

# Participatory Action Research (PAR)

- 1 Contexts .. rationale for PAR
- 2 What is PAR
- 3 How to do PAR
- 4 PAR for ESD values & principles in PAR
- 5 PAR for ESD by teachers – on what? with whom? how to do it?

# Context and Rational

- 1 Critique of development model** – continuing oppression of large majority
  - top – down .. no participation
  - not effective
- 2 Critique of classical conventional social science research** (positivist research paradigm)
  - value neutrality .. objectivity
  - elitist (control of techs, use of findings, control of knowl) .. disempowering
  - extractive .. exploitative .. alienating .. marginalised
  - fail to effect change, ameliorate conditions
- 3 Producing really useful knowledge for direct use by the ‘researched’**

# What is PAR

research with, not research on

Research that brings together researchers and researched so that they can work together to identify problems they face, facilitate them to research and create solutions to these problems and to improve conditions in the community

Methodology for alternative system of knowledge production – not set of tools, techniques and methods

**research + participation + action = change**  
**process of knowing and acting**

# Characteristics of PAR

- people-centred .. participation & dec-making, popular/people's knowledge
- res process is coll & locally based: 3 interrelated process – coll investigation, coll analysis, collective action
- Objects/subjects of research also become researchers – involvement of stakeholders
- Own/ppl's exps provides data for study
- Research topic impt to the researched – defn by need for action
- Researched gain knowledge fr research – creates knowl not for sake of knowl alone
- Action arising fr knowledge gained in research makes a diff, of relevance and benefit the researched
- Educative exp for all
- Exp of empowerment by researched, also by researcher

# What is PAR

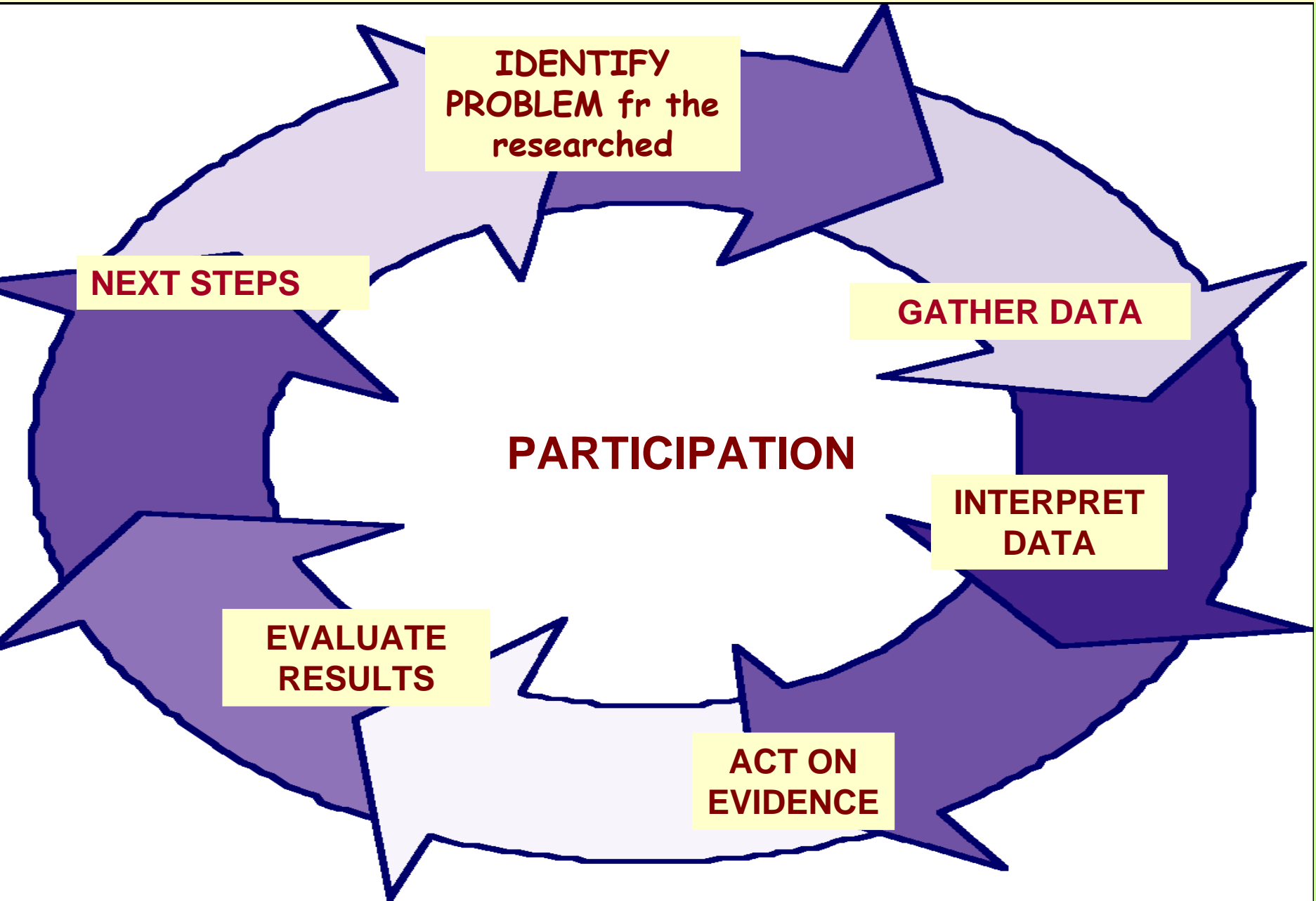
research as empowerment process, as praxis creating alternatives

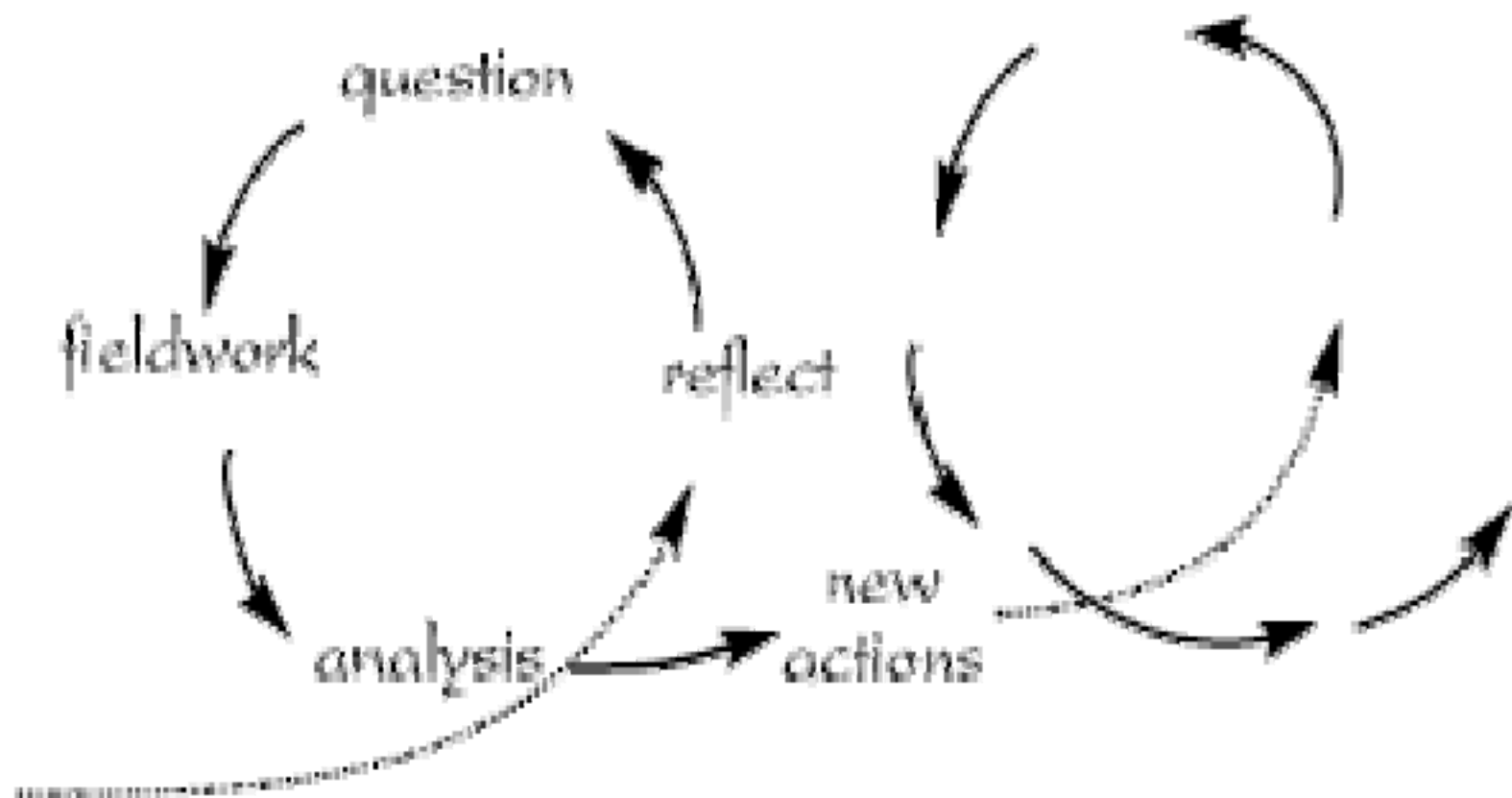
- 1 objectives
- 2 methodology .. cyclical process – that is value based
- 3 roles and relationships of researcher
- 4 reflective and reflexive/reflexivity

# Process

- Participatory, cyclical and interactive
- learning & edu process promoting reflection and critical analysis of own reality and circumstances
- Collective process of investigation, reflection, planning and action
- Ongoing process of edu and learning
- Taking action and problem solving

# CYCLICAL .. INTERACTIVE





**Fig C. Cyclical Research Process**

# How PAR is different fr conventional research

- Bld community partnerships that are sustained throughout the research
- Peoples empowerment, not researcher's benefits .. build skills, capacities etc
- Recognise the knowledge and capacities of the researched
- Bring direct action needed
- Sharing power

# Contributions of PAR

- Valuing pple's knowledge
- Refining capacities of ordinary people
- Appropriating knowledge
- Develop of knowledge appropriate to people's needs
- People's liberation

# ESD values/principles in PAR

- value based
- active participation  
partnership
- democratic .. Inclusive
- affirming and build on  
people's knowledge,  
capacities, experience
- diversity
- multi –interdisciplinary
- locally relevant
- liberation .. sustainable  
devt

# Different varieties of PAR

- **Community based PAR**
  - reference team as voice of community among researchers
- **Feminist PAR**
  - power imbalances, power relations
  - dealing with silences
  - Emotional well-being
- **Participatory evaluation .. empowerment evaluation**

# Challenges of PAR

- time consuming
- no supportive environment
- no pre-set plan – can create insecurity
- effects of ‘rocking’ status quo
- reflection and reflexivity – uncomfortable for traditional researchers
- building consensus while retaining diversity
- transforming conflicts