

Community Engagement

A Handbook for County Officials in Southern Sudan

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Introduction

The Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan implicitly expresses the firm belief that a democratic form of government is the best hope for creating the conditions for a peaceful, just and prosperous society. In pursuit of democracy, the Constitution calls for decentralization and “the involvement and participation of the people of Southern Sudan at all levels of government.” As the Constitution recognizes, it is the local level of government that is closest to the people. For this reason, it is local government that is best able to understand the aspirations, opportunities and challenges that people have; and best positioned to facilitate their involvement and participation in government decision-making processes.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide county officials with the advice they will need to engage at the community level and, through community engagement, to meet the responsibility they have for ensuring that government listens and responds to the voices of the people.

What Is Community Engagement

For our purposes, community engagement is a process by which county officials interact with community members in order to increase government effectiveness, responsiveness, transparency and accountability. The interaction between government and community members can take the form of government informing, consulting with, collaborating with and/or empowering community members. Which form county officials choose to use will depend upon the purpose of the engagement and the level of input government is seeking from the community members.

- **Information:** When government informs citizens, it is not necessarily looking for their input, although officials should not discourage input when presenting information. Good governments provide community members with timely, accurate, and objective information to help them understand government policies, programs and decisions. A few examples of situations in which a government should “inform” community members include:
 - Prior to the start of a new initiative (such as an immunization campaign, the introduction of a new service or the imposition of a new fee) in order to explain the rationale for the initiative, how it will affect the community and any role community members might be expected to play in its implementation;
 - During the construction of infrastructure or establishing the start-up of a new service in order to report on the status of the activity;
 - When there are problems the government is taking action to resolve or opportunities the government is seeking in order to publicize and explain government actions.

Information can be provided in community meetings, brochures, radio programs, and other outreach efforts. Whenever government provides information, it should also be open to questions and comments that community members might have.

- **Consultation:** Governments should consult with community members when the decisions it intends to make would benefit from community input or feedback. A few examples of situations in which consultations would be useful include:

- Determining program priorities for the county budget plan;
- Determining how best to distribute humanitarian relief resources;
- Seeking ways and approaches for communities to be self reliant, and to change their focus from humanitarian relief to development;
- Seeking solutions for reversing the poor performance of a particular program;
- Seeking solutions for conflict mitigation and resolution.

Consultations can take the form of workshops, single-topic group discussions, interviews with a cross-section or select number of community members, surveys, mapping exercises and other gatherings. In some instances, it will make sense to open up the consultative process to anyone who would like to participate. In other instances, it will be more effective to consult with representatives of different interest groups. The benefits of an open consultative process are that more people will feel their views have been heard and considered, and more people will be aware that government is taking an action on their behalf. The benefits of consulting through interest group representatives are that the processes will be simpler to manage and consensus will be easier to reach. Whenever government consults, it will want to listen sincerely to the input provided and, once a decision is taken, provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

- **Collaboration:** Government should collaborate with community members when community members are contributing substantial amounts of labor or other resources to a particular project or can partner with government to achieve a shared objective. A few examples of situations in which collaboration is a good choice include:
 - A community is contributing to the construction of a school or clinic;
 - A community group is sharing responsibility for operations and/or maintenance of a government-funded activity;
 - Communities and government are working together to compile a boma, payam or county profile.

Whereas in a consultative process final decisions are made by government, in a collaborative process many of the decisions may be jointly made by government and community members, although usually government will establish the framework for decision-making.

In most collaborative situations, county officials will make decisions with a small sub-set of a community population and not with the entire community. This is true even in instances in which the entire community or a large portion of the community may benefit from the collaboration. The reason for collaborating with a small sub-set is to facilitate timely and more cohesive decision-making. The sub-set could be the community leadership of a user group, parent-teacher organization, farmer association or community unit established specifically for the collaboration. Sub-set participants and county officials should work together to keep the community informed of decisions and actions taken through the collaboration.

- **Empowerment:** Government empowers community members when it places final decision-making authority in the hands of community members or their representatives. Empowerment occurs when community members self-mobilize to address a particular problem or to seize or create a specific opportunity. They may request support from government but want to retain control over how resources are used. County officials should encourage and promote community empowerment whenever possible by supporting viable community initiatives that have broad-based community support.

The Value of Community Engagement

The leaders who drafted the Interim Constitution recognized that there are significant benefits to be gained when government engages constructively with its communities. Among the most important are the following:

- **Community Engagement Improves the Quality of Decision-Making:** Decisions based on government information alone can increase risk and lead to missed opportunities. While government staff can often bring technical expertise to a policy, plan or program that community members may not have, technical expertise is only one in a range of factors essential to effective decision-making. Community members can contribute knowledge and perspectives that they have gained from their experiences as well as relevant and important information on the local social and political dynamics. This type of information can make the difference between a decision that leads to achievement of the intended objective and a decision that results in unintended consequences. The more community members are affected by the decision, the more their input will improve the quality of the decision.
- **Community Engagement Enhances Prospects for Sustainability:** People everywhere want to have a say about decisions that affect their lives. County officials who listen to what community members have to say, and factor their input into final decisions, will learn that participatory processes enhance prospects for sustainability. The reasons for this are three-fold:
 - First, decisions based on input from community members usually reflect the will of the people. When decisions result in something people want, they are more likely to make the effort to maintain, sustain and even build on whatever that result was.
 - Second, community members who have a voice in decision-making tend to share ownership for the decision and, thus, take on added responsibility for making the decision work.
 - Finally, community members who have participated in a well-managed participatory decision-making process will understand why certain decisions were made. This puts them in a better position to help make adjustments to the decision should adjustments become necessary and to more effectively defend the decision should others seek to derail it.

In most instances, it is best to engage with people through their communities, rather than one-on-one. In this way, people can build on each other's information, experiences and ideas; reach consensus on the way forward; and take collective action to make the decision a successful one.

- **Community Engagement Increases the Legitimacy of Public Decisions:** Community engagement increases the legitimacy of public decisions in several different ways:
 - Community members who feel that their own input influenced the decision will feel a shared "ownership" of the decision. With shared "ownership," they are more likely to acknowledge the legitimacy of the decision even when they may not have agreed with the ultimate outcome.
 - Often, community-influenced decisions result in a more equitable distribution of benefits than decisions made by government officials who are: (a) not familiar with community conditions; or (b) able to take into account only the demands of the most well-

connected elements of the community. The more people who benefit from a decision, the greater legitimacy it is likely to have.

- **Community Engagement Strengthens Trust in County Officials:** Community engagement heightens people's awareness of the actions government is taking on their behalf. When government is taking positive actions and acting in good faith, this awareness will build trust. More importantly, the awareness created by community engagement gives community members the information they need to hold government accountable. Accountability is essential to deepening and sustaining trust.
- **Community Engagement Fosters Accountability and Transparency:** Community engagement fosters transparency as governments are required by the public to explain how revenues will be spent on community development projects. This strengthens accountability as communities gather information on what projects are proposed and monitor progress implementing them.
- **Community Engagement Builds Good Citizens:** Community engagement increases community members' sense of civic responsibility. It also helps community members acquire problem solving, creative thinking and conflict resolution skills that they can apply constructively to other aspects of community life.
- **Community Engagement Increases Prospects that Communities Will Contribute to Government- Managed Initiatives or Take Initiative on Their Own:** Communities that feel part of a process are more likely to contribute labor and other resources to the implementation of decisions made during the process. In some instances, community engagement provides communities with the skills and relationships to address some community needs themselves.

Community Engagement Challenges

Community engagement is hard. While the benefits it delivers far outweigh the disadvantages, it is important to understand the challenges so that they can be mitigated, avoided or addressed. The following are descriptions of the most common challenges.

- **Community Engagement can Create Unrealistic Expectations:** Involving community members in decisions takes advantage of their time and energy and can leave them with high expectations for action. At the outset of any community engagement exercise, county officials should explain the purpose of the engagement, clarify what might be possible as a result of the engagement, and provide a realistic time frame in which the results of decisions might be realized.
- **It may be Difficult to Ensure that all Views are Represented:** Unfortunately, many people in Southern Sudan have been marginalized for much of their lives. They may not have the confidence to speak in public or there may be more powerful groups in the community who discourage them from participating. Typically, these people may include women, the elderly, the youth, single-headed households, the disabled, the extremely poor, and tribal minorities. County officials need to be able to identify vulnerable or disenfranchised groups and be sensitive to the constraints they might feel in expressing their views or sharing their experiences in a community forum. To encourage their participation county officials might:
 - Publically reinforce that their input is valuable;
 - Ensure that a critical mass of members of the disadvantaged group participates so that those who are willing to speak find safety in numbers;
 - Organize small groups to discuss certain topics on the agenda and ask each small group to report back to the plenary group (recognizing that it might be easier for marginalized members to participate in smaller groups – groupings could include youth, elderly, man/woman etc.);
 - Hold separate sessions for different tribal groups;
 - Address constraints on their participation. This could include:
 - Providing childcare services at events to encourage the participation of women;
 - Choosing meeting places that provide easy access for the handicapped;
 - Choosing meeting places that are neutral and do not favor one ethnic or demographic group over another;
 - Ensuring accessibility of meeting sites (specifically during the rainy season)
 - Organizing transportation as needed;
 - Making sure events are held at times when it is convenient for marginalized populations to participate;
 - Translating materials into local or pictorial languages.
- **Community Engagement can Slow Government Action:** Consulting with communities can be a time-consuming process. If a county government is working against a tight deadline, there may be a temptation to omit the engagement process. At times, giving in to this temptation may be the way to go. Before doing so, however, county officials should assess whether, by skipping the engagement process up front, they will lose time later because of a lack of community support. They should also assess who benefits most from the accelerated process: a broad number of people or a narrow elite?

- **Some Community Members may want to use the Occasion to Criticize Government:** There will probably be times when communities take advantage of public meetings to express their dissatisfaction with government performance. In some instances, these complaints may be justified. In other instances, they may not be. In either case, county officials should listen to any criticism with openness, patience and a willingness to learn. Ideally, county officials will be able to respond to criticism with a calm explanation of why the criticism is invalid. If the criticism is valid, officials will want to make a sincere commitment to addressing the source of the concern and getting back to the community with information on what has been done. If appropriate, the county official might request advice from the community member or others in the group as to how best to resolve the issue.
- **There may be major Disagreements among Community Members during the Engagement Process:** Community discord can be one of the most difficult challenges to address. To the extent that subjects of disagreement can be anticipated, those subjects should be placed at the end of the engagement activity's agenda. When major disagreement does occur, it can sometimes be useful to stop and to unpack the issue. In the unpacking, presiding officials can work with community members to identify areas of agreement, areas of possible compromise and areas of stubborn difference. In some instances, it may be possible to move forward on the areas of agreement and compromise and defer action on the areas of difference. If it is necessary to resolve areas of difference in the near term, county officials could, before resolving the difference through government action, set up a community sub-committee and give it a chance to try to resolve the disagreement. The sub-committee could be set by an external mediator in the region.
- **There may be Resistance to Listening to and Acting on What People Have to Say:** For a variety of reasons (for example, a lack of faith that the average person has little to offer, an unwillingness to relinquish or share power), there may be resistance among certain government officials to promote, support, or give credibility to participatory processes. In the short term, this may not create any problems but, over the longer term, this kind of thinking will lead to centralized leadership and decision-making that undermines the will of the people.

Community Engagement Opportunities

County officials have a number of ways to create or take advantage of existing opportunities for engagement. Below are a few ways. County officials may come up with other ways as well.

- **Community Meetings:** A community meeting is an event open to all members of the community. During a community meeting county officials present information, take questions and sometimes stimulate discussion on a particular issue, or on a number of topics. Community meetings usually last one to two hours and should be held on a regular basis, usually quarterly. Their primary purposes are usually to: (a) report and get feedback on the progress government is making toward certain objectives; and (b) hold discussions on topics of community interest. They are not suitable for addressing complex issues.
- **Consultative Workshops:** Consultative workshops are used to provide information and seek in-depth feedback from community members. Properly managed, they can build consensus and public ownership for county decisions; help both sides develop new approaches to address issues and take advantage of opportunities. Consultative workshops usually last anywhere from a half day to three days. When county officials are seeking general input, consultative workshops can be open to all members of the community. In instances in which community officials are seeking to involve community members in actual decision making, it will be more productive to keep the group small and invite only representatives of relevant interest groups. Consultative workshops require a considerable amount of planning with regard to substance, organization, logistics and decisions about who should participate. For workshops with complex agendas, county officials might want to use skilled facilitators to ensure the smooth flow and exchange of conversation.
- **The Development of Boma and Payam Profiles:** County officials need comprehensive profiles of their bomas and payams in order to:
 - Equip themselves with the information they need to make wise, fair and efficient decisions on county priorities, the allocation of resources and other topics;
 - Conduct effective planning; and
 - Monitor whether positive change is occurring.

The more community members are involved in the development of these profiles, the more insightful and relevant the profiles are likely to be. The amount of time, staff and resources needed to conduct profiling will depend upon whether county officials are conducting a comprehensive profile, a sectoral profile or something in-between. The development of community profiles should be used as opportunities to inform but their primary purpose should be to consult and identify opportunities to collaborate and empower.

- **Boards, Task Forces, and Associations, User Groups or Committees:** County officials can appoint or, alternatively, collaborate with communities to organize boards, task forces and associations, user groups or standing committees.
 - *Boards* (also called advisory committees) are organized to provide advice to county officials on an on-going basis. They provide a sounding board for government decisions and work with county officials to build consensus in the community for decisions taken. They can also assist government in reviewing ideas and proposals. Boards usually have six to twelve members. Board members should be selected for their leadership in the

community, good judgment and integrity. Boards are often guided by charters that set forth their roles and responsibilities.

- *Task Forces* are set up to resolve a particular issue or organize a specific event. That is to say, task forces are useful when there is a time-limited mission with clearly defined outcomes. The size of a task force is driven by the complexity of the task. Task force members should be selected because their expertise is relevant to the task or because they represent a constituency that will be affected by the task. Of course, integrity and good judgment are traits to seek out as well.
- *Associations, User Groups or Standing Committees* are groups of community members that have banded together because of a shared and long-term interest in: (a) pooling knowledge, resources or demand; (b) managing a particular activity or a resource; or (c) improving or overseeing a sector or a situation. They can be small or large organizations. Large organizations will sometimes have specialized sub-committees. In some instances, membership is self-selected. For example, all farmers may be welcomed to join a farmer association. In other instances, members are elected or selected to represent a larger portion of the interest group. An example here would be community members selected or elected to serve on a water user committee or to work on a community improvement plan for a specific community.

The existence of these sorts of organizations in communities facilitates communication with county government in a number of different ways. Members usually have a clear sense of the challenges and opportunities in their sector of interest, can often speak with one voice, and are already organized to get things done with no monetary compensation.

In most situations, county officials will relate to these groups but not be members of the groups. Occasionally, however, it might make sense to have a joint task force or joint committee, in which county official and community members participate together. No matter what the membership of the groups, it will be important to reach agreement on the respective roles and responsibilities of the county and community members.

In determining which community engagement opportunity is appropriate to use in any given situation, county officials should consider the following:

- The primary purpose of the engagement (that is, whether the primary purpose is to inform, consult, collaborate or empower);
- The depth of community interest or concern about the topic;
- The extent to which there has been any prior engagement on the topic;
- The extent to which the engagement required is on-going or time-limited;
- The scope the government has for flexibility on the topic;
- The amount of time county officials and community members have to engage; and
- The level of funds available for engagement.

Community Engagement Methods

There are a number of methods county officials can use to facilitate community engagement. Sometimes, county officials may want to use more than one method in order to triangulate. To

triangulate means to compare information gathered from different sources to ensure that the information is consistent and, when it is not, to identify the reason for and correct the discrepancy. Engagement methods are described below. Tools to assist in implementing the methods can be found in the toolkit attached to this handbook.

- **Key Informant Interviews:** Key informants are community members who have knowledge, experience or expertise relevant to a particular subject. County officials might want to use key informant interviews when their purpose is to:
 - Deal with sensitive topics that community members might not want to discuss in an open forum;
 - Seek a better understanding of the causes and possible solutions to a conflict situation; or
 - Build constructive personal relationships.

Key informant interviews require time to collect a range of views and to conduct and analyze the results of interviews.

In some instances, county officials may work from a fixed questionnaire. In other instances, free-form discussions between the key informant and the county official, guided by broad, open-ended questions (such as “I am interested in learning about...”), will result in more useful insights. County officials should avoid asking questions in a manner that lead the key respondent to a particular answer. They should also avoid rushing a key informant or finishing his or her sentences. Key informant interviews should be held in private settings. In discussing sensitive topics, it will be important to assure key informants that the confidentiality of their responses will be respected. During key respondent interviews, county officials should both listen and observe. Often, body language or how something is said is as important as what is said.

- **Group Interviews:** Group interviews are held with a number of community members. The number could be small or, to the extent it is manageable, large. As is the case with key informant interviews, it is best to ask broad, open-ended questions to generate discussion. Group interviews can be used solely for the purpose of gathering information. In most instances, however, county officials also will want to use the group interview fora to provide information. This could include starting the interview with a briefing on relevant county government activities and/or taking questions during the interview. Sometimes, county officials will want to use group interviews as a way of building consensus toward a mutually agreed upon course of action. If county officials feel that some demographic portions of a community’s population may be reluctant to speak during a group interview, they may want to interview different demographic populations separately.
- **Focus Groups:** Focus groups are a research tool for gathering in-depth information about public perceptions, opinions and attitudes toward an on-going or proposed policy, program or service. They are different from group interviews in that county officials do not engage in a give-and-take dialogue with focus group members as they might in a group interview. Also, focus groups do not drive toward decisions.

Focus groups usually consist of eight to twelve community members who spend one to two hours interacting with each other in response to a set of questions prepared by county officials before the focus group session begins. The questions are posed by a facilitator. No decisions

are made in focus groups but information collected during sessions can feed into decisions and be useful to designing new, or modifying ongoing, policies, programs and services.

A county official can facilitate a focus group; however, focus group members might speak more frankly if focus group sessions are facilitated by an outside party. Frank and open discussion is also more likely if participants are drawn from groups of similar or equivalent social standing. This means that, at times, it may make sense to conduct several focus groups. Focus groups can include a random mix of community members or include only members of a particular segment of the population, such as young people, women or ex-combatants. Whether focus group membership is broad or narrow should depend upon whether the subject(s) to be discussed affect the entire community or a portion of the community.

- **Participatory Community Mapping:** Participatory community mapping is a process whereby community members draw maps of certain aspects of their villages. Depending upon the information the county officials are collecting, there are different types of maps that community members can draw:
 - *Social maps* help community members better understand health, education, water and sanitation or other social conditions.
 - *Household maps* show where people live and where there are homes with selected variables such as economic vulnerability, girls and boys in or out of school, malnourished children, pregnant women, widows, farmers with model cultivation skills, midwives or other types of household information criteria.
 - *Infrastructure maps* provide an inventory of homes, roads, schools, clinics, water posts and other infrastructure and how they relate spatially and distance-wise to each other and to community needs;
 - *Resource maps* show one or more aspects of a county's geophysical assets, such as the landscape, surface features of the land and slopes; forest, vegetation and different types/ varieties of trees ; soil-type, fertility, and erosion; land use, tenure boundaries and ownership; water, water bodies, irrigation sources, rivers and drainage; water drainage system, forests and agricultural areas; and so forth.

Community members can draw maps on large pieces of paper but it is often easier to engage a greater number of people with maps drawn on the ground. Ground drawings can use seeds, nuts, small stones, sticks, leaves and other easily accessible resources used to represent schools, clinics, roads, forests, different types of people and so forth.

Mapping exercises can serve a number of purposes. They can:

- Serve as a starting point to facilitate interaction among community members as well as between community members and county officials;
- Serve as a take-off point for discussions on why present conditions exist and how they might be changed; or on the impact one variable has on another -- for instance, the impact poor water drainage management has on drought or the impact of the long distances women must travel to fetch water;
- Facilitate decisions on where to locate new infrastructure or where to focus service delivery;
- Help determine which households will require which kinds of support, such as food assistance, seeds, and so forth;

- Help determine from which households to find certain kinds of expertise, such as midwives, animal health care workers and so forth;
- Serve as a starting point for monitoring change. In these instances, maps on paper must be saved and maps drawn on the ground must be transferred to paper.

Mapping exercises can take a half day to a day. If county officials want to work with communities to map different aspects of community life, mapping could take more than one day.

In facilitating mapping exercises, county officials will want to:

- Remember that the process of drawing the map is as important, and sometimes more important, than the map itself. This is because a primary reason for drawing the map is to use the process to generate discussions about community problems and how to address them; and community opportunities and how to take advantage of them.
- Be careful not to intervene in the substance of the discussions or the mapping but rather to facilitate community discussions and mapping.
- Be careful not to ask for too much information from any one map.
- Be sensitive to areas of possible conflict, such as land tenure, boundaries and so forth.

The annex to this handbook offers sample mapping exercises.

- **Transect Walks:** In a transect walk, a county official and a note taker walk around the community accompanied by a handful of community members and use the opportunity of the walk to ask community members questions about livelihoods, local practices, natural resources and other topics as they see sights related to these topics. Discussions with a broader range of community members will occur as these other community members are encountered in their homes or at work during the walk. Sometimes county officials will want to take more than one walk, accompanied on each walk by a different demographic group in the community. This is because women will highlight different aspects of community life than men will, youth will have different perspectives than the elderly and so forth.

Allow the community members to plan the route but it is not necessary to stick with the original plan. Walk slowly and ask community members to describe what the group is seeing and to discuss related practices, issues or opportunities. Keep the discussions going by making observations and asking questions. At the end of the walk, sit down with the community members to review what was seen, ask final questions and to share with community members what is being recorded. If there have been walks with different groups, ask questions in order to: (a) help different groups of community members see the community from the perspectives of other community members; and (b) if possible, reconcile any differences in perspectives that might affect the decisions being made.

Frequently, transect walks are combined with mapping exercises. In some instances, the walks are done after the mapping exercise to confirm and deepen the map that has been drawn. In other instances, the order is reversed and the mapping exercise is done after the walk and used to capture what was seen and learned during the walk.

Preparing for Community Engagement

Good planning will increase the chances that your community engagement will be successful. Initially, county officials will want to:

- Clearly define the purpose for the engagement;
- Determine the opportunity for engagement and methods of engagement to be used;
- Decide whether all or select groups of community members will be invited to participate; and
- Identify roughly the financial, logistical and human resources that will be available for the engagement.

With these decisions made, county officials should next:

- Prepare a checklist of the actions that need to take place for the community engagement to occur;
- Next to each action item on the checklist, indicate who is responsible for the action;
- Choose a date for the engagement event (to the extent possible, community members should be consulted in choosing the date to make sure that the date chosen is convenient to them);
- Work backwards from the date chosen for the engagement to add a deadline for each action on the county's checklist of actions.

The following are two checklists of the sorts of actions that need to be taken after the decisions indicated above have been made. The first is a checklist of substantive actions. The second is a checklist of managerial and logistical actions. County officials can start with and modify the prototype checklists as they see fit.

Actions Related to the Substance of the Engagement

- Develop the agenda;
- Make whatever preparations are needed to follow the agenda:
 - For all engagements, prepare briefings, remarks and information that will be provided by county officials;
 - For consultative engagements:
 - Prepare the questions or plan the activities that will lead to the community members providing the information that county officials are seeking;
 - Determine how best to ensure that the voices of disadvantaged groups are heard (youth, elderly, disabled etc.)
 - For collaborative engagements, prepare county positions on topics to be discussed; and anticipate and prepare to address community positions on those same topics;
 - For empowerment engagements, anticipate and prepare to address community requests.
- Determine what substantive information community members might need before the engagement; ensure that the information is developed and disseminated in a timely manner;
- Select conveners, facilitators, subject matter specialists, and note takers, and provide them with any guidance or practice that they might need;

- Anticipate questions, possible criticism and potential points of intra-community tension; develop strategies for addressing anticipated questions, criticism and tension;
- Prepare a strategy for follow-up after the engagement that lets community members know how their input was used.

Actions Related to Management of the Engagement

- Make sure community members are prepared and know what to expect;
- Arrange for meeting space that is:
 - Large enough;
 - Located in a convenient place that does not symbolically or geographically favor one group over another;
 - Adequately equipped with electricity, screens or blackboards, bathroom facilities and other features deemed useful or necessary;
- Make a list of the supplies that will be needed and ensure that they are available. The list could include items such as flipcharts, tape or tacks, markers, paper, pens and pencils, slide projector, tables, microphones, cameras and so forth; and
- Arrange for media coverage if media coverage would be useful.

Managing Engagement Process

Following are a few final tips for county officials managing community engagement processes:

- During the engagement process itself:
 - Make sure everyone participates;
 - Show respect for community members and help community members to show respect for each other;
 - Stimulate group discussion;
 - Encourage creativity in problem solving;
 - Listen carefully and patiently to what people are saying;
 - Answer questions when you can; when you don't know an answer, don't be afraid to say you don't know but promise to find out what you can and get back to the community with an answer;
 - Always follow-up on any commitments made;
 - Be flexible when the group is taking you in a direction you hadn't planned to go; resist changing decisions that have been reached by consensus;
 - Be sensitive to group dynamics, hidden agendas and both verbal and non-verbal; communication in the group; and
 - Be prepared to summarize.
- Make sure someone is taking notes;
- At the close of the engagement, review with community members what has been learned or agreed upon;
- After each engagement, review with county staff what went wrong and what went right about the engagement; and record these thoughts so that these lessons learned can be incorporated into future engagements;
- Have fun! Remember that community engagement is a chance to learn more about the people you are serving and an important contribution that you are making to the establishment of a stable, prosperous and democratic Southern Sudan.

Annexure: Sample Mapping Exercises

Following are sample mapping exercises. For most maps, the first step will be asking community members to draw a base map which includes the boundaries and major landmarks in the community. Maps can be drawn on sheets of flip chart paper or on the ground. Maps drawn on the ground are often easier to work with as they can be bigger and “mistakes” can be “erased.” Seeds, small stones, flowers, leaves, sticks and other easy to find resources can be used to show different variables. For maps drawn on the ground, it is a good idea to copy them later onto paper.

Health Map

On the base map, community members could be asked to depict:

- Households where there are:
 - Children who have suffered from water-borne diseases such as cholera, acute respiratory infection such as TB and pneumonia, or other diseases over the past year, with a different symbol being used for each disease;
 - Children who have been immunized and those who haven't;
 - Deaths over the past year by category;
 - Individuals affected by polio;
 - Pregnant women.
- Households where there are midwives and other community health workers;
- Hazards such as pollution, zones of defecation, places where mosquitoes breed, and so on;
- Facilities such as clinics, health posts and medical shops or pharmacies.

Discussions that could be facilitated during or after the mapping exercise:

- What are the community's health care priorities;
- How many days of work do people lose because of illness;
- What percentage of household budgets go to health care and what strategies can be employed for decreasing percentages;
- Why certain water-borne diseases seem to be more prevalent in one part of the community than other parts;
- Can community members estimate how many children are fully immunized and how many aren't;
- Why children aren't being immunized and how to address the situation;
- How far do people have to travel for health care - do community members pool resources to get people with major illnesses or injuries to a hospital;
- What condition are health facilities in - what services do they/should they provide;
- Where to place new health posts - from what sections of the community to train more health workers;
- Which women are seeking adequate pre-natal and post-natal health care and which aren't - and how to help those who aren't;
- What the relationship might be between hazards and community health status;
- What the community can do about mosquito breeding grounds;
- How the community can improve sanitation practices;

Water and Sanitation Map

On the base map, community members could be asked to show:

- Number, type, location and reliability of all water sources;
- Quality of water drainage system;
- Distribution points, differentiated by water use;
- Households that do not have easy access to water;
- Number, type and location of sanitation facilities;
- Households where there are community members with a role in maintaining water supply and sanitation services.

Discussions that could be facilitated during and after the mapping exercise:

- Sustainability of water sources and how to improve protection of the sources;
- The relationship between clean water and good health;
- Whether distribution points make sense from a health and safety perspective (for instance, do people take their water upstream or downstream from where animals take water; is there physical safety from animal and human predators);
- Whether distribution points make sense from a productivity perspective (do women spend too much time fetching water);
- Equity or conflict issues in the distribution of water;
- Whether the community can and should improve its capacity to manage and maintain water infrastructure;
- Allocation of water for agriculture, human consumption, animal consumption and so forth and whether the allocation ratios make sense.

Education Map

On the base map, community members could be asked to show:

- Households whose boys attend primary school and don't attend school;
- Households whose girls attend primary school and don't attend school;
- Households where PTA members live;
- Households where men are literate and numerate;
- Households where women are literate and numerate;
- The location of schools;
- School infrastructure.

Discussions that could be facilitated during and after the mapping exercise:

- Why more boys than girls are attending school and what can be done to promote girls' education;
- When and why children drop out of school and what can be done to maintain enrollment;
- Whether the community has enough PTA members and could be more accomplished with a bigger or more active PTA;
- What role literate and numerate community members play or might play in helping others;

- The adequacy of school infrastructure (is there a permanent building, is it big enough to accommodate all students, does it have water, a latrine, a community garden) and what might the community do to improve the infrastructure.

Vulnerability Map

On the base map, community members could be asked to show households where families:

- Go without food for days;
- Eat only once a day;
- Have malnourished children;
- Lack adequate shelter;
- Live in or near pollution zones;
- Shelter child laborers;
- Are headed by widows;
- That have a large number of non-earning dependents.

Discussions that could be generated during and after the mapping exercise:

- Which families are in need of relief support;
- How relief supplies might be distributed:
 - Where might distribution points be located;
 - How best to ensure equitable distribution;
- Coping strategies community members might have or need to develop;
- What community organizations exist to help people;
- How do community members support each other in times of crisis.

Infrastructure Map

On a base map, community members could be asked to show:

- Roads;
- Markets;
- Storage;
- Primary and Secondary Schools;
- Health Units, Centers and Hospitals;
- Water Posts;
- Latrines;
- Other Infrastructure.

Discussions that could be facilitated during and after the mapping exercise:

- The condition of existing community infrastructure;
- The respective roles and responsibilities of government and the community in managing and maintaining infrastructure;
- Whether community members should be taxed/pay fees to support infrastructure and services provided from infrastructure;
- The placement of infrastructure:
 - Is existing infrastructure well-located;

- What factors should drive placement;
- What are the infrastructure gaps;
- Who benefits from what infrastructure and how do different segments of the population benefit from infrastructure differently.

Natural Resource Map

On the base map, community members could be asked to show:

- Agricultural land by cropping patterns;
- Agricultural land by fertility (i.e. soil mapping);
- Grazing land;
- Forests;
- Water drainage system;
- Rivers;
- Streams.

Discussions that could be facilitated during and after the mapping exercise:

- The pros and cons of the current allocation of land between agriculture and grazing;
- Differentiating water sources (boreholes vs. natural dams);
- Sites for training farmers that are accessible all year round;
- Land use trends (how does the map correspond to what a map drawn five years ago would have looked like; what will the map look like five years from now if current practices continue; what would the community like the map to look like);
- The sustainability of current land use practices;
- Availability of agricultural inputs;
- The impact of uncovered water drainage systems on flooding and droughts;
- Environmental trends (how does the map correspond to what a map drawn five years ago would have looked like; what will the map look like five years from now if current practices continue; what would the community like the map to look like);
- The potential for using water resources for irrigation;
- History of natural disasters.