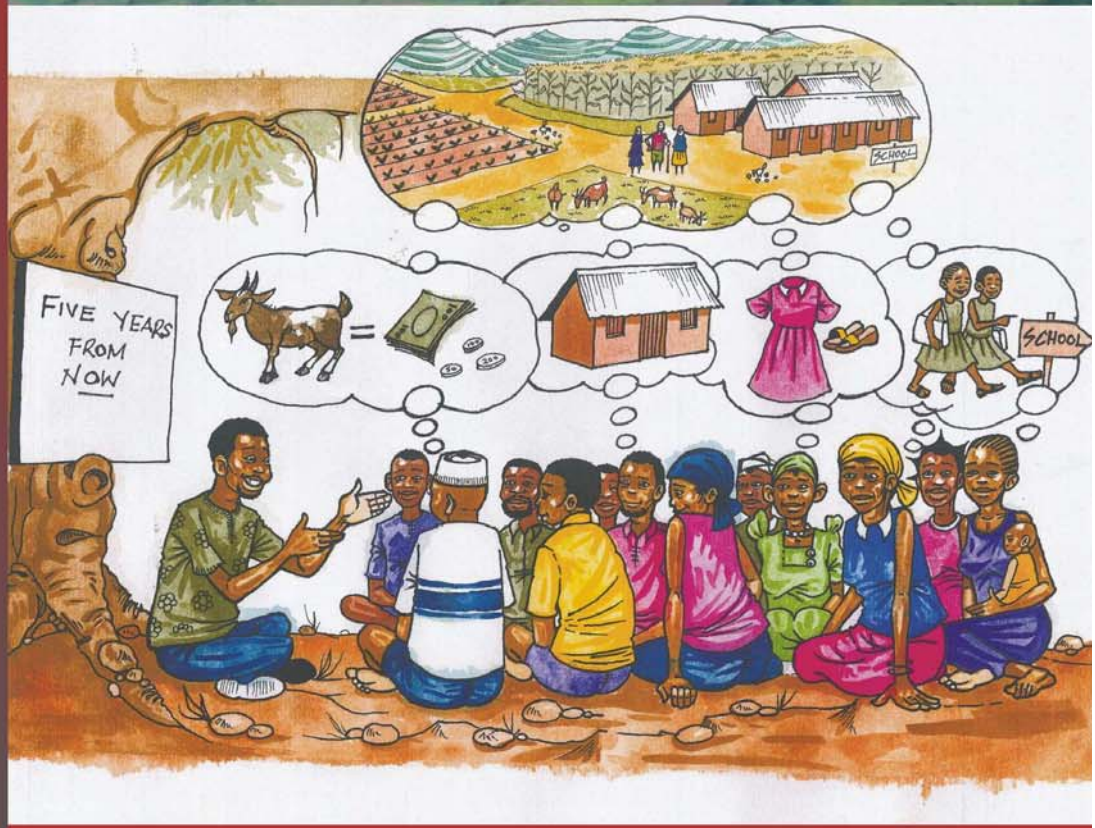
Enabling Rural Innovation in Africa

ERI Guide 1

The Power of Visioning

A Handbook for Facilitating the Development of Community Action Plans



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About CIAT

The International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT, its Spanish acronym) is a not-for-profit organisation that conducts socially and environmentally progressive research aimed at reducing hunger and poverty and preserving natural resources in developing countries. CIAT is one of the 15 Future Harvest Centres that make up the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) www.cgiar.org. Sustainable livelihoods constitute the core of CIAT's vision. CIAT's niche in achieving sustainable rural livelihoods consists of generating knowledge and technologies and innovations that can ultimately help the poor attain three critical conditions: competitive agriculture, agro-ecosystem health, and rural innovation

The **African Highlands Initiative (AHI)** is a regional research program that brings together national and international research expertise, local government representatives, and development partners that strongly share a commitment to work with local communities to improve their livelihoods while reversing natural resource degradation. AHI is a programme of the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa (ASARECA) and is hosted by the World Agro-forestry Centre (ICRAF) as one of the CGIAR's eco-regional programme. AHI's core role is to develop and integrate methods, practices, policies and approaches for improving local communities and support organisations to better manage natural resources.

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The Power of Visioning

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAR	After Action Review
AHI	Africa Highlands Eco-regional Programme.
Ag&NRM	Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
CAP	Community Action Plan
CBO	Community-based Organisations
CDF	Community Development Facilitator.
CIAT	International Centre for Tropical Agriculture.
CV	Community Visioning
DFC	Desired Future Conditions
DFID	Department for International Development.
ERI	Enabling Rural Innovation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPR	Farmer Participatory Research
GSA	Gender and Stakeholder Analysis
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agro-forestry (World Agro-forestry Centre)
IMRAD	Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussions
NGO	Non Governmental organisations
NRM	Natural Resources Management.
NRSP	Natural Resources Systems Programme (of DFID).
PD	Participatory Diagnosis
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
R&D	Research and Development
R□D	Research for Development.
SARAR	Self-esteem: Associative strength: Resourcefulness: Action planning: Responsibility:
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Analysis
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Acknowledgements

This Handbook is part of a series of Enabling Rural Innovation (ERI) field guides that aim at disseminating methodologies, tools, and approaches for empowering rural communities and their service providers to generate and access knowledge, innovations, and technologies through experimentation, and to strengthen their organisational capacity to better manage their resources (human, social, financial, physical, and natural).

Most of the materials used in this handbook are drawn from various interactions with farmers, agricultural scientists and development professionals and other rural service providers in eastern and southern Africa. We are grateful to the hundreds of male and female farmers who participated with great enthusiasm and contributed a wealth of knowledge in the development of this Handbook.

We are grateful to several colleagues who participated with enthusiasm in field-testing, training and actual practice of Community Visioning in the pilot learning sites over the last three years. Their enthusiasm, active participation, and creative contributions in the different workshops and reflection meetings have been instrumental in shaping this Handbook. We thank our colleagues in the "ERI" team for their intellectual support and friendship. Susan Kaaria, Robert Delve, Emimah Njuki, Rupert Best, Shaun Ferris, and Rick Kamugisha contributed in various ways, through discussions, planning meetings, training workshops and other capacity building events, to different parts of this handbook.

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Pascal Sanginga and Colletah Chitsike

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1. Introduction

1.1. Why this Handbook?

"Demand-driven", "community-based", "farmer-led", "user-oriented", "stakeholder participation", "farmers' empowerment", etc. are some of the recent rhetoric in agricultural research, development, policy and practice. Although there are outstanding cases of good practice, most agricultural and natural resources management (Ag&NRM) research and development professionals still lack the necessary skills, methods, tools and approaches for making agricultural research and development truly demand-driven, community-based, farmer led, empowering and participatory.

The purpose of this Handbook is to improve the practice and use of participatory approaches for engaging with rural communities and local stakeholders in defining their collective visions and committing to action for achieving their visions and improving their livelihoods in a sustainable manner.
This Handbook is based on filed experience and provides a rich source of materials, tools and skills for stimulating positive change in rural communities and facilitating farmers and communities to develop realistic action plans based on their collective visions of desired future conditions.

1.2. Who can use this Handbook

This Handbook is primarily intended for research and community development professionals who work with rural communities to improve their livelihoods using participatory approaches. These include community development workers, extension officers, Ag& NRM researchers, rural service providers, local government planners and policy makers, as well as leaders of farmers' associations. The Handbook will also provide essential materials for development trainers, University lecturers and students of Ag&NRM, governance and policy, environment and rural development.

Although the handbook focuses on agricultural and natural resources management, it is designed to be relevant to most types or integrated rural development interventions.

1.3. How to use this Handbook?

The Handbook can be used in five different ways:

- As a **field guide**: to systematize the practical aspects of Community Visioning (CV), ensuring participation and strengthening of skills level in facilitating community action planning (CAP);
- As a **resource book** and reference material: to describe and illustrate basic methods and tools for facilitating CV and CAP with practical examples from participatory action research in eastern and southern Africa. It can help you select appropriate tools for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, analysis and reporting of participatory activities;
- As a **training guide:** that can be used in training workshops and courses on participatory approaches to familiarize participants with basic tools, skills and principles for designing and implementing a participatory process of community planning;
- As a **self learning manual:** it consists of a combination and sequencing of participatory methods and tools for enhancing a shared understanding and learning between local communities and the R&D team to enable rural communities and their development partners to identify their opportunities and constraints, and plan together appropriate interventions for enabling rural innovations.
- As a **theoretical guide:** The Handbook provides a better understanding of the key concepts, principles, tools, methodologies, and practical guidelines to rethink and systematise current approaches by integrating more innovative participatory approaches and process-oriented methodologies and for engaging with rural communities to plan agricultural and development projects.

1.4. How can this Handbook help you?

This Handbook can help you to:

√ Better plan and conduct participatory planning in Ag&NRM and sustainable development initiatives;

√ Strengthen community capacity and empower farmers and rural communities to value the best of what they have, and to seek more of it;

- √ Establish dialogue with rural communities and stimulate self-awareness and collective learning and analysis of livelihood assets, opportunities, strategies and outcomes;
- √ Facilitate the development of community action plans based on desired future conditions and livelihood opportunities;
- √ Create effective partnerships and link farmers to other rural service providers;
- √ Better understand the theoretical bases, concepts, principles, approaches and methods for working with rural communities to facilitate the development of community action plans
- √ Systematise reporting, analysis and documentation of your community activities;

1.5. Origin of this Handbook

The Handbook is grounded in progressive field experiences, results and lessons accumulated in the implementation of two related participatory action research projects: "Strengthening Social Capital for improving policies and decision making in NRM"[1] and "Enabling Rural Innovation in Africa"[2].

"***Strengthening Social Capital*** " project aimed at developing mechanisms and processes for engaging small-scale farmers and rural communities directly in the articulation of their community plans and in the formulation and implementation of community byelaws that promote adaptation and use of improved NRM practices. This participatory policy action research project was implemented in Kabale district, Uganda from 2001 to 2005 and concentrated on four key elements:

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[1] For details see Sanginga, Marin and Kamugisha, 2005. Strengthening Social Capital for improving policies and decision making in NRM. Final Technical Report to the Natural Resources Systems Programme of the Department for International Development. www.nrsp.co.uk

[2] For details visit www.ciat.cgiar.org/africa or see **Sanginga, P.,** C., Kaaria, S., Chitsike, R. Best, Robert Delve, Roger Kirkby (200□). Enabling rural innovation in Africa: An Approach for Integrating farmer participatory research and participatory market research to build the agricultural assets of rural poor. *Uganda Journal of Agricultural Sciences* 9 (1): 9□2-957 or visit http://www.coard.co.uk/section09.php http://www.naro.go.ug/Events/NARO Conference/conference.html

(i) facilitating Community Visioning and action planning,

(ii) stimulating participatory policy analysis,

(iii) catalyzing policy dialogue and linking bottom-up processes to higher level policy processes,

(iv) supporting policy action and policy process management.

"Enabling Rural Innovation" (ERI) in Africa is a multi-stakeholder research for development partnership that is pioneering innovative participatory approaches and methodologies for empowering rural communities to make informed decisions and creating their capacity to:

(v) identify market opportunities and develop profitable and sustainable enterprises;

(vi) generate and access information, knowledge and technology in support of their productive activities, and;

(vii) strengthen their organisational capacity to better manage their resources (human, social, financial, natural) and offer them prospects of an upward spiral out of poverty.

ERI is being implemented in pilot learning sites in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda; and is expanding to several other countries in central and southern Africa.

The Handbook also results from a compilation of materials used in several training workshops and other capacity building events with a number of research and development partners. A constant request during these workshops and from partners has been to avail an easy to use yet comprehensive handbook that can capture the wealth of experience of methods to be used as resource materials for those who have attended training workshops, but also as a self-learning field guide for other professionals who are working with rural communities.

This Handbook is by no means a blue print or standard way of conducting participatory diagnosis or community action planning. You are rather encouraged to adapt this process to suit your needs, and also create your own process and tools. Community Visioning as well as this Handbook remain work in progress, and as such we would be most

grateful to receive your comments and suggestions for the improvement of the approach.

1.6. Organization of the Handbook

This Handbook is divided into ten chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the Handbook, its purpose, intended users and uses, origins and structure.

Chapter 2 defines the key concepts and principles of Community Visioning as a novel approach for participatory diagnosis and participatory planning. It also introduces the key stages of Community Visioning and action planning.

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical bases from which the concepts and methods of CV are drawn. These are: the sustainable livelihood framework, appreciative inquiry, the new professionalism, and

Chapter 4 discusses the basic methods for CV, and gives some hints and tips on selecting amongst a range of participatory methods, and for combining, sequencing and triangulating different methods and tools.

Chapter 5 describes "before you start" i.e. the process of identifying, selecting and building partnerships and selecting communities. It provides criteria for selecting communities to work with and describes a process of entering the community and mobilizing farmers and groups. It also focuses on the essentials for team planning and preparations before going to the field.

Chapter 6 goes into details to describe the process and tools for establishing dialogue It is the "dream stage" for defining community visions of success through a number of participatory exercises such as the River code" for stimulating self-awareness and positive energies for change within the community to value the best of what is, and to seek more of it.

Chapter 7 describes the process and presents some useful participatory tools for stimulating collective learning and analysis of community livelihood assets. Some of these tools are the usual PRA tools, but they focus more on learning and analysis through an empowering process rather than extracting and collecting information.

Chapter 8 describes the process of formulating community action plans and long-term objectives. It further discusses the process of setting strategic directions for negotiating change, prioritizing actions, and creating structures for the formulation and implementation of community visions and action plans

Chapter 9 encourages the team to reflect on the CV process to draw relevant lessons and implications for their work. The chapter discusses some critical ingredients for qualitative analysis and gives practical hints for reporting and presenting the results to different stakeholder groups.

Chapter 10 concludes the Handbook by presenting a summary of the key issues and their implications for Ag&NRM research and development, and outlines the possible next steps after CV and CAP within the ERI framework. These include participatory market research, participatory technology development, managing group dynamics and group development processes, and participatory monitoring and evaluation.

2. Key principles and Concepts of Community Visioning

2.1 What is New about Community Visioning?

The past two decades have seen increasing attention to participatory approaches as a means of engaging with local communities and other stakeholders to make development interventions more effective, create a sense of ownership and ensure equity and sustainability of development interventions. However, until recently most agricultural and rural development projects have routinely relied on participatory rural appraisal (PRA) exercise to identify problems and constraints in the farming system, and as an entry point into communities.

Recently, PRA has come under criticism for being superficial, extractive, transitory, unable to initiate change and to build local capacities[3]. A frequent problem with PRA is the emphasis on the tools and use of a toolbox, resulting in the collection of a lot of information, but neglecting the importance of collective learning and action, analyzing and reflecting on the usefulness of the information for the local community to facilitate transformational processes.

This handbook proposes a different approach, a different way of thinking about the use of PRA, which traditionally focuses on extracting information from people to identify their problems and constraints. This novel approach termed Community Visioning (CV) is a highly interactive process for establishing dialogue and engaging with farmers to identify opportunities and facilitate community action planning. It is a vehicle for creating awareness, learning about change, facilitating communities or groups to develop their visions of desired future conditions and for developing specific action plans and commitments to action.

The main thrust of visioning is that rural communities are endowed with resources and assets that establish their capabilities and can be turned into

[3] Cook, B. and Kothari, U. 2001. *Participation: The New Tyranny*? London: Zed Books.

opportunities for improving their livelihoods. It is an innovative way of engaging with rural communities and creating their capacity and ability to go beyond familiar ways of thinking, challenge the *status quo* and common assumptions and routines to focus on real possibilities of what the community or group is capable of achieving toward a high purpose to transform systems.

2.2 What is Community Visioning?

Community Visioning is a capacity building process that identifies and builds collective capacity and competence of local communities through dialogue that creates positive images and leads to commitment to action. Visioning is based on the three principles below:

- Every community or organisation seeks out the positive, life-giving forces and appreciates the "best of what is." CV is based on the assumption that you can facilitate change by paying attention to the opportunities that people may exploit, rather than focusing on problems and constraints.

Box 1: What is a Vision?

"A vision is our deepest expression of what we want. It is a desirabl state, an expression of optimism of the preferred future, of how we would like (ur lives to be"

- √ A vision is realistic, credible, attractive statement regarding the fut re
- √ It is an articulation of a destination toward which a community/orga nisation should aim.
- √ A future that in important ways is better, more successful, and mor desirable than the present.
- √ It is a sign post pointing the way for all who need to understand wh at the community is and where it intends to go.
- √ It is a wake up call to every one involved that fundamental change s needed and is on the way.
- √ It is a dream, an agreed goal, future.
- √ A vision is where tomorrow begins, for it expresses what you and (thers who share the vision will be working hard to create.
- √ A vision inspires enthusiasm and commitment, clarifies purpose ar d direction.
- √ Visions provide agendas that create focus and hold out hope of a l etter tomorrow.

- Communities are capable of becoming more than they are, and they can learn how to guide their own evolution -- bold dreams of "what might be."
- Visions create a renewal of group energy, hope, motivation and commitment; and establish climate of continual learning & inquiry: "When you focus on what works and you dream of the possibilities, it's very inspiring to people".

2.3 Key principles of Community Visioning

The main advantage of CV is its focus on facilitating an internal drive for change. It helps farmers and rural communities to realize the potential for change, to be cognizant and understand the forces that can facilitate or constrain change, and engage their creative capacities in planning and defining strategies for seizing opportunities and dealing with potential challenges.

Therefore Community Visioning requires changes in basic orientation of PRA:

- From problem-focused to opportunity-asset based approach
- From tool-box approach, to process-based, results-based approach
- From “hits and runs” to long term view, long term partnership
- From functional-extractive participation to empowering and learning processes

An important principle of this approach is that it starts with an analysis of strengths, assets and opportunities, rather than problems and constraints, and builds on these opportunities to develop community commitment to action. It develops collaborative and collective competence through dialogues, and creates positive images or a vision that leads to commitment to action.

As such, Community Visioning is based on the principle of fostering and strengthening the following five attributes[4]:

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[4] Rietbergen-McCracken, and Narayan, D. 1998. Participation and Social Assessment. Tools and techniques. Washington DC, The World Bank.

- √ Self-esteem: a sense of self-worth as a community, group, organization or person as a valuable resource for development
- √ Associative strength: the capacity to define and work toward a common vision through mutual respect, trust and collaborative effort
- √ Resourcefulness: the capacity to visualize new solutions to problems, and the willingness to take risks
- √ Action planning: combining critical thinking and creativity to come up with new, effective and reality-based plans in which each participant has a useful and fulfilling role
- √ Responsibility: for follow-through until the commitments made are fully discharged and the vision of benefits achieved.

Visioning is therefore a process of thinking, seeing and acting for purposeful positive change in communities by concentrating attention and efforts to what people can realize, the opportunities they can develop, and their visions of the future rather than focusing on problems, constraints and needs.

An important principle of this approach is that it starts with an analysis of strengths or opportunities, rather than needs, problems or constraints. It implies a recognition of community's inherent potential, whether this derives from their strong social networks, their access to physical resources and infrastructure, their ability to use these opportunities to achieve better livelihood outcomes. It is therefore different from a problem solving approach.

Visioning is based on the principle that every community or organisation seeks out the positive, life-giving forces to achieve the best of their dreams. It is a cooperative search for the strengths, passions and life-giving forces that are found within every system and that hold potential for inspired, positive change.

2.4 Four Stages of Community Visioning

The actual practice of CV process has the following four main phases:

- √ The first stage focuses on establishing dialogue with communities for stimulating self-awareness for change and valuing and appreciating the best of what is.

- √ The second phase "Facilitating Community Visioning" is about defining the community vision of desired future conditions, dreaming for intentional change.
- √ The third phase "Collective learning and analysis of livelihood assets uses a range of participatory tools to analyze community assets and opportunities that can be combine and used towards the achievement of the vision.
- √ The fourth phase "Action planning' set strategic directions, for negotiating change, prioritizing the elements and creating the structures for the development and implementation of community action plans.

3. Theoretical bases for Community Visioning

This section suggests a number of key principles underlying CV, and describes some theoretical frameworks that provide a conceptual basis for CV. Visioning is based on four interrelated bodies of literature and conceptual frameworks. These are:

1. The Sustainable Livelihood Approach
2. Appreciative Inquiry
3. The New Professionalism: Reversals in Learning
4. Gender and Stakeholder Analysis

3.1 The Sustainable Livelihood Approach[5]

Community Visioning fits well with the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA), which is increasingly being adopted by most agricultural, and rural development programmes and interventions. The SLA presents the main factors that affect people's livelihoods, and typical relationships between these. It provides a way of thinking about rural community livelihoods that will stimulate analysis and reflection among the rural people. It attempts to gain a realistic understanding of what shapes people's livelihoods and how the various influencing factors can be adjusted so that, taken together, they produce more beneficial livelihood outcomes. A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living.

The livelihoods approach attempts to identify the promising opportunities open to people and the most pressing constraints faced by them. It builds upon people's own definitions of opportunities and constraints, and it then supports people to address/realise them. Using an SLA approach enables communities to define their desired livelihood outcomes and define strategies they can use to build their livelihood assets, and opportunities for achieving better livelihood outcomes.

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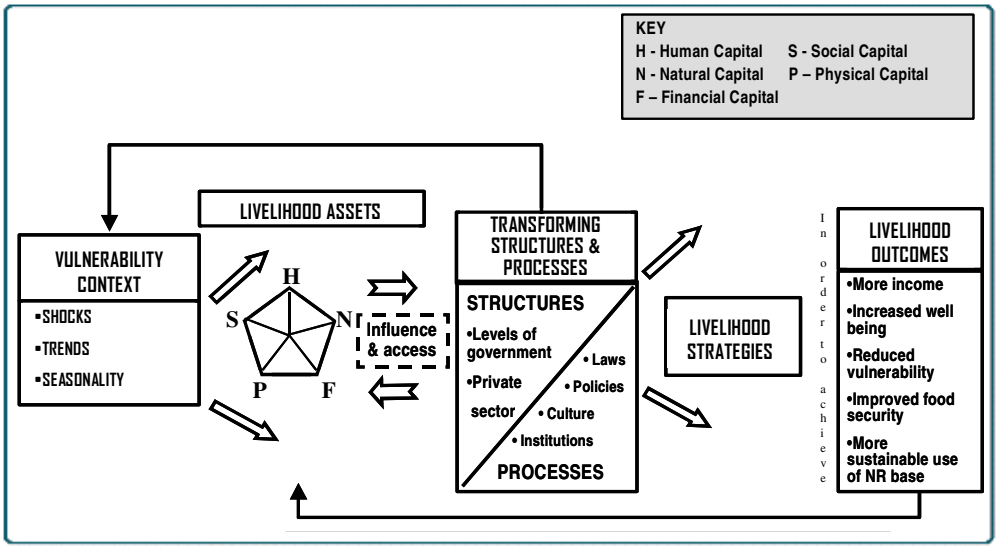
[5] Carney, D (1998), Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make? Department for International Development, London.

Visioning is an asset-based approach that helps local communities to define their desired livelihood outcomes, and identify opportunities and assets they can exploit and developing effective strategies for reducing or minimizing vulnerability.

Tool 1: The Sustainable Livelihood Framework

The SLA is a useful framework that can help you plan and develop a checklist of issues for a better understanding of livelihood assets, opportunities and strategies for achieving better livelihood outcomes in rural communities.

Figure 1: The Sustainable Livelihood Framework



Source: Carney, D (1998) Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What contribution can we make? Department for International Development, London.

Key elements of the SLA framework include:

1. **Livelihood assets:** Include what people have and can use to survive and make a living. The asset pentagon that lies at the heart of livelihoods analysis shows resources, which people use in their livelihood strategies. These are the basic building blocks upon which households and communities are able to engage in productive activities and social relations. Livelihood assets comprise five different types of capital:

- *Human capital* - Skills, knowledge, ability to work, health - necessary to make use of any other types of capital.
- *Social capital* - Social resources determined by relationships with others. Networks and connectedness, membership of groups, relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchange, cooperation, collective action and access to wider social institutions.
- *Natural capital:* Quantity and quality of the natural resource base available to people - land, forests, livestock, water, rainfall, aquatic resources, biodiversity, air quality etc.
- *Physical capital:* productive assets, such as housing, tools, infrastructure, water supplies, schools, social amenities whose ownership can contribute to improving livelihoods or income
- *Financial capital:* consists of cash, savings, loans and gifts, remittances or other financial instruments.

2. **Livelihood Strategies:** Refer to how people combine and use their assets to make a living. The SL approach seeks to develop an understanding of the factors behind people's choice of a livelihood strategy, to reinforce the positive aspects and to alleviate the constraints or negative influences. Diversity of strategies between individuals and households, different social groups, and communities should be recognized and explored.

3. **Policies, institutions and processes**: These are both public (political, legislative, governmental etc.) and private (commercial, civil, NGOs etc.) organizations and institutions that exist in the community and can be used to transform processes, such as policies, in order to bring about change. It is through partnership with organizations and institutions, such as government, commercial or civil society institutions that rural communities can achieve and sustain better livelihoods.

4. **Livelihood outcomes:** Are the results of livelihood strategies, and their effects on the different dimensions of poverty, well-being, vulnerability, food security, income, sustainable natural resources (NR) use, and other outcomes. It is important to explore people's livelihood goals and preferred outcomes, and understand the trade offs between immediate livelihood gains and longer-term benefits.

5. **Vulnerability Context:** These are external factors that make people vulnerable by influencing levels of assets and how assets can be used. They include:

    - Trends – demographic trends; migration, changes in the natural resource base, recurring seasonal changes in resources, economy, governance, technology.
    - Shocks - illness, natural disaster, economy, conflict, crop / livestock pests & diseases.
    - Seasons – recurring seasonal changes; climate change, production, health, employment.

Vulnerability is closely linked to capital assets as the capacity to deal with risks and/ or to exploit opportunities to resist and recover from shocks and other negative aspects depends on the assets that a household or community can use.

3.2 Appreciative Inquiry[6]

Traditionally, PRA usually focuses on identifying constraints and problems and helping communities to solve their problems. A key principle of Community Visioning is to start with the positive through an appreciative inquiry process.

Appreciative inquiry is a positive approach to change that focuses on the collective wisdom, knowledge, strategies, attitudes, skills, and capabilities of the organization at its best. It is a strategy for intentional change, a process of collaborative inquiry, based on interviews and affirmative questioning, that collects and celebrates "good news stories" of an organization, community, or system; these stories serve to enhance cultural identity, spirit and vision.

The main assumptions of appreciative inquiry are:

- √ In every society, community, organisation or group, there is something that works.

[6] Whitney, D. and Trosten-Bloom, A. 2003. The Power of Appreciative Inquiry: A practical Guide to Positive Change. San Francisco: Berret-Koehler Publishers, Inc. http://www.new-paradigm.co.uk/Appreciative.htm

- √ What we focus on becomes our reality.
- √ Reality is created in the moment and there are multiple realities.
- √ The act of asking questions of a group, community or organisation influences the group in some ways.
- √ People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) where they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
- √ If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past
- √ It is important to value differences.
- √ The language we use creates our reality.

Tool 2: Appreciative Inquiry

Although developed and frequently applied in organisational development, Appreciative Inquiry has considerable relevance to community development. When used for community development, it is often called "Asset-based approach", or appreciative planning and action.

Appreciative inquiry uses a "□D"[7] model that guides members of a community through a cycle of activities with four major phases:

- √ Discover: Appreciating & Valuing the Best of "What Is".
- √ Dream: envisioning positive possibilities and processes that would work perfectly all the time. Envisioning "What Might Be"
- √ Design: creating the structures, processes and relationships that will support the dream and prioritizing the elements of perfect processes. Designing "What Should Be
- √ Delivery "what will be"— developing a plan for implementation of "What Will Be"

[7] This □D model is also known as "□ I" model with Inquire; Imagine; Innovate and Implement

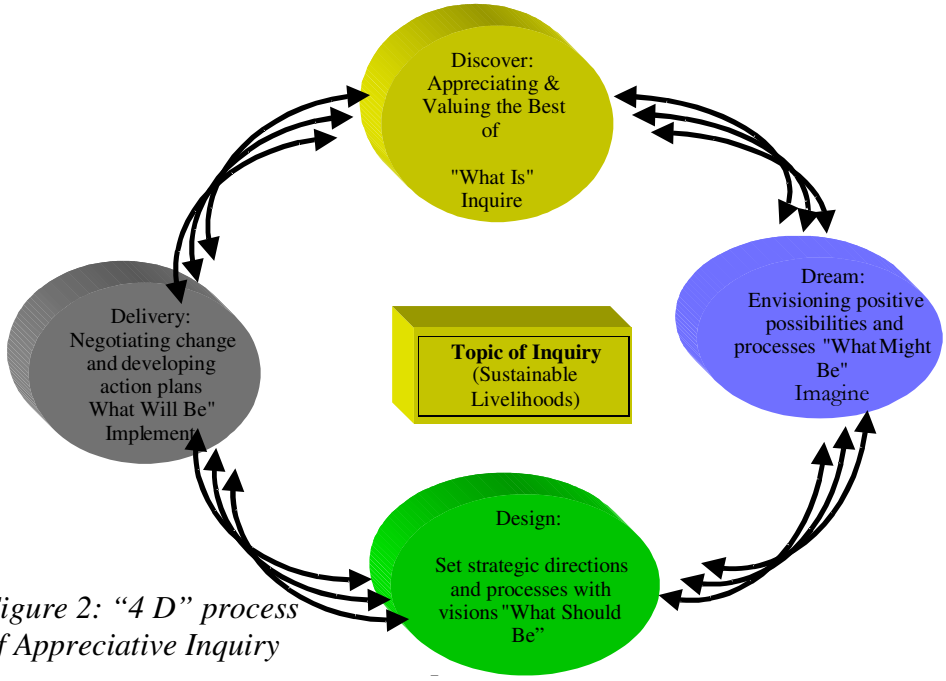


Figure 2: "4 D" process of Appreciative Inquiry

As a change process, Appreciative Inquiry involves "tracking and fanning"[8]. Tracking is a state of mind where one is constantly looking for what one wants more of. It begins with the assumption that whatever one wants more of already exists, even in small amounts. Fanning is any action that amplifies, encourages and helps you to get more of whatever you are looking for. Appreciative Inquiry creates changes by focusing attention on things that are working and amplifying them through fanning. It requires a change of attitude and reversals in learning.

3.3 Gender and Stakeholder Analysis (GSA)

Given the different roles that women and men play in agricultural production in much of Africa, and considering the growing recognition of feminisation of poverty, it is increasingly imperative that a high priority and visibility be given to strengthening and consolidating appropriate use of gender analysis in community development.

Awareness of gender issues has significantly progressed. However, gender analysis remains to be fully incorporated into agricultural research

[8] Bushe, G. Five theories of change embedded in appreciative inquiry. Htpp//: www.new-paradigm.co.uk/appreciative.htm

and development interventions. The tendency has often been to count the number of women and men and to desegregate data by sex of farmers. Gender analysis moves beyond head-counting or sex segregation of populations, towards a more systematic social analysis of the roles, responsibilities, constraints and opportunities as well as relationships between men and women, and between different categories of women, in relation to agricultural production.

However, too often even PRA have lacked an awareness of gender and gender differences. There are several obstacles to participatory approaches addressing gender exist and include:

- PRA methods are in themselves largely gender neutral. This is in part due to PRA's tendency to look for consensus and agreement within the target group, based on the often mistaken idea that a certain level of cohesiveness and common interests will be found within a community.
- PRA tools tend to focus on the 'communities' and yet communities are not homogenous entities with monolithic interests: *"Gender is hidden [in participatory research] in seemingly inclusive terms: 'the people', "farmers", beneficiaries or simply 'the community'. It was only when comparing projects that it became clear that 'the community' was all too often the male community* [9]
- In many cases, development professionals are often mainly men, who were not generally exposed to gender analysis, making communication with women culturally difficult in many areas.
- The association with a western feminist agenda which portray women as victim of men's oppression and exploitation, and therefore focus on conflicts rather than cooperation has exacerbated the unpopularity of tackling structural change in gender relations.

In order to be realistic, CV process must ensure that the distinct visions, aspirations, expectations, resources and opportunities, roles and responsibilities of men and women, and other relevant stakeholder groups are analysed and addressed.

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[9] Akerkar, Supriya (2001) *Gender and Participation: Overview Report*, Institute of Development Studies.

There exists a variety of frameworks for gender analysis in agriculture which have been shown to be useful in designing, planning and evaluating agricultural research and development initiatives[10].

Box 2: Key questions for gender analysis

Three sets of questions are central to gender analysis, namely:

i. Who does what, when and where? This covers crop-spe cific tasks and operations, farm enterprises and off-farm, non farm and household maintenance activities that compete for, or co nplement, the management of in-crop and post-harvest seed, oots and tubers.

ii. Who has access to or control over resources? Cont ol means having decision-making authority concerning a resource.

iii. Who benefits? What are the incentives and disinc ntives for managing resources? For making changes? The quest on of who benefits is closely related to roles and responsibilities, as well as to issues of access and control.

The following questions from Chambers's *Fun with 21*, can help you pay attention to gender and other aspects of social differentiation:

- What are the significant 'axes of difference' in the community or group? Gender? Age? Wealth? Social, ethnic or religious group? Education? Or what? How do these combine?
- Who are the uppers? Males? Older people? The relatively wealthy? Those of high social, ethnic or religious status? The educated?
- Who are the lowers? Women? Children? The very old? The poor? Those of low social, ethnic or religious status? The disabled? The uneducated?

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[10] For more details See Feldstein, H. S. and Poats, S. V., 1989. Conceptual Framework for Gender Analysis in Farming Systems Research and Extension Pp. 9-25. In: H.S. Feldstein and S.V. Poats (eds.) Working Together. Gender Analysis in Agriculture. Kumarian Press, Connecticut.

March, C., I. Smyth and M. Mukhopadhyay 1999. A Guide to Gender Analysis Frameworks. OXFAM Publishing, Oxford

- Who are the stakeholders - the people affected or who might be affected, well or badly, by the process? Who are the likely gainers? Who are the potential losers?
- What am I seeing and not seeing? Where am I going and not going? What am I being shown and not shown?
- What am I being told and not told? How does the person I am and how I am seen affect what people tell me? Do they think I could bring benefits or penalties? Does this affect what they show and tell? Are people being polite, prudent, deferential…?

However, it is important to note that initiating gender sensitive changes would need reversals in learning and effective facilitation skills which would promote local engagement different members of the community to bring about awareness and change in gender dynamics.

3.4. The "New Professionalism": Reversals in Learning

Community Visioning is based on a deep cycle of learning process, which requires that new skills and capabilities should be complemented by fundamental shifts of the individual and collective attitudes to ensure enduring change in rural communities. The quality of visioning process depends on the behaviour, skills and attitudes of the facilitator. It requires personal and social relationships building, a feeling of trust, confidence and mutual respect, and personal commitment of the facilitators, patience, and creativity.

Therefore to be effective CV needs different mind-sets, skills and attitudes for appreciating the positives rather than concentrating on the negatives, the problems and constraints. This requires a "new professionalism" or reversals in professional values, preferences and attitudes[11].

This is a reversal of the conventional approach of "teaching" farmers or extracting information with little learning taking place. Facilitation requires commitment and willingness to learn from and with farmers,

[11] Chambers (1997) *Whose reality counts? Putting the last first*, London: Intermediate Technology Productions.

discovering, seeing and experimenting, rather than instructing or teaching. Mastery of "soft skills" such as listening, question asking, probing, effective dialogue and systemic conceptualisation which are not typical components of academic training and do not come naturally to people need to be internalized and mastered by the Community Development Facilitators (CDF).

Table 1: Facilitators' Effects on Learning

Counter to Learning	**Supportive of learnin**
Operates from a position o power	Operates from a positio n of helping
Closed and distant	Open and approachabl
Emphasises what participa ts do wrong	Emphasises how partic pants can improve
Compares one participant ith the "best" participants	Works with the particip nts as individuals
When participants complet a difficult task, immediately g ive them a tougher one without emp asizing achievement	When participants com plete task, praise them well w hich allows them to opt for difficult task
Emphasises past failures	Emphasises current suc cesses
Accepts complaints, but ig ores their solution	Accepts complaint and helps find solutions
Offers excuses	Offers rationales
Places blame	Accepts blame
Treats facilitation as a "job	Treats facilitation as a v ay of life
Demeans individual partici ants in front of the workshop or c hers	Counsels with participa nts in private
Makes fun of participants	Encourages all contribu tions
Not supportive of group w ork and creates dependency	Supports group work a d explanations and expec ations

Facilitation is the conscious process of assisting a group to successfully achieve its task while functioning as a group. Facilitation means that we can promote effective, interactive communication with others through the use of a variety of skills that you can learn or enhance in a relatively

short time. Good communication is necessary to create a climate that will allow researchers and farmers to work together effectively. Characteristics such as ability to surrender control, improved communication, transparency and trust, all need to be internalised.

Effective facilitation means change in attitude, behaviour; change in the way work gets done, and changes in the way you relate to community members and to one another. It requires

- √ helping to set clear objectives and goals;
- √ empowering people to participate and getting people involved,
- √ facilitating discussion and consensus on important items,
- √ active listening more than talking,
- √ asking questions more than telling,
- √ paraphrasing and encouraging all o participate.
- √ encouraging open communication,
- √ resisting having the last word, and paying attention to both tasks and relationships, content and processes

4. Basic Methods for Community Visioning

The methods for conducting CV fall under three major categories: interviews, observations and visual methods

4.1 Interview Methods

The interview method is the favourite method for CV. The interview is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. However, asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task that it may seem at first. Interviews can take different forms. Group interview is the systematic interview of several individuals simultaneously in formal and informal setting. To conduct group interviews you need to master good communication and effective facilitation skills and knowledge of group dynamics.

Tool 3: Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)[12] is a more specific type of group interview. The popularity of FGD has led to a certain amount of confusion and abuse of the term. Most people will call all group interviews FGD, even though there is a considerable difference between the two. Too often any efforts to talk to people in groups are called FGDs. Just gathering people together does not guarantee that a meaningful, focused discussion will occur to gather qualitative data in a systematic way.

A FGD is not a group interview where the investigator asks the group questions and participants individually provide answers. It is a group discussion where participants are able to talk to each other about the topic of interest. FGDs are fundamentally a way of listening to people

[12] Morgan, David L. 1998. The Focus Group Guidebook. Focus Group Kit, Volume 1 SAGE Publications. Thousand Oaks, California

and learning from them, through effective communication between the facilitator and the participants as well as among the participants themselves - creating a process of sharing and collective learning.

Picture 1: Participants in a focus group discussion, Chisewu, Malawi

The group is facilitated by a moderator or facilitator who introduces topics and helps the group to participate in a lively discussion amongst themselves.

FGDs are more complicated than other group interviews. You need to make a number of decisions about who the participants will be; you need to think about who will really be able to talk about the topic to be discussed in ways that will be useful to the group and the team. You need to think about what kinds of questions to ask, and how to make them interesting for the participants. You need to make sense of whatever data you get from the group discussion.

Box 3: Ten things to consider when planning and conducti FGDs

1. Get to know the community before you begin your FGD. Try to develop a dictionary of local terms related to your topic
2. Selection of participants: Select the participants who you think ill provide you with the best of information. People talk more openly when ey are in a group of people with similar background.
3. Don't rely on your ideas about a problem. Ask the communit and key informants to help you. Get to know what is known, what is kr own, what are the gaps and why things are done the way they are done.
4. How many participants do we select? Group dynamic studies r commend that FGDs work well with around 8-15 people, but in many case we have worked with groups of 15-25 farmers. Large groups are difficult t manage, smaller groups may not provide a variety of views. When the g up is too large, it is better to divide into sub-groups, and then share the results of discussion. Depending on your objectives, it may be necessary o conduct separate FGDs with men and women, youth and other relevant c tegories.
5. Make sure the questions are easily understood by the respond ts (simple language, keep questions short, do not have several parts in one question). Avoid questions that will give you a YES/NO answer.
6. Use effective facilitation skills asking open-ended questions usi g the Six Helpers (Why? What? Where? When? Who? How?). However, y to avoid using too many WHY questions; they give people the impressio that there should be a sensible response. WHY questions may sou d like an interrogation. Use a range of effective facilitation techniques (en couraging, probing, prompting, paraphrasing, listening, etc)
7. Listen and learn; judge responses (facts, opinions, attitudes, rum rs). Verify information through triangulation of methods, source of inform ation and research team
8. Avoid using so many questions: FGDs usually last for 2 hours, depending on the success of the discussion.
9. Prepare a seating arrangement for interactive communication/ iscussion. Be sensitive and respectful to everyone involved. Use visualizatio methods to enhance participation and dialogue
10. Take detailed notes not only of the discussions, but also the b ehavior of participants (cassette/video recording)

4.2 Visual Methods

Visioning combines group interviews with visual methods such diagrams, sketches, maps. These are becoming popular as a means for enhancing a shared understanding and collective learning, facilitating collective memory and documentation, and also for collecting information on complex issues and processes.

Visual methods are important strategies and resources for CV because they:

- Provide focus for attention while discussing an issue
- Stimulate discussion by both literate and non-literate people
- Can represent complex issues or processes simply
- Provide a means for crosschecking and therefore provoke effective group work
- Evoke creative associations
- Stimulate people's memory about their past and present situations
- Reinforce the written and spoken word
- Assist in decision-making and can be used in monitoring

4.3 Observation methods

Observation is considered the archetypical method of scientific research. However, people often forget this simplest and basic of all scientific methods. Observation can be defined as the act of noting a phenomenon, often with instruments, and recording for scientific and other purposes. The main advantage of observation is its directness, it enables the team to collect information first hand by simply watching as individuals or groups behave, act and react. Observations generate the kind of common sense that lies at the base of all knowledge, from that amassed by the layperson, farmers; to that conducted by the scientists and the experimental researchers.

What differentiates observations during a CV process from everyday observations is their systematic and purposive nature. In CV observations are systematic because they are carried out with reference to four critical issues: what to observe, where and when to observe, how to carry out observation, and how much to infer when recording observations.

Tool 4: Direct Observations

When doing CV, observation should evolve through a series of different activities in three different stages:

√ "Initial" observations are primarily descriptive, unfocused and general in scope. They are based on broad livelihood issues. As you

build rapport with communities, the CV team becomes more familiar with their setting, groups and activities and may begin to distinguish some important features that are interesting.

√ At this point, CV should shift to more "focused" observations, directing their attention to deeper and narrower questions, behaviours, group dynamics and social processes.

√ This stage of focused observations is followed by "selected" observations whereby CV focuses on establishing and refining the characteristics of and relations among elements. Specific questions arise that must provide answers in constructing typologies, models, and categories within and between settings, groups and phenomena.

There are two potential problems with observations: validity and reliability, i.e. to what extent observations rely more on observer perceptions than real facts; to what extent the observations are real and not merely the effects of chance. To enhance the validity and reliability of observations, you need to ensure the following:

√ Observations are conducted systematically and repeatedly over varying conditions in order to ensure the widest range of observational consistency.

√ Agree on a conceptual framework to decide what needs to be observed.

√ Prepare a checklist of things to observe and the information required

√ Use multiple observers or teams to crosscheck findings and eliminate bias and inaccurate interpretations. Choose an appropriate observer for the group, usually the note-taker or other team members who are not facilitating discussions.

√ Use an analytical inductive methodology by testing emergent propositions in the search of negative and deviant cases

√ Crosscheck and confirm observations and enrich them with quotes, narratives and verbatim from the stakeholders to lend credence to the data.

√ Validate your observations with the stakeholders

- √ All observation notational records should contain explicit references to participants, names, settings, interactions, temporal elements, routines, rituals and interpretations.
- √ Record observations as you are making them, and discuss the recorded observations with farmers and other team members to confirm.

Recording of observations should be done on the spot, during the event. When the CV team cannot fully document their observations immediately, the possibility of distortions and unintentional misrepresentation increases. The longer you wait to record observations, the greater the possibility for flawed recalls. It is helpful to note down key words that will help to remember the observations of events as they occurred so that they can be documented at the earliest possible occasion, preferably before you leave the field.

In presenting data from observations, ensure a high degree of coherence, plausibility and correspondence to what stakeholders recognize as their own experience, giving a sense of resemblance and authenticity

4.4 Selecting Appropriate Tools and Methods

There is a wide literature on PRA tools[13]. It is more likely that some of your team members may have good knowledge of a number of PRA tools, or may have participated in PRA exercises in different contexts and situations. They may have participated in training workshops on PRA tools, or may have learnt some participatory tools as part of their academic training. CV builds on a number of PRA tools by making them more participatory, empowering and learning tools, rather than for extracting information only

All the tools have their own advantages and limitations. The choice of tools depends on a number of considerations including:

- § Degree of participation of stakeholders in the collection and analysis of data and findings
- § Does the tool facilitate collective learning and analysis?

[13] Pretty, □, Guijt, I.; Thompson, □ and Scoones, I. 1995. Participatory Learning and Action. A Trainers' Guide. International Institute of Environment and Development. London

- Relevance of the tool and information collected to different groups
- Ease of application and prerequisites for implementation: does the tool require some training, equipment, and special expertise?
- Scale of application (individual farmers, households, groups, communities, micro-watershed)
- Cost-effectiveness (logistics, materials, equipment)
- Type of information needed
- Level of data accuracy and reliability of findings, type and scale of analysis required (Some aspects may need more accurate quantitative data. In this case, you will need to apply more rigorous scientific methods at a later stage).
- Necessity to provide quick feedback to stakeholders

Table 2: List of common PRA tools

Methods	**Tools**
Interview Methods	- Individual interview - Household interviews - Key informants interview - Group interviews - Focus group discussion - Community meetings
Visual Methods	- Village resource map - Social map - Resource flows maps - Market chain analysis - Venn Diagram - Historical profiles - Seasonal calendars - Daily activity routines charts - Preference ranking and scoring
Observation Methods	- Direct observations - Participant observations - Transect walks - Role Plays and drama

It is very important to identify all possible sources of existing information (partner documentation, organization reports, government records, university studies and dissertations, newspapers, geographic maps etc). This is important in a situation where many organizations have worked and are likely to have collected significant amount of information on the area of interest.

4.5 Sequencing and Combining Tools and Methods

Because each tool and method has limitations, CV requires a creative combination of alternative methods and sources of information to achieve the multiple objectives of CV; and to ensure the participation of local stakeholders and to crosscheck and validate information collected. This combination and sequencing of tools, methods and sources of information is referred to as triangulation and is in fact one of the guiding principles of CV and other participatory approaches.

Careful sequencing of tools and methods is important to ensure good quality results. Some techniques are particularly effective at the beginning of the CV as they provide the team with an orientation to the community and encourage an atmosphere of active participation and shared learning. Other tools work better at a latter stage once the research team has developed a degree of rapport with farmers, enabling open discussion of sensitive topics.

For example, it is common to start with brainstorming before doing a village resource map. Village resource maps can be complemented with transect walk, or resource flow maps. Before doing a seasonal calendar, you may have to start by a preference ranking in small focus group discussions, and then do a market chain analysis mapping. A role-play can be performed to introduce a group discussion on sensitive topics such as gender daily activity routines.

It is particularly important to stress the importance of direct observation in CV as it provides a basis for crosschecking information received through individual interviews and/or group discussions. Similarly, direct observations must be crosschecked with other information, and exploring the contradictions to reveal more information. Timing and sequencing of methods is important. There is need to combine tools in a strategic sequence to apply best practice to all tools used.

You will need to be sure that the combination and sequencing of more than one tool provide the opportunity for crosschecking findings and doest result in unnecessary duplication, confusion and lead to incompatible data.

4.6. Getting Familiar with the Tools: Simulating the use of the tools

After selecting the important tools that will be used in the field, and deciding on the sequence of their use, it is important to perform a simulation exercise. This is important to make sure you all understand how the CV will be conducted, and that the tools are specific rather than vague, and how best they can be used in the field to allow discussions, collective learning and reflection. This is also important to practice effective facilitation skills in an experiential learning process.

Feedback should be organized using the questions in the After Action Review tool (Tool 23)

5. Selecting and Building Effective Partnerships

5.1. Introduction

Partnership is a critical principle and strategy to Community Visioning and to participatory research and development. Involving different partners is important to address common concerns, deliver services to the rural poor, accelerate impacts, and achieve sustainable rural livelihoods. Partners bring different skills, expertise and resources that are needed to start dialogue with communities. Therefore, to realize the full potential of Community Visioning, you must be skilled not only at identifying and selecting partners, but also at forming and managing successful partnerships.

Community Visioning is essentially a process of facilitating rural innovation. Rural innovation is the process by which various stakeholders generate, adapt or adopt novel ideas, approaches, technologies or ways of organising, to improve on- and off-farm activities, so that the rural sector becomes more competitive in a sustainable manner.

> "*Innovation is not about hiring an Einstein or creating a slogan. Everybody is capable of it, and the first sign that it is happening is when people work together, excited because they want to be there, focused on finding a solution to a challenge they all understand.*" [14]

Successful innovations and visions result from strong interactions and knowledge flows within networks of actors and partners with strong feedback loops. Few organizations have the capacity to meet all the varied challenges associated with community visions of their desired future conditions. Forming partnerships is the means to address complex

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[1] Tim Smith who conceived the Eden Project, Cornwall, UK

issues in research and development but many people and organizations have little experience in the development and management of such partnerships.

5.2 What do we mean by partnerships?

Partnership can simply be defined as two or more organizations with complementary areas of expertise committing resources and working together to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome that would have been difficult for each to reach alone. It implies positive, purposive relationship among organizations that retain autonomy, integrity and distinct identity, and thus the potential to withdraw from the relationship.

It is the ability to achieve something together that no organization could have produced on its own, and the ability of each organization, through collaboration, to achieve its own objectives better than it could alone.

5.3 How do we select partners?

Partners are usually supporting stakeholders who can help communities to achieve their visions. A first step in selecting partners is to conduct a stakeholder analysis to identify potential partners and assess their institutional capacity. To select an effective partner, you will need to gather information on the potential partners, on the following questions:

You will need to engage in discussions and conversations with potential partners at different levels to assess the organization readiness and fitness for partnerships. You will need to build trust and stimulate institutional commitments[15]. These discussions require time, personal face-to-face contacts and visits to field activities.

[15] For details see Gormley, W. 2001. *Selecting partners: Practical considerations for forming partnerships.* Tips and Tools Series: Collaborative alliances. The organizational Change Programme for the CGIAR Centres. Washington DC: TRG Inc.

Box 4 : checklist of questions for selecting suitable partners

i. Do we have common goals and values with this organization?
ii. How compatible are our work practices, culture, and approaches?
iii. Does this partner overlap with our primary work?
iv. What are the weaknesses and strengths this partner may bring to the partnership?
v. What do we know about this partner's previous experiences with partnerships? Did the organization meet its commitments?
vi. Does this partner possess the resources (human, financial, technological, material etc) necessary to contribute to the partnership?
vii. Will this organization be willing and able to collaborate, share control, and work toward mutual benefits?
viii. Will this organization be willing and able to devote the resources required for successful implementation? Will the organization deliver what it promises?
ix. Does the organization senior management support the partnership and collaboration? Will they give the partnership efforts it requires?

Tool 5: Stakeholder analysis matrix

Stakeholder analysis is a methodology for identifying and analysing the key stakeholders in a project and planning for their participation. It is an approach or procedure for gaining an understanding of a system by means of identifying key actors or stakeholders in the system and assessing their respective interests, and ways in which these interests (stakes) affect preferences, relationships or outcomes.

Stakeholder analysis can help in determining who the key players might be, and to identify appropriate forms of involvement for the different stakeholder groups based on analysis of their interests, influence and importance to the community. A stakeholder analysis can be facilitated through brainstorming with key informants and initial partners to make an institutional inventory by asking the following questions:

- Which organizations or people are working in this community?
- What are their roles and activities?
- What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- How are they linked to each others and to other organizations?

Table 3: Stakeholder analysis matrix

Name of organizations	Major activities	Coverage (geographic or targets)	Capacity (Human and material)	Prospects for scaling up	Partnerships experience	Ranking
Agricultural Research and Developmen t Centre (ARDC NARO)	Adaptive Research on food crops, natural resources management and livestock Technology dissemination through demonstrations Training of agricultural extension workers Agricultural resources and information centre	South-western Highland areas (4 Districts)	S x Agricultural scientists ((:ops, agronomy, NRM, li 'estock, social sciences) T :chnicians (Agronomy, soils, a ro-forestry, extension, home e onomics, gender) R :search station for research a d demonstrations E :tension and Farmer training f: :ilities V :hicles, computers, c mmunication facilities Can bring in scientists from research national and international research centres	Very high to the ARDC zone. Good linkages with Extension and Local Government Good linkages with other NGOs Also linkages with other ARDCs and NARO institutes nationwide. Good linkages with international research centres and other NARS in the regions	Wide experience in partnerships with major NGOs, research centres and local governments. Many ongoing collaborative projects	

5.4 Identifying and selecting pilot communities

The partners you select are likely to have a geographical area where they are working already or intend to work. In other situations, the choice of areas and communities to work with may still be open. Even when the partners have a set geographic area where they are working, they will probably be working in several communities. You may not be able to work in all the communities. You need to select a few communities where to start with a clear plan and strategy how the process can be scaled up to other communities.

To select a community to work with, you and your partners will need to:

- √ Get a list of potential communities from your partners and select a number of communities to visit, based on advice from your partners.
- √ Visit all the potential communities and assess their potential for action.
- √ Review existing documentation (PRA reports, maps) on potential communities.
- √ Contact key informants, local leaders, government structures, other organizations.
- √ Organize community meetings.
- √ Walk through communities to make direct observations and informal interviews.
- √ Identify existing groups and local organizations.
- √ Set criteria for selection of communities.
- √ Decide on communities to select.

The following questions can help you decide which communities to work with:

- √ Is there a real potential for working in this community? (agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions)
- √ Do farmers see a good opportunity to invest time and resources to resolve their problems? Are there issues that farmers consider important enough to commit their time and resources?

- √ Are there many farmers in the community and nearby villages who face the same issues? Is there a good potential for scaling out to nearby villages?
- √ Are there farmers already trying out to find solutions to their problems or farmers who are willing to commit time and resources to find solutions?
- √ Are there potential options and technologies that you can offer to farmers and which may provide substantial benefits?
- √ Are there active groups or local social organizations or farmers working together to try and find solutions to problems?
- √ Are there development organizations working in the community or willing to work in the community and which can commit resources (human, financial, physical)? Is there an active extension or development worker with sufficient motivation and skills to be a community development facilitator (CDF) or willing to learn new skills and tools?
- √ Is there potential for empowering women and promote gender equity?
- √ What are your research interests? What technologies can you offer? What are the research issues?
- √ What is the past history of communities' work with organizations and external institutions?

Other criteria for selecting communities may include:

- √ Accessibility of the village i.e. the road to the village to be passable at all seasons. But you need to be aware of and as much as possible avoid falling into the common biases of rural development tourism[16]. These include roadside biases, seasonal biases, gender and elite biases, location and organisational biases.
- √ Availability of basic development work – already existing agriculture activities taking place in the area to intensify farmers' interest and willingness to do development work.

[16] Chambers, 1983: 13-23.

- √ Motivation of extension worker responsible for the area i.e. should have hard working spirit and good relations with the farmers
- √ Willingness of the partner in having an input in the development work i.e. should be able to meet some of the expenses within the project.
- √ Use your own judgement and partners' recommendations.

5.5 Entering the Community: Social Mobilization and Seeking commitment

After the first exploratory visits, and selection of communities or groups to work with, you will need to return to the selected communities to initiate a process of social mobilization and rapport building.

Social mobilization is a key initial activity. It starts the process of entering the community and building trust. You will need to arrange for informal meetings with local leaders, social organizations or groups you intend to involve in the process to check for real motivation, enthusiasm and commitment; and to identify people and local institutions which can take the lead in catalysing the development process within the community.

There is no magic bullet or a blueprint. These entry points can be used in combination taking into approach the advantages and disadvantages of each of them. You need to assess the context and find the most appropriate way of entering the community and mobilizing farmers. However, a general principle is to build on existing groups, and strengthening them rather than creating new groups and new structures.

Once the entry-point has been identified, the next step is to arrange for a community meeting. This first meeting helps you to raise awareness in the community and to gather additional information. You should present it as a follow up to the first exploratory meeting and as a feedback to the community of the outcomes of the exploratory visits and your decision to start working there with them. This process of social mobilization should be done at least a week before the actual CV is conducted.

Table 4: Advantages and disadvantages of community entry points

Co ımunity ent y point	Advantages	Disadvantage
Ent re Cor ımunity	§ Whole commun y is aware § More inclusive § Heterogeneous, iversity of ideas, skills ar l people	§ Takes longe : § Can create l igh expectation § May be diff cult to manage if t o big
Exi ting Gro up	§ Easy access/mo ilization § High cohesion a d common goal, vi ion	§ May appear exclusive § Less diversi y of ideas
Ext nsion and dev lopment age ts	§ Easy to approac , known and knowledgeal le of the community, may have ongoing activitie in the community	§ May be bias ed. § May have n gative perceptions from the communitie s
Loc l autl ority (tra itional or p olitical)	§ Provide good lin s with policy and powe structure § Can easily mobil ze communities an farmers § Can support the oject or initiative	§ May want t dominate, manipulate r highjack th project § May not be effective if not havin community support § May exclud opponents nd categories c population

You will need to better understand how the community or group is organized, the activities they are involved in, how the group functions, etc. You can also spend some time visiting farms and other group projects, interacting as much as possible with farmers who will attend the meeting. This allows you to start developing a feel of personal relationships and building trust with the group or community.

Box 5: What to look for in groups

The main features of a cohesive and successful group include:

√ Group history and objectives
√ Group activities
√ Membership: who are the members? How many, women? men? How does one become member?
√ Group structure: What is the leadership structure? How are leaders selected?
√ Regular meetings: How often does the group meet?
√ Record keeping: Records are very important monitoring and evaluation tools for the group
√ Constitution and bylaws (rules and regulations): Help the group manage internal conflicts and make the responsibilities of each member clear.
√ Resource mobilization: Regular group savings and contributions are essential for group performance.
√ Effective networking (horizontal and vertical linkages)
√ Diversification of activities (implementation of production oriented activities)
√ Self initiated activities (own initiatives)

You will have to explain to the leaders and groups the approach and motivate them to participate in the learning process.

√ You need to explain the whole process of visioning and ask for commitment to the process.
√ Farmers should clearly understand that the process will take about 3 days and should commit to participate.
√ Discuss issues of the venue for the meeting, when the meeting will start and expected finishing time, expected number of participants, and other logistic issues. Timing and venue of the meeting are important determinants of participation.
  - Agree on an appropriate time where most members of the community can participate.
  - Find out a suitable time for women and men.
  - If possible, try to avoid market days, and other days of important community activities.
  - Select neutral venues such as schools, churches or public buildings, or community meeting place.
  - As much as possible avoid conducting meetings in people's homes as this may limit participation. Alternatively rotate meeting places to avoid one person hosting the group for the three or four days.

5.6 Team building and planning

CV is best conducted by a multi-disciplinary team from the different partners' organizations. This is important to engage different people from the outset of the process and to bring different expertise necessary to facilitate farmers to develop realistic action plans that will be implemented.

The size of the CV team should be decided taking into consideration the number of farmers who will participate. If the group is too large, and you would be required to have small focus group discussions, then you need at least one facilitator for each FGD.

At the minimum, the CV team should be composed of:

- √ A lead facilitator
- √ Co-facilitators
- √ Note taker(s)
- √ Local village extension agent or Community development worker.
- √ Consider gender and knowledge of local language in forming your team.

Prior to conducting CV you need to spend some time (□-8 hours) for team building and planning with partners to:

- √ Develop an agenda and plan for the CV, discuss both the process and the content.
- √ Make sure you all understand why the CV is needed, and how it will be conducted.
- √ Check the desired outcomes; make sure they are specific rather than vague.
- √ Make sure you are all clear about the questions you wish to answer, and what type of information you need to collect and analyze.
- √ Prepare a checklist of key questions and agree how they should be asked and who is going to ask the questions.
- √ Evaluate and review existing information, and detect gaps in the existing literature or documentation.
- √ Discuss in more details the different tools that will be used, their purpose and how best they can be used in the field to allow discussions, collective learning and reflection.

- √ But be flexible and be prepared to change or drop a tool and improvise in the field.
- √ Agree on roles and responsibilities; who will do what, how, when? What questions to ask, what tools to use and how? Who will do the translation if necessary?
- √ Make sure all the materials needed for fieldwork are ready, and other logistic issues resolved.
- √ Make sure that farmers are well informed, and that the appropriate people are coming, the venue is clear and time for the meeting has been negotiated with farmers.

Picture 2: Team planning before field work is critical for effective CV

5.7 Building a common knowledge base

It is expected that team members will have different knowledge and experience with participatory tools, and for many of them CV may be entirely a new approach. After selecting the important tools that will be used in the field, and deciding on the sequence of their use, it is important to perform a simulation exercise.

This is important to make sure you all understand how the CV will be conducted, and that the tools are specific rather than vague, and how best they can be used in the field to allow discussions, collective learning

and reflection. This is also important to practice effective facilitation skills in an experiential learning process.

Team planning should be seen as an opportunity for learning, sharing and training. Team members need to develop a common understanding of the process, methods and tools that they will use during the CV process.

One way of doing this is to do an experiential learning activity for sharing knowledge of tools and methods. The objective of this learning activity is to assess participants' knowledge and experience in the use of PRA tools. You can either do this through brainstorming to generate a list of tools team members are familiar with, and have used in the past. If the team is large, consider forming small working groups to discuss these tools in more detail, and provide feedback to the rest of the team.

In both cases you need to discuss the following:

- √ What participatory tools and methods you have used in the past or are familiar with?
- √ What were the context and the purpose of using these tools?
- √ What are the advantages and limitations of each of these tools?
- √ What information can you collect with these tools?
- √ How can you use these tools? What materials do you need?

This should take at least an hour and one will need flip charts, markers and space.

Table 5: Participants' knowledge of PRA tools and methods

PRA Tools	Description of the tool*	Advantages	Limitations

**purpose, how to use it, what information is collected, what was the context of use)*

Tool 6: What would you do IF:

It is important that the team discuss how they can handle some of the difficult situations that may happen in the field and disorganise their plans.

Box 6: What would you do if…..

1. You arrive in the community for participatory diagnosis based on your project objectives, but the farmers bring up other demands and issues, which are more important than the work your institution is focusing on?
2. In group discussions/interviews, the farmers are very silent, unresponsive and reluctant to answer your questions?
3. Part way in small group interviews, some farmers say they must leave to attend to other matters?
4. A group of farmers (women) come late to the meeting, after you have finished with brainstorming?
5. You planned to have separate groups of men and women, but farmers want to remain in big mixed group?
6. At the end of group discussion/interview new information arises that contradicts an earlier key finding?
7. In the planning meeting with farmers, the local leader (village chief) tries to control the choice of research priorities?
8. During group discussion, the most articulate and better educated farmers dominate the discussion about farming practices?
9. One farmer is drunk and keeps interrupting others; or one farmer is overtly distracting the meeting, insisting on a specific point?
10. In front of a group of farmers, one member of your team contradicts what one of the farmers has just said?
11. You realize midway your discussion that the majority of women are not talking?
12. A very senior member of your institution decides to attend the field work to observe participatory diagnosis, but as she knows little of skills and attitudes for good participation, she is simply lecturing farmers?
13. The Extension agent who is introducing you or translating misrepresents the purpose of the participatory diagnosis to the community?
14. A team member is over enthusiastic and keeps interrupting the farmers when they are speaking?
15. One team member is taking a patronizing attitude towards the farmers and tends to lecture them?
16. The information you collect during the participatory diagnostic seems to contradict your secondary data?

5.8 Developing a Plan for Field Work

When planning a CV process, it is important to list the issues that need to be investigated and then develop a planning matrix (Table 6) showing the sequence of tools and techniques that can be used to investigate each issue. This matrix can then be used to guide your decision on the types of methods of tools that can help you achieve the expected results and outputs.

Tool 7: The "Six Helpers"

Box 7: The SIX Helpers for planning		
1	**WHAT?**	Content. What will you do in the field? What are the key activities?
2	**WHY?**	Purpose and objectives. What are your expected outputs? Who will benefit? How is this important? For whom?
3	**HOW?**	List of tools to use, and their sequence
4	**WHAT NEXT?**	The three most important questions you will want answered in the session you will facilitate, taking into consideration the thematic content of the activity
5	**WHEN and HOW LONG?**	Time frame, duration and sequence of sessions, adequacy of time for content to be covered. General allocation of time for each topic
6	**WHO?**	Team member of farmers' roles, tasks /jobs, needs, etc., who should do what?

You need to develop a clear plan for CV, with a clear but flexible sequence of activities tools, and roles (who does what, when, how, what questions to ask). This plan should reflect the five basic principles of participation, systematic, flexibility, optimal ignorance, process and content; and team work.

√ **Participation:** CV relies heavily on participation of local communities as the method is designed to enable local people to participate, not as source of information as is the case in many PRA and survey work, but as learning partner in generating and analysing the information for collective learning and community planning. The use of visual methods are particularly important to allow illiterate people to participate fully.

Table 6: Planning Matrix for CV

What activity?	**Why? (Objectives)**	**What? (Tools to use)**	**How?**	**When (Time)**	**Who will do what? (Roles)**
Crating self awareness	To stimulate collective wareness of levelopment approaches To emphasise the ieed for self-reliance To start dialogue on participatory approaches and community mobilisation	- River code - Brainstormi ng	- Role play of river code - Discussions of key issues of the river code (see questions) - Brainstormin g on community experience.	- 5 mins introduction - 10 mins on river code - 15-20 mins on key questions	Lead facilitator to introduce; Co-facilitator to probe and summarize

- √ **Flexibility:** There is no blueprint of a CV activity, or a standard methodology to follow. The choice of tools to use and their sequence in the field depends on the purpose, resources, time and skills of the facilitators. The team should be able to improvise and respond to unexpected changes with a learning oriented culture.

- √ **Systematic:** The use of multiple methods in CV should not lead to duplication and confusion, or collection of incompatible data, but provide opportunities for cross-checking and complementing findings. CV should be based on a systematic and rigorous framework with clear understanding of the objectives and the expected outcomes.

- √ **Team work:** CV is best conducted by a team, comprising of a mix of disciplines, including both men and women, with a local team speaking the local language and known to farmers. The team should spend time working together during the initial planning and community mobilization , but also spend some time in the field and after the field for analysis and reporting, and designing a CV process.

- √ **Optimal ignorance:** Focus is on learning what is necessary to take decisions on future development actions rather than on learning everything. You need to provide people with opportunities to describe what they know, and how they perceive things.

- √ **Process precedes content:** Content deals with the subject matter, the task or the information you need to collect when conducting CV. Process is concerned with what is happening between and to group members while the group is working on the content/task. Very little attention is paid to process, even when it is the major cause of ineffective CV. Attention to process will enable one to diagnose problems early and deal with them more effectively, and make CV really empowering and a learning process. The team members should internalize both process and content of the CV.

Picture 3: Make sure you have what you need for fieldwork.

6. Establishing Dialogue and Stimulating Self-Awareness

6.1 Introduction

The actual practice of CV process has the following five main steps

1. Establishing dialogue and stimulating self awareness ("Valuing and appreciating the best of What Is"
2. Facilitating Community Visioning (Dream or Imagine What Might Be)
3. Stimulating collective learning and livelihood analysis (Discover and Inquire)
4. Action planning (Set strategic directions, creating the structures, and prioritizing the elements of the process)
5. Deciding on first steps (Negotiating change on What will be implemented)

These steps usually take four to five consecutive days or more depending on the level of interest and participation of community members, the type of projects you are dealing with, and the availability of previous information on the community. The first day is for team planning and the last day is for team review. The team may have to meet several days to write up the report, and plan feedback to their organizations and to communities.

6.2 Establishing dialogue and setting social contract

This may be your first meeting as a team with the community (or second meeting after the initial social mobilization and exploratory visits to select communities). For many farmers as well as team members, it may be the first time they attend a CV process. They may be expecting a typical conventional meeting dominated by the R&D team and some local leaders. You will need to use effective facilitation skills for managing group dynamics and encouraging active participation.

The first day, establish dialogue and set a social contract. In our experience in many communities, you should plan for sufficient time. The meeting is likely to start late, as farmers will not arrive at the agreed time for the first day. You can use this time while waiting for farmers conducting informal interviews and making other direct observations (on cropping patterns, social interactions, group dynamics) or reviewing your plan. Depending on when the meeting will actually start, it may last -5 hours. Avoid "**sausaging"** the first day.

6.2.1 Sitting arrangement

There are different sitting arrangements and they all have different implications for participation, learning and sharing. Avoid classroom type or conventional seating arrangements whereby the visitors are given the "high table" while farmers are seated in rows, with men usually seated on chairs and women on the floor or mats. This is too formal and depict a position of authority of the team with farmers distancing themselves from the facilitators.

Suggest a more interactive seating arrangement (circle, semi circle). The lead facilitator should be in a central place while other team members should try as much as possible to sit with amongst community members. The note taker should be in a position where it is easy to observe all the interactions in the group.

Pictures 4: Seating arrangements: Avoid classroom type right) and encourage more interactive arrangement left)

A circle or semi-circle has the advantages that people can relax and interact well. There is no natural top position for the facilitator, and it is easy to maintain eye contacts with almost everybody and move easily in

the group. However, it may intimidate shy people. If the group is too large, participants sit far from those opposite them. Be creative with seating arrangements, rearranging to make and keep participants more active.

6.2.2 Introductions: Who are we? Where do we come from? What do we do?

The local partner or CDF greets the farmers and thanks them for their time and for coming to the meeting. Observe usual protocols. S/he should avoid giving the objectives of the visit at this stage. It is sufficient just to say that s/he has brought visitors who are keen to discuss with farmers and that s/he will give them time to explain why they are there. The CDF then invites the team to introduce themselves stating their names, where they come from, and what they do.

Introduce your self in a relaxed way and try to break the ice as much as possible. Say who you are, where you come from (your roots), and what you do (not I am a Researcher or Coordinator, Specialist in…BUT I work with farmers on…in ….). Avoid intimidating titles such as Doctors, Director, Coordinator, Officer, Head, Specialist, etc). Try one of two local language words, even imperfectly, if you cannot speak the local language. It relaxes. Mention what you hope to gain from the meeting.

The CDF then asks farmers if they wish to introduce themselves, simply mentioning their names and positions/roles in the group or community. The team should pay attention to group dynamics (positions, roles and languages) and retain as many names as possible you will have to use later to encourage participation.

6.2.3 Clarifying Expectations and setting contract

It is likely that people would be asking themselves some of the following questions:

1. Why am I here? What is in it for others? What is in it for me?
2. Why here and not somewhere else? Why this community or group not another? Why these people and not others?

3. Why do people think I or we are here?
4. What are their expectations?
5. Who is participating in whose activity, programme, project? Who owns it? Who feels it is theirs? Are 'they' participating in 'ours? Or are we participating in 'theirs'?

You need to answer these questions upfront. One team member, the lead facilitator or the team member who made the first visits for identifying and selecting the community should recap with the farmers the most important points they discussed with the group during the first visit. Ask farmers what they thought of your visit and if they discussed it after you have left. Allow four to five responses before summarizing the main points in relation to the objectives of the project.

Alternatively, you may brainstorm by asking farmers what their expectations of the meeting are i.e. why they came to the meeting, and what do they expect from the meeting. Remember to also ask your team members their expectations. This will allow you to introduce some points that farmers may not mention, and to merge your expectations with theirs.

Picture 5: Group leaders explain objectives and activities of their groups

One team member can summarize the expectations expressed by farmers and the team and ask whether the summary reflects farmers' expectations. Alternatively ask one farmer to do this.

- √ From the list of expectations, the facilitator or one team member should identify the expectations that can be addressed by the CV process, and those that the project will not be able to address.
- √ Be clear as much as possible and constantly check whether farmers are also clear about the objectives of the meeting.
- √ Be careful not to raise expectations about benefits that may not materialize.

After clarifying expectations and explaining the objectives of the CV, you will then need to develop an agenda and a programme together with farmers.

- √ Explain the objectives of the meeting, the agenda and the process.
- √ Reintroduce your team members and explain their roles in the meeting. Share the desired outcomes of the CV and allow for any input from farmers.
- √ Explain the agenda of CV and the programme for the 3-□ days: what you will be doing with farmers during the 3 days, and how you will do it.
- √ Involve other people appropriately to prioritize the agenda items. Make sure they are specific rather than vague.
- √ Get agreements from farmers on the programme; time to start and to finish. Allow farmers to reach consensus by explicitly encouraging different opinions.
- √ Once the consensus has been reached, make sure you respect the time to start and time to end meeting.
- √ You may use this opportunity to change sitting arrangements to encourage active participation. Ask farmers to propose a more appropriate sitting arrangement and then justify why a circle is more effective for learning and sharing.
- √ Observe group dynamics, especially gender dynamics, whether women are moving closer and sitting with men, sitting on chairs or mats, etc…However, be cautious and do not try to impose or push

too much, especially pushing women to sit with or close to men against local practices.

The note taker, co-facilitator and observer should draw a sketch of sitting arrangements with names, sex, and position of different farmers. This is helpful to develop a sociogramme of the group, indicating who is talking, asking questions, and for encouraging people to participate

6.2.4 How do you arrange for meals and other logistics?

You should also discuss logistic issues and get agreement on how to deal with issues of meals in the future. It is important to find out how to handle this, to conform to local practices. Partners and farmers may have different practices.

- √ Some will provide refreshment (soft drink and snack) any time they meet with farmers.
- √ Some will make arrangements to cook meals in the community, if the meeting will last for more than four hours.
- √ Some organisations "compensate" farmers for attending meetings, or pay "transport refunds" or meeting allowances.
- √ In some cases, farmers will make their own arrangements (usually contributing money) to provide snacks or meals.
- √ It is also possible to make arrangements with farmers for the team to contribute towards the cost of the meals, for example by offering to buy "sauce" while farmers will cook "food".
- √ Be sensitive to local culture and avoid destructive practices that may create problems to other stakeholders or may be difficult to sustain in future.

There is no blue print on this. What is important is to avoid creating an attitude of dependence and the impression that meals and other forms of compensation are more important than the discussion that will take place.

Table 7: Managing Meeting Energy

Beginning	**Middle**	**Ending**
Energy is m re directed by t ıe facilitator Use introdu tion statements Clarify purp se, agenda proc ss, and expected ou puts of the meeting Be clear as r uch as possible and constantly c eck whether farı ers are also clear ab ut the objectives o the meeting. Involve oth r people appropriate y to prioritize th agenda items. Get agreem nts from farmers on t ıe programme; time to start and to inish. Facilitator r le is to ensure all ur derstand and are wor ing from same assum tions about purpo e of the meeting	Energy is multidir ctional. Encourage partici ation and contributions, discussions. Use open-ended q uestions, paraphrasing, and encouraging non v erbals to keep discussion m oving Pay attention to th ose who dominate the mee ing Hand over the sti k and encourage people o use flip chart to record ke points. Use humour in a v ariety of ways—to relieve t nsion, to move meeting on o new subject, and simpl to have fun. Tie things to the b gger picture, the vision Ask unusual quest ons from time to time, chall nge basic assumptions. Facilitator role is t track key points, test fo consensus, ensure ll points are considered an understood	Energy is mo e focused by th e leader Seek agreem nts, decisions an closure Use summar zing questions an closed questions Review and summarize o utcomes and identify ollow up actions and p eople's responsibiliti s Facilitator ro e is to keep group f cused on decisions rea hed and next steps

6.3 Stimulating self-awareness: "Valuing the Best of What Is"

6.3.1 Brainstorming

It is important to start the discussion with more general questions, using brainstorming techniques. Begin with more general questions to break the ice and create rapport.

Questions such as ***"What are your problems in this village?"*** or ***What are the main constraints you face in food production, marketing, etc,*** should be avoided completely at this stage.

Rather you should start from the positive, from people's experience of working together, from the best of their achievements, from their dreams and visions of their desired future conditions. Visioning is about positive change and mobilizing positive energies, and not starting from problems and constraints. As Hall and Hammond observed *" Because I looked for problems, I not only found them, but I helped make them bigger than they were before I appeared"*[17]

You should facilitate brainstorming around the following questions:

- √ What are the most significant achievements you have realized in your group?
- √ What are the things you are proud of in your village? Community? Group?
- √ What changes would you like to see in your life, household, group, community or village in the next five to ten years?
- √ If you are successful, what would be different in this village in the next 5 years?

Tool 8: Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a method for generating ideas in a non-judgmental and non-directive way by inviting participants to freely share their ideas and thoughts about a specific issue or question. Brainstorming helps you to collect ideas from the group quickly with less discussion. It is a first step in a group discussion, which is usually followed up with other methods.

[17] Hall, Joe and Hammond, Sue. What is Appreciative Inquiry? Htpp//: www.new-paradigm.co.uk/appreciative.htm

Box 8: Conducting brainstorming

To do a brainstorming, you need to:

- § Formulate a question or issue for brainstorming
- § Ask the group to think about as many ideas as possible abou ıe topic and each will be given a chance to give one or more ideas
- § Go around the group asking each person to contribute ideas b ly
- § Do not let people start discussing or debating ideas at this stag
- § The facilitator or recorder needs to recognize and record ·ryone's ideas, even if they are repetitive, until when people have exha :ed new ideas, or most people have contributed ideas.
- § The facilitator should then try and combine ideas, eliminating ɔlication and improving upon those already put forward, until the partic .nts feel that a reasonable list of thoughts have been reached.
- § Once all ideas have been noted on a flip chart visible to eve ɔne, the emerging issues, topics, questions can be highlighted and a /zed by the group.

For example, it is useful to use brainstorming when starting a resource map, seasonal activity calendar, preference ranking, or stakeholder analysis.

A key rule of brainstorming is that "**Nobody knows nothing and nobody knows everything"**

- § All ideas and thoughts are welcome
- § No criticism of others' ideas is allowed
- § The more ideas the better

The role of the facilitator is to stimulate new ideas, to encourage people to participate and to summarize the discussion. A brainstorming session should not take very long, as it is only meant to get topics, questions, issues or ideas that will be discussed in more details by other tools and methods.

- Remember you are a facilitator not a passive observer: Use prompting questions when people appear at loss as to what to do next. Make effective use of your facilitation skills for paraphrasing, encouraging and summarizing

- Beware of those who dominate the process, and those who remain on the margin
- Exhibit genuine interest in the discussions and what the participants are saying. The facilitator needs to be really engaged to make the discussion more effective.
- Use humor in a variety of ways to relieve tension, to move the meeting on, and simply to have fun. Ask unusual questions from time to time to challenge basic assumptions, ask people who normally don't get involved in particular issue to get involved somehow in the discussion.
- Use good intuitive sense on when there is enough agreement to move the meeting to the next item, to make decision or to settle an argument.
- Provide positive feedback for genuine accomplishments during the meeting.

Tool 9: Flip Chart

Flipchart is an important facilitator tool for brainstorming and recording relevant information as it is generated. The points on the flipchart serve to focus the group's attention, and assist the group and the facilitator in keeping their discussions focused and organized.

Picture 6: Using the flip chart more effectively, Tororo, Uganda

The most important advantage of a flipchart is that it facilitates group memory. The concept of group memory involves two elements:

i. Retention and reference: When participants are able to see key points of the discussion listed on a flipchart, and they have visual access to it throughout the discussion, the repeated exposure ensures greater retention of the information.
ii. Visual records of outcomes: When the facilitator or a group member records ideas and suggestions on a flipchart as they are generated, participants have a visual memory of key points as the discussion progresses. At the end of the session, participants have a collective memory of key points and outcomes, ideas and decisions.
iii. Keep the flipchart displayed as they are developed throughout the discussion so that participants can refer to them as needed.

6.3.2 The River Code

A good way to start establishing dialogue and stimulating self-awareness is to use a tool that is more participatory and relaxing, but educative. We have used the "River code" play successfully.

Tool 10: The "River Code" role-play

Role-plays or drama encourage people to enact scenes concerning perceptions, behaviors, issues and problems that need to be discussed in the group. You need to select a topic for role-play and prepare participants to perform the drama or role-play. The group then discusses the issues emerging from the drama or role-play, and lessons or conclusions that can be drawn, as well as the implications to the project. The river code is a role-play for discussing participation, social change and approaches to development. It can also be used for illustrating the sustainable livelihood framework. It can be used in different ways depending on your objectives.

Preparations:

Explain to farmers that to start discussion, sharing and learning, you are going to perform a play in which farmers will move from their sitting

arrangements, and watch the play in a more relaxed mode. Allow for a 10 – 15 minutes break while preparing for this.

Select 3-□ people who will perform the play, and take them aside for coaching.
Draw a river on the ground or floor using local materials (charcoal, sticks, *pangas*, chalk or ropes). Two lines fairly drawn apart represent the banks of a river. In the river, draw circles to represent stepping-stones, and an island in the middle of the river.
Briefly show them how the play is performed, and ask them to try it two to three times before you call other participants to watch the play.

Picture 7: Key Scenes in the River code role-play

Box 9: The River Code Play

This is a mime or a play without words:

Two persons come to the river and look for a place to cross and are 'iscussing how to cross. The current is very strong. A third person comes alon and sees their difficulty. She/He leads them up the river and shows them the stepping-stones. She/he encourages them to step on them but they both are afraid, so s/he agrees to take one on her/his back. By the time s/he gets to th middle of the river, the person on his/her back seems very heavy and s/he bec mes very tired, so s/he puts the person on the little island. The third person gc s back to fetch the second, who also wants to climb on her/his back. Bu the third woman/man refuses. Instead s/he takes her/his hand and encourag s him/her to step on the same stones her/himself. Halfway across the second w man/man starts to manage alone. They both cross the river. When they get t the other side of the river. They are both extremely pleased with themselve and they walk off together, completely forgetting about the first woman/man, s ing alone on the island. He tries to get their attention, but they

Processing the River Code

Guiding questions for discussion

- § What did you see happening in the play?
- § What different approaches were used to help the two people across?
- § What does each side of the river represent?
- § What could each person represent in real life?
- § Why are some people left in the middle of the river?
- § In what ways does development and research leave people stranded?
- § Are there some real life examples of people being "carried and dumped" in this community?
- § What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods (carrying and leading) for crossing the river?
- § What methods would you prefer for this community? Why?

The processing of the river code play usually generates a lively discussion that farmers may want to continue. After the discussion of the play, the

facilitator needs to summarize the key outputs and activities set for the project.

Use this opportunity to further explain the approach of the project and the role of participation emphasising mutual learning and spirit of self-reliance and confidence, creativity and collaboration. Find local tales and proverbs or local vocabulary for "being carried" and "being led", and emphasise the choice made by the community and its advantages.

It is important to emphasise that development it is a long process and the immediate benefits are not always material but learning together how to improve things.

The facilitator needs to tie the discussion to the larger picture of sustainable rural livelihoods. Use the river code to explain the objectives of the visioning process. The objectives are to:

- √ develop our collective vision of desired future conditions (where we want to be, the other side of the river—Livelihood outcomes)
- √ analyse our current situation and define what resources we have to achieve our objectives (where we are now, one side of the river- Capital assets)
- √ decide and develop strategies for achieving our objectives (method of crossing the river—Livelihood strategies)
- √ identify potential obstacles that can prevent us from reaching our visions and implementing our plans and activities (the current in the river- Shocks and Vulnerability)
- √ identify and assess people, institutions and stakeholders that we need to involve in our project (Policies and Institutions)
- √ define what we need to do, what steps we need to take, and activities to start with (the stepping stones)

6.4 Dream-Imagine: 'The Community's Vision of Success'

This is the "Dream" or "Imagine" stage of the Appreciative Inquiry, or the vision of livelihood outcomes in the sustainable livelihood framework, or the other side of the river in the River Code. The process involves a visioning exercise, i.e. take the community members to the end of the project, the other side of the river, and encourage people to

think about the kinds of things they would hope to see in the future if they are successful. The other side of the river represents the future conditions, improvements in the livelihoods, improvements from the current conditions.

A community vision refers to a picture of the future (the other side of the river) with some explicit discussion on why people should strive to create that future. In a change process a good vision serves three important purposes:

- √ clarifying the general direction of change,
- √ motivating people to take action in the right direction, and
- √ helping to coordinate actions of different people in a fast and efficient way.

Box 10: Key characteristics of an effective vision:

- Imaginable: the vision conveys the picture of what the future will l ok like
- Desirable: An effective vision appeals to the long term ir erests of community members, and others who have stake in the communi /
- Feasible: A good vision comprises realistic, attainable goals
- Focused: A desirable vision is clear enough to provide guidance i decision-making and action planning
- Flexible: An achievable vision is general enough to allow individu l initiative and alternative responses in light of changing conditions
- Communicable: a useful vision is easy to communicate, can be successfully explained in five minutes.

The following questions can be used in a brainstorming mode.

- What would you like to achieve in the next 5 years?
- What changes would you like to see in the next five years?
- What would the other side of the river look like?
- "What would be different in this village, group or your households if you are really successful?

The future time needs to be specified beforehand. Five years? Ten years? However, note that the longer term you use for the visioning exercise, the more it will be come like dreamlike. It is important to use a realistic timeframe for the dream or vision to be achievable, realistic, within the reach of the community.

Brainstorm and make sure all participants have expressed their vision, including facilitators and team members. You need to probe to be as specific as possible to avoid responses such as improved livelihoods, better living conditions…

Record each response on a flipchart. You will need to use these when drawing a village map of desired future conditions. This should build on the village resource and social maps to indicate changes they would like to see in future.

7. Stimulating Collective Analysis of Community Livelihood Assets

7.1 Introducing Livelihood Assets Analysis

The day (or session) should start with 10-20 minutes reflection on the previous day, linking the river code to the project objectives and approaches. You may want to pick on some individual to facilitate this reflection, asking their fellow participants what touched them most, or asking them to explain to the newcomers (if any) on what happened the previous day. One participant can draw the river code and explain what it means to the new comers, and the lessons they have learned in the process.

- √ Revisit the river code by drawing it on a flipchart showing the two sides of the river. One bank is where we are now, and the other ban is where we want to be in future. In order to cross the river, it is important to know what assets we have, i.e. what things we have that we can use to cross the river. These are the community livelihood assets in the current conditions.

- √ Lead a brainstorming session on the community key assets, i.e. what is currently available for a few minutes. These should include land, crops, trees, animals, people, income, farm implements, buildings, etc…

- √ After this brainstorming, you can then introduce the different tools that farmers can use to represent their assets and resources. Some of the tools should include village resource map, social map, crop calendars, venn diagram, institutional analysis, etc.

- √ Give examples of some of these tools and check whether farmers have used them before. If they have used them in the

past, ask them to explain the process and the usefulness of such tools. If possible, ask for a copy and see what is missing.

7.2 Working groups

Depending on the number of people attending, it may be necessary to divide farmers into focus groups and assign tasks to each group. The number of people in each group should be between 6-10 to allow maximum participation, sharing and learning. Each focus group should be facilitated by a team member, who will have to introduce the tool to use and guide the first steps without dominating the discussion, then "hand over the stick", and encourage participation of group members.

The tasks could include

√ Group 1: to draw a village resource map showing all the major features of the village including crops, houses, livestock, social infrastructure such as schools, churches, health centers, markets, water points, forests, etc. In some cases, it may be important to have separate groups of men and women, and youth to draw their separate maps. It may be possible to draw a village social map showing all the households, their key assets, membership of groups, crops and livestock, etc.

√ Group 2: to make a crop and activity calendar, listing and detailing the major crops and ranking them in order of importance for food security and income; showing the season activities for each crop, gender division of roles and control of resources, rainfall patterns, vulnerability periods (hungry periods, sickness, no money, etc). This group could also do a market chain analysis mapping, indicating income generating activities and crops, market outlets and distance, market actors and institutions, price, supply and demand trends.

√ Group 3: to do an institutional inventory and Venn diagram to identify the local organizations and institutions active in the community; their roles and activities - ranking them in order of their importance. The group may also analyse how they can influence local institutions and stakeholders to be more supportive of livelihoods and development plans. They may also conduct a SWOT analysis of different institutions.

√ Group □: to do a gender daily activity calendar to discuss the division of roles and responsibilities between men and women; identify activities performed by men and women and time taken to perform specific activities. This group may also analyse the sources of vulnerability and livelihood strategies for men and women. Information generated should be analysed to identify gender issues in the community followed by a discussion on their implications on the implementation of community visions and projects.

7.3 Some useful tools

While you can find an abundant literature on PRA methods and tools that you can use, their sequence, combination and appropriate use in a field situation is not always explicit in many books and manuals. In this section, we draw from our experience in conducting CV with rural communities to describe the process, tools and methods we have used, and where possible we include visual presentations of the outcomes of the tools.

Tool 11: Village Resources Mapping

Mapping is a visual representation of information in a particular geographic location (village, community) based on people's knowledge and perceptions of their resources or issues at hand. It represents the key features of the community, its key assets and opportunities.

Picture 8: Drawing a village resource map; left, Katundulu-Ukwe, Malawi; right, Karambo-Kabale, Uganda

To facilitate a village resource mapping, you need to:

- √ Explain the purpose and process of mapping; Why you need a map/diagram
- √ Ask if farmers have done it before and how they did it. If some farmers have done mapping before, ask them to explain to others how they did it, and what type of information was included.
- √ Check how many people were involved. If many, it may be necessary to ask for a copy of the map, update it rather than drawing a new map.
- √ Explain what should be represented on the map. It may be easier to start with the community or village boundaries then major infrastructures, and then major natural resources or other key features of the village
- √ Ensure that the "symbols of power" (stick, markers, pencils) during diagramming are handed over to those that are not inclined to participate
- √ Remember to hand over the stick to farmers after showing an example on how to fill the matrix. This often enhances participation. They may be interesting gender differences for example that you need to capture and reflect on. You need to make sure you record differences in opinions expressed by different categories of farmers.
- √ Remember you are a facilitator not a passive observer. Make effective use of your facilitation skills to encourage participation. Use prompting questions when people appear at loss as what to do next. Ask probing questions to explore details omitted. Beware of those who dominate the process, and those who remain on the margin.
- √ Don't assume that all those present understand all the symbols, particularly if people are joining during the process. Try to clarify symbols with those who put them on the diagram.
- √ Interview the map: What is represented? Be sure that the farmers include direction indicators on the map (North, south, east and west) and that the village borders are clearly marked.
- √ Ensure that someone is taking notes on the various discussions that occur around the mapping exercise
- √ At the end of mapping/diagramming, review the maps/diagrams by asking farmers/groups to display, present and explain their map in

plenary where other farmers can ask questions, make comments, correct or give additional information to complete the map.

√ Crosscheck if everyone thought the exercise was useful and productive. If not explore ways to make it better next time

√ Provide appropriate positive feedback for genuine accomplishment.

√ After the discussion, ask people how useful the mapping was, and what they have learned through the process., and what uses they can make of the map. Then summarize the main uses of the map, and the importance of mapping present conditions before planning for the future.

√ Ensure that a copy of the diagram is returned to the community

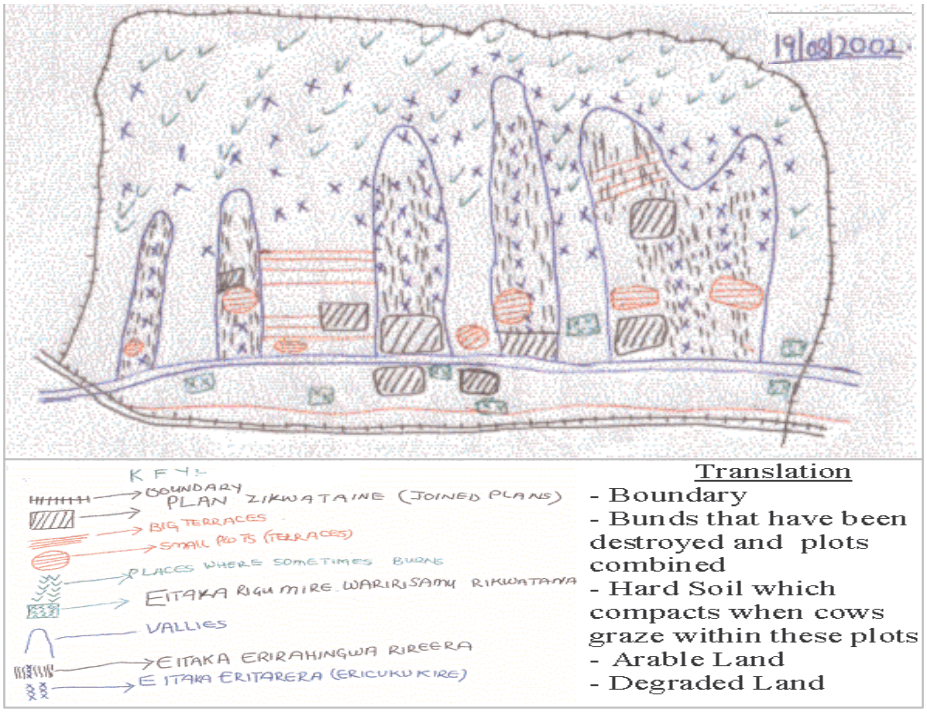


Figure 3: Participatory Land Degradation Assessment: Areas that are prone to bush burning, soil erosion and band destruction in the Buramba-Maugandu, Kabale District, Uganda.

Recent developments in GIS (Geographic information system) make it possible to complement and digitalize maps drawn by farmers in a participatory process, permitting the validation of location of the various components (topography, soils types, vegetation, altitude, geographic locations, etc…)

Box 11: What should be represented in a village resourc e map

1. Natural assets: village boundaries, main crops, livestock, tre s, forests, wetlands, hills, rivers, streams, soil types
2. Physical assets: houses, buildings, roads, paths, wat r points, markets, shops, churches, government buildings, schools, hospitals, clinics, and other important infrastructures
3. If you are interested in NRM, you need to prepare a c ecklist of questions you would ask, including:
   - What are the key natural resources you use in this village?
   - What are the main uses of natural resources? Who are the u sers?
   - Are there resources outside your village that you acces and are using?
   - How are these managed? What are the rules for access, onstraints and
   - Are there some "hot points" of erosion, soil degradation
   - Are there some resources shared by many membe s of the community? How access to and use of these resources is re ulated?
   - Are there problems in access, use and control of natural re ources by various socio-economic groups in the community?

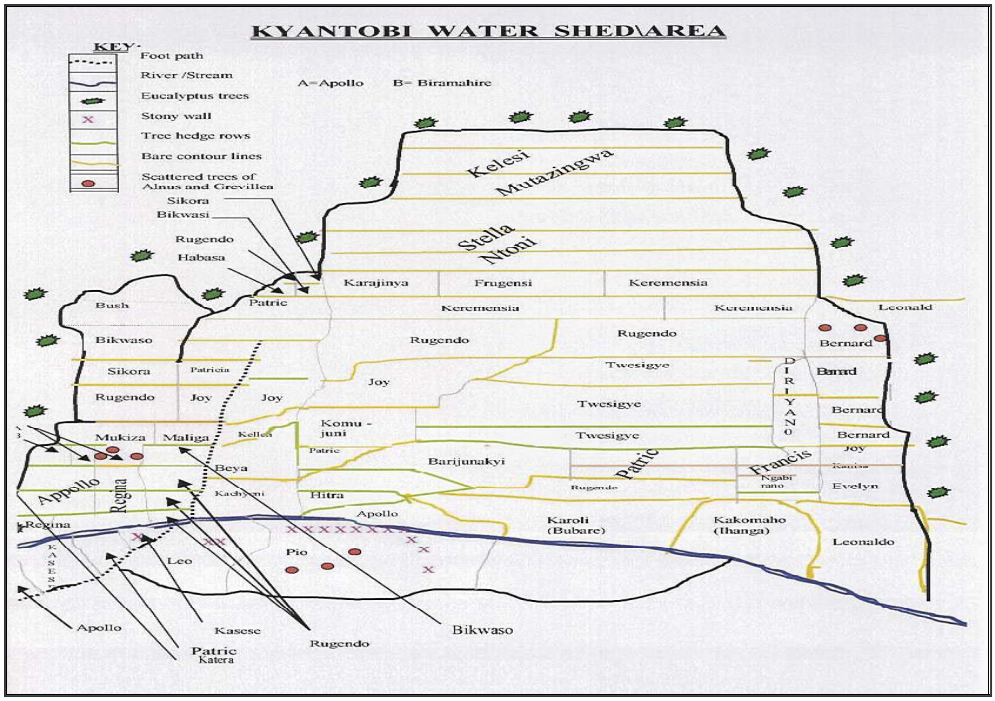


Fig. 4: Map of Kyantombi watershed, Source: AFRENA, Kabale

Tool 12: Community social mapping

The community social map is a participatory and visual tool that can complement the village resource map to learn more about the village organizational structure, and how differences among community members are defined. It can particularly be useful in locating and differentiating households, indicating their assets, community social positions such as membership to groups, wealth status and household status (female-headed households, the elderly, absentee husbands, etc).

The starting point of the community social map should be the village resource in which you can overlay information related to human and social capital, and if possible financial capital. The social map can give you indication on the number of households in the village and their principal activities, the social structure or family organization, the settlement pattern, ownership of resources, land tenure status, etc.

For relatively small communities, you can gather a lot more detailed information by asking the farmers to represent and locate each household on the map with the following information:

- √ Location of all households
- √ Household types (building materials
- √ Household status (female headed households, absentee husbands, elderly households
- √ Wealth categories (based on socially relevant criteria)
- √ Household assets (livestock, physical assets, oxen carts, bicycles, land sizes)
- √ Position in community or groups (leaders, chiefs, committee members)
- √ Important professions other than farmers (teachers, extension agents, government workers)
- √ Specific ethnic minorities or migrants
- √ Gender access and control of key resource

Different symbols can be used to show particular household socio-economic characteristics such as relative wealth, membership to group, farm type, female headed household, etc.

Picture 9: A community resource and social map, Tororo, Uganda

For big villages, this may be cumbersome, but the map can still provide information about the key social differentiation factors in the village. You can use a number of questions to probe more about the socio-economic differences between households based on the characteristics you are looking for.

A key aspect could be gender differences in access and control of key resources.

Tool 13: Gender Resource Mapping: Access to and Control of resources

This is a specific type of village resources or social map, focusing on gender differences in the access and control of resources. Men and women make different use of resources. It may be essential for your CV to understand gender division of labor and access to and control of resources. In this case you may have separate groups of men and women to draw their maps separately and indicate who controls or who has access to the resources, who provides most of the labor, etc. You can also use a village resource map in which men and women represent their intra-household division of labor, and control and access to resources

represented on the map. You will need to agree on the different symbols to represent men and women.

Tool 14: Preference ranking or scoring

The village resource map will generate a long list of crops, livestock and other important community enterprises. Farmers may need to decide on the five most important crops, livestock enterprises or natural resources they are interested in, and around which they will develop their community action plans. To do this, you will need to facilitate a preference ranking or scoring.

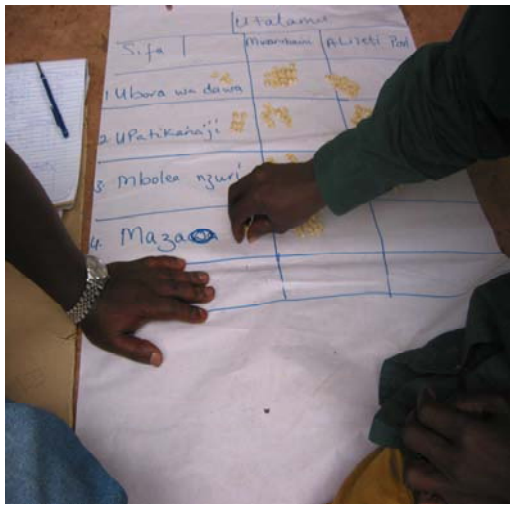
Preference ranking is a method in which farmers rank a range of options in order of their preference, and then discusses their reasons for the ranking. It is useful to obtain a clear picture (a) of farmer's preferences, and (b) the reasons or criteria used to form these preferences, and (c) to explore differences amongst farmers in their preferences by gender and other socio-economic categories.

Tips for conducting Preference Ranking

- Assist the farmer to rank the items,
- Ask the farmers to "think aloud" while making their rankings.
- Give the farmers an opportunity to physically sort, to order and re-order.
- Ask the farmer to clarify the reasons for a given ranking. This avoids the risk of making a simplistic ordering of options, which does not reflect the farmer's complex set of decision-making criteria.

  e.g. Why is this one better than the one you placed below it?

  Why is this one not as good as the one you placed above it?
- Equally important to an evaluation is understanding why the farmer rejects certain options.



Picture 10: Preference Ranking, left, and matrix scoring, right; Masindi, Uganda, and Hai, Tanzania

Table 8: Comparison between different technology or enterprises options

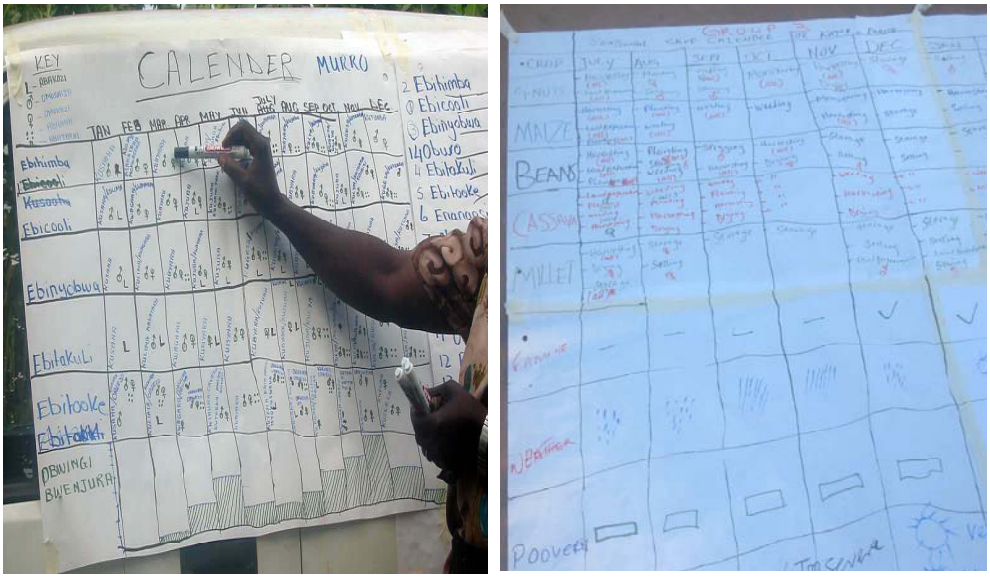
Pri rity opt ons	**Order of Preference By ender**		**Reasons for Preferen ce**

You can also use Matrix ranking and scoring to make a relative comparison between different technology or enterprises options, and to make a detailed analysis of how much and why people prefer one option above the other. Matrix scoring shows how well options meet predefined criteria. This method can be used to understand people's opinions on, for example, different service providers, on different technologies.

Tool 15: Seasonal crop activity calendar and gender division of labour

The preference ranking and scoring will generate a limited number of products that provide income to the farming community. The next step is to do a seasonal crop activity calendar. Seasonal crop activity calendars can reveal how different activities are performed, help to identify bottleneck periods, and the different activities performed by men and

women. Seasonal calendars can also provide insight into rainfall patterns, labor demand, crop sequences and identifying periods of particular stresses and vulnerability. They also provide insights into the gender division of labor, and how access to and control of resources varies according to gender.



Picture 11: Seasonal crop activity calendar with gender division of labour; Masindi and Tororo , Uganda.

To facilitate a seasonal crop activity calendar, you need to:

- √ Brainstorm on the most important crops or enterprises.
- √ Make a priority list of most important crops, livestock or natural resources. Limit this list to a manageable size. The list of crops and enterprises could form the rows of the table. It may be useful to use drawing of selected crops or livestock, rather than writing.
- √ Agree on which month to start with (current month, beginning of the cropping season, or beginning of the year, whichever farmers find easy to start with). The months of the year could form the columns.
- √ With the crops/enterprises in rows and months in columns, you will have a matrix.
- √ Take one crop (row) and ask which activity is performed in the first month (column), by who (men, women, or both; hired labor,

children, etc.). Agree on symbols to represent men, women, children and hired labor). Focus the discussion on who does what, when and why?

- √ After completing all the rows and columns, you will have a calendar with a key to the symbols.
- √ The calendar should then be presented in plenary for confirmation and to check for different opinions.
- √ You may then ask the plenary to identify periods of vulnerability (hunger, diseases, financial crisis, etc.) or rainfall patterns, period of food or income scarcity, etc. These could be represented in bar graphs or line.

- § What creates vulnerability for household members e.g. food insecurity, shortage of cash, etc pushing them into poverty? (Are these seasonal or longer term? Can they be anticipated?)
- § Have they experienced any difficulties recently? How did they deal with the situation?

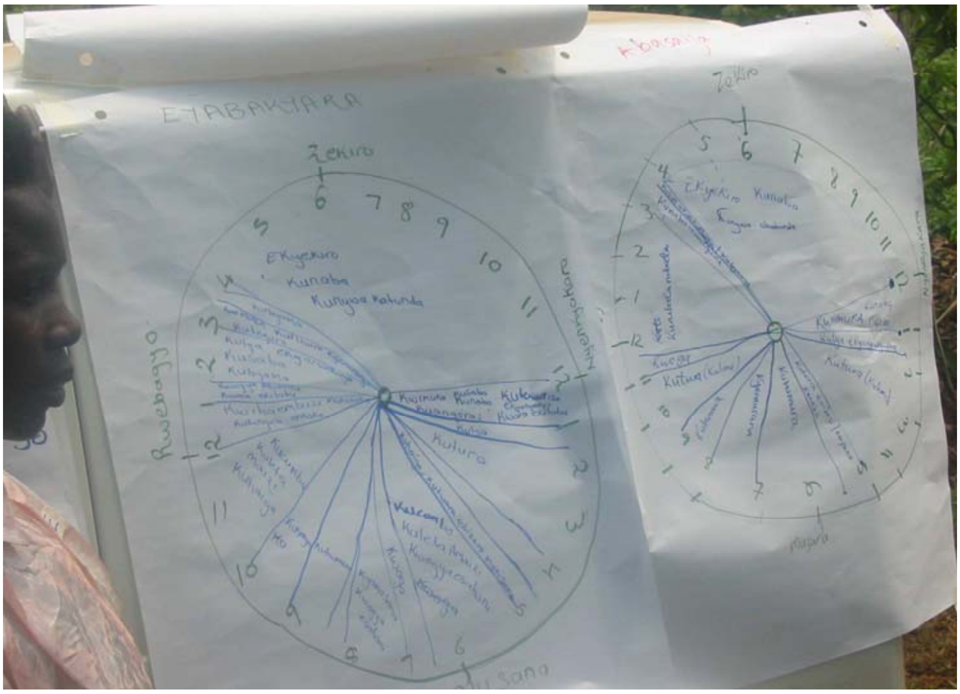
You can use the gender roles and decision-making framework to facilitate feedback and plenary discussion. Some of the questions below can be useful:

- √ What are household members (men, women and children's) tasks and time allocation in cropping, livestock management, food preparation, water and firewood collection, social and leisure activities.
- √ What ownership or access do women of the household have over agricultural land, trees, and livestock? Who has rights to sell land, crops, and livestock? Who is consulted?
- √ Who makes decisions in the household on crop choices, crop management decisions, crop sales
- √ What are the responsibilities of husband, wife or other household adults, for managing income?
  - § income from crops and livestock
  - § income from non farm occupations
  - § Large amounts of money.

Tool 16: Daily activity routine

This tool helps to depict daily routines or patterns of activity of different groups of people, men and women, looking at how the majority of men and women spend their time in a typical day. It is useful not only for making assessment of daily tasks performed by men and women, but as an entry point for discussing intra-household gender issues. It shows the busiest time of the day, and can therefore be useful in helping plan the timing of project-related activities. For example, the chart can show the most appropriate time of the day for organizing meetings with women and men.

The daily activity routine chart is best done by a small group of people, preferably in separate groups of men and women. When presenting the chart, the representatives of each group should explain their diagram. At the end of the presentations, discuss the reasons for any differences, and what strategies can be used to reduce apparent gender imbalance.



Picture 12: Daily activity routine for women (left) and men (right), Masindi, Uganda

To facilitate a daily activity routine chart:

- √ Brainstorm on routine activities and timing in a typical normal day of a specific season. List these activities and their time on a flipchart
- √ Draw a 2□-hour clock (using local time system) and ask participants to fill in their activities. You may show an example and then hand over the stick to participants to facilitate the process.
- √ Use effective facilitation skills to facilitate consensus and check for different opinions
- √ In the plenary compare men's and women's daily routine and invite comments
- √ Facilitate plenary discussion in a "non-activist' feminist manner, but do not avoid conflicting and sensitive issues. Instead, facilitate an open discussion (see module on dealing with conflicts)
- √ At the end of the discussion, ask what the implications are and what can be done or needs to be done about gender issues. This is an opportunity to single out gender as a special area of intervention, and for visioning.

Tool 17: Market Chain Analysis[18]

Given the growing interest in linking farmers to markets, a practical starting point in developing a marketing strategy is to assist farmers to visualize their market chain from beginning to end, from the resources and activities on farm and the production of basic goods, to where produce is sold.

A market chain analysis map is useful as it permits to visualise the different points in the production and marketing chain and the roles that different actors play at different stages of the chain. It facilitates the identification and analysis of critical points impeding the development of

[18] For details see Kaganzi, E.; Best, R.; Wandscheneider T.; Ostertag, C.; Lundy, M., and Ferris, S. 2005. A Market Facilitator's Guide for Agroenterprise Development. Enabling Rural Innovation Guide 2. International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, Cali, Colombia

a market chain, and where improved and or alternative interventions that can be applied to improve the chain

In mapping market chain, the group of farmers will draw (using symbols, figures and arrows) the production-to-consumption route of a selected product. The map or route should include the different chain links, plus the actors and main functions in each chain link. It is important is to describe the flow of the product, quantities and prices and market outlets in such a way that all the community members can see and discuss it.

The results of the questions should be noted on the map itself or by one of the facilitators of the process in his/her notes. These greatly enrich the original map and show participants how much they already know about the market chain.

The different crops or products can be represented with different colours or symbols, while the different market outlets can be ranked by order of their importance. The flows should be represented by different types of arrows indicating direction and importance.

The final output of the market chain analysis map provides an initial market option portfolio by identifying:

- √ products with a high market demand
- √ products in scarce supply
- √ products that provide most income to the largest number of farmers in the target group.
- √ products being imported into the territory
- √ products in which the territory of interest enjoys a competitive advantage.
- √ specific commodity groups, such as soft fruits, or highly perishable vegetables.
- √ products associated with the conservation of natural resources
- √ products that are higher risk, but grown locally and known to be in increasing demand.

Table 9: Checklist for Market Chain Analysis

Market chain functions	**Observations/ Comments**
Production characterization	
Where is the commodity produced?	
How much is being produced, monthly or annually?	
How many farmers are currently producing?	
How much is sold, monthly or annually?	
What is the seasonality of supply during the year?	
What are the current average yields (average and ranges) (kgs/ha)	
Market characteristics	
Where do we sell what we produce (Market outlets and distance, means of transport)	
What is the frequency of markets?	
What else do we buy from this market?	
What is the importance of the markets	
What are the main constraints in the chain?	
Market Actors and Institutions	
Who are the buyers? Where do they come from?	
How many farmers are involved in marketing?	
Are there some market development institutions and services (credit, information, infrastructures, inputs…)	
Product Prices	
What is the average price of the products by units in the different markets?	
When are prices very high? How much?	
When are prices very low? How much?	
What is the form of payment at each stage of the chain?	

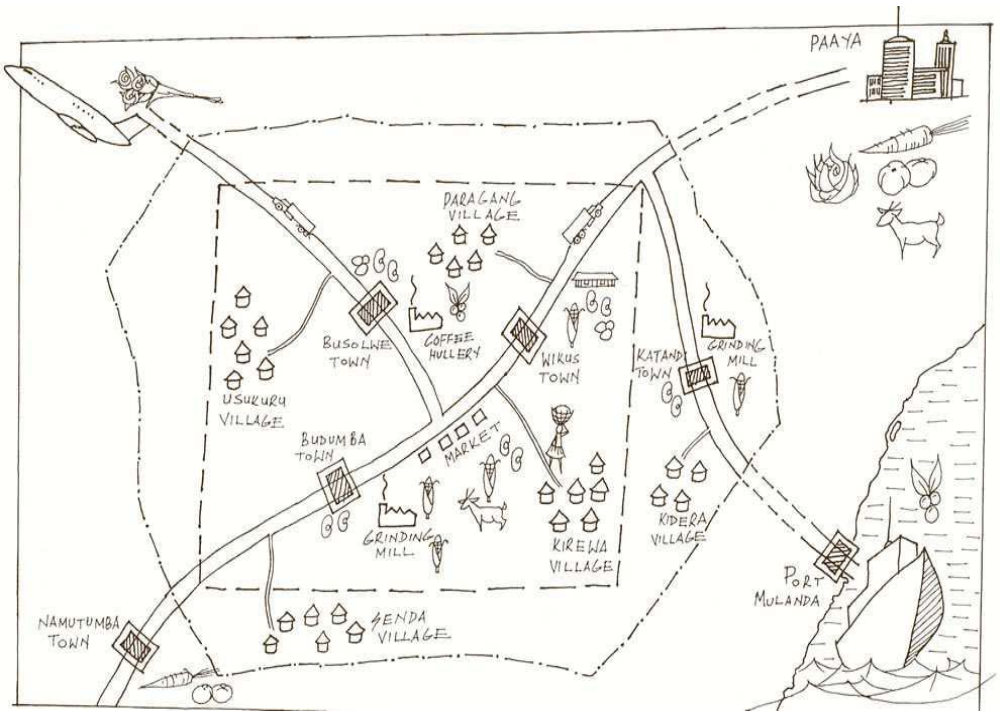


Figure 5: Market chain analysis map (Source: Kaganzi et al., 2005)

Tool 18: Venn Diagram

It is important to make an inventory of institutions and stakeholders that are operating in the community and that can be involved in helping the communities achieve its vision of desired future conditions. To do this, you can facilitate a Venn diagram to represent the relationships between institutions and relative importance to the community.

Venn diagram is a participatory tool used to identify institutions and organizations and their linkages. It aims to illustrate the extent to which individuals, organizations, institutions interact or overlap with each other, the relative importance of each, and their efforts and contributions to an intervention or issue being discussed.

Box 12: To facilitate a Venn diagram

- List individuals, organizations, institutions or projects in and outside the village that have influence on or interest in the project or intervention. These are potential stakeholders.
- The community, group, intervention or issue to be evaluated or discussed is represented by a big circle in the centre.
- Each entity is represented by a circle. The size of the circle is determined by the importance of the institutions or organizations. The importance of the interaction or linkages is represented by the size and the distance of the circle.
- Large circles represent powerful or important individuals, institutions or organization.
- The larger the circle, the more important or powerful the stakeholders.
- The closer the circle, the more interactions or linkages stakeholders have with the intervention or issues.
- A small circle within a larger circle represents a component of the stakeholders or organizations.
- Arrows can be used to indicate the direction and nature of linkages or interactions between stakeholders. Intersections or overlaps between circles can also be used to indicate such interactions.

The use of Venn diagrams is appropriate in the following situations:

- In assessing linkages and relationships between the primary stakeholders and other local and external stakeholders and organizations.
- In mapping relationships and relative importance and influence or proximity of different stakeholders
- In identifying hidden local and external stakeholders who may be potentially linked to primary stakeholders.
- In assessing changes in relationships and linkages, and in identifying levels of pressure points to promote changes in future.

Further discussions may tackle issues such as stakeholders' capacity and influence in the intervention. However, in some situations Venn diagram may appear too abstract to farmers. An alternative is to use a stakeholder analysis matrix (see tool 5), focusing on interactions and interests in the community.

Picture 13: Venn diagram of external organisations in Kabale, Uganda

7.4 Facilitating Collective Analysis and Reflection

Representatives of the working groups should present their reports to the plenary, reporting both process and content. The order should be logical, starting from community resource maps and social maps, followed by seasonal crop/resources calendar, gender daily activity chart, and finally stakeholder matrix or venn diagram.

Box 13: Tips for facilitating collective analysis of CV results

- √ Use effective facilitation skills for moderating plenary discussions, encouraging group members to contribute and make additions if any before asking other participants to comment and ask questions.
- √ Make sure the most vocal and educated members of the group do not dominate the presentations. Encourage participation of women and others who may not be given the opportunity to present.
- √ Ask prompting questions to check for omissions and make suggestions for improvement.
- √ Give positive feedback to the group, and reflect on what has been learned: Why are we doing this? What does it tell us? What shall we do?
- √ Make sure you take notes of presentations and discussions, as well as farmers' behaviour and your observations.
- √ Arrange to leave or return copies of the different group tasks to the group.

8. Facilitating the Development of Community Action Plans

8.1 Reaching the Long-Term Goals: Defining Expected Results

Visioning provides a good basis for planning as it builds upon people's own dreams. Working from a vision helps to open up people's minds to other ways of overcoming problems and realizing opportunities. Visioning helps people to think in terms of long-term vision, beyond the immediacy of daily problems.

The objectives of the session is to stimulate farmers to work towards meeting some, or all of the long-term objectives by deciding what needs to be done to meet them. These will form the development results, or the outcomes and outputs of the project.

Throughout this process it is critical to use probing and open-ended questions to get expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. Some key guiding questions for developing long-term visions with communities include:

- What would be different in 5-10 years if you were successful?
- What achievements can you realistically expect in 3-5 year time
- What changes would you like to see in 3-5 years?

Tool 19: Mapping Community Visions of desired future conditions

This is similar to resources mapping done by farmers in the previous day. However, the focus here is to look into the future, to dream about their desired future conditions. Based on the village resource and social maps, the facilitator can ask participants to consider what the ideal future condition would be if research were successful.

This builds on the dream and imagine stage (starting with the end in sight) to depict changes they would like to see in the community or village. The future map should then be compared with current situations.

Figure 6: Community Visioning of desired future conditions

Guiding questions will include:

- √ *If you have one thing, just one thing you can change, what would that be?*
- √ *What changes do you want to try to bring about in your community?*
- √ *What would be different in 3-5 years if the program were successful?*
- √ *How can the project best contribute to this vision?*

8.1.1 Crossing the River: the Stepping Stones (Outputs)

Farmers should identify the short term, immediate, visible and concrete and tangible developmental results that they can produce. These should be the immediate consequences of project inputs and activities. They are also the direct products or services delivered by the project, and are the first signs of impacts.

To help farmers define these short-term and long-term outputs, you can ask:

- What would be different in 2–3 years if you were successful?
- What achievements can you realistically expect in a year time?
- What changes would you like to see in the first six months?
- What do you need to do to bring about these changes?

Tool 20: Force Field Analysis

After identifying these short-term changes and results that community members would like to achieve, the next stage is to analyse the factors that can contribute or constrain their success. For this you can use force field analysis.

Force field analysis can be used as a visual technique based on "now" or before and after scenarios. It is a way of generating a shared vision of a future livelihood outcomes and an agreed strategy for achieving the livelihood outcomes. You can facilitate the group to analyze these fields of forces in order to set the stage for determining what strategies and actions are needed in order to increase the number or power of the driving forces and reduce the restraining forces to achieve planned livelihood outcomes.

The basic premise of the force field analysis is that any complex situation can be defined as a "field" in which multiple forces interact, some of which complement each other, while others operate in opposition. That is, there are both **driving** forces and **restraining** forces operating in any field or situation. They exist in virtually all aspects of life and many levels of human and organizational interaction.

√ Driving forces create pressure that pushes in the direction of some preferred conditions or desired state, which is in support of change. These are **opportunities**.

√ Restraining forces also generate pressure that work in support of maintaining the status quo or present condition, that is against change or interfere with the progress or achievement of progress. These are **constraints**

In force field analysis:

- Ask one participant to draw the river as in the river code
- Explain that one side of the river is the current situation (where we are now) as shown on the maps, seasonal calendars, daily routines, Venn diagrams
- The other side of the river represents a better situation sometime in the future (where we want to be)

- The stepping-stones in the river represent the forces that can assist us in moving forward to cross to the other side of the river (driving forces)
- The current in the river represent constraints or restraining forces that are in the way of achieving desired goals
- What have been the main changes in livelihoods over the last 5-10 years?
- What are your priorities and strategies for achieving improvements in your livelihoods? Why are these paths preferred?
- What changes in organisations or policies would be necessary to support these strategies?
- In what areas could policies be developed to better support their livelihoods?
- Could other local institutions be more effective in supporting livelihoods? Which ones and in what ways?

Figure 7: Obstacles and constraints for crossing the river

A more popular use of Force Field Analysis is SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis as a qualitative participatory tool for identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to a project or group.

i. **S**trengths are those things that are working well in a project or situation, these aspects people are proud to talk about.
ii. **W**eaknesses are those things that have not worked so well.
iii. **O**pportunities are ideas to overcome weaknesses and build on strengths.
iv. **T**hreats are the things that constrain or threaten the range of opportunities for change.

As a participatory technique for planning SWOT analysis encourages partners to take failures or weaknesses and transform them into constructive learning processes.

Force field analysis can be used as a visual technique based on "now" or "before" and "after" scenarios. It is a way of generating a shared vision of future livelihood outcomes and an agreed strategy for achieving the livelihood outcomes.

You can facilitate the group to analyse these fields of forces in order to set the stage for determining what strategies and actions are needed in order to increase the number or power of the driving forces and reduce the restraining forces to achieve planned livelihood outcomes.

Box 14: Basic Principles for initiating Change in Grou ps

√ Change is a process, not a decision.
√ Change requires experience and practice in the new way of doin things.
√ Make one or two changes at a time. Do not attempt to tackle ev rything at once.
√ Change takes time.
√ Allow time for change to take place. Change is never easy, a nd people need time to learn new ways of working together
√ Keep the goal in mind. Accomplish something frequently toward ne goal.
√ Do not let time go by without moving the desired direction
√ Use planning and regular evaluation of progress as tools to m(ve toward the goal.
√ Have patience with people. Change is difficult and even thre tening for some. People resist change, even when it is for the better.
√ Do not play God. Be realistic but positive about what you can a complish, acknowledging constraints, and plan accordingly.

8.1.2 Developing Community Action Plans

Explain the objectives of the session by linking it to previous sessions. This is the last session to make plans, agreements and commitments on things we would like to start working on.

Refer to the *River Code* and highlight the steppingstones, and what farmers need to do to reach the different steppingstones. These are activities.

Once the priorities are ranked and decided by the farmers, explain the five questions for developing action plans

- What should be our priorities for crops and livestock?
- For each priority, what problems do we want to solve?
- How can we solve these problems? What can we do to solve these problems?
- Who can help us address these problems? What do we need from them?
- When do we want to start?

You also can use the change formula below to develop community action plans.

Box 15: Effective Change formula :
SCE = D x Vx S_{fs} xB
Where:
SCE= Success of a Change Effort
D=Dissatisfaction with current condition
V=Vision of Desired future condition
S=Steps and fs=First steps
B=Belief in the Success of the effort

Make sure farmers understand this by asking one of them to summarize and explain to others, before dividing farmers into groups. Depending on the number of participants, you can divide farmers into 3-□ groups:

- Men's group
- Women's group
- Mixed group
- Youth group

Each group is to develop a community action plan specifying priority things they would like to be addressed, i.e. crops, livestock, markets, training and group development. A matrix of such an exercise is given in Table 10 below.

Group discussions can take up to one hour or more. Reconvene in Plenary for presentations and discussions. Facilitate consensus on major crops/livestock identified as priorities, but also note differing opinions and new ideas.

Explain that these are still preliminary plans that both farmers and the R&D team need to reflect on. You need to harmonize these plans with your plans. Make a plan for follow up and developing more realistic plans.

8.1.3 Selecting Committees to get things done

When the group is too large, it may be important to break big groups into small sub-groups or committees to accomplish specific tasks. This will increase efficiency by dividing the task and by giving as many people as possible chance to work closely with everyone else, and to increase everyone's learning and involvement. Sub-committees also encourage members who have certain expertise to take leaderships on certain tasks or aspects of the community action plan.

Encourage people to form their own committees or subgroups, making certain that they all understand the objectives and the roles of committees or subgroups. There would probably be an overall executive committee in charge of coordination and overall leadership of the group. You should be careful not to create leadership conflicts at this stage for existing groups with their existing leadership structures.

Table 10: Community Action Planning Matrix

What do we want to work on?	What do we want to achieve? (*V*)	What is the situation now? (*D*)	What can we do to improve (*S*)	What are the chances of success? (*B*)	What do we need to do first? When (fs)	Who should be responsible?
Existing options						
1						
2						
3						
New opportunities						
1						
2						
3						
Markets						
1						
2						
3						
Group development						
1						
2						
3						
Gender						

Box 16: Functions of sub-committees in farmers' groups

- They allow many people to participate in group activities and take responsibilities
- They foster leadership development in the community
- They facilitate division of labour, roles and responsibilities
- They allow for the executive committee to delegate tasks, and decentralise power and responsibilities
- They facilitate rapid response and coordination
- The foster feedback to groups and community members

Based on the action plans and the type of activities selected by the farmers, there could be:

- √ A research committee in charge of experimentation
- √ A market or income committee
- √ An NRM committee
- √ A monitoring committee, if the responsibilities of the overall committee do not include PM&E

You should encourage group members to keep the number of committees to the minimum to avoid creating too many sub-groups. They also need to keep the larger group intact, and regularly bring the subgroups together for discussions and sharing, review and decision-making. If they don't, they may end up with several smaller teams instead of one large team. This may create conflicts in the group and may limit efficiency.

The roles and responsibilities of each committee should be clear to every one before selecting members of these committees. You should therefore facilitate a brainstorming session on this, as well as on criteria for selecting members for each committee. Farmers should also determine how many people each committee should have. Subcommittees should not be too big. An odd number is better than an even number (3-5).

Fig 8: Selecting committees to get things done

Committees are made up of community members who either volunteer or are voted to be committee members. The group should first discuss the roles and responsibilities of each committee member and agree on important criteria for selecting people on these committees. Some communities used the following criteria for selecting members:

- √ Gender distribution, representation of both men and women
- √ Ability to read and write (not always required)
- √ Patient, hardworking, active keen learner and listener
- √ Willing to share ideas, findings with members
- √ Ability to give feedback to others,
- √ Willing to try new things and be a risk taker (Inquisitive)
- √ Willing to devote required time and efforts to committee and tasks

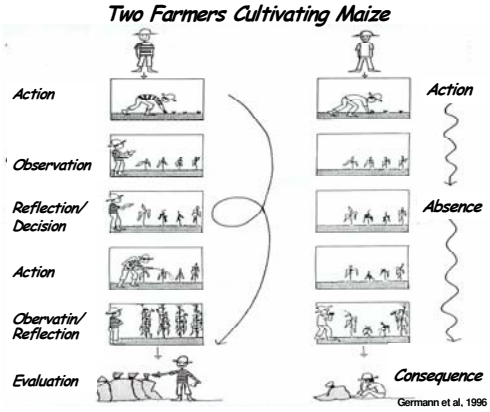
In some other communities, the following criteria were considered important in selecting members of sub-committees

- √ Should not be a drunkard
- √ Should not be involved in more than two development committees
- √ Should be recognized as an expert in the crop or enterprise
- √ Should be unselfish

8.1.4 Introducing Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) [19]

It is important to set up from the beginning an effective system for monitoring and evaluation of the community action plans. You will need to find simple ways of introducing PM&E concepts to farmers. One approach we have found particularly effective form of communication for knowledge transmission is the use of graphics and drawings. By using graphics the concepts can be quickly and clearly reaffirmed, regardless of the participants' level of schooling.

Tool 21: PM&E Graphics



Picture 14.: Using graphics to introduce participatory monitoring and evaluation concepts and principles

1. The facilitator should display in a visible place the drawings above (or any other) and ask farmers to observe.

2. The facilitator then asks some farmers to describe and explain the graphics:

- What do you observe in the graphics?
- What is the farmer doing?
- What is the difference between the two graphics?

[19] For more details, see Sanginga, P.; Opondo, C.; Kaaria, S., and Njuki, □ forthcoming. Grounding Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in Agricultural Research for Development: Enabling Rural Innovation Guide #3. International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, CIAT Kampala, Uganda.

- Explain what you are observing?
- Why is there a difference between the two graphics?

3. It is important to identify the local vocabularies for the terms participatory, monitoring and evaluation. It is important to use examples from local people's daily life to facilitate understanding of concepts.

The facilitator can lead a discussion about the importance of PM&E based on the discussion generated by the graphic

Box 17: PM&E "Saves you from falling into a pit".

Monitoring and Evaluation is "Stopping to think before continuing"

Monitoring and evaluation helps to correct and identify any chan ges as we implement a project activity so that desired results are achieved.

PM&E is done to check if project objectives are met or not and gu de on way forward.

To ensure that we do not go off-track as regards set objectives.

To correct misunderstanding or mistakes in time.

To ensure attainment of objectives, to remain on track (not forgetti g vision)

To ensure smooth progress of the planned activities and assess he impact of the project

To check positive or negative progress.

To ensure good performance and sustainability of a project since obstacles are identified early and changes made.

Have corrective measures and assess performance, progress, ailure and achievements of the project in line with the project objectives.

8.1.5 Agreeing on the next steps and way forward

Explain that these are still preliminary plans that both farmers and the R&D team need to reflect on. Farmers need to further reflect on the plans before they are finalized. The team will also need to harmonize these plans with their organizations' plans and their own work plans. However, to maintain the momentum generated by the CV process, you

can make commitments for some options, which were selected for food security.

At this stage, it is important to revisit the community action plans, summarize the main points and decide on the next steps or the first steps for implementation of the community action plans. Plans for follow up could include:

- √ Community reflection and Feedback of results
- √ Selection of committees
- √ Plans for designing experiments and demonstrations
- √ Market visits
- √ Training

Use the six helpers to determine what the next steps should be (see table 11 below):

8.2 Keep the End in Sight: Developing and agreeing on an "Exit Strategy"

It is important to develop and agree on an exit strategy from the beginning of the project. Farmers, communities as well as service providers should be well aware that the project has a time frame, and there would eventually be an end to the project, a time when the project will phase out. This time will vary depending on the type of activities, the objectives of the project as well as the community action plans developed during the visioning and action planning processes.

The discussion on an exit strategy should focus on three sets of questions?

1. When should the project end? How long do you want to work with us? When do you think you should be able to implement things on your own, without external assistance?
2. What are the success factors? What are the things you would like to see before the project is terminated?
3. What roles would you like the service providers to play after this time? How can we make sure that you will be able to continue on your own?

Table 11: The six helpers used to determine what the next steps should be:

What	When	Where	Who
Organize a feedback to community and village council	Next week Friday at the community meeting (start at 09.00 am)	Village church	Group leaders, mobilizers and secretary. Each group should present results Invite Extension and Local government staff

The first question would generate some discussion, and resistance from farmers who would argue that there is no end to learning and friendship. They may argue that partnership is like in a marriage where people come together for life. You will need to emphasise that you as a development organisation will not have justification to work only with their community or group, and that there are many other farmers, groups or communities that need assistance. There is no way you can be there forever, and there will be a time when you have to phase out.

Refer to the river code, and explain that eventually the person who was led was eventually able to cross the river after seeing how to do it. Then come back to the first question: How long would it take you to be able to cross the river alone? How many years do you want to work together?

Brainstorm on these questions by asking people to explain their responses. If your project has a time frame, usually based on your level of funding, use that time frame to guide discussion. Facilitate a consensus within the group.

The process of developing an exit strategy should include:

- √ Agree on a time frame
- √ Set clear targets, milestones, and performance indicators
- √ Conduct monitoring and reflection regularly, refine milestones
- √ Build in sustainability mechanisms (funding, partnerships, mentoring…)
- √ Do a joint evaluation at the end of the specified time
- √ Agree on exit strategy
- √ Define new roles and responsibilities

The time frame for exit would depend on several factors including the type of resources you are dealing with, the nature of the project, the level of group maturity, agro-ecological (seasons) conditions. For example in ERI pilot sites, the time frame for developing sustainable agro-enterprises (for new varieties) would take 3 to□ years.

- √ Year 1: Group development, market opportunity identification and experimentation
- √ Year 2: experimentation and seed multiplication (bimodal rainfall)

- √ Year 3: Seed multiplication and production, agro-enterprise development
- √ Year □: Marketing

This time frame would vary depending on the types of enterprises and markets, as well as level of group development. For existing products and existing markets, the process may be much shorter, whereas for new products that require a phase of experimentation, the process would be slower. When the group is already well organised, the process is much faster compared to new groups that need time for group strengthening.

The level of skills and commitment of service providers would also affect time for phasing out.

Box 18: Exit strategy: When do we phase out?

- √ When objectives have been achieved
- √ When community action plans have been implemented
- √ When the steps of the methodology are completed, and partne s are able to adapt and replicate
- √ When communities and partners have the ability to continue th e process, and have started to do so
- √ When after some time (1-2 years), we recognize failure, the pr ject is not making progress
- √ When funding for the project stops
- √ When groups are successfully linked to markets and are able o manage their resources
- √ When groups have strong structures and are linked to oth er service providers
- √ When groups are able to initiate their own activities, witho ut or little facilitation
- √ When groups have developed their own sustainable funding me chanisms.

8.3. Concluding the meeting

To conclude the meeting, consider the following:

- √ Express gratitude for the time spent together.
- √ Mention things you have learned throughout the CV.
- √ Each team member should thank the farmers for their participation.
- √ Invite comments and questions.
- √ Respond to questions honestly.
- √ Don't try to answer all questions. For some questions, you may refer farmers to the river code, and get other questions responded to by other farmers.
- √ Don't promise what you cannot deliver.
- √ Leave some materials in the community (flip charts, markers, note books). This may be used for community meetings, or next time when you return
- √ Observe protocols for closing the meeting. (by inviting the leader of the group, or local authority to give closing remarks, prayer etc.)

Before leaving, spend some time chatting with individual farmers (perhaps the less active ones) on your way out of the community. This is important to start crating individual rapports.

9. Reporting and Sharing Results

9.1 Team Review and Reflection

Remember to organize a team meeting the last day to reflect and review the entire process and make plans to discuss the next steps.

The agenda of the meeting should include:

i. Reflections on the process

- Review the steps in the process:
- How we went about it?
- What went well? What did not go so well? How can we improve?
- What have we learnt?

ii. Review the content:

- What tools were used in the field?
- What information was collected?
- What gaps need to be filled?
- What are the emerging issues?
- Discuss plan for report writing (outline, roles and responsibilities, timing)

iii. Next steps: issues to discuss may include plans for

- Refining and finalizing the community action plans
- Preparing for feedback to communities
- Facilitating selection of committees

iv. Discuss outline of the report, including roles, and responsibilities and timeframes.

Tool 22: After Action Review (AAR)

You can use the AFTER ACTION REVIEW (AAR) tool to facilitate team reflection. AAR's main purpose is learning by talking and thinking about a completed activity. Its goal is simply to state lessons learned,

rather than to solve problems or criticize. The exercise aims to capture the lessons before they are forgotten.

Box 19: Basic rules of After Action Review (AAR)

- √ Focus on constructive feedback.
- √ Recognize positive contributions.
- √ Give all participants the chance to share their ideas and to be hear .
- √ AAR focuses on process, not individual performance.
- √ Participants must thus ask themselves what others could benefit.
- √ AAR allows people to realize what they have learned by thinking about the seven questions below:
  - § What was supposed to happen? Why?
  - § What actually happened? Why?
  - § What is the difference? Why?
  - § What went well? Why?
  - § What could have gone better? Why?
  - § What lessons can we learn?
  - § What can we do next time to improve? How?

You can also use the following questions from Robert Chambers' Fun with 21s to generate questions for reflection.

1. How did I/we behave? How should I/we behave when we visit you? What should we do and not do?
2. What am I/are we now going to do? What actions are needed? What are people now expecting? What commitments have I/we entered into? How can I/we fulfil these?
3. What will happen after I/we leave? What sort of process is likely to go on in the community? Is anyone liable to be penalised?
4. What did I/we leave undone? What did we miss, leave out? What remains to be done?
5. What questions would 'you' (local people) like to ask 'us'? What other questions should we be asking ourselves?
6. What lessons can I/we learn from this experience? What would we do differently, knowing what we now know? What advice would we now give to others?

9.2 Preparing for Data Analysis and Report writing

The CV process will yield a lot of information, maps, tables, statements and narratives. You will then wonder what to pay attention to and how much weight to give to different types of data. Qualitative data analysis is much more complex than statistical analysis because it is based on open ended questions allowing participants to respond differently, change their opinions and discuss with others.

Qualitative analysis is mostly based on the analysis of words, not numbers. The analysis seeks to understand and explain the meanings of the words, that is, analysing their content. When analysing qualitative data, it is useful to look for certain regularities or patterns that emerge from the numerous observations and interviews made during fieldwork.

Principles of Qualitative analysis

The following principles should guide you when doing a narrative analysis.

- *Let your objectives guide the analysis:* Your analysis should be guided by the SLA framework and reflect the objectives of CV.
- *Don't get locked into one way of thinking:* Narrative analysis seeks to depict reality as experienced and understood by the farmers. The analysis benefits from corrective feedback from different sources: participants, research team, decision-makers. Narrative analysis is also a process of comparison: finding patterns, making comparisons and contrasting information, finding negative evidence. Once you have identified actions and statements that support the main ideas, you need to compare positive and negative cases, by checking the range of perspectives, that is, how widely the cases are distributed through a number of different situations.
- *Questions are the raw materials of analysis:* The analysis is directly related to the CV checklist or guiding questions. A critical aspect of narrative analysis is to focus the analysis and concentrate attention on areas of critical concern.
- *Effective analysis goes beyond words:* The analysis does not focus only on the responses and words given by the farmers. The actions and behaviours of people tell a great deal, and the analysis should include

all other factors in the communication (body languages, tones and voices, gestures)

- *Early analysis can move the study to higher levels*: Early findings can be incorporated into later analyses for the purpose of confirmation or amplification.
- *Analysis must have the appropriate level of interpretation*: The level of interpretation must meet stakeholder needs, but also be practical and manageable
- *Analysis must be practical and appropriate to the situation*: Narrative analysis is guided by practicality. The environment and the context give insights about the nature of the analysis. The analysis should be made simple and straightforward, although for some stakeholders more complex processes are needed.

Box 20: Critical ingredients of qualitative analysis

√ Analysis must be systematic: Systematic analysis follows a prescribed, sequential process, which is not arbitrary or spontaneous.

√ Analysis must be verifiable: Another researcher should be able to arrive at similar conclusions using available documents, field notes, debriefing documents and raw data.

√ Analysis requires time: qualitative analysis begins earlier and lasts longer than quantitative analysis. Data gathering and data analysis in qualitative analysis is a simultaneous process.

√ Analysis is jeopardized by delay: Delays erode the quality of analysis, overtime memories of the contextual factors may be lost, and with it important information.

√ Analysis should seek to enlighten: The guiding principle of analysis is to lift the level of understanding and learning.

√ Analysis should entertain alternative explanations: Alternative views are sought out and eagerly examined, rival explanations need to be cross examined to provide a better understanding of a breadth of situation

√ Analysis is improved by feedback: Analysis benefits from corrective feedback from different sources: participants, research team, decision-makers.

√ Analysis is a process of comparison: The most useful strategy in qualitative research is finding patterns, making comparisons and contrasting information, finding negative evidence.

√ Analysis is situational responsive: Qualitative analysis is dynamic and responsive to the context and different situations.

9.3 Preparing Reports of CV

You will need to prepare a technical report to your organisation and other partners and stakeholders. A good report must:

- √ Present a true and accurate account of the CV and CAP process
- √ Be easy to read and understand
- √ Be informative and definitive, not only descriptive
- √ Be written clearly, in a simple style
- √ Include all the necessary illustrations, results and informative materials
- √ Be well organised and structured

Some organisations may have formats for reporting, while other do not have prescribed formats. The outline for reporting CV results may follow the IMRAD format (Introduction, Materials and Methods; Results and Discussion) and includes an executive summary and a conclusion.

Tool 23: IMRAD

The IMRAD format stands for:

- √ **I**ntroduction (Why did we do the work?),
- √ **M**ethod (What did we do?),
- √ **R**esults (What did we find?)
- √ **A**nd
- √ **D**iscussion (What do the results mean? What needs to be done now?).

We describe below the main components of a good report.

9.3.1 Introduction

The introduction should clearly explain the context of the project, programme or organization and cover a description of the goal to which the organization, programme project sought to contribute.

You need to:

- √ Explain why the report should be read;
- √ Explain why you conduct a CV and CAP, and how it is different from other approaches;

- √ Explain the context of the CV, and your interest in working with rural communities in a more empowering process;
- √ Outline the nature, scope and context of your organization, programme or project, providing some background to the reader
- √ Explain the approach and its significance
- √ Clearly outline the objectives and expected outputs of the CV and their significance
- √ The introduction should not be too long. We suggest a maximum of 2 pages.

9.3.2 Materials and Methods

This section should include descriptions of the methodology, process, tools and activities conducted during the CV.

- √ Set this section chronologically and provide all the information that will allow other people to judge your report, and repeat the process and methodology themselves in their own settings.
- √ Provide a brief description of the community (geographic and administrative location, population, farming systems, etc.).
- √ Justify why and how this community was selected, and the process of inviting farmers.
- √ Describe the tools and methods used, and how they were used.
- √ Describe any facilities, expertise and special resources used to implement the CV.
- √ Highlight any special activity achievements (e.g. involvement of policy-makers; or numbers of NGOs etc).

9.3.3 Results

Key results and findings should be presented comprehensively but concisely using tables, graphs, boxes, illustrations, pictures or sketches as far as possible rather than lengthy text.

Use headings, subheadings, numbering and bullets to encourage easy reading.

Illustrate your key results and findings with examples, quotes and narratives from the farmers and communities to give farmers' voices to your readers.

You can present the results in the same order you presented the objectives in the introduction so that the reader can judge how the objectives were achieved.

You can also use the sustainable livelihood framework to organize your report. This could include:

- Community livelihood assets and opportunities
  - Social
  - Human
  - Financial including market issues
  - Natural resources,
  - Physical: hospitals, schools, markets
- Vulnerability context
- Institutions Policies and structures including social structures, venn diagrams and gender issues.
- Livelihood strategies
  - Production activities
    - Food security based
    - Income generation based (on farm and off farm)
  - Well being analysis and livelihood options for different social groups
  - Desired future situation-Visioning
  - Community action plans

You can also decide to report the results chronologically by using the main phases and steps of the CV and CAP process. This could include

9.3.4 Discussion

This is probably the most difficult part of the report in which you need to bring together and tie all the elements and show the significance of the different results. The reader should not end up asking "So What?"

The discussion session should:

- √ Relate the results to the objectives or questions set out in the introduction.
- √ Follow the order of original objectives and comment whether the objectives were achieved and if not, explain why.
- √ Summarise the key findings of your report
- √ Indicate the significance of the results, and if possible compare these results to previous studies, reports, findings and existing literature.
- √ Show what is new, and the significance of your findings
- √ State conclusions and recommendations with evidence and facts for each
- √ Suggest way forward and highlight implications for research, development, policy and communities.

Other important sections of the report

In addition to the IMRAD format, you should also include a Conclusion, Executive Summary and appendices. These are important for people who may not have enough time to read the report in detail but need to know the main features and content of the report.

9.3.5 Conclusion.

Most people will read this section, when they don't have time to read the full report. So, you should make sure this section:

- √ Provide an accurate summary of the report, its rationale, content, and the main findings
- √ Explain how the CV outputs will contribute towards your organization or project's purpose.
- √ Critically assess the achievements of the CV and what benefits it could engender.
- √ How might the project's achievements impact on people's lives, stating which people (men, women, which group or groups of the poor)?

- √ Assess the impact of the CV process by making a robust assessment of the extent to which the CV created awareness of change and development process.
- √ Highlight the emerging issues, potential entry points, and implications for research and development.
- √ Explain what options were identified and their implications for R□D partners and communities, and suggest what follow up actions might be considered regarding the community action plan.
- √ Outline what else needs to be done to promote the experience, and/or learning and/or understanding of the CV including suggestions for further refining and promotion of CV?

9.3.6 Executive Summary or Abstract

A good report should also include an executive summary or abstract that provides a brief summary of the purpose of the project, the research activities and the extent to which the objectives of the CV were achieved. The contribution of the CV towards attainment of the project purpose should also be assessed, as well as the implications for research, development and policy.

Although this is written as the last part, it is the first part of the report after the title page.

A good executive summary should:

- √ Be short and concise, usually not more than one page.
- √ Complete in itself, and can be read separately.
- √ Describe the rational, scope and objectives of CV.
- √ Describe the methods and process used.
- √ Be informative rather than descriptive by presenting the key findings, their significance and their implications, rather than describing the activities.
- √ Contain a number of key words (6-12) which are frequently written at the end of the summary

9.3.7 Appendices

The report may have a number of appendices i.e. a collection of supplementary material appended at the end of a report but not essential to the completeness of the report. These may include maps and figures, tables, boxes, pictures, reference materials, list of participants and any other materials that may help readers to better understand the report.

9.4 Sharing and Using the Results of CV

CV emphasises building local stakeholders capacity to analyse and reflect on the data. This therefore should focus on stimulating local analysis that enables learning by local stakeholders. In building this local capacity, the R&D team should start the analysis, and then present their partially analysed results to the larger group of participants for validation, confirmation and corrective feedback.

Sharing the information with stakeholders demand to find out which formats are appropriate for each stakeholders, and what is the use of information and results for different stakeholders. Researchers and project staff are often interested in a written report and other forms of publications. Local communities and other stakeholders may not have access to such reports, and may need more interactive feedback.

There are some specific strategies that will facilitate communication and receptivity of CV results. The audience or stakeholders should begin to imagine that the story is about them. When this occurs, the story makes more sense to the stakeholders and the audience. The language and the style need to be simple and familiar to the stakeholders. Some of the quotations and observations selected to illustrate interpretations also need to reflect stakeholders' experience.

Some useful tips

√ Convene a gathering or meeting to present and discuss the results and outcomes of CV, and highlight the main findings. Community feedback exercises provide an excellent opportunity to review the CV, to ensure that results remain relevant and cover all priority areas and to set up mechanisms for the regular sharing of data where they do not already exist.

√ Ensure that different user groups in the community are present in the feedback and feed forward sessions.

√ Use simple visual methods for presentation to minimize the danger of specialists to dominate and blind other stakeholders with complex statistics and fancy data and language; and to ensure that the information you are presenting to community groups takes into account those who are not literate.

√ The presentation of results should evoke some reactions, questions, clarifications and discussions which make it possible to verify information collected and to give insights in the meanings and interpretation of results by various stakeholders groups.

Picture 15: Encourage farmers to present and discuss results of CV

Box 21:Ten Practical hints for presentation of CV results

1. Select the right reporter based on ability and credibility, and allow sufficient time for preparation and collegial feedback
2. Engage the audience quickly to hook them into the report, by clearly explaining why CV is important, and how the findings can be used.
3. Know the point and get to it quickly: Highlight the start with the important points, and limit your points to only the information that is needed
4. Sequence your comments: focusing on the key findings, citing the most important findings first and then moving on to the less important findings
5. Ensure an attractive, evocative way of presenting results, Use multiple reporting strategies and methods. Use visuals and quotes, and examples
6. Provide enlightenment and avoid the "Ho-Hum Syndrome" (the questions that go through the mind of the audience such as Do we really need this? Don't we know this already? What is new? Show what is important and valuable to the audience.
7. Tell the audience what you want them to do: Relate the information to necessary action or decisions, and state implications
8. Present both positive and negative experiences, and state their implications to stress what stakeholders should do
9. Document CV methodology, obstacles, success, observations and experiences to make it more transparent
10. Allow time for questions. Allocate more than half of the time available for discussions and comments

10. So, What Next?

This Handbook has described in detail the process of engaging with rural communities and empowering farmers and communities, and rural service providers to make Ag&NRM research and development more demand driven and community-based. Visioning is a different way of conducting participatory diagnosis and community planning. It is an interactive process that strengthens the capacities of rural communities to recognize their collective assets, strengths and opportunities, resources and responsibilities for stimulating change, for seeking the positive, life-giving forces, and commitment for achieving their visions of desired future conditions.

Though this process, farmers have now developed their community action plans based on their collective visions of desired future conditions and collective analysis of livelihood assets, opportunities and possible constraints. These include their objectives and specify what they want to do or work on, what they want to achieve, what they want to improve, how it will be done, when and who should be involved. They also specify the resources (human, material, financial, physical, social and natural) that are needed to implement their action plans.

You have also shared the results of the CV and CAP processes with the key stakeholders and partners, from local communities to your organisation, your partners' institutions as well as with other interested stakeholders (local government, policy makers, research and other rural service providers). Your report is also available for consultations and use by other interested stakeholders: researchers, development organisations, policy makers, and students. Your report will probably become an important document and source of information in the area and can now be used as reference materials.

So what next? Is your job finished?

We suggest that your job has just started, and there is still a long way to go. You have built a strong foundation for long-term relationships and commitments with the farmers and your partners. This relationship

needs to be nurtured and sustained over time to the levels where farmers are empowered and have developed capacity to manage their own initiatives and plans with little facilitation. You will still need to facilitate and support communities and farmers groups to implement their action plans.
Community visions and action plans need to be well articulated refined, owned and shared amongst farmers and other key stakeholders. They all need to develop clear strategies for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their action plans, and for sharing and spreading the benefits to many more farmers and other communities.

As such this Handbook is just one step, although critical, to the process of community development. There are other handbooks and materials in the ERI series that can help you continue supporting rural communities and their service providers to move toward their collective visions. These include:

√ A Market Facilitator guide for rural agro-enterprise development: This describes steps, processes, methods and tools that can be used to help communities to conduct market research, identify market opportunities and develop sustainable agro-enterprises that provide income and food security. It can be useful for creating an entrepreneurial spirit and business skills in rural communities where farmers produce what they can sell, rather than selling what they have already produced.

√ A Handbook for strengthening group development and managing group dynamics. It explains the basics of group and group development process, and will help community development facilitators and rural service providers to better manage group dynamics, strengthen the organisational capacity of farmers, and linking farmers to other service providers.

√ A Guide for participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) that helps to establish community-based participatory monitoring systems for tracking changes, monitoring progress, assessing performance, reflecting and sharing results with other stakeholders.

√ A Guide for planning and conducting farmers'experimentation. This is based on the farmer participatory research and participatory technology development materials that can help you to facilitate farmers and rural communities to plan, design, implement, monitor and analyse experimentation, and evaluate technologies with farmers. It is a Guide that helps to involve farmers in Ag&NRM research and build their capacity to experiment, innovate, and generate knowledge and technologies.

√ A Guide for facilitating participatory process for collective action in NRM and for facilitating the involvement of local communities in formulating and implementing byelaws and other local policies in NRM, and for managing conflicts in NRM.

There are other resource materials that can help you refine, adapt and complement this Handbook. We hope that you have found this Handbook a valuable one. However, as we noted in the introduction, it is not a blue print.

We hope that this Handbook has inspired you to maintain and nurture your creativity and innovativeness. The use of this Handbook should continue to generate new insights, field experiences and lessons, tools and approaches that can help to catalyse rural communities capacity to continually innovate and become more proactive partners and actors in rural innovation systems.

We therefore invite you to share your experiences, approaches and tools and to give us feedback and suggestions that can help us to make this Handbook more useful to a variety of rural service providers.

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