

PILLARS UPDATE JUNE 2003

PILLARS Questionnaires

Thank you to everyone who responded to the questionnaire that was sent out with the last newsletter. We had some very encouraging and helpful feedback about how the guides are being used, and some practical suggestions as to how they could be improved.

Respondents were using the guides in some twenty-one different countries, with local community groups – youth groups, women's groups and adult literacy groups. They were also being used in the context of training workshops – training in leadership skills for pastors in Rwanda, in disaster preparedness for NGOs, CBOs and local government workers in Uganda and in preparing post-literacy materials for literacy workers based worldwide with the Summer Institute of Linguistics. In addition to the translations that have been carried out during PILLARS workshops or by Tearfund partners, the questionnaires showed that all or parts of several PILLARS guides have also been translated into another ten languages, including Kiswahili, Kinyarwanda and Thai. Future plans included using the guides as post-literacy materials, translating them into a further six languages and setting up training workshops in another five countries.

Several people commented that aspects of particular guides were not appropriate for their context; others suggested topics for new PILLARS guides. On the whole, the responses endorsed the importance of producing literature that is accessible to grassroots community groups and that promotes participation, group learning and change.

“The PILLARS guides are very useful in small group situations; especially for enlisting the participation of members of small groups that meet regularly. The Bible study and linkage to a topic/s is a real eye opener to discussion of God's original plan for us” *COPEA, Uganda.*

“All the reference books that we use on capacity building for group leaders are written in foreign languages ... Many trainers do not take into account of certain nuances when translating them into local languages, nor of the misunderstandings that can result and that can have a negative impact on the attitudes and behaviours of the farmers using them” *Solidarités paysannes, Union des Comores*

PILLARS Guides

The following guides are now available in English, with most also available in French, Spanish and Portuguese:

Building The Capacity Of Local Groups
Improving Food Security
Agro forestry
Credit and Loans for Small Businesses
Preparing For Disasters
Mobilising the community
Healthy Eating

Available Winter 2003:

Church and Development
Community response to HIV and AIDS

For further information about translations of the PILLARS guides, please contact us at the address below.

PILLARS Workshops

The PILLARS process, which consists of a series of training workshops for community workers, in which they learn how to use, translate and write new PILLARS guides, is currently being piloted by Tearfund in Myanmar, Ethiopia and shortly in Brazil.

The second PILLARS process began in **Myanmar** earlier this year, with participants from a further six language groups meeting in Yangon for a week's training in facilitation, translation, writing and information gathering skills.



In **Ethiopia**, the first PILLARS workshop took place in February, in Soddo, Wolaitta. At the beginning of May baseline surveys were conducted in local communities, to identify the need for written information in the Wolaitta language and to determine the communities' priorities and interests. This will guide the development of the PILLARS project in the region as the workshop participants begin to write new materials and to consider the impact of the information they produce and distribute in the months ahead.

A final workshop was held in **Burkina Faso**, where a new guide on HIV/AIDS was written in Mooré. The three Mooré guides produced during the PILLARS workshops will be presented to NGOs,

local government staff and church leaders at an official launch in October.

In India, a facilitation skills workshop took place in February, with a view to equipping participants to use the guides in Hindi to stimulate participation, group learning and transformation. An accompanying workbook will shortly be available to all those who are using PILLARS guides or who are wanting to offer training in facilitation and participatory methodologies for work in other related projects.

In **Nigeria**, the first two guides were also published in the Yoruba language.

Over the next few months workshops will be held in **Brazil** with a number of Christian mission agencies and NGOs working with indigenous people groups in the north and northeast of the country.

Workshops are also to take place in the **CAR**, where, against a background of political unrest, conflict, economic instability, inadequate medical services and illiteracy, Tearfund partner ACATBA (Association Centrafricaine pour la Traduction de la Bible et Alphabétisation) has been helping local churches to set up literacy classes. It has found that those it has trained have been asking wider questions around how their lives and livelihoods can be improved. ACATBA made the following response, using the PILLARS guides...

“ACATBA sent a team to some of the villages in the eastern part of the country, where it conducted a community survey to try to determine where people needed help. The team used a method described in Tearfund's PILLARS guide *Building the capacity of local groups*, called “the Five Finger Method”. The questions “What, how, who, where, and when” helped the communities identify their needs and to think through how they

could start to address them. High child and maternal mortality rates were the two main problems identified. Following this survey one community decided to construct a simple building in which mothers could give birth to babies in clean and safe conditions. After the maternity unit was built and the birth attendant finished her training, the local committee was trained in management. They learned how to get this maternity unit running, how the finances should be kept and what responsibility each member of the committee had. For this training we again used the PILLARS guide *Building the capacity of local groups*. We used it in French although this is not the ideal language to be used in remote areas.

This community became an example to other communities, and only six months after the inauguration of this first maternity unit we were able to open another one, seventy kilometres away. Two more communities followed and two more maternity units were built. ACATBA helped them to arrange training possibilities for their traditional midwives, a first medical supply and training for their local committee. We are pleased to see how these local initiatives are bearing fruit. As a next step we are planning the first PILLARS training course in order to equip and encourage local people to translate their own material into their local language, which can then be used as educational and training material” *Hanni Grunig, SIL CAR*

Please get in touch...

...with any further comments you have about our resources and plans that you have to integrate them into your work. We would also be grateful for your contributions to these newsletters – for any stories of how you are using the guides or short articles on subjects such

as information sharing, local language and culture or literacy and development.

We will shortly be setting up a more formal network, in the form of a web based discussion group, which will enable you to share learning with other PILLARS practitioners by contributing questions and comments, and making those available to others, without the formal intervention of Tearfund! Details to follow...

You can also find more information about PILLARS on our website, www.tilz.info, and can order PILLARS resources from us at the following address:

**Resources Development PDT,
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100 Church Road
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