

ABSTRACT

The participatory action research (PAR) project, conducted by the University of Nairobi, Kenya during 1989, sought to involve members of communities in its research activities. The preliminary studies that were carried out in Kabras and Mwingi areas were intended to help in devising a strategy that would help to bring about such envisaged involvement. This chapter outlines the strategy that was adopted and used by the project team in involving members of the community in project activities. The actual activities in which members of communities were involved are explained in detail. With education for self-reliance conceived as the major goal, the PAR project team decided to experiment with community education activities. Following the studies of Kabras and Mwingi areas, the project team decided to carry out two types of educational activities: a leaders' workshop, and village education activities. The workshop enabled the research team to get to know the leaders and to impart to them know-how and skills in participatory research, project management and adopting a people-orientation. Village education activities consisted of educational film shows to local people in a few selected villages and an educational tour. From these village educational activities, it was clear that villagers in Kabras Division were positively inclined toward improving their living conditions, especially where a genuine concern was shown to help them realize their potential.