

IIRR



2009 Annual Report

Our History, Our Work



The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) was established in 1960 to bring about integrated community-based development and to generate models for reducing poverty. The **Credo** at the center of IIRR's existence was written by Dr. Y.C. James Yen in the 1920s and focused on two tenets of development long before they became established as fundamental ideas in the field: **participatory and sustainable development**.

Participatory Development. IIRR works directly with and through community organizations to carry out needs-based activities with the view that it is only through the participation of local people that true and lasting development is possible. The participation of local people starts with the ownership of the *problem* through to the ownership of the *solution*. This includes the assessment of community assets, the identification of needs and the determination of priorities that make sense for the community's development and well-being. Program activities are designed to solve locally-identified problems associated with poverty.

Sustainable Development. A key IIRR policy is not to provide relief but to work with communities to build their own solutions to release their hidden potential. This is the essence of capacity building. Thus, the measure of success in IIRR's work is leaving behind robust, strong and independent rural organizations that can manage their own affairs and address their own concerns without external intervention.

IIRR is a learning organization that captures new and traditional knowledge from the field and rethinks how these can become possible models for replication in other settings. IIRR shares this learning community work through training and publications. IIRR's work is organized around two program themes:

Economic and Social Well-Being:

- a. Building the capacities of the rural poor in learning communities to analyze their situation, identify needs and address their demands for increased economic and political participation.
- b. Building the capacities of the rural poor in learning communities to address the multiple causes and consequences of poverty that have an impact on their lives with a focus on the following action areas:
 - Rural enterprise and livelihood
 - Environmental protection
 - Natural resource management
 - Health, education and social well-being

Institutional Development which involves strengthening the capacities of institutions that have a role to play in support of the development process of the rural poor, including local, national and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental agencies at all levels.

"Relief has its place. But what the people need is not relief, but release – release of their own potential for development."

– Dr. Y.C. James Yen

Cover photographs:

1. Kenyan woman accessing water to carry for household use. See page 7 for more on how IIRR is helping to bring safe water to communities in Kenya.
2. IIRR President, Isaac Bekalo (right), with Governor Sally Lee of Sorsogon Province, Philippines, visiting the province's green house garden.
3. Students at Sisters of Mary, Boystown engage in a sustainable agriculture class centered around Bio Intensive Gardening in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.
4. Young Northern Ugandan returnees tend to their bio intensive gardens through IIRR's Farmer Field School project in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.
5. IIRR partners with organizations and community members at the local and national levels, from farmers to fishers, like the community member shown here in Ticao Island in Bicol Region, Philippines, engaging in coastal resource management.

Letter from the Board Chair

A Bit of History

As IIRR celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year, it is common to look at our history and to contemplate all of the changes that have occurred since the Institute was formally incorporated in 1960. I would note, however, that our roots go back much further in time, to the creation of the Chinese Mass Education Movement (CMEM) by our founder, Dr. Y.C. James Yen, in 1923. Its aim was to explore the potential of the rural poor and to educate them not merely *for* life but to *remake* life. The establishment of CMEM really marked the official beginning of the rural reconstruction movement.

CMEM eventually developed the fourfold program of integrated activities in education, health, livelihood and local self government that remains a key theme of the Institute's work to this day. After 1949, Dr. Yen continued his work first in Taiwan and then in the Philippines. The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) was formally established in 1952. PRRM's good work led to the granting of the famous Ramon Magsaysay Award for Peace and International Understanding to Dr. Yen in 1960. That same year, wishing to internationalize the training of rural development skills, IIRR as we currently know it was established, to be based in the Philippines as a center for international extension, leadership training and operational research.

It was not long after IIRR's international training programs began that NGO and public sector students from Africa, Asia and Latin America began to form local alumni groups and that other national rural reconstruction movements were established in Guatemala, Colombia, Thailand, Ghana, India and Bangladesh. In 1986, IIRR itself received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Peace and International Understanding that Dr. Yen had received 26 years earlier.

IIRR's philosophy continues through its regional work in Asia and Africa, which currently focuses on: 1) Community-managed disaster risk reduction (including climate change); 2) Value chain development for small producers and traders, local enterprises, microfinance entities (particularly those run by and for women), and local universities that are developing entrepreneurs in agricultural schools; and 3) Education, early child development in nomadic and marginalized communities, programs that develop models for gender equality and economic empowerment of girls, and programs that integrate functional adult literacy into economic activities.

As I complete my first year as Chair, I thank all of our friends for their past support and look forward to your continued assistance in the work that lies ahead.


James F. Kelly
Board Chair



Letter from the President

Starting and Staying

In the 50 years since IIRR was formally incorporated, IIRR continues to fulfill its mission with sustained levels of dedication and commitment to the plight of the rural poor. Today, IIRR continues its life-long journey of capacity building for community empowerment by forging strategic alliances with over 150 partners, including people's organizations, schools, local and national governments and indigenous and international NGOs. These organizations work with communities in common interest areas such as education, disaster prevention, climate change adaptation, enterprise development, HIV/AIDS, health, peace-building and gender equality. They know the local conditions and cultural sensitivities necessary to meet challenges in capacity development of the target communities and allow IIRR to leverage local resources, skills, talents and know-how in a cost-effective and sustainable way.

While recognizing the impact of our work with communities and grassroots partners, it is equally important to link with policymaking agencies to help create an enabling environment for community capacity development. One such strategy IIRR has developed over the years is the documentation and dissemination of evidence-based success in capacity development using an innovative approach known as a "writeshop." This approach has now become a powerful, globally-acknowledged process to document, package and efficiently disseminate development lessons from the field.

In 2009, IIRR produced seven publications in partnership with UN-HABITAT, IDRC, Royal Tropical Institute, Pastoralist Forum Ethiopia and Development Fund Norway. The most exciting new development in this field is our work with African universities. In the past year, seven African universities jointly adapted the writeshop process to localize their textbooks, teaching/learning materials and methods, a significant step towards the transformation and innovation of teaching and learning processes in African institutions of higher learning. IIRR's role in this process will have an enormous impact on community-linked academic establishments in the region.

Having started my career with IIRR 22 years ago, I fully understand the challenges of keeping an organization going. In 2010, our board and management will embark on the development of a new strategy for 2015 which will once again renew our commitment to rural reconstruction as participatory and people-centered development. Thank you all for helping IIRR to stay its course. Our board, management and staff trust that your support will continue charging our "staying power" as we forge ahead and continuously innovate with rural folk.



Isaac Bekalo
President

Vision

**A world of equity,
justice and peace
where all people
can lead lives of
quality and dignity.**

Mission

**Building the capacity
of the poor and
their organizations
to overcome poverty.**

Our Work with Communities

The International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) addresses poverty through capacity building that includes systematic learning, documenting and sharing information and knowledge for scaling up and replication. IIRR works and learns together with communities to ensure that they participate fully for sustainable efforts against poverty. IIRR works with partners to actively monitor, evaluate, learn, document and share lessons learned with communities and other organizations through action research, case studies, publications, study tours, trainings, workshops and conferences.

Education in Pastoralist and Marginalized Communities

The goal of the Pastoralist Education Program (PEP) is to expand opportunities for pastoralist children to access quality basic education through approaches that meet their lifestyle and needs. The program is designed to complement the efforts of the respective national and local governments to attain their “education for all” ambitions and the Millennium Development Goals. To date, the program has initiated Early Child Development (ECD) for pre-primary levels, Alternative Basic Education (ABE) for out-of-school children and Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) for adult learners.

Nomadic pastoralists are highly mobile. This requires a major adaptation of the educational delivery system. IIRR and partners have designed flexible approaches like mobile schools where the pupils and the teachers are provided with tents, teaching and learning materials in safe boxes, and a camel to transport them. Whenever and wherever they move, children do not miss learning. In addition, shepherd classes were introduced for children to attend classes early in the mornings and during evening hours so that they continue to support their families by taking care of the herds. This flexibility has allowed parents to support education

and has particularly enabled girls to attend classes. IIRR, through the Pastoralist Education Program, works in ten districts in Kenya’s northern region and Rift Valley provinces. By supporting 25 learning centers through a partnership with nine local organizations, IIRR is enhancing access to quality basic education for children in marginalized pastoral communities. IIRR also supports 30 similar centers in Ethiopia.



Under the Shade of the Acacia Tree

Nine year-old Letilan is the third of five children born into a poor and illiterate family. As a way of earning money for his family, he took to running errands in his village of Farakore in Baragoi District, Kenya. This was in addition to his main task of herding livestock, a risky and labor-intensive task. After each year’s work, he was rewarded with a female heifer by the herd owners. His siblings were also destined go into herding as their only means of livelihood. The area lacked even a basic educational infrastructure. As a result, children like Letilan had no chance to improve their lives through education. Through the interventions of the Community Initiatives Facilitation and Assistance (CIFA), a development organization that is one of IIRR’s Pastoralist Education Program (PEP) partners in northern Kenya, the community initiated a learning project to support children with limited access to education in Farakore.

One day Letilan found his way to the learning center for out-of-school pupils under an acacia tree in the village. He began attending school without his father’s knowledge. On learning of this development a few days later, his father lamented: “Oh my son, you have been getting a cow equivalent to 12 shoats (goats and sheep) yearly! Of what good to us is this time wasted under the acacia tree?” Despite his father’s negative view of school, Letilan was determined to pursue his education. At the end of his first term in school, he had the best grades in his class and, with the inspiration of the teacher who was amazed at his ability, continued to lead the class through the year’s end. Since that time, Letilan has consistently ranked among the top three in his classes. The school that became a major turning point in the life of Letilan and many other children started from a mere community meeting. It is one of the pioneer schools that IIRR supported through PEP and it has grown to teach children from grades one to five, also serving as an Early Childhood Development center.

From humble beginnings under the shade of an acacia tree, a modern learning center has emerged. Through the collaborative efforts of CIFA, Kenya’s Ministry of Education, the local Constituency Development Fund (CDF), the Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF), the Ayuder Foundation and the local community, seven permanent primary school classrooms, two teachers’ quarters, an administration block, a kitchen and a store have been constructed. The school is also now registered under the Ministry of Education in Kenya and, as a result, receives full government support. Contrary to the initial assumption that parents in the area undervalued education, the community members strongly supported the initiative by enrolling their children in school. The commitment of the community to the education of their children can be summarized in the comments of the school management committee treasurer: “We only came to know about education five years ago when IIRR and CIFA visited us. We did not even know what a school committee was but now we appreciate education and want to continue to learn our roles in the school and bring the children to school. We still need you to teach us slowly.”

Community-Based Discovery and Learning

Learning Our Way Out (LOWO) is a community-based discovery and learning approach that addresses community problems such as population and development issues through a process of dialogue and conversation led by community volunteers trained in the use of facilitation techniques. Through the LOWO concept, people can realize the impact of large family size and high population growth on the well-being of the family and community. The approach is based on the idea that community-managed learning processes lead to an increased demand for accessible and exercisable options for family planning.



A Pillar of Strength

Thirty-eight year-old Tseganesh Tomicah is the mother of five children from Tiramisu in Sidama zone of Shebadino district, 30 kilometers from Awassa, the capital of the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State in Ethiopia. She was one of the community facilitators selected when the Learning Our Way Out (LOWO) project was implemented by IIRR and its partners in her village. Before joining LOWO, she stayed at home and took care of her children. Tseganesh was married at the age of 14 when she was in fifth grade. She struggled to reach the eighth grade, but by then she already had four children and could not continue her education. It was during this time that she was selected by the community to volunteer and serve in the LOWO project as a facilitator.

After being trained in key facilitation and communication skills, she started to hold weekly, and later biweekly, community dialogues in her village. As the result of these community dialogue sessions, people in the villages started to realize the direct relationship between a large family and poverty and they began to consider family planning methods. Apart from the changes observed in the community, Tseganesh herself benefited from the training and started using contraceptives in spite of her husband's persistent desire for more children. As a result of this exposure, she became more courageous, rejoined school and completed tenth grade. Today, she is employed in the women's affairs office in Shebadino. She has also studied Human Resource Management and serves as chairperson of the district Women's Association.

Tseganesh still uses community dialogue to help her neighbors and community members address the challenges they face. Every two weeks, she leads a meeting where she uses skills and knowledge acquired from the LOWO project and her experiences in her current roles to engage in multiple community assignments. In Shebadino, facilitators like Tseganesh who were selected to lead the community dialogue processes have seen remarkable changes in their lives. Out of the ten facilitators selected in LOWO, eight now have jobs as a result of their contribution to the community. Many have become local leaders in government and cooperative unions.

"LOWO is everything to me. As the result of LOWO, my economic status has changed drastically," Tseganesh says. "I was able to build a corrugated iron sheet roofed house from the income I earn from my work. If it weren't for LOWO, I would probably still be without a livelihood and probably would have a very large family. I am employed and now everyone respects me. This is all because of LOWO. LOWO has become my pillar."

Bio Intensive Gardening to Save the Environment and Improve Nutrition

IIIRR first introduced Bio Intensive Gardening (BIG) to the Sisters of Mary School, Inc., Girlstown near the IIRR global headquarters at the Yen Center in Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

The Sisters of Mary School decided to integrate Bio Intensive Gardening into the technical-vocational education curriculum. Students who participate in the project earn academic credits and also receive a national certificate to serve as agricultural extension agents after completing the course.

By growing food organically and integrating agroforestry practices in farming, students learn environmental protection and climate change adaptation measures. These environmentally-friendly measures also ensure the project's success and sustainability.

The Sisters of Mary School partnered with IIRR to adapt its expertise in sustainable agriculture into a model for small-scale family food production. IIRR has developed and replicated this model in many villages and schools across the Philippines. The Sisters



of Mary School used the BIG model to establish the course curriculum, which focuses on organic crop production using methods suited for small household backyards. When students complete their BIG training at Sisters of Mary School, they will use the new skills with their families at home and in their communities.

In August 2009, the second phase of the project began as "Sustainable Agriculture Technical Vocational Education." This phase was integrated into the fourth year curriculum and over 136 students have been trained.

The students learn through participatory methods including mini lectures, problem analyses in groups, “learning by doing” through field work to set up garden plots, student group discussions, coaching and sharing meetings with teachers and school management, and actually planting, watering and weeding gardens. Seminars are also held to target students from low-income backgrounds and those coming from agriculturally-productive areas of the Philippines.



IIRR plans to expand sustainable agriculture using BIG to post-secondary technical-vocational education and have it accredited by the Philippine Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. A curriculum is under development that will capture the training regulations required for agricultural crop skills development. IIRR is also working with other government schools to integrate BIG into their curriculums.

The bio-intensive approach is a biological form of agriculture in which a small area of land is intensively cultivated, using nature’s own ingredients to rebuild and then maintain the soil’s productivity. At the heart of the approach is the effort to improve the soil’s capability to nurture and sustain plant life. In the bio-intensive approach, the soil is gradually enhanced and the composition of beneficial microbial life actually improves from season to season. Some of the benefits of the approach include the following:

- Recycles plant and animal waste and residues,
- Reduces dependence on inputs used in conventional food production,
- Controls pest naturally,
- Eliminates pesticide-related health hazards,
- Improves family nutrition,
- Uses a small space to grow more food,
- Uses less labor and capital,
- Conserves water, and
- Generates income.

Growing Water in Sand

In recent years, the residents of Balesa, Kenya, have suffered severe drought leading to loss of animals and livelihoods. In the 2008 drought, their only source of water dried up early and the community had no choice but to walk 40 kilometers to North Horr to find water.

Balesa village has 100 households and 3,000 people and is situated 200 kilometers south of Marsabit. Mrs. Kurfa, a resident of Balesa, shares her experience of life before the situation improved:

We relied on water from shallow wells. At the peak of the droughts, the wells dried up. This forced us to move with our families to North Horr where there is permanent water. Our children were transferred from one school to another every year. They hardly completed five years of education because of the family’s mobility. They never performed well.

Every week, we trekked in scorching heat for over 40 kilometers to find water. The journey took us two days. Some of us who were lactating were forced to stay for at least one night without breastfeeding. We would suffer from breast engorgement as we could not carry our babies on the long journey.

The community asked the Pastoralist Integrated Support Programme (PISP), an IIRR partner in



Setting up a sand dam

the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) program in Kenya, to assist by providing water, clearly an urgent need in the area. The community, with support of the PISP, identified sand dams as the most appropriate water harvesting technology for the area and one that the community could sustainably manage. Initially, some community members were not sure if sand dams were the best option, thinking it would be a waste of resources to set them up in the area. However, PISP took some community representatives to see how the technology was used elsewhere in Kenya. Mrs. Kurfa was one of those who went on a learning visit. PISP piloted a few sand dams in Balesa through funding from the UK Department of International Development (DFID) and the Gender and Governance Program (GGP) in Kenya.

Sand dams are barriers constructed across sandy river beds. The dams catch runoff water and trapped sand stores the additional water that seeps into the ground. This technology is used in areas not suitable for underground and rock catchment tanks.

According to Mrs. Kurfa, the few pilot sand dams have changed the lives of people in the area, especially for women and children:

Immediately after the construction of the first sand dams, the area received rains and the sand dams managed to trap water and sand. Some of these dams retained water for up to four months after the rains and we noticed that the acacia trees around the sites were greener than others.

Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) is a development process and a tool where communities are actively engaged in the identification, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of their disaster risks, with the aim of reducing people's vulnerabilities and enhancing their capacities. It places the communities at the center of the decision-making process and the management of disaster risk reduction measures.

CMDRR recognizes that disaster risk reduction components include livelihood, health, natural resource management and access to basic services/rights as a foundation of safety. An empowered community system and structure can resolve the root causes of increasing disaster risk and enhance a community's ability to bounce back immediately during and after hazards.



Animals access water from a sand dam

To date, more than 30 sand dams have been constructed and they have contributed to improved wellbeing of the residents of Balesa and El-hadi communities. The schools in the area are now no longer closed immediately when the rains fail because the dams keep them going for some time. Water committees were also set up to maintain the sand dam structures. PISP engaged the communities in capacity building training on management and community-managed disaster risk reduction so that they could organize themselves to mitigate the risks of future hazards.

Learning Alliance Strengthens Value Chains for 18 Farmer Groups in Ethiopia

It is rare to find farmers in Africa engaged in capacity building training together with professionals from other sectors. Rarely also do organizations from the “north” engage their “southern” partners in formal learning programs that primarily target farmers and their organizations. The usual relationship is that of providing funding to partners in the “south” punctuated by occasional visits. However, this is now changing as illustrated by the experiences of the Learning Alliance (LA) initiative in Ethiopia.

The Learning Alliance is an initiative where farmer organizations are the primary focus in the learning process of service providers including non-governmental organizations like IIRR that provide support to them. The Learning Alliance is a learning-by-doing program in value chain development, organized around clusters of farmer organizations and service providers who have existing working relationships.



Dedie Cooperative Leaders discussing their case with Anna of KIT during the Learning Alliance Documentation Workshop

Eighteen farmer organizations focusing on the haricot bean, teff, wheat, coffee, linseed, and honey production work in the alliance to upgrade their business and market position in the value chain. Their service providers are trained to support and facilitate the farmer organizations in this effort through a process of learning that includes the use of workshops, assignments and coaching visits by the Learning Alliance coordination team.

So far, courses offered have covered areas such as basic value chain analysis, self-analysis for trade partnership, financial analysis, coaching and cluster action planning. The final stage of the Learning Alliance is a business planning contest and documentation of lessons learned. The Learning Alliance in Ethiopia is supported by Agri-ProFocus, SNV, ICCO, KIT, Agriterria, Cordaid, FFARM and IIRR as the process facilitator.

As a member of the coordinating team in the alliance, IIRR facilitated this three-year action-based learning and led the overall coordination and facilitation of the six workshops that brought farmer organizations and service providers together.

For the last three years, participants have worked to improve their capacities through take-home assignments and hands-on experiences. During the coaching process,

changes in entrepreneurial attitudes of the participants have been observed. The confidence level of the farmer organizations has increased as they continuously look for new market opportunities, and business planning practice has improved where chain partnerships are established.

At the end of the process, the alliance engaged all 18 farmer group clusters in a business plan competition where €75,000 was awarded to winners by ICCO, and the Agri-ProFocus network. While each farmer organization received €500 for taking part in the competition, the top three groups won €15,000, €12,000, and €10,000, respectively, and five organizations selected in other categories like gender and environment won amounts ranging from €6,000 to €15,000 each.

Watering Hope and Health

Mwewa village of Gatundu North district is a 30-minute drive from Kenya's capital, Nairobi. The village is surrounded by captivating scenery of leafy coffee farms and steep, undulating hills where the Karimnu River gracefully meanders into the valley below. This beautiful setting and the river's presence, however, belie the daily challenge of access to safe drinking water for the village's 6,000 residents.

In the hilly terrain, residents face a daily challenge in accessing water. Nearly every day, women and children as young as 12 carry heavy containers of water up the hills on their backs. They spend hours fetching water that barely meets their household needs. The alternative is to spend 15 Kenyan shillings (19 US cents) for a 20-liter jerrycan of water, a cost that many cannot afford. Households require at least five such jerry cans each day.

A Safe Water Kiosk Initiative project team visited Mwea towards the end of 2009 to assess levels of dependency and the hygiene status of the Karimnu River. The team observed that scores of villagers were using the river's contaminated water. Farming along the river bank, washing and bathing were common. There were also times when human feces and dead animals could be seen floating in the river, especially in the rainy season when run-off from the hills drained into the river.

Mwea residents suffered from stomach pain and diarrhea. Many are unable to boil or treat drinking water to prevent diseases because firewood and chemicals are expensive.

After visiting the village, the project team decided to establish a water kiosk to provide safe drinking water for the community at an affordable fee.

In December 2009, the Safe Water Kiosk (SWK) project was launched in Mwea. This was marked by the setting up of the first kiosk at the Rachael Children's Home in the village. Residents now have access to safe drinking water for the small fee of one Kenyan shilling (1.25 US cents) per liter. The proprietor of Rachael Children's Home will run the water kiosk as a business enterprise to augment the home's income while providing water to the community.



Rachael Muiruri, the proprietor of the first safe water kiosk and Bob Stea of Safe Water Network-USA officially open the first safe water kiosk

The Safe Water Kiosk Project is a collaborative effort between five organizations: Safe Water Network from the USA, IIRR, PureFlow, Sterling Micro Development Consultants and HOPE Worldwide in Kenya. The project partners work in a consortium that combines expertise in water treatment technology, a business model, community health education and mobilization to improve the health of communities through the provision of safe drinking water using sustainable low-cost water purification systems.

Gender and Leadership Fulfilled My Ambitions to Become a Change Agent

Tsehay Assefa, a mother of four, was born in Agree in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia. Her family strongly believed in educating girls and sent her to school with her sisters at a very young age. During her school years, she was known in the community for her brilliance, assertiveness and for asking “difficult” questions of her family members and teachers.

Among the questions she would ask were: “Why can’t girls play football? Why are girls not allowed to lead the flag raising ceremony? Why do women suffer violence at the hands of men?” However, Tsehay did not stop at the questioning. She decided to show her friends and the school community that things could be different for girls. She joined her school football team and played with the boys. She became part of the team in charge of flag raising at school and also joined a girls group in school.

She later studied at Addis Ababa University for a degree in Political Science and International Relations. She also acquired a diploma in Housing Planning and Building from the Netherlands University and a Master’s degree in Gender Studies from Addis Ababa University.

Tsehay has worked in different government ministries including the Federal Civil Service Agency (FSCA) as a policy analysis expert and as a training coordinator where she facilitates gender related trainings.



She says, “For me, affirmative action is any step or action that increases the representation of women in different development endeavors.”

“I would like to thank IIRR for providing our department with office equipment like computers, printers and other materials. IIRR also gave us a grant, training and technical support that made most of our staff conscious of gender issues and how to mainstream gender.”

“Currently, I am working towards mainstreaming gender issues in the agency as well as encouraging the agency to work towards relevant policies, procedures and systems. As a department head, I strongly believe that I have created strong gender change agents in our organization. Those that have been trained by IIRR in our agency are now change agents who crave to see women empowered.”

IIRR Opens South Sudan Country Office

Beginning in May 2009, IIRR opened a new country office in South Sudan. Sirak Abebe, formerly the Outreach Coordinator in Ethiopia, was appointed as Country Program Coordinator. Among other achievements, the country program manager secured offices and signed a memorandum of understanding between IIRR and Plan South Sudan on cooperation and partnership in South Sudan. The new office faces many challenges including high operational costs, security concerns and the existing focus on relief work by many development organizations in the country, but IIRR remains confident that we will soon be able to initiate work with rural communities and their organizations.



“We work with the people not out of pity but out of respect for their potential for growth and development, both as individuals and as communities.”

– Dr. Y.C. James Yen

Learning and Sharing

IIRR can build on more than eight decades of experience in learning about and sharing participatory approaches to rural development. Its capacity development efforts emanate from field programs in Asia and Africa.

As a research and training institute, IIRR offers a number of practice-based capacity building services that promote the use of participatory approaches in rural development. IIRR's training and capacity development activities include a wide range of international and customized training courses in the following areas: participatory development approaches, community-based natural resource management, value chain development, community-managed disaster risk reduction, community-managed health, organizational development and management, participatory local governance, participatory rural appraisal and participatory planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning.

IIRR facilitates a learning process that enables course participants to exchange their own experiences and analyze technologies, tools and approaches to participatory development. Practical work on action plans toward the end of each course encourages students to apply their newly-acquired knowledge, skills and lessons to their own organizations' development work in their countries.

In 2009, IIRR conducted more than ten international training courses and customized courses. Selected courses are highlighted below.

International Courses

Value Chain Development Training Pioneered in Ethiopia

IIRR's first international pro-poor Value Chain Development (VCD) course was held from October 26 to November 6, 2009 in Ethiopia. Nineteen participants, including four women, from seven countries attended the training in Addis Ababa. The course was conducted in partnership with the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT).

The training included successful field visits to the Genesis Farm and Adaa Dairy, where

participants practically applied the concepts learned. The course also included a plenary session in which participants engaged Ethiopian value chain experts in discussions. In addition, the participants analyzed a coffee value chain case and played a simulation game that illustrated the roles of different actors in the value chain.

The future of value chain development and training in the region is bright. It is a relatively new concept and organizations are eager to build the capacity of their staff to handle the development and strengthening of the value chain in their projects. A similar course is planned for 2010.

CMDRR Training in Asia Creates Lasting Impressions

IIRR Asia conducted an international course on Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) in the Philippines from November 23 to December 4, 2009. Participants included 21 managers, project officers, coordinators and trainers from Ghana, India, Indonesia, Zambia and the Philippines.



Women formed one-third of the total number of participants. The diverse knowledge and experience of these participants provided an exciting learning environment.

The course was designed to enhance the capacity of development professionals to facilitate the CMDRR process. Selected tools in facilitating a participatory disaster risk assessment (hazard, capacity and vulnerability assessment) and participatory planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning were demonstrated and practiced by participants. They also conducted hands-on exercises on risk assessment and mitigation strategy and action planning at the community level.



Participants expressed great appreciation for the course. Manas Bhattacharyya, a Senior Program Officer with the Association for Stimulating Know How (ASK), India said:

“The course was a great and lifetime experience for me. I feel the ‘emotional attachment’ with IIRR, the venue, the resource persons and the communities we visited. I will remember the games, sessions, field visits, exposure trip and the International Night. The training brought 20 of us from five countries very close to each other and we have established a deep emotional bond and relationships.”

Participants from Five Countries Attend Monitoring and Evaluation Course

A Participatory Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (PPM&E) training was held in Kenya in November. Twelve participants (including two women) from Nigeria, Sudan, Burundi, Kenya and Ethiopia attended. The two-week course used classroom interactions and a field practicum at the Network for Eco-farming in Africa (NECOFA) near Nakuru, which allowed interaction with local community-based organizations.



Customized Courses

Monitoring and Evaluation Training for Red Cross Staff in Indonesia

IIRR Asia held a seven-day training course on Participatory Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (PPM&E) with a two-day field activity for the staff of the American Red Cross (ARC) from November 11 to 18, 2009 in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.



The training was designed for ARC program and project officers. The 21 staff who attended the course practiced the selection and use of appropriate participatory M&E tools to monitor ongoing project activities and evaluate key results of projects.

The training focused on change in knowledge about concepts, principles and practices of participatory M&E, skills on facilitating participatory M&E processes related to data collection and analysis, preparing M&E reports and the attitude needed to perform participatory M&E processes. The participants also took part in a field practicum in the villages of Lambaroskep and Lamdingin.

Capacity Development in Aquaculture Entrepreneurship in Malawi

In October 2009, the University of Stirling in Scotland commissioned IIRR to conduct a training workshop on Entrepreneurship Skill Development in Aquaculture for prospective farmers. The training was part of the university’s Entrepreneurship in Aquaculture project and was held in Lilongwe, Malawi.

IIRR's Asia and Africa regional centers collaborated in the ten-day workshop that focused on business skill development. The training increased the entrepreneurship capacity of farmers in small-holder aquaculture.



Conducted from October 12 to 21, 2009, the course was also attended by nine participants from colleges, universities and the private sector. The highlight of the training workshop was a two-day interactive field visit to an aquaculture and entrepreneurship project, where participants identified challenges, issues, insights and lessons facing aquaculture projects in the community.

Systematic Approach to Project Development and Management in Afghanistan

IIRR organized a customized training of trainers (TOI) course for staff of the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR), a national level non-governmental, humanitarian organization that supports sustainable development in Afghanistan.

The first phase of the training was held from October 25 to November 4, 2009, and a second training was scheduled for the first quarter of 2010.



KLMC Staff Trained in Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Four Kenya Livestock Marketing Council (KLMC) board members and seven members of their staff attended a five-day PPME course in November 2009 in Nairobi. Apart from equipping the participants in monitoring and evaluation skills, the course prepared the KLMC staff for an upcoming mid-term evaluation of their program. The PPME course was the second in a series of four courses that IIRR plans to facilitate for KLMC. The first was in resource mobilization and proposal writing. Trainings in advocacy and effective financial management will be held in the future.

Gender Assertiveness Training for IIRR Partners

IIRR Ethiopia organized a three-day gender assertiveness training for the Gender in Leadership and Decision Making (GLDM) project partners. Thirty participants (29 women and 1 man) attended the training from July 29 to 31, 2009. The participants included representatives from partner organizations including federal ministries, Addis Ababa University and public and government schools.



The objective of the training was to boost the self-esteem of emerging women leaders by enhancing their assertive behaviors and communication skills. Participants were equipped to lead and communicate successfully at home and at the organizational level.

“The people are the foundation of the nation. Our only chance for a lasting peace on earth: the release of the strength of the common man.”

– Dr. Y.C. James Yen

Record Participation in Uganda CMDRR Training

A record 33 participants from Senegal, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Denmark and Germany attended the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) training conducted from September 14 to 25, 2009 in Kampala, Uganda.

The CMDRR course addressed the need to equip communities to increase their capacity to reduce risk and vulnerability and to build resilience to withstand and cope with the impact of hazards. Participants later applied their training by facilitating the DRR process with selected communities in northern Uganda.

Bio Intensive Gardening Training in Philippines

A training in Bio Intensive Gardening (BIG) was conducted from October 8 to 10, 2009 with 20 participants from the community of Ticao. The training covered, among other things, the basic concepts of BIG and sustainable farming and demonstrations of the procedures to establish a bio-intensive garden. The basic elements of BIG, including double digging, the use of



organic farm inputs and crop planning, were demonstrated as illustrated below.

The demonstration was done in a plot measuring 4 x 25 meters. The whole demonstration site measures ¼ hectare and is divided into 17 plots. The area was fenced in to keep animals away. Procedures in preparing natural farm inputs were also shared with the community.



Resource person demonstrates double digging technique



Participants apply leaves of madre de cacao, wood ash and crushed eggs as fertilizers.



Facilitator emphasizes the importance of the crop cycle



Curious children getting their hands dirty to help support climate change adaptation

Innovative Knowledge Documentation and Packaging through Writeshop

The **writeshop** is an intensive participatory process pioneered by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction that is designed to allow printed materials to be developed, revised and put into final form as quickly as possible, taking full advantage of the expertise of the various participants.

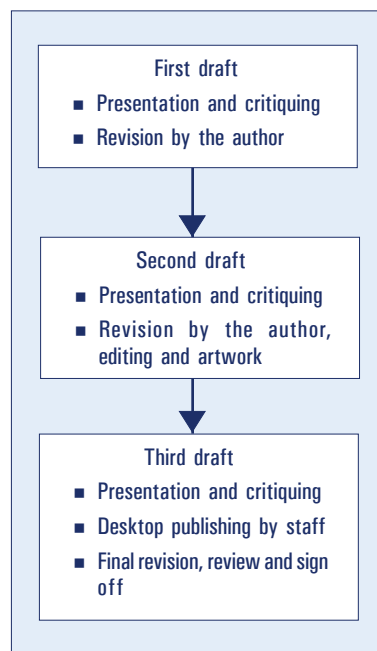
The process is extremely flexible. The repeated presentations, comments and revisions of drafts allow for papers to be reviewed and revised substantially, new topics to be developed during the writeshop, and topics to be merged or dropped.

This allows ideas to be validated by a range of experts in the field. The concentration of resource persons, editors, artists and layout designers at one time and place enables materials to be produced far more quickly than is typical for similar publications.

It is also a capacity building activity that enhances the participants' writing skills and serves as a hands-on training, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate the writeshop process in their respective regions.

The materials produced during the writeshop benefit greatly from peer review during the production process. These materials are disseminated widely and readers are encouraged to utilize them in any relevant form. They can be used as training handouts or as reference materials.

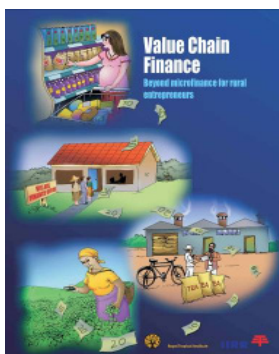
There is intentionally no copyright on materials created as IIRR upholds the value of knowledge sharing and readers are encouraged to widely use, adapt and/or translate the material provided that IIRR is properly acknowledged and cited.



2009 Publications

Value Chain Finance: Beyond Microfinance for Rural Entrepreneurs

This book focuses on value chain finance as a solution to the dilemmas that small-scale farmers, traders and processors face in their business operations. Value chain finance occurs when specialized financial institutions are linked to the value chain and offer services that build on business relations in the chain.



This book describes 13 cases from ten countries including Bolivia, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Nicaragua, Peru, Rwanda and Tanzania, where value chain finance initiatives have unclogged value chains, improved the lives of the rural poor, produced more and higher-quality agricultural products, and made the value chain more profitable for all concerned.

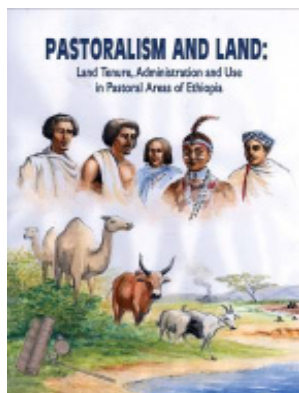
This is the third in a series of books on value chains by the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR).

“Outsiders can help, but insiders must do the job.” – Dr. Y.C. James Yen

Pastoralism and Land: Land Tenure, Administration and Use in Pastoral Areas of Ethiopia

This book looks at the experiences of pastoral communities in Ethiopia and how they are adapting to changes in land use systems that affect them. It explores the pastoral production system, the historical and contemporary status of land use practices in pastoral areas of Ethiopia and the traditional institutions and methods that were used to manage land as a shared resource.

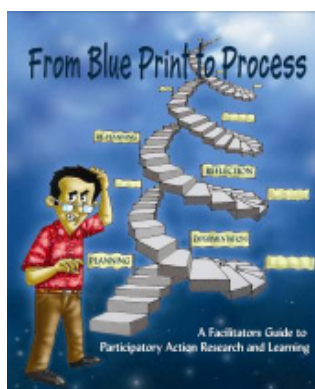
The book also looks at pastoral natural resource management as governed by traditional systems and how this is changing with the advent of new land use systems.



From Blue Print to Process: A Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Action Research and Learning

This manual is based on field-based training efforts organized as part of an action research project. It covers the challenges often faced by development practitioners in ensuring that participatory approaches are well integrated into conventional planning approaches.

Sessions have been developed to ensure that readers are guided to discover and learn on their own. It provides answers to key questions and methods that can guide facilitators through a stimulating, discovery-learning journey.

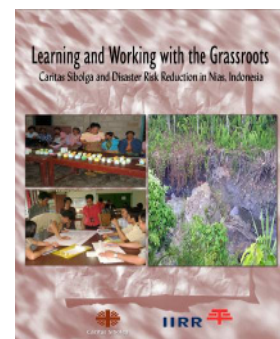


"Commitment cannot be taught; it can only be caught."
— Dr. Y.C. James Yen

Learning and Working with the Grassroots: Caritas Sibolga and Disaster Risk Reduction in Nias, Indonesia

This publication includes case studies and case stories generated from project implementation experiences. The content of this publication was written by the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) project team based on their real-life experiences to highlight the action learning nature of the pilot project. The three chapters of the book focus on Training, Action and Reflection.

This is also practice-based learning from Caritas Keuskupan Sibolga's CMDRR pilot project and is intended for the use of practitioners, local parishes, members of the Caritas network, donors and partners of CKS, government agencies and other NGOs.



The Community Agricultural Technology Program: Experiences in Technology Transfer and Adoption in the Philippines

This sourcebook was designed to document the Community Agricultural Technology Program's experiences, diffuse information and encourage adoption among farmers and other stakeholders. It is a compilation of case studies and field stories which may reinforce adoption initiatives. Local government experiences and farmers' success stories are also incorporated in the cases to provide a total picture of the project's achievements.



Releasing Potentials: Toward Sustainable Community Forestry

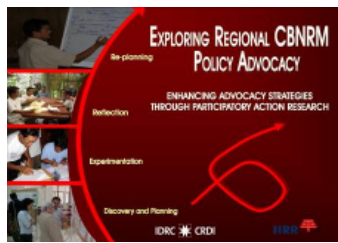
For those interested in democratizing policy formulation processes, this publication provides case stories of individuals and organization partners of the IIRR Community Forestry



Interlocking Project. These are stories of their involvement in the community-based forestry management policy advocacy processes and their reflections on the implications of current local and national forestry policy and advocacy process. Moreover, it also illustrates ways of engaging stakeholder groups in community forestry. Their stories narrate their involvement in the community forestry action research project of IIRR and how it provided them opportunities for realizing their potentials for sustainable community forestry.

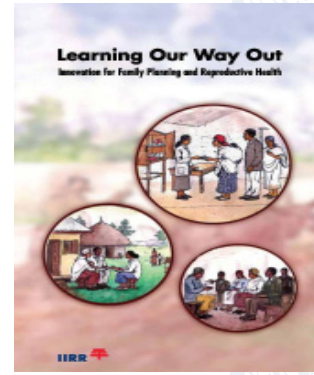
Exploring Regional CBNRM Policy Advocacy: Enhancing Advocacy Strategies through Participatory Action Research

This book focuses on field-level interfaces of policy dynamics, particularly those related to natural resources. Much of this study focuses on advocacy strategies—those that address barriers arising from natural resource management policies—through multi-stakeholder interactions.



Learning Our Way Out: Innovation for Family Planning and Reproductive Health

Learning Our Way Out (LOWO) was an approach tested by IIRR in Ethiopia over a five-year period beginning in 1998. During that period of implementation, LOWO succeeded in helping people change their opinions and perspectives about family size and its relation to poverty and gave them opportunities to access reproductive health information and services.



This book shares this approach used for village people to express their problems and, through dialogue, discover that the problems are the result of deeper, underlying problems which affect all – women, men, young and old. This edition focuses on the understanding of the relevance of family planning in addressing greater community problems, including population and development issues, in Ethiopia.

Read more about LOWO on page 4.

Please visit us online at <http://www.iirr.org>, where you can shop for publications in the IIRR bookstore, read the latest features from the field, sign up for free monthly e-newsletters, view our photo gallery, connect with other IIRR supporters and much more.

2009 Donors

IIRR gratefully acknowledges the following individuals and institutions for their commitment to the rural poor. Your generosity and support help us enable the poor and their organizations to achieve their full potential and implement lasting solutions for overcoming poverty.

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Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO)

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The Jimmy Yen Society

The Jimmy Yen Society is an honorary organization that recognizes friends who have designated IIRR as a beneficiary in their estate plans. These planned giving donors create lasting legacies through deferred gifts such as bequests, charitable trusts, endowments and life income arrangements. We would like to acknowledge the following members of the Jimmy Yen Society, named after the visionary founder of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, to thank them for their support of IIRR.

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The 2009 sources of financial support identified above are consistent with the 2009 Financial Summary included in the annual report and with the audited financial statements of IIRR for 2009. For US reporting purposes, IIRR is required to recognize revenues in the year in which funds are received or formally committed, even though committed funds may be received or used over several years.

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Financial Summary

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION
(A Nonprofit, Nonstock Organization)

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION (In U.S. Dollars)

	As of December 31	
	2009	2008
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,300,669	\$ 419,547
Investments	684,149	522,351
Contributions Receivable	1,251,237	2,402,992
Other Receivables	201,928	323,263
Property and Equipment - net	118,299	174,588
Prepayments and Other Assets	25,784	24,200
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,582,066	\$3,866,941
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts Payable and Other Current Liabilities	\$ 323,975	\$ 390,956
Funds Held in Trust	-	4,264
TOTAL LIABILITIES	323,975	395,220
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	73,787	64,371
Temporarily restricted	2,466,322	2,689,368
Permanently restricted	717,982	717,982
TOTAL NET ASSETS	3,258,091	3,471,721
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$3,582,066	\$3,866,941

1. Data extracted from the audited financial statements of IIRR for the year ended 2009. The audited financial statements for 2009 and prior years are available by writing to IIRR.
2. Latest annual report filed with the Attorney General of the State of New York is available from IIRR or from the offices of the Attorney General of the State of New York, Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.
3. The Institute is exempt from Federal income taxes under Section 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and has been classified as an organization which is not a private foundation under Section 509 (a). The Institute qualifies as an organization to which contributions are subject to special limitation provisions under Section 170 (b) (1) (a) of the Code.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION
(A Nonprofit, Nonstock Organization)

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
(In U.S. Dollars)

	Years Ended December 31				
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total 2009	Total 2008
REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT					
Contributions/Grants:					
Foundations	\$ 12,954	\$1,354,520	\$ -	\$ 1,367,474	\$ 2,193,547
Governments	-	168,861	-	168,861	298,373
Individuals	93,456	96,310	-	189,766	182,860
Corporations	7,277	1,000	-	8,277	5,453
Workshops	377,069	-	-	377,069	42,308
Training Courses	358,554	-	-	358,554	270,188
Technical Assistance	198,155	-	-	198,155	472,862
Gain on changes in market value of investments	102,195	-	-	102,195	-
Use of Campus Facilities by development organizations	92,051	-	-	92,051	95,092
Study Programs	55,552	-	-	55,552	86,636
Publication Sales	13,067	-	-	13,067	21,039
Others	55,153	-	-	55,153	163,095
Net assets released from restrictions:					
Satisfaction of program restrictions	1,668,737	(1,668,737)	-	-	-
Expiration of time restrictions	175,000	(175,000)	-	-	-
	3,209,220	(223,046)	-	2,986,174	3,831,453
EXPENSES					
Program Services:					
Learning Community	1,830,227	-	-	1,830,227	2,234,841
Education and Training	518,537	-	-	518,537	872,948
Publication and Communication	321,067	-	-	321,067	201,221
	2,669,831	-	-	2,669,831	3,309,010
Supporting Services:					
Management and General	294,358	-	-	294,358	479,484
Fund Raising	107,954	-	-	107,954	100,387
	402,312	-	-	402,312	579,871
	3,072,143	-	-	3,072,143	3,888,881
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT OVER EXPENSES OF CONTINUING OPERATIONS					
	137,077	(223,046)	-	(85,969)	(57,428)
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT OVER EXPENSES OF DISCONTINUED OPERATIONS					
	-	-	-	-	-
Translation Gain (Loss)	(127,661)	-	-	(127,661)	433,367
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	64,371	2,689,368	717,982	3,471,721	3,962,516
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$ 73,787	\$2,466,322	\$ 717,982	\$3,258,091	\$3,471,721

Learning Community Program

This Program aims to: (1) enable people and their communities to effect meaningful change in their lives through research and learning processes; and, (2) generate knowledge about participatory human development through practical experience. Capacity building of people and their institutions is achieved at the community level through this program.

Education and Training Program

This Program aims to share knowledge to strengthen the capacities of learning communities, development practitioners and the international development community to promote participatory human development through training courses, workshops, study programs, conferences and other educational fora.

Publication and Communication Program

This Program aims to share knowledge to strengthen the capacities of learning communities, development practitioners and the international development community to promote participatory human development through the production, distribution and use of publication and communication materials produced and shared using participatory approaches.

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN 2009

OVERVIEW

In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as applied to not-for-profit corporations, IIRR showed a deficit of \$85,969 in 2009 before currency translation loss, as compared with a 2008 deficit of \$57,428. The lesser deficit in 2008 was attributable to substantial multi-year grants obtained and recorded during that year, for use in subsequent years. By using funds obtained in prior years, IIRR was able to implement its program activities in 2009. On an operating basis, IIRR recorded a deficit of \$51,170 in 2009, as compared with a deficit of \$170,619 in 2008.

Of total revenues, gains and other support (\$2,986,174) in 2009, \$1,734,378 (58%) consisted of contributions and grants, and \$1,251,796 (42%) consisted of earned income from training courses, technical assistance, workshops, study programs, use of campus facilities, publication sales and other earned income.

REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

Contributions and Grants

Total contributions and grants in 2009 were \$1,734,378, a decrease of \$945,855 (35%) from 2008, principally because of the receipt in 2008 of significant multi-year grants, as noted above. The most significant drop from 2008 was in funding from foundations and governments, while a slight increase was experienced in funding from individuals and corporations. Particularly notable was a grant from an anonymous donor (\$501,800) for the Pastoralist Education Program in Kenya and Ethiopia, which is scheduled to run from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010 and October 1, 2008 to September 30, 2009 respectively.

Training Courses, Technical Assistance, Workshops, Study Programs, Use of Campus Facilities and Other Earned Income

Aggregate income in these categories was \$1,251,796, an increase of \$100,576 (9%) from

2008. Substantial decreases in earned revenue from technical assistance and study programs were fully offset by the increases in workshops and training courses.

EXPENSES

Program Services

Program service expenses are classified in accordance with IIRR's current program components: the learning community program, the education and training program, and the publication and communication program. Aggregate expenses of program services were \$2,669,831 in 2009, a decrease of 19% over 2008. Expenses of the learning community program decreased by \$404,614 (18%), expenses for the education and training program decreased by \$354,411 (41%), and expenses for the publication and communication program increased by \$119,846 (60%). The increase in expenses for the publication and communication program was attributable primarily to projects involving workshops and other participatory events for which donor funds were provided.

Supporting Services

Aggregate expenses for supporting services were \$402,312, or 13% of total expenditures in 2009 as compared with \$579,871 (15%) in 2008.

LIQUIDITY AND CAPITAL RESOURCES

Cash at year-end was higher in 2009 as compared with 2008. The increase was largely attributable to decrease in contributions receivable. Total net assets were lower on December 31, 2009 as compared with the prior year, by 6%. Of total net assets at December 31, 2009, \$73,787 (2%) was unrestricted, \$2,466,322 (76%) was temporarily restricted, and \$717,982 (22%) was permanently restricted endowment funds. The temporarily restricted funds will become available for use in 2010 and subsequent years, upon compliance with donor restrictions and agreements.

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