

Sustaining Development Through Community Mobilization



A Case Study of
Participatory Rural Appraisal
in The Gambia

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**Sustaining Development Through Community Mobilization:
A Case Study of Participatory Rural Appraisal
in The Gambia**

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Explanation of Abbreviations

AA/TG	ActionAid/The Gambia
CAP	Community Action Plan
D	Dalasi (currency of The Gambia)
PHC	Primary Health Care
PRAP	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PTA	Parent - Teacher Association (school committee)
VDG	Village Development Committee

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Beyond the village and local NGO level, there is an increasing number of international groups working on needs of local level planning including several NGOs in India, the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, the World Resources Institute in Washington, ActionAid, and several groups based in Kenya including the National Environment Secretariat, Egerton University, the African Centre for Technology Studies, as well as several ministries.

In particular, a continuing vote of thanks is due to Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway. Had the happy coincidence of their collaboration never taken place, there would have been no core methodology waiting for local applications. The worth and vision of their contribution is becoming more fully appreciated as increasing numbers of local adaptations and variations of PRA are emerging across Asia and Africa.

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Richard Ford
Clark University
September, 1992

Foreword

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is spreading across Africa. Adapted from the pioneering work of Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway in Rapid Rural Appraisal, PRA is a new approach that enables rural communities to initiate their own development.

Since the first African PRA was carried out in Kenya in 1988,¹ the methodology has spread to a dozen African countries and is being used in many different ecological, political, economic, and institutional settings. This case study follows PRAs carried out in Dingiraay and Ndawen, two small communities in central Gambia, by ActionAid/The Gambia (AA/TG).

Over the last few decades, The Gambia, like many African nations, has launched many donor-driven development projects in agriculture, water, forestry, health, and education. Yet life in many rural communities remains hard. Apparent declines in rainfall, along with difficulties of maintaining infrastructure and equipment, have led to gradual reductions in food productivity, increases in deforestation, lowering of the water table in many areas, and a general decrease in the economic and physical well being of many of The Gambia's rural citizens -- about 80% of the nation. Donor projects have not achieved their anticipated impacts largely because

they have not been designed in ways that local institutions could sustain.

PRA takes an alternative approach to rural development. Rather than start with large investments of money and centralized, external plans, PRA begins in rural communities and builds on what local groups identify to be important. This case study documents one such experience, using PRA in two communities with difficult ecological and economic conditions.

The original plan was to carry out two training sessions, using the village of Dingiraay for both. For the first week, things went well and effectively in Dingiraay. Then the PRA team slowly became aware that a few "guests" were appearing at the Dingiraay PRA sessions. They had come from neighboring villages to see what PRA was all about.

By the end of the second week, residents of one nearby village, Ndawen, made it very clear that they too wanted a PRA. AA/TG plans were adapted and Ndawen became the site of the second training session.

This case study therefore reflects the findings and experiences of Dingiraay with occasional comments and references to Ndawen.

¹Kabutha, Charity, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Richard Ford. *Assessing Mbusyani: Using Participatory Rural Appraisal for Sustainable Resources Management*. Clark University, Worcester, MA. 1991

1. Introduction

Background to the Field Study

Dingiraay is a small Wolof community of 48 households, located 8 kms north of the Gambia River, about 300 kms inland from the Atlantic coast. In 1914, a small cluster of households living in Kass Wolof decided that there was insufficient land to provide good livelihoods. Dingiraay's founder, first chief, and first Alkalo (community leader) Ousman Jama Sallah led a migration from Kass Wolof to the present site. He continues today to be regarded as the spiritual and political inspiration of the community. He is buried in a small plot, not far from the Dingiraay mosque.

The community is closely knit and totally Wolof. The map on page 8 and transect on page 11 (actually transect of Ndawen) note that houses are built in a concentrated area in the center of the village and the fields arranged in expanding circles, with the most desirable land being that closest to the village. Communal fuelwood and grazing areas extend beyond the limits of the cultivated land.

Dingiraay's environment is harsh. The flat and sandy terrain is dotted with silk-cotton and baobab trees and many low lying bushes. Rainfall is intermittent and unreliable, falling between June and September. Officially the annual rainfall averages 500 to 600 mm per annum but local farmers say the rains have been declining since the late 1960s. The

soil is porous, so even the sparse rainfall quickly soaks into the land and disappears. The water table for most of the village is 51 m (about 165 feet).

Opportunities for effective food production and income generation are slim. Farmers have grown millets for many years with uneven results. Ground nuts have met with only small success due to insufficient water. Local vegetables are also grown though at little more than a subsistence level. Rice will not grow in Dingiraay even though it is the preferred staple in the diet. Livestock is important, especially cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and donkeys though no family has a large herd. Of the 48 households, material wealth is scarce. Two abandoned pick-up trucks adorn the landscape but no resident operates a car. All ploughing is done by hand or with animal traction; there is no mechanical or powered water pump in the village although through the help of the Women's Bureau there is now a diesel operated coos (millet) grinding mill.

While the physical and economic level of the village is low, the spiritual and cultural qualities are high. A mosque, built from 1982 - 1990 with local subscriptions, is the most prominent feature on the village map. An active Mosque Committee (founded in 1914) looks after the mosque as well as the spiritual well-being of the community. Though the community is entirely Moslem, there are several active and vocal women's groups that meet often

and sponsor local community projects. These women's groups, along with youth groups and special task groups (eg Primary Health Care Committee) attend to the day-to-day management of village affairs. By tradition, the Alkalo has the final say on all community matters such as land use and access, family disputes, opening of new lands, location of new compounds, and community projects. The working relationship between the community institutions and the Alkalo is a healthy one and as a result, a strong spirit of cooperation and local action pervades the village.

While the government has not been an active player in the village, several donors occasionally help. Catholic Relief Services provides famine relief in the form of food and food for work. The Red Cross organized a committee in Dingiraay.



ActionAid has been an active partner in the village for the last decade, providing help with the primary school, health attendants, water access, literacy training, and agricultural technologies.

Ndawen lies three km from Dingiraay in a similar ecological setting. Founded in the 1930s, the village has grown slightly larger than Dingiraay. Ndawen has no school, but there are several wells -- only one working effectively -- a primary health care clinic, and a blacksmith shop. There are several farmers who are using fertilizer and improved seeds. Yet Ndawen, like Dingiraay, is poor and vulnerable. Resources and productivity are declining, employment is scarce, population grows, and there is little reason to hope that government or private agencies will pull Ndawen out of its downward slide. For both Dingiraay and Ndawen, any significant change in economic, ecological, health, or nutritional well-being, will come because the people of these communities will organize themselves and initiate action.

Dingiraay and Ndawen represent the situation of many Gambian communities. Yields are declining, but the people's spirit is strong; water grows more scarce every year but the will of the communities to meet their water needs is high; trees disappear and land goes out of production, but the willingness of people to persevere increases. Even with strong village institutions, local initiatives have not been a prominent part of Dingiraay's development. The goal of the PRA exercises was to test whether a community-based methodology such as PRA could pass initiatives along to village institutions and introduce projects which community institutions could plan, implement, and sustain.

Rationale for PRA

PRA is a new way to systematize an old approach to rural development: community participation. It offers a significant alternative to centrally planned and externally managed development. The methodology, one of a number of village-based approaches, is unique in several ways. It helps rural communities to support activities which they design and implement. It strengthens local leadership and institutions. It integrates sectors at the community level related to natural resources management, and helps to build collaboration among development agents external to the community.

Three assumptions form the basis for PRA:

Local Knowledge. *Farmers have knowledge and information: but it needs to be organized*

The PRA approach believes that rural resource users have considerable knowledge about their problems and familiarity with locally based ways to solve them. PRA assumes that rural residents may not appreciate the enormous power that this information can yield nor how systematizing this information can help rank problems, select options to solve the problems, mobilize community groups to take action, and attract external agents to offer assistance. As a first step, PRA helps communities to organize and systematize their own information in ways that they will be able to control.

Local Resources. *Villagers have resources: but they need to be mobilized*

Rural communities can introduce projects, acting primarily on their own resources. PRA helps local institutions and leaders to mobilize themselves for effective action. PRA assumes that community institutions are among the most underutilized resources available for development efforts. Yet experience has shown that these institutions need strengthening. PRA therefore works with community groups to become the prime movers in taking action.

Attracting Outside Help. *Outside resources are available: but need to be defined in the context of village-identified priorities*

Community institutions can take initial steps to solve problems, but they cannot necessarily do the job alone. External units such as government technical and extension officers, NGOs, and international organizations can provide critical technical, financial, or managerial assistance that is unavailable to rural communities. PRA creates a setting in which village and outside groups share goals and agree on actions and inputs to meet common needs.

The PRA Approach

PRA uses techniques of data gathering, analysis, and ranking derived directly from Rapid Rural Appraisal methodologies developed by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway. These include village sketch maps, transects, seasonal calendars, trend lines, time lines, institutional diagrams, resource access ranking, and options assessment ranking.²

²Kabutha, Charity, Barbara Thomas-Slayter and Richard Ford. *Participatory Rural Appraisal Handbook*, World Resources Institute in collaboration with Kenya's National Environment Secretariat, Egerton University, and Clark University, 1990.



Further, PRA calls upon the Rapid Rural Appraisal criteria of productivity, sustainability, equitability, and stability to find solutions to problems the community identifies as its most severe. The solutions are then organized into a Community Action Plan in which specific community groups are identified to carry out particular tasks.

PRA's data gathering, analysis and presentation rely largely on visual data collection instruments; reach out to many social, ethnic, gender, age, and class elements within a community; collect most data via group discussions; use large group meetings to rank information; integrate socio-economic

data with technical information; and leave data with the community for analysis, ranking, and action rather than extract it for external analysis.

The total impact of the PRA process has been to show communities that they do not have to wait for external agents to come to their assistance. The process of organizing village information into a systematic plan focusses community attention and mobilizes community groups. Local groups taking initiatives on, for example, water or forestry, has consistently attracted attention of external NGOs, international agencies, or government officers to provide a portion of the needed resources.

2. PRA in The Gambia: Data Collection

Orientation for Dingiraay Leadership

By request of the PRA training team, ActionAid picked a field site they perceived to be difficult and located in a marginal ecosystem. ActionAid had previously worked in both Dingiraay and Ndawen so was a known entity in both communities. Initial contacts made in Dingiraay a week before the training included the AA/TG Regional Manager meeting with the Alkalo and bringing kola nuts to the village elders.

The PRA team provided two copies of an introduction to PRA³, one for the Alkalo and the other for a women's group leader. Although the booklet is not yet available in Wolof, a local school graduate comfortable in English reviewed the booklet carefully with both leaders. It illustrates the steps of PRA and notes how the end product will be a plan of action that the community will implement. AA/TG felt that the combination of close discussions with community leaders and the clearly written introduction to PRA provided sufficient background information for the leadership of Dingiraay.

The formal launching of the PRA assessment in Dingiraay brought out between 130 and 150 village

residents -- about 80% to 90% of the entire adult population. AA/TG explained the nature of PRA and what it would and would not do. In particular, the AA/TG speakers noted that PRA did not bring money -- it brought only a means to get the village focussed on how to identify its problems and ways to put solutions in place. AA/TG presenters noted that the goal of PRA was to build community solidarity and united action on themes and sectors the people thought were important.

The Alkalo then introduced the village leaders including the Imam (religious leader of the mosque), three heads of women's groups, two youth leaders, and other committee members. AA/TG in turn introduced the leaders of the PRA team and their local field staff.

A brief discussion followed in which the Alkalo reminisced about an incident ten years earlier. ActionAid had come to the village and asked his father (then the Alkalo) what the village needed. His father replied, a school. ActionAid set in motion a process which resulted in a sturdy primary school for Dingiraay, recently handed over to the government. But, the Alkalo noted, the school is not doing well. Enrollments are only 120 pupils or

³Ford, Richard, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Wanjiku Mwangiru. *An Introduction to PRA for Rural Resources Management*. NES, Nairobi and Clark University, 1989.

roughly half of the peak enrollment when ActionAid was in charge. The Alkalo lamented that neither the government nor the community could sustain the school. He wondered if consultation with the community when ActionAid first visited Dingiraay would have placed the school as the highest priority. He further wondered if the community had picked a school as their number one need, whether today the people would be doing more to support it.

The launching ceremony lasted little more than an hour. But it was an essential time for the team and the community to become acquainted with each other's agendas. The Alkalo's open commentary set a tone that was to prevail throughout the data collection, analysis, and ranking. Frank and open discussion at this early stage in the PRA is fundamental to its longer term success.

The orientation and launching for Ndawen were similar though on a grander scale. The Dingiraay PRA had been underway for two weeks when Ndawen launched its own PRA. So there was already considerable awareness of the PRA process among the residents of the new village. As a result, Ndawen knew quite a bit about what to expect from the PRA and had invited AA/TG on the basis of their positive exposure to the process.

The Ndawen launching ceremony attracted even more people than Dingiraay. In fact, there were visitors from even more villages in the area -- the information was running quickly through markets and regional meetings by this time.

AA/TG started much the same as in Dingiraay, stressing that PRA did not bring money. This issue

has become very important as many communities assume that the only reason an outside agency comes to a community is to bring money. To emphasize this message, AA/TG invited Dingiraay's Alkalo to comment on what PRA was doing in his village. He spoke for fifteen minutes with a moving commentary. The Alkalo said that the initial result was something they had been unable to achieve for the previous twenty years -- community solidarity. He observed that Dingiraay had been unable to get the community institutions solidly behind any actions -- for food, education, water, income generation, or tree planting. PRA, the Alkalo noted, had created a setting within which many different elements had been able to discuss and agree on what needed to be done and who would do it. He reiterated that Dingiraay was not looking for PRA to bring money but, instead, to equip Dingiraay's institutions with skills to do their own planning and design as well as their own fund raising.

Although there were more than 200 adults and many, many children present, and even though the temperature was well over 100 F (35 C) and the humidity close to 100%, there was full attention and concentration on what the Alkalo had said. It was clear that the message of getting community institutions organized was falling on fertile ground in Ndawen.

The Data

PRA builds its analysis around four types of information: spatial, temporal, institutional, and technical. Visual data collection instruments are used whenever possible.⁴

⁴Ibid

Spatial Information

In the case of Dingiraay's first exercise, two techniques were used to determine the village's spatial arrangement: the village sketch map and a village transect.

The PRA team divided Dingiraay's residents into three groups, each with about 45 to 50 people. Normally this size group is much too large for meaningful data collection. The team requested the Alkalo to limit participation to 10 or 12 per group. But such limits were not possible. The village had become intrigued with the introductory booklet (word had spread through the market and at the well) and everyone wanted to be part of creating the community action plan. The groups were divided approximately as older men, older women (over 25 or 30 years for each), and younger people. The PRA team split as well.

Sketch Map: Each of the three groups was asked to prepare a sketch map of Dingiraay, the purpose being for villagers to orient the team to the location of important things in the community. The young people picked up almost immediately on the assignment and within 45 minutes had a good spatial arrangement of the community (see Figure 2) sketched out on the ground. One inventive lad disappeared part way through the exercise and returned with a can of wood ash. He carefully marked each road with the ash so that a clear pattern of white roads leading to each compound emerged. Stones, tin cans, an old shoe, and broken sticks identified important sites such as houses, the seed storage building, the coos mill, four village wells, the two derelict trucks, and the mosque.

While the youth were progressing, the women (working about 100 m away) were fumbling. They started twice drawing on the ground, only to erase

their work and begin again. Different women would appear from their compounds, offer advice, and eventually slip away as if the exercise was too complicated. Then Amie Secka appeared, the head of the Older Woman's Cultural Group (see Annex A). She got down to business almost immediately and worked out a pattern of roads and houses. Once the other women saw how Amie was doing it, they joined in and soon had a well organized production. The time of fumbling was upwards of an hour; the actual production took less than an hour, once they got going. As an afterthought, one woman went over to the youth map, borrowed their tin of wood ash, and marked roads on the women's map just as the youth had done.

The men also drew on the ground but had more difficulty than the women. While the youth and women drew only the residential part of the village, the men included all the fields. They had problems with proportion and scale and then found that the core residential area was so small that they couldn't illustrate the detail they wished. One elder furtively snuck off to see what the youth were doing and came back with a big smile. He erased everything and started a second time, this one showing only the village residential core. Other men slipped away to see what the youth were doing and then came back and marked their map accordingly. As the process concluded, the Alkalo quipped that education was certainly paying off for the youth as it was clear they had prepared a much better sketch map than either the men or the women. Everyone laughed. The PRA team copied the three maps and asked the three map makers to meet after hours to integrate the three into one village sketch map, shown as Figure 2.

Mapping for Ndawen was somewhat different. Whereas for Dingiraay the young people caught on immediately, it was not so simple for Ndawen's youth. A dispute erupted almost immediately

Figure 1. Map of the Gambia

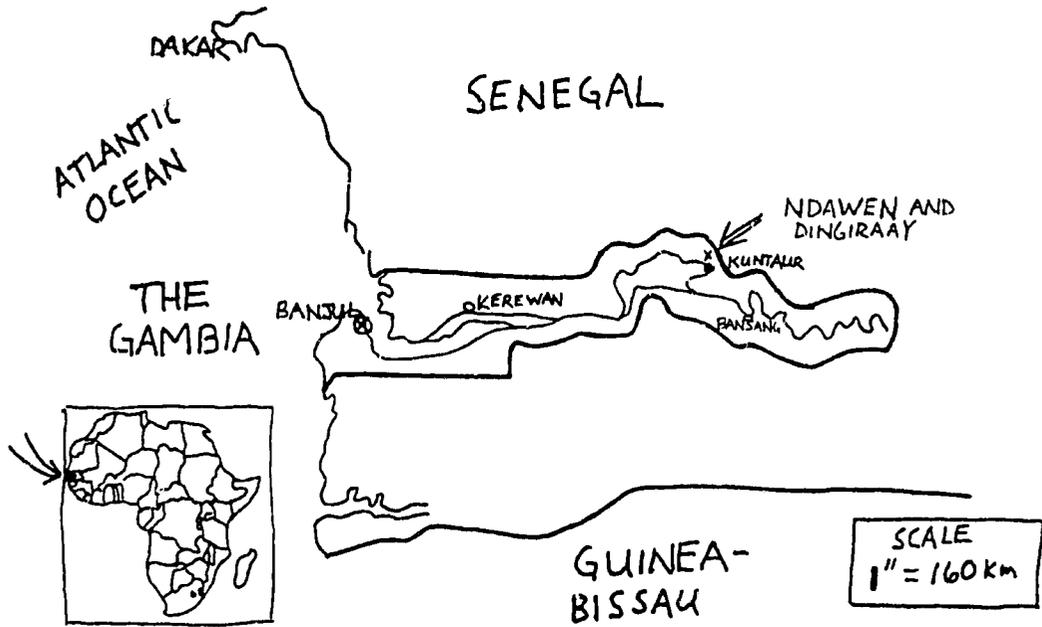


Figure 2. Sketch Map: Dingiraay

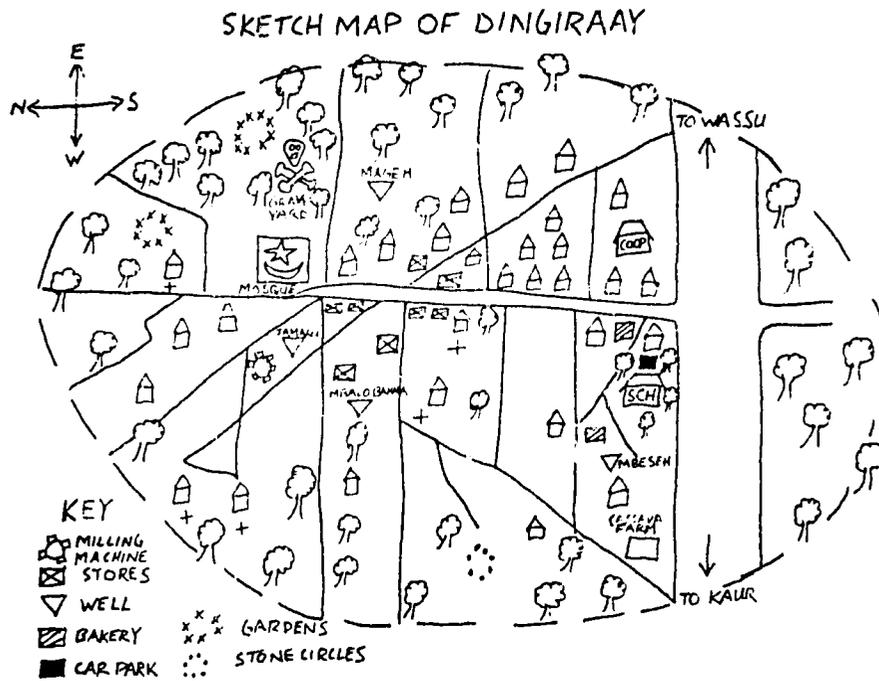
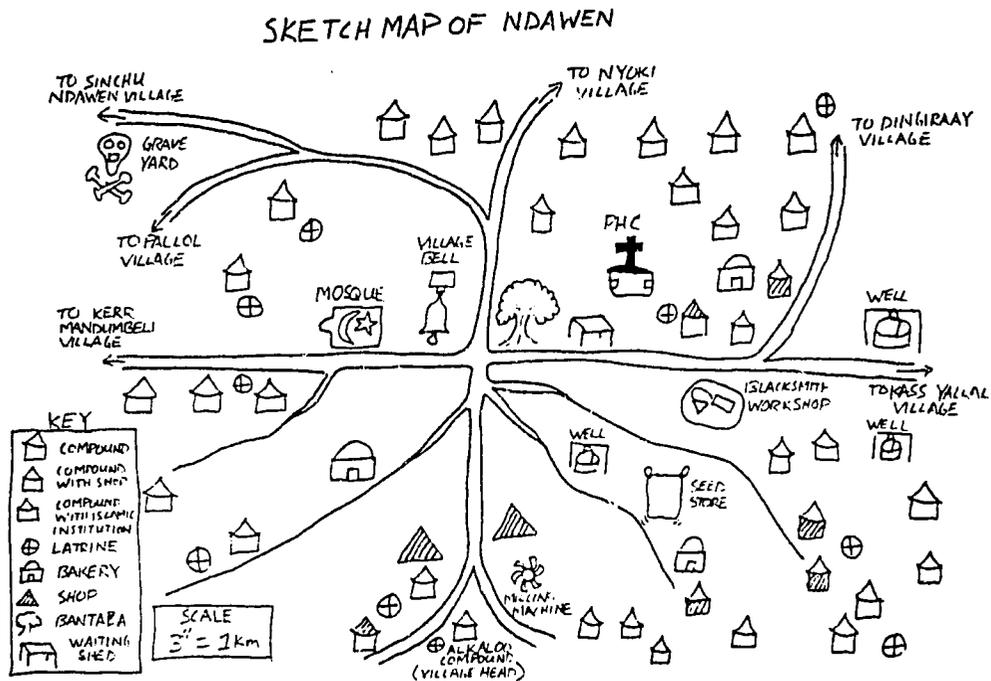


Figure 3. Sketch Map: Ndawen



between the young men and women and eventually the women went off and drew their own map. Later, another argument broke out between two of the young men and still another fracture took place. In the end, the youth produced three different maps and a fourth came in the following day.

The Ndawen men and women worked effectively and developed very clear and well organized presentations. Of the total of eight or nine maps produced by all groups in Dingiraay and Ndawen, the Ndawen women had the greatest detail and most explicit explanations of their village's layout as well as location of particular problems and opportunities. Figure 3 presents the Ndawen village map, derived mostly from the group of older women.

Transect: In both communities, it took about two hours to complete the sketch maps. Both village groups decided they still wanted to do transects so the Alkalos directed the different mapping groups to set out from the core area to the edge of the villages in three different directions. The groups each contained about 40 people. The people offered comments and answered questions while the PRA team members recorded notes, using paper and clipboards. The result of the three sub-transects have been integrated into one transect, in this case, for Ndawen. The transect appears as Figure 4.

The transect reinforced the findings of the sketch maps. Both suggested that water was a huge problem for both communities. There were four hand dug wells in Dingiraay but only two were working. Of the two, one was significantly more reliable and had better tasting water than the second. But the water level was 50 metres below the surface and required heavy manual labour to lift a three to four litre water bag to the surface -- about a minute

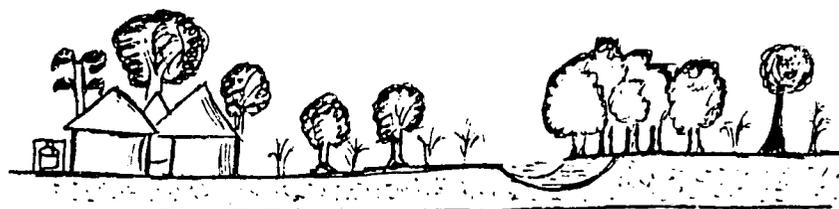
per bag with three women pulling or 2 to 3 minutes per bag with only one lifting. Ndawen's problems also focussed on water. They had five wells of which only one was working.

The transects underscored that the villages lie in a constant and precarious threat of drought. July is one of the rainy months of the year, but the fields were parched and the crops anemic. The people had planted three times over the previous two months, with the first two plantings being a total loss. Farmers noted that if rain did not come in a few days, they would lose most of their third planting.

The transect exercises informed the PRA team that there were few latrines -- a later count showed about 25% of the houses in both villages with formal latrine facilities. Most of the houses had thatched roofs though a few near the center of the villages had tin sheets for at least one building in the compound. Animal traction was by far the most common mode of land tilling though several women commented that the men were reluctant to use their horses for farm work because it might damage their breeding quality. Later the team learned that veterinary services in the community go almost entirely to the horses which the men own and not to the sheep and goats which are an important source of livelihood for many families, nor to the donkeys which do the bulk of Dingiraay's carting and agricultural work.

The transects also confirmed that the villages are almost entirely flat with relatively little variety in land quality or use and little variation in the porosity of soil, all contributing to water storage problems. It also confirmed that wet rice cultivation is not possible in spite of local diet preferences, and fuelwood problems were likely to get much worse in the years to come, present trends continued.

Figure 4. Transect: Ndawen



Soil Type	Sandy/loamy	Sandy/loamy	Rocky/clay	Loamy
Water	3 potable wells; 1 in use; 2 defunct	---	Pond	---
Crops	maize, g/nuts, cassava, egg plant, and vegetables	Early millet, vegetables, ground nuts	---	Ground nuts, millet
Forestry/Agro-Forestry	wild mango, neem, baobab, mango, papaya, moringa, fig tree	Wild mango, baobabs, shrubs	Baobab, prosopis, shrubs, acacia, wild mango, ropes, fuel, medicine,	Wild mango
Socio-Economic	Koranic schools, seed store, bakeries, PHC, shops, mosque, houses, food	Farming, cemetery, block making from loamy soil	Grazing	Farming
Land Use	Arabic	Arabic	Grazing	Farming
Technology	Animal draught inputs available to 3/4 H/Hs, milling machine, blacksmith	---	---	---
Sanitation	Indiscriminate refuse disposal	Indiscriminate refuse disposal	---	---
Problems	water, refuse disposal, land, veg. production	Deforestation, inadequate land	Deforestation, water borne diseases	Deforestation
Opportunities	fix wells, new wells, skills improvement, resources mgt.	Reforestation, mixed farming	Reforestation, food, employment	Mixed farming, reforestation

Temporal Information

The next set of exercises focussed on time. Three were used: time lines, trend lines, and the seasonal calendar.

Time Line: Data for the time lines were gathered in three groups and merged into one set of events for the whole village. In Dingiraay, they elicited an interesting discussion on the founding of the village, some of the problems over the years, the reverence that the people held for many of the Alkalos, and the respect they held for the traditions of the community. It is offered as Figure 5.

Ndawen's time line produced more controversy with some saying that the village was founded about 1900 and others arguing that it was in the 1930s. Eventually the argument was settled by figuring out which generations had come from Senegal, the relationship of their arrival to the First and Second World Wars, and who had been leaders at which times. For some, it was the first time that there had been a conscious effort to establish a chronology of the village's events.

Trend Lines: The trend lines took more time yet provided more interesting information. First, the trends showed that villagers in both communities are deeply concerned about a perceived and significant drop in rainfall. Meteorological records confirm the downward slide since the 1960s though the closest reporting rainfall station is 36 kms away at Georgetown. Dingiraay villagers noted that productivity was low during their first years because they had few inputs and did not fully understand the nature of agricultural practices in their new environment. By the early 1960s, while the rains were still good, new farming practices and new technologies greatly increased their yields. They described the period from the late fifties to the late sixties as a time

of self-sufficiency when they could grow enough food on their land to feed the entire village.

Both communities saw the most recent decade as a time of difficulty, in part because there are more people to feed and in part because the rains are less reliable. The explicit discussions about family size and the relation of food needs to productivity of the land aroused a ripple of conflict. While the communities noted rises in population and drops in land productivity, there was no clear consensus on what to do about it. But they did discuss it at length. It may be helpful to note that The Gambia has one of the highest infant mortality rates in all of Africa -- 143 per 1000 live births according to *Population Concern*.

Seasonal Calendar: For Dingiraay and Ndawen, the seasonal calendar exercise was slow to start, took several hours to complete, and was one of the most valuable exercises during the entire PRA. It was supplemented by a gender analysis tool in Dingiraay for which the team asked how men and women spent a typical day. Figures 8 and 9 present the findings. The exercises indicate that women perform the bulk of the village's work load including water collection, fuelwood gathering, farm work, and food preparation.

While gathering these data, a number of village men openly admitted that women do virtually all of the village's work and that there may be better and more equitable ways to organize the work load. In many ways, the conversation paralleled the discussion about food and population. While there was no agreement that all of the men would reorganize their work day or start gathering water -- both would be difficult if not impossible to implement on any short term notice -- the men did reflect on the nature of the problem and thought about some things they might do to ease the burden of labour on their wives.

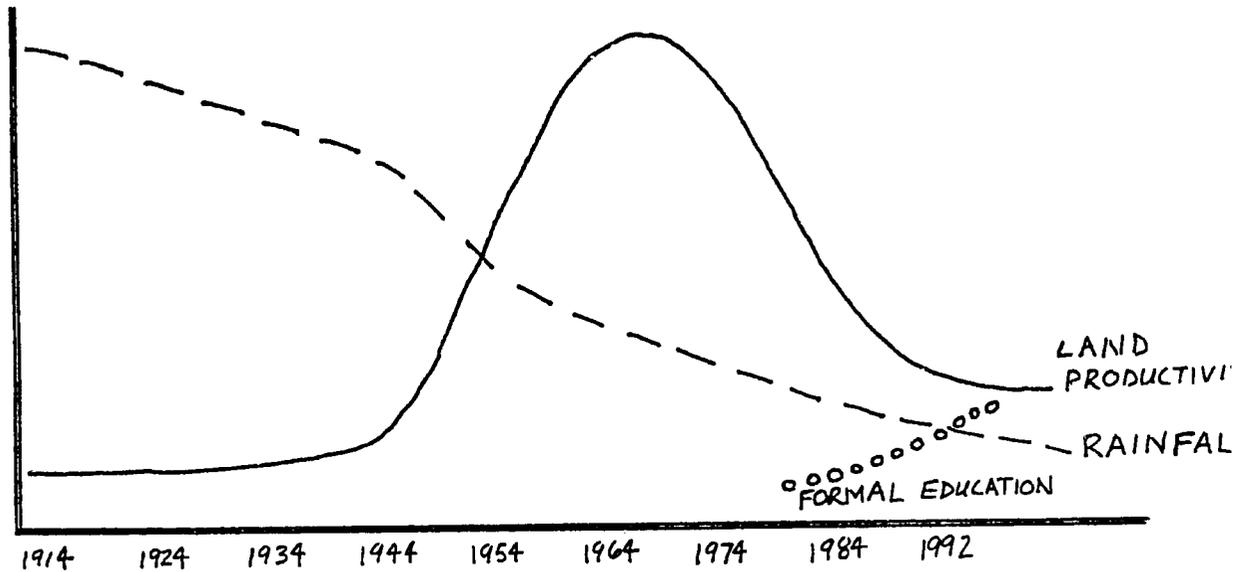
Figure 5. Dingiraay Time Line

Dates	Major Events
1914	Ousman Jama Sallah founded the village and became the first chief; offshoot from Kass Wolof seeking new farmland
1920-1940	Sporadic outbreaks of meningitis and smallpox
1921-1924	Amadou Jama Sallah was chief
1924	Chieftaincy shifted to Dokeh as Amadou Jama Sallah was deposed
1924-1934	Gebel Sallah was first Alkalo
1932	Famine due to pest infestation
1934-1956	Elimane Sallah was second Alkalo
1956-1963	Sait Jama Sallah was third Alkalo
1963-1990	Hali Khan was fourth Alkalo
1972	Outbreak of measles claimed 29 lives
1978	The Cooperative building was constructed
1981	Community and ActionAid founded the school
1982	Construction of main mosque started
1989	Fire disaster
1990	Mosque construction completed
1990	Alhagie Khan became the fifth Alkalo
1990	Women's Bureau installs coos milling machine
1991	Sandstorm destroyed houses
1992	Cue man killed when swarm of bees attack
1992	School handed over to the Government by ActionAid

Chronology of Village Leadership

1914 - 1921	Ousman J. Sallah - Founder and first Chief
1921 - 1924	Amadou Jama Sallah - deposed by commissioner
1924 - 1934	Gebel Sallah - First Alkalo; served as Chief and Alkalo
1934 - 1956	Elimane Sallah - Alkalo
1956 - 1963	Sait Jama Sallah - Alkalo
1963 - 1990	Hali Khan - Alkalo
1990 - present	Alhagie Khan - Alkalo

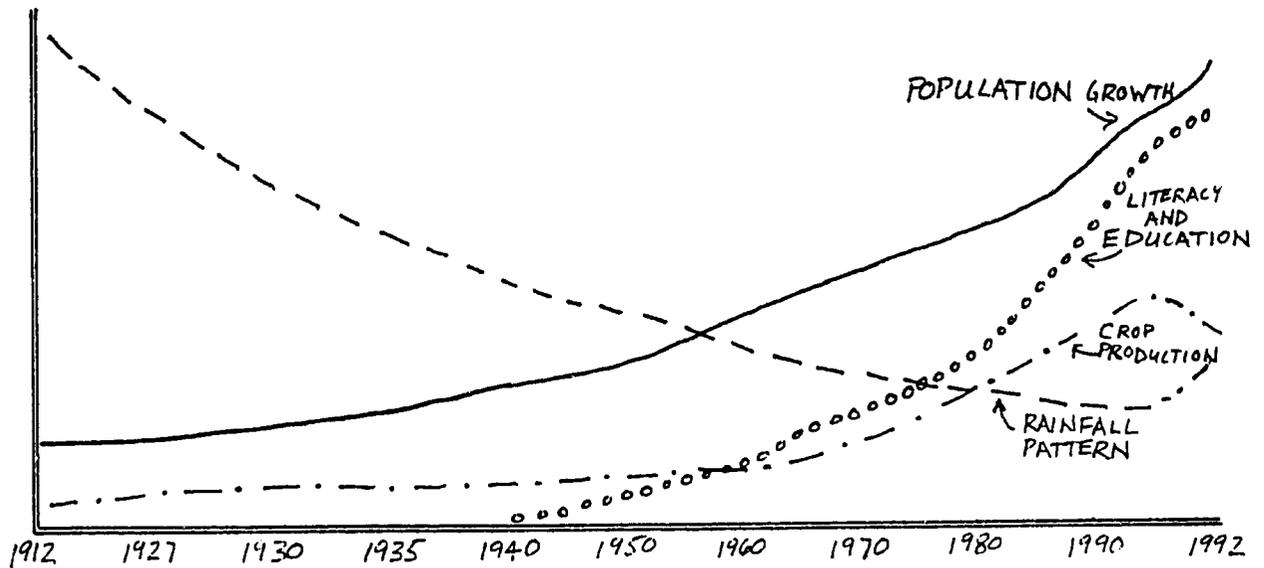
Figure 6. Trend Lines: Dingiraay



Explanations

1914 - 1942	Low technology Pest infestation Lack of incentives
1943-1959	Introduction of improved technology (eg animal drawn implements) Opening of market outlets and incentives
1960 - 1970	Self-sufficiency
1970 - 1983	Decline in rainfall Poor producer prices
1984 - 1992	Persistent decrease in rainfall Producer prices continue to drop

Figure 7. Trend Lines: Ndawen



Explanations

- 1912 - 1940 No formal education
- 1912 - 1970 Enough rainfall due to adequate tree cover
- 1912 - 1960 Low crop production due to lack of technology and inputs
- 1940 - 1980 Low education
- 1960 - 1990 Increased production due to advances in technology and availability of farm inputs
- 1970 - 1992 Declining rainfall patterns

SEASONS	WOLLE MONTHS	ACTIVITIES																								
		FARM CLEARING AND SEED PREP	IMPLEMENT SEWING	SOWING	FERTILIZER APPLICATION	WEEDING	HARVESTING	STORAGE (RESHING (GROUND NUTS) SKIN,)	SKIN,	PEST CONTROL	INSECTICIDES	ILL HEALTH	ANIMAL FEED COLLECTION	WEDDINGS	WRESTLING	LIRUMUSION	FIRE BELTING COMPOUND REPAIRS	GRASS COLLECTION	♀ DOMESTIC WORK	HUNGRY SEASON	HUMAN MIGRATION	LIVESTOCK	MIGRATION	RELAX AND TRAVEL PERIOD		
JUL.		TAM HARIT																								
AUG.		DIGGI GAMO																								
SEPT.		GAMO																								
OCT.		RAKI GAMO																								
NOV.		RAKATI GAMO																								
DEC.		NDEY KORR																								
JAN.		MAMAM KORR																								
FEB.		BARAHU																								
MAR.		KORR																								
APR.		KHORRY																								
MAY		DIGGI																								
JUN.		TOBASKI																								

Figure 8. Seasonal Calendar: Ndawen

Figure 8. Seasonal Calendar (continued)

NDAWEN SEASONAL TRENDS

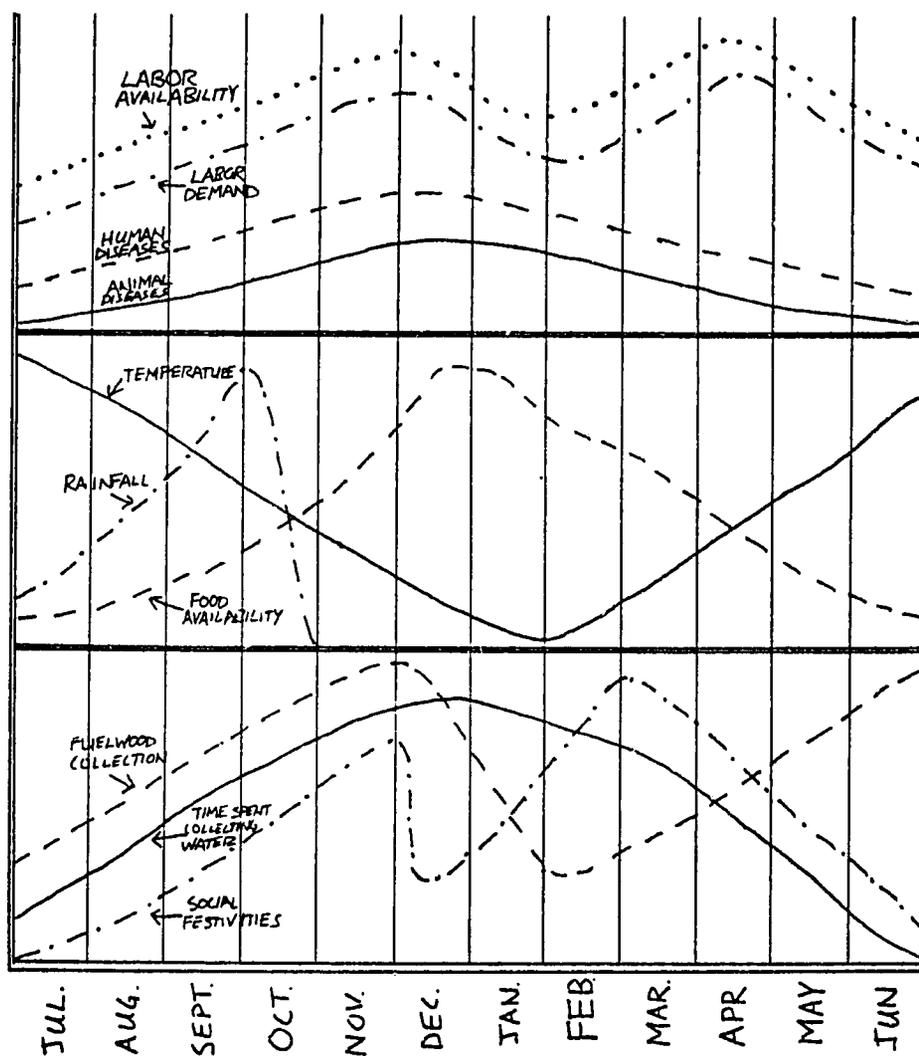


Figure 9. Dingiraay Daily Calendar by Gender

Appx Time¹	Women's Activity²	Men's Activity³
6:00 - 6:30 am	Wake up, bathe, and pray	Wake up, bathe, and pray
6:30 - 8:00 am	Domestic services (breakfast, housework, collect water, sweep)	Farm work
8:00 - 8:30 am	Coos preparation	
8:30 - 9:00 am	Water collection	
9:00 - 11:30 am	Farm work	
11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Lunch preparation	Rest and Pray
1:00 - 2:00 pm		
2:00 - 3:30 pm	Rest and pray	
3:30 - 5:30 pm	Water and fuelwood collection	Farm work
5:30 - 6:00 pm	Farm work	
6:00 - 7:30 pm	Leaves and vegetable collection	
7:30 - 8:30 pm	Dinner preparation	Rest, pray and read the Quran
8:30 pm	Bathe, dinner, and pray	
10:30 pm		Go to bed

¹ There is much overlapping of these activities. This time schedule is for illustrative purposes only.

² In Dingiraay, women spend their time the same way every day, though in the wet season there is more farm work. Also activities will vary depending on how many wives in the household.

³ Men rest most of the time during the dry season or do maintenance work such as repairing fences, rethatching roofs, or building new houses.

The calendars also noted: when food is in short supply (March through October); when labour demands are heaviest (August - September and February - March); when different agricultural tasks are performed; and, when the heaviest incidence of problems seem to coalesce (September and March).

Moreover, the calendars indicated when labour is most available and therefore when community work projects could best be carried out -- October through to the first part of January.

Institutional Information

The third set of PRA data relates to institutions. If community organizations are to carry the burden of launching village projects, detailed information about their capacities and needs is essential. The team designed an institutional assessment matrix with five categories: (1) history and objectives; (2) leadership and management; (3) operational capacity; (4) achievements; and (5) institutional needs. They then went to the community and asked that each organization be identified. Led by the Alkalo, Dingiraay named nine active institutions:

- The Mosque Committee
- Women's Cultural Group (older women)
- Women's Cultural Group (younger women)
- Youth Committee
- ActionAid Committee
- Red Cross Committee
- CRS (Catholic Relief Services) Committee
- Parent Teachers Association (PTA)
- Primary Health Care Committee (PHC)

Institutional Inventory: Leaders of each group were then identified and individual conversations organized. Each village group assembled from 5 to 20 members of Executive Committees and met as nine groups -- one for each village committee. The results are presented in Annex A (pages 43 - 47). A brief summary of the findings suggests that some of the village institutions are very old -- the mosque committee dates back to 1914. All nine see their objectives to maintain tranquility in the village and include community enrichment of one form or another. Most have sponsored projects at one time including health, water, agriculture, community cleaning, food distribution, and education. Several had treasurers, auditors, or cashiers as well as

experience in handling small amounts of money. None had a bank account.

Several had a few members who were literate though none had any member fully fluent in a European language. There may have been village residents working elsewhere with good literacy skills though the information did not come forward. Further, there are several teachers in the school with language skills but they were away in July as it was school vacation time.

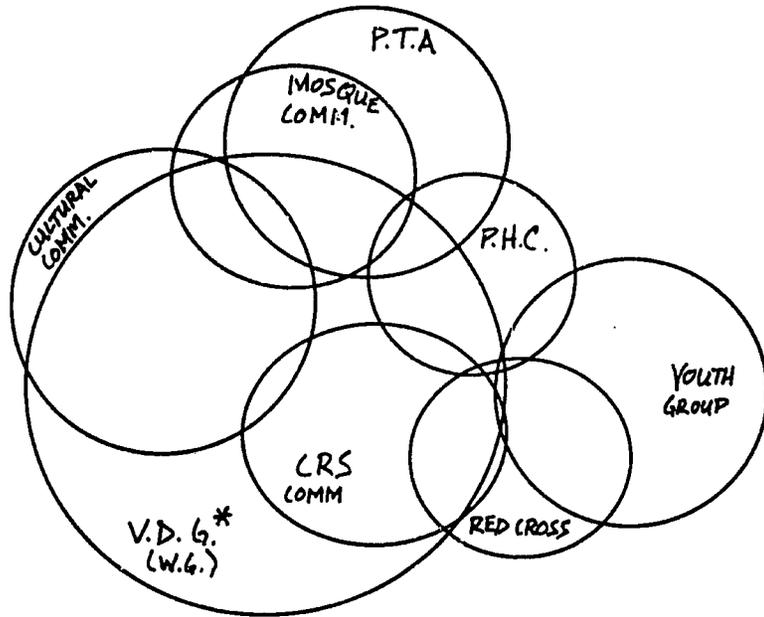
All groups expressed high priority for additional training, especially in literacy, numeracy, and management skills. ActionAid already has a literacy programme underway in Dingiraay with a literacy facilitator in residence. One direct outgrowth of the institutional assessment was a village-initiated recommendation that ActionAid increase training for members of village institutions, with special emphasis on planning, project design, and management.

The overall assessment of Dingiraay's institutional capacity indicted they were stronger on potential than accomplishment. Even so, it was clearly established that a core group of community institutions is available and enjoys respect and support from the village. Good will and high aspirations prevail in all of the groups. A solid and yet to be utilized capacity to address village problems is waiting to be activated.

Institutional Ranking: The second institutional assessment asked Dingiraay residents to determine which groups were the most important and which groups worked best with one another. The PRA team used Robert Chambers' "chapati circles"⁵ to weigh the importance as well as record.

⁵Page 51 *The PRA Handbook*

Figure 10. Institutional Diagrams



* VDG (W.G.) = ACTIONAID / THE GAMBIA DINGIRAY WOMEN'S GROUP

	MOSQ	VDG (WG)	PHC	CULT. COMM.	RED CROSS	CRS	PTA	YOUTH GROUP
MOSQUE		X	X	X			X	
VDG (W.G.)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
PHC	X	X			X		X	X
CULT. COMM	X	X					X	X
RED CROSS		X	X			X		
CRS		X	X	X	X			
PTA	X	X	X	X				
YOUTH GROUP		X	X		X			

of collaboration. The villagers returned to their earlier breakdown of male/female/youth and proceeded to rank and arrange the nine institutions. Reactions were interesting.

First, the groups were becoming accustomed to the PRA exercises and were catching on to what was expected of them. Second, they were enjoying their work and exchanging many opinions about what was and might be in their community. When the discussion of "most important" began, several identified the village ActionAid committee as the major influence and placed the AA/TG symbol on a large circle. This aroused great and heated exchange. All agreed that ActionAid's work was important but several noted there were many committees as strong and as significant in Dingiraay as ActionAid. Large-sized papers gave way to smaller papers to be replaced again by large ones. Eventually sets of "important" institutions appeared -- one from each group -- of village institutional rankings and each group seemed happy with the result. Generally they had AA/TG slightly larger than other groups but with the Mosque, PTA, Women's cultural committee, and several others as very important.

The groups then set about discussing how the different groups worked together. This also took some time and groups had somewhat different opinions. However, the general consensus was that groups collaborated well and had a good record of joint projects. A subcommittee of the PRA team prepared a synthesis diagram which appears as Figure 10.

The overlap of the circles speaks for itself, noting extensive interaction. The closeness in size, with VDG (the AA/TG group) being only slightly larger indicates the relative harmony and accord

among the various village institutions. Finally, the matrix ranking at the bottom of the page, noting which groups interact with each other confirms that the VDG relates to every other village institution. The numbered ranking notes seven groups relating to the VDG while the next highest interaction rate was 6 for the Primary Health Care committee. This level of demonstrated collaboration is striking. The close overlap indicates both past accomplishment and future potentials for good institutional cooperation in Dingiraay. Also of interest is the fact that Dingiraay's residents thoroughly enjoyed the exercise. It was clear that they were finding the PRA exercises both pleasurable and helpful.

Institutional data for Ndawen looked much like Dingiraay. Some profiles for Ndawen are included in Annex A, for documentation of Ndawen groups.

Technical Information

While it is convenient to locate the collection of technical data at this point in the case study, the actual collection did not come here. Rather, the next step is for the community to analyze and rank their problems and then seek out technical data relevant to their expressed needs. The section on technical data therefore appears on page 27 - 28.

Summary: Data Collection

The data gathering served several purposes in Dingiraay and Ndawen. First, it demonstrated that the villagers knew many important things about their community. Second, it helped to get different community elements -- men and women; young and old; newcomers and long term residents -- talking to one another and focussing on common problems.



Third, it put in systematic form what the communities thought about their problems and needs. Finally, the data collection set the stage -- after ranking problems -- to invite technical specialists to provide information on feasibility and cost for options available to solve Dingiraay's and Ndawen's highest priority problems.

During the data collection, a second task was underway -- identifying problems and opportunities. During each exercise, PRA team members asked about problems. The sketch map and transect organized them spatially, the trend lines considered how problems were changing, the calendars pinpointed times of year for particular problems; the institutional assessment identified groups to initiate

action as well as what types of training or strengthening these village groups might need.

Perhaps most important, the data gathering got the people talking. During one session, an elder commented that the discussions had brought the community together to act as one. Another said that after the PRA team left, the community groups continued to talk well into the night, on topics that the PRA exercises had initiated. Perhaps as another measure of PRA's value, by the third day, visitors from neighboring villages were dropping by to see exactly what PRA was all about. It was this casual dropping in that led to the invitation from Ndawen to start a PRA there.

3. Data Synthesis, Analysis, and Ranking

Data Analysis

Information in the absence of analysis, has little value. Discussions are needed among community members and the PRA team on the nature of the problem, what the community thinks causes the problem, what they are currently doing to deal with the problem, and what new opportunities they think offer effective solutions. Figure 11 presents the final product of the process, having gone through the three stages of data analysis noted below.

Stage 1: PRA Team Compilation

The first stage is usually done by the team. In the case of Dingiraay, it took about two hours. All problems were listed in the left hand column of a matrix, with sub-sets noted (eg water scarcity). These problems were derived from the data collection, using techniques of triangulation from spatial, to temporal, to institutional data gathering exercises. The team then reviewed notes and information from data gathering sessions to suggest causes (eg deforestation, porous soil) for the problem as well as current coping strategies (eg hand lifting water from 50 metres). The team worked hard to keep its own opinions and views out of the data at this stage, seeing that its primary task was to help the community organize its information in forms that it could assess. However, when team members felt strongly about including an item that appeared

in no one's field notes, it was inserted but marked with a double ** (eg water harvesting as an option the PRA team added for easing the water problem). The information was encoded into the matrix, reviewed, and then entered into a working chart for community review.

In the case of Dingiraay, very few residents spoke English, so the matrix was translated into Wolof by the village literacy facilitator and then prepared for use in Stage 2.

Stage 2: Community Amendments

The Wolof version went back to the community where a large and often noisy session took place involving both the team and the community. The village literacy facilitator led the discussion, in Wolof, and did a superb job. He reviewed the matrix and asked the community to comment and amend it. Discussions were vigorous with several changes added to the causes of water shortages as well as a new category which the PRA team had not included -- institutional needs and shortcomings as well as training needs.

The group discussed whether the chart presented the causes in ways that the village supported and whether the options listed were activities that they could implement. After about an hour, the community had a chart that they approved as

Figure 11. Data Analysis: Dingiraay

Problems	Causes	Coping Strategy	Opportunity
Water Scarcity	<p>Low water table Low soil retention Long time to collect Few wells (2) working Lack of irrigation facilities</p>	<p>Redigging of old wells Catchment tank at school Another well opened in 1990 through community digging</p>	<p>Tapping water from the river, 8 kms away **Water harvesting techniques Reservoir Catchment Rehabilitation of two wells</p>
Quality	<p>Well not covered and prone to pollution</p>		<p>Use local tree species (Maringa) seeds to clean water</p>
Firewood Scarce (long distance)	<p>Drought Deforestation (natural and human caused)</p>	<p>Walk many kms each day to collect firewood Enforcement of the rules to control or minimise use Use carts to bring in wood</p>	<p>Create village woodlots **Wood saving stoves **Biomass creation programs **Agro-forestry</p>
Poor Health	<p>No health facility Poor environmental sanitation (stagnant water and mosquito breeding areas) Lack of organized basic health education and environmental sanitation programme</p>	<p>Walk long distances to health facility PHC services just introduced Village health post site identified PHC committee established Use of local medicine (herbs, etc) Use of bush</p>	<p>Strengthening PHC services Health education Analysis of causes by community groups</p>

Low farm productivity and food deficits	Pests (termites and grasshoppers) Lack of knowledge to match crops to soil types Little access to fertilizers Poor soil Droughts Overuse of land Unavailability of new seed types, drought resistant species, and early maturing varieties Low income	Crop rotation Matching knowledge of crop to soil types Use of organic manure Fallowing Petty trading during dry season	Improved access to fertilizer and other farm inputs Improved seed varieties (drought resistant and early maturing) Other forms of income generation Growing fruits and vegetables
Poor animal health	Lack of adequate veterinary extension	Use of local treatment Attention given to horses but not sheep and goats	**Improved access to veterinary services
Low literacy	Low school enrollments High school drop-out rates	PTA activities and enrollment campaigns Introduction of school feed programme SFG Adult literacy classes	Strengthening the coping strategies
Labour demand on women	Unequal distribution of labour between men and women Lack of labour saving devices	Marrying more women (polygyny) Child labour	Introduction of labour saving devices
Weak community institutions	Lack of management and literacy/ numeracy skills	Several committees now working and some receiving training in management	Require formal plan to upgrade capacities of several village institutions

descriptive of the nature of their problems as well as opportunities. By this time, the community was fully aware of what PRA was doing and how it could help them focus their energies on the most urgent and pressing problems that they defined. The matrix now went back to the PRA team.

Stage 3: Final Assembly

The team took the two versions of the problem analysis and combined them into a single document. This is the version presented as Figure 11 and the one that served as an entry point to: (1) have the village rank their problems in order of severity; and (2) bring in a technical team to look at the options within those priority problem areas. The technical team considered cost, feasibility, and durability of the community's options as well as some technical options the community might not have considered.

Problem Ranking

Now it was time to rank problems in order of most to least severe. Several different PRA techniques have been used to rank problems, varying from very simple means such as community voting to more sophisticated techniques such as pair wise ranking, as described in the *PRA Handbook*.⁶ The Dingiraay residents decided they would rank the problems on their own. They informed the PRA team that they would meet at night and come up with their highest priority needs.

Figure 12. Dingiraay Ranking of Problems

- .. Inadequate Water
- .. Low Farm Production and Food Deficits
- .. Poor Health
- .. Excessive Labour Demand on Women
- .. Poor Animal Health
- .. Low Levels of Literacy
- .. Firewood

In addition to these seven "sector" problems, the community said they need help in literacy development and group management so that their nine community institutions would be able to design, implement, and operate the action plan that PRA would produce.

The community met that night -- essentially the full adult population -- talked over their problems, and agreed that the most important and urgent needs were solving their water problem, dealing with several levels of health, focusing on their own skills of literacy and local management, and getting fuelwood. The formal list appears as Figure 12.

The ownership of the PRA process was now complete in that the leaders of the youth group, women's groups, and men's group all participated actively in the ranking and felt full and total possession of the list.

⁶Page 61, *The PRA Handbook*

Technical Data

Once problems are set in priority order, a technical survey is required. A small digression here is important.

PRA assumes that farmers and other resource users have considerable knowledge about their environment and what they can do about it. However, there is no assumption that local residents have full or sufficient technical knowledge nor that they have the means to keep up with new approaches in, for example, water storage. Thus, the PRA process looks for ways that good technical data on new and recurrent cost, feasibility, ecological impact, sustainability, and reliance on local skills can become part of the village deliberations. The Technical Survey provides opportunity for village and outside knowledge to be combined into a single integrated strategy. Such integration has been difficult to achieve in years gone by. PRA and local level planning make such integration a reality.

In the case of Dingiraay, given the priority areas (Figure 12) that the village selected, the technical team included four ActionAid staff with skills in well rehabilitation, health, agriculture, and agroforestry. N.M. Mageto, one of the PRA trainers who is a water engineer from Kenya, joined the team for water problems other than well rehabilitation. Their technical review required one day.

Water received the team's most attention, as noted in the report. The full document from the technical team is presented here, in part to show that a report can be incomplete in some areas. Its

purpose is not to have the fine details of what will be required. Rather, the technical team is called on to add its best judgments of what will be needed and what to expect from a technical perspective not available to many rural communities. It is designed as one additional and important set of information that village institutions need before embarking on the Community Plan of Action (CAP). Figure 13 provides details.

Resource Access Ranking

ActionAid had asked that the PRA include an exercise in wealth ranking. The Team introduced the session the following morning but encountered some concern from among the AA/TG group as to why anyone wanted to know about individual household wealth. The discussion noted AA/TG goals of reaching a broad cross section of Gambian communities rather than 20% of the more wealthy. The AA/TG goal of more equitable development had been articulated in the Tandaba Declaration.⁷ The Dingiraay group finally agreed that identifying the poor in a community is important and that wealth ranking is an appropriate activity.

The AA/TG group then expressed concern with the word "wealth." Was it the business of the PRA team to know who in Dingiraay was wealthy and who had money? If so, what would be done with the information so as to protect the privacy of individual households. The group agreed that steps should be taken to protect information about individual families as well as to assure that the information would be used only for community goals.

⁷The Tandaba Declaration was drafted by ActionAid/The Gambia senior staff at a retreat in November, 1991. It set a new direction for the AA/TG, with particular emphasis on community development.

Figure 13. Technical Team Survey: Dingiraay

OPTION ONE: Borehole

1. Survey	D*	3,300
2. Drilling		50,000
3. Casing		4,500
4. Pumping Unit		80,000
5. Storage Tank		35,000
6. Pipes		90,000
7. Operations and Maintenance		
a. Operator (12 x 500)		6,000
b. Diesel (12 x 600)		7,200
c. Service and Repairs (12 x 750)		9,000
d. Spare Parts (12 x 1500)		18,000
TOTAL	D	303,000

OPTION TWO: Local Well Rehabilitation

1. 7 molds and cement	D	770
2. Topping and cement		275
3. Apron and 6 bags		330
4. Transport of sand and gravel		300
5. Skilled labour		2,000
6. Steel rods		1,500
TOTAL	D	5,175

OPTION THREE: Area Council Well Rehabilitation

1. Internal plaster -- 20 bags	D	1,100
2. Topping 3 bags		165
3. Apron 6 bags		330
4. Steel Rods - 40 lengths		600
5. Transport of sand and gravel		300
6. Skilled labour		1,125
TOTAL	D	3,620

OPTION FOUR: ActionAid Well Rehabilitation

1. Same work as Option Three	D	3,620
2. Hand pump		10,000
TOTAL	D	13,620

OPTION FIVE: Primary School Water Catchment Tank Rehabilitation

1. 25 bags of cement	D	1,375
2. 7 kg waterproof cement		500
3. 1 roll chicken wire		500
4. Facia Board (8" x 1" x 200 m)		?
5. Gutters		
a. 4 blocked end		?
b. 2 corner pieces		?
c. 50 plain gutters		?
d. 27 clips		?
e. 3 down pipes		?
6. Skilled labour		3,000
APPROX TOTAL	D	6,500

*10 Dalasis = US \$1.00

Discussion then turned to the methodology to do wealth ranking. Options of identifying a handful of individual village informants were considered but rejected. The AA/TG group felt that this approach placed too much pressure on individuals within the community to make judgments on fellow villagers. Such actions might inhibit joint community action at some future date. After extended debate, the PRA training group agreed that the wealth ranking data should be gathered in open meetings, as in all previous data collection. Proponents of the open process argued that PRA's goal was for continued community ownership and endorsement of the PRA process. Anything detracting from such ownership should be discouraged.

As a final point, the group questioned the name wealth ranking, noting that the Wolof translation for the word wealth [funka] suggested "how much money does someone have." This question would be an extremely sensitive discussion in Dingiraay, whether held in public or in private. Again, after extended discussion, the AA/TG group decided to drop the phrase "wealth ranking" and, instead, use "resource access ranking" to introduce the concept to the community.

Upon arrival in the community, the team and residents met together and discussed the concept of resource access ranking. Discussion leaders presented it as a process to show which households had the best access to resources and which less access. Discussion focussed on one of the PRA goals - equitability or equal access to community resources. The presenters asked community residents what

were the most important resources in the community that people needed to earn a livelihood. After some discussion, the community listed six: labour, land, skills, inputs, livestock, and remittances from outside.

The group agreed that these were good criteria and broke up into the three subgroups which had been used throughout the PRA exercise: men, women, and youth. The ranking went reasonably well and concluded in three sets of ranked order, by household. However, the following day when the AA/TG group was discussing the exercise, concern about the process returned. For example, when the women's group was asked to rank a particular household's access to labour, skills, etc. the women replied it was none of their business to rank access of a neighbour or member of the community. The women said only members of a household could rank their own household's access. In cases where a household was not represented, the women sent for someone. Over the course of the hour-long ranking, a representative from each of the 48 households came to the women's group. Even with individual involvement, the women seemed uneasy and anxious about the ranking. The high morale and extremely enthusiastic spirit that had characterized the other PRA sessions seemed to be fading during the resource access ranking.

The results of the exercise, conclusions for three groups averaged into a single rating, appear as Figure 14. The individual names of the households are known but are not published as part of the report, to protect the privacy of each household.

Figure 14. Resource Access Ranking: Dingiraay

Name of Household	LAB	SKL	LND	INP	LVK	REM	TOT	AVG	Name of Household	LAB	SKL	LND	INP	LVK	REM	TOT	AVG
1. ----	1	1	3	2	1	1	9	1.5	31. ---	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	1.2
2. ----	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2	32. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
3. ----	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	33. ---	2	2	2	2	1	1	10	1.7
4. ----	1	1	1	2	1	2	8	1.3	34. ---	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2
5. ----	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2	35. ---	1	2	1	1	1	1	7	1.2
6. ----	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	1.2	36. ---	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	1.2
7. ----	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	1.3	37. ---	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	1.2
8. ----	1	1	1	3	2	1	9	1.5	38. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
9. ----	3	3	2	2	2	1	13	2.2	39. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
10. ---	1	1	1	2	2	1	8	1.3	40. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
11. ---	2	1	2	2	1	1	9	1.5	41. ---	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	1.2
12. ---	1	2	2	2	1	1	9	1.5	42. ---	1	2	2	1	1	1	8	1.3
13. ---	1	1	2	2	2	1	9	1.5	43. ---	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2
14. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1	44. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
15. ---	2	1	2	2	2	1	10	1.7	45. ---	1	2	2	1	1	1	8	1.3
16. ---	2	1	2	2	1	1	9	1.5	46. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
17. ---	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2	47. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
18. ---	1	1	2	2	2	1	9	1.5	48. ---	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	1
19. ---	2	1	3	2	1	1	10	1.7									
20. ---	2	2	2	2	1	1	10	1.7									
21. ---	1	2	1	1	1	1	7	1.2									
22. ---	2	1	2	2	1	1	9	1.5									
23. ---	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	1.3									
24. ---	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2									
25. ---	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	1.3									
26. ---	1	2	2	2	1	1	9	1.5									
27. ---	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	1.2									
28. ---	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	1.3									
29. ---	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	1.3									
30. ---	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	1.3									

KEY		
LAB = Labour	SKL = Skills	LND = Land
INP = Inputs	LVK = Livestock	REM = Remits
TOT = Total	AVE = Average	
1 = Low	2 = Medium	3 = High

Analysis of Findings (Totals of Raw Numbers)

Category	Labour		Skills		Land		Inputs		Livestock		Remit's	
	TOT	%	TOT	%	TOT	%	TOT	%	TOT	%	TOT	%
Low	40	83	39	81	20	42	21	44	42	88	47	98
Medium	7	15	8	17	26	54	26	54	6	12	1	2
High	1	2	1	2	2	4	1	2	0	0	0	0

Rating of Overall Access to Resources

Category	Number	Percentage
Low Access (1 - 1.2)	24	50%
Medium Access (1.3 - 1.5)	19	40%
High Access (1.7 - 2.2)	5	10%

This chart results from self assessments of access to resources in Dingiraay. Village groups determined that the most important resources in their community were labour, skills, land, farm inputs, livestock, and remittances from relatives. Names of individual household heads have been withheld for purposes of confidentiality. The

review indicates, by the community's own judgment, that half the families have low access and only 10% have high access to productive resources.

The time required to collect this information was two hours. Four additional hours of compilation and analysis produced these results.

Ranking Opportunities

Rationale for Ranking Opportunities

Information was now in place for the most difficult of the PRA exercises: ranking options. Here, community institutions come together based on the narrowing of choices they have been considering over the previous two exercises. The goal of opportunity ranking is to find solutions to critical problems that the community will endorse and sustain. Two principal documents form the basis for the ranking: The Analysis Chart, Figure 11; and, The Technical Survey, Figure 13. In previous PRA exercises, this ranking has proved to be among the most painful and difficult of the sessions. On the other hand, it has consistently been the meeting when the final bonding of people and their CAP has taken place and when the community has come together to speak with one voice about priorities.

To facilitate the discussion, the PRA team used the Options Assessment Chart developed by Chambers and Conway in the Rapid Rural Appraisal methodology. It is described in detail in the PRA Handbook.⁸

The chart draws on four analytical criteria and asks the community to rank their choices, based on these categories. The criteria include:

... *productivity*: will the option increase productivity of water or agriculture or income or wood fuel?

... *sustainability*: will the option be something that the community can maintain primarily from its own resources?

... *equitability*: will the option be accessible to all members of the community or will some elements benefit more than others?

... *stability*: will the option bring change in an incremental and systematic way, thereby creating a minimum of disruption in the ecology, social structure, or economic life of the community?

In addition to these four criteria, estimates of cost for each option, based on estimates from the Technical Survey were introduced. The chart, as completed by the people of Dingiraay, appears as Figure 15. The explanation of coding is included with the chart. Note that the chart includes only ranking for options within the choice of water. This is not an accident. Although the community listed several problems and ranked them in order of severity (Figure 12), when the actual ranking occurred, the residents did not want to talk about anything other than their first choice: water. They noted that there was no reason to talk about any of the other needs because water was their overwhelming priority and they had to address that before dealing with others.

It is of interest that a similar narrowing occurred during the Options Assessment Ranking in Ndawen. In both communities, from a donor or external agent's perspective, there were many problems to be solved. In previous years, these external agents had brought schools, wells, primary health care clinics, seed storage facilities, credit systems, and tree planting packages. Yet many of these external inputs had not reached expected performance because community groups had provided only partial follow-up and support. Dingiraay's

⁸Page 65 of *The PRA Handbook*.

school was running at half capacity because the community could not raise resources to support it; a seed store was 2/3 finished because the community had not followed through with matching contributions. Wells were silted up because village committees had not followed detailed maintenance schedules.

In both villages, the ranking discussions made reference to why several of these earlier actions had not worked and what would be required of the community to implement and sustain "their" projects. These discussions suggested that external agents had preempted village priorities with externally based goals. The PRA ranking process assures that the choices and priorities will be largely those of the community. While both Dingiraay and Ndawen's ranking exercises are of interest, there is sufficient overlap that only one detailed discussion is needed.

Ranking Dingiraay's Options

The discussion started slowly. The Alkalo began, commenting that Dingiraay once again welcomed the PRA team. He reviewed findings of the previous meetings. Between 125 and 150 villagers were present. He then introduced the PRA team member who would lead the discussions, in Wolof.

The team had placed details of each option on large sheets of paper and taped them to the side of the ActionAid pick-up truck. The leader reviewed each option and asked for comments. There was also a blank Options Assessment Chart waiting for the community to complete. The leader asked which of the options seemed more appropriate.

As has happened in several previous exercises, people, at first, did not want to bother with the chart. They wanted to go straight to the "easiest"

solution. Two men asked if ActionAid would drill a borehole and provide a pump. However, several wondered how they would maintain it, noting that fuel was expensive and spare parts hard to find.

Then a leader of one of the women's groups began. She was the first woman to speak. She described at length the problems a neighboring village had experienced with hand pumps, drawing water from depths of 50 m. Because of the great depth, it was physically demanding work to lift the handles enough times to raise water from such depths (distance is equivalent in height to a sixteen story building). After some weeks of trying to get the pumps to work, women in the nearby village broke the pumps and returned to their earlier pulley and pail system. The Dingiraay women's group leader said that if all they did was put hand pumps on their existing well, they might just as well do nothing. She was confident that hand pumps would not work in her community.

One of the water specialists noted that the problems in the neighboring village were real but it was the fault of a bad design that a local company had tried to copy from an imported pump. Several increasingly heated exchanges began about the use of hand pumps. Several examples were contributed, noting that hand pumps were acceptable closer to the river where the water table was higher. The unique problems of Dingiraay's deep water called for an equally unique solution.

One younger man who had been an active participant with the youth group summarized the sentiment of the group, making an impassioned, ten minute plea. He explained that the burden of collecting water for their village fell totally on the women. The entire village, he exhorted, had a responsibility to find solutions that would ease the burdens of women.

By this time, perhaps 45 minutes into the discussion, no one had paid any attention to the chart and the PRA team leader was having a hard time keeping order. Several men joined in the debate, saying that hand pumps were fully unacceptable. As others would speak, there would be comments and interjections from all over the group, but especially from some of the older men sitting in a shaded area near the back of the open air discussion. At one point, the Alkalo got up, went over to the group of men and, shaking his finger with much animation, shouted that the men were not helping if all they could do was sit on the sidelines making comments. What Dingiraay needed, he added, were solutions and actions to solve their problems.

One old man said that development was a slow process and that people had to go one step at a time. Maybe, he commented, the village should start with something small to solve their water problems and then eventually work up to the solution of a borehole. While his ideas might have made sense to the ActionAid people, they were not acceptable to the group as a whole.

The meeting was electric with tension. It was clear that no one supported hand pumps. Options for fixing the school roof water catchment tank were dismissed as being too little. The possibility of a new rain harvesting system using large sheets of plastic to channel rain water into storage tanks (a technique being used effectively in nearby Senegal) was judged as too complicated even though some of the men had visited a project site in Senegal a few years before.

There were a few supportive comments that they should look at rehabilitation of one or more of the abandoned wells as it was considerably less expensive to fix an old well than install a new borehole. Yet the heat and tension of the meeting

was pushing hard for a borehole. Given the heavy emotion and sentiment, no one wanted to look at health, agriculture, forestry, or income generation lest it would detract from water projects. The people of Dingiraay had identified their number one problem and their first priority solution. They wanted a borehole.

Another theme, though never formally voted upon, ran quietly through the meetings: let ActionAid give Dingiraay a borehole. Even though the ActionAid leadership mentioned twice a day that PRA was a new form of development that enabled ActionAid and Dingiraay to become partners in development, some of the old views continued to prevail. The view of "let outsiders do it" was strong among the older men making comments from the back of the meeting -- the ones whom the Alkalo told to act more orderly. They maintained their perception that development is donors bringing gifts and creating dependence. Why not, one man asked, have ActionAid give enough money to drill and line the borehole and provide pumps and pipe. Another said that ActionAid had a lot of money and why not give the people a well. When the ActionAid manager noted that a borehole would cost close to D 300,000 (about \$30,000), another man described how an Arab development agency from the Gulf had provided a neighboring village with a borehole a few years ago. It seemed to be working effectively. Moreover, the neighboring village could now rely on an abundant supply of clean water. Their health was improving, they were able to pay for the fuel and maintenance by using some of the water for intensive market gardening, growing year-round vegetables.

Dilemma of Ranking

The choice of the borehole created a profound dilemma for AA/TG. On one hand, boreholes

across dryland Africa have generally had a poor record of performance and sustainability. Water has attracted more users than the land could support, fuel was too expensive for the users to provide, spare parts were months in coming, and technicians to operate and repair the pump were expensive and scarce.

On the other hand, Dingiraay (and Ndawen) have very few viable options for water that will enable them to break out of their present state of poverty. Because water is so critical to survival and eventual growth, it may be that the community has selected the only realistic option available to them. This premise tests the very core of PRA's assumption that the community (with sound technical advice from outside) will decide what is best for their long term productivity and sustainability.

Two further issues emerged. First, the villagers were correct in stating that their problem was not available water, but was to lift the water. Thus, any funds invested in rehabilitating old wells would duplicate what they already had. Further, working on the school water tank or the harvesting scheme would make only incremental differences and would not create possibilities of a major breakthrough. For a long term boost, they wanted a borehole.

The second issue dealt with gender. It was obvious that men and women wanted the borehole for very different reasons. The women wanted help to lift the water they already had in the ground. They showed the blisters and callouses on their hands as stark testimony to the years of toil and demanding physical labour to which they were subjected. Yet the women would had no money to pay for the pump's fuel or maintenance. The men wanted a borehole so they could grow cash crops. There is a severe shortage of vegetables and a huge demand that would absorb any market garden crops they could produce. Further, there is a nearby

weekly market that draws about 400 sellers from a distance of 75 kilometers. Farmers would have no trouble selling their crop.

The underground water supply seems to be stable for the area. The aquifer beneath Dingiraay is part of the Gambia River water course (8 km away) and rests at approximately the level of the river bed. Thus there is reason to believe that the borehole could pump for some time without any adverse impact on the water table. These points, of course, would be part of the hydrology survey (item #1 in the Technical Report) to be completed prior to any project approvals and funding.

The Options Assessment Chart

Once the air was cleared that the borehole was the first, second, and third priority for the village, tensions eased. The entire meeting settled down, people laughed and smiled, and the young children on the backs of mothers were allowed to cry and behave as normal children again.

The PRA team leader turned to the Options Assessment Chart. Normally, the chart goes into use earlier in the discussion. The tension was so great for Dingiraay that the chart was simply not an available alternative until the tensions subsided.

The leader explained the concepts and the discussions began. While it might appear that the ranking was an after-thought, given the earlier conversations, it turned out to be a productive exercise. The ranking took about half an hour. The chart appears as Figure 15. The Dingiraay experience suggests a number of lessons for NGOs such as AA/TG and for government agencies. These lessons are especially important for groups that are contemplating use of PRA in programme or operational modes.

Figure 15. Options Assessment Chart: Dingiraay

OPPORTUNITY	SUS	EQU	PRO	STA	CST	SUMMARY
Option #1						
Construct borehole	0	++	++	++	--	4
Option #2						
Rehab Well w/o pump	++	++	++	++	++	10
Option #3						
Area Council Well nopump	++	++	++	++	++	10
Option #4						
Rehab Action well w/pump	--	--	--	--	--	0
Option #5						
Rooflop tank rehab	0	0	++	++	--	3

Code: SUS = sustainability;
 EQU = equitability;
 PRO = productivity;
 STA = stability;
 CST = cost.

SYMBOLS: ++ = highly favorable;
 + = favorable;
 0 = not enough information;
 - = unfavorable;
 -- = highly unfavorable.

This chart enables community groups to discuss different options, using criteria for ranking as set out in the five ranking columns. For the first four (sustainability, equitability, productivity, and stability), a double ++ indicates a high grade (highly favorable) for each. In the case of cost, a ++ indicates low cost (highly favorable). While representing high sustainability and low cost with the same symbol can be confusing, it is recommended to use this system in order to keep the ranking symbols consistent throughout the entire chart.

The summary column represents a rough approximation of the total values which groups have attached to each option. These summary scores are not hard figures. Instead, they are impressions. In the case of Dingiraay, even though the summary noted higher scores for well rehabilitation than a borehole, other considerations pushed the community to select a borehole. However, the ranking helped to establish back-up choices which the community may need to use. Further, it brought a sense of consensus to all of the choices, including very little interest in options 4 and 5.

4. Dingiraay's Community Action Plan

The Plan

At this final point in the PRA, Dingiraay had already decided what its plan would be. It would place a borehole first on its list of priorities. The translation of the Options Assessment Chart into an actual plan was merely a mechanical exercise. Even so, several points are very important to stress.

First, the options assessment was an important learning exercise for the community. It demonstrated that the borehole was not the best choice from the perspective of the PRA ranking criteria (see Figure 15). Sustainability of the pump was uncertain; cost was very high. From a purely technical perspective, rehabilitation of one or both of the silted wells was a better choice. Yet from the viewpoint of Dingiraay's men, women, and young people, the borehole was by far their highest priority. As a result, the plan called for the borehole as the first and only choice for at least the first six months of PRA follow up.

Second, the community groups entered this planning stage in the full awareness that ActionAid thought the borehole was a poor selection. At several points during the ranking discussions, ActionAid staff indicated that they were skeptical about the village's capacity to purchase fuel, buy spare parts, and maintain the pump. In the full

awareness of this information, the village decided they would still like to try. ActionAid indicated that they would look at cost-sharing proposals for some of the second and third choices on the list (for example, well rehabilitation). They also indicated willingness to work closely with Dingiraay's leadership in organizing feasibility studies and discussions with other donors about a borehole. For example, the technical survey indicated that a survey of hydrological potential would be required. ActionAid might work with Dingiraay leadership to get that organized. Further, there are international and non-governmental agencies in The Gambia that specialize in water development. ActionAid could help to put Dingiraay in touch with one or more of these organizations.

Third, the PRA experience made Dingiraay explicitly aware of its overwhelming priority for water -- substantially higher than any other community need. In the words of the Alkalo, the community was now speaking with one voice. The discussions, though heated and sometimes hostile, helped the community to understand this priority. The result was awareness among the village that its present structure of nine action committees was not sufficient to solve its water problem.

Given these learning experiences, the Dingiraay CAP was limited, even inadequate, on its set of

technical and physical actions. Yet the progress on its list of organizational and capacity building steps was profound. The Dingiraay CAP process demonstrated that:

organization essential the community would create a water committee, to be drawn from the membership of several of the existing committees. While this committee was not named during the PRA assessment, it was clear that there would be extended discussions among men, women, and young people to organize such a group;

external help available to facilitate committee action the water committee would work closely with ActionAid to clarify what steps it could take and how to get started;

continual community consultation because the PRA had been an open process involving the entire community, the work of the water committee would be equally open. Continuing discussions would involve different groups -- the PHC committee, the Women's Cultural Committee, etc. -- as needs emerged. In addition, the consultation would include visits to other communities facing similar needs as well as the one neighboring village where a borehole was working well;

capacity building of community institutions the water committee would need training in issues of water planning and management as well as literacy, numeracy, and managerial skills. ActionAid would respond in whatever ways possible to help in this area of institutional development;

lack of success not a failure the water committee was prepared to be unsuccessful in its first

attempts to obtain a borehole. Moving to a second or third choice on the list would not be considered a failure. While no formal time frame was established, Dingiraay's leadership agreed that 6 months to a year should be invested in getting organized. After that, a PRA appraisal should be convened to see what they had learned and what the prospects were for installing a borehole;

Dingiraay must be prime mover in solving its problems the community learned that no external agent was going to come and install a borehole for them. If there was to be a borehole, it would come because of strong community organizations and contributions, facilitation by ActionAid and perhaps other development entities, and cooperation among several additional external groups, each making a particular contribution. However, the primary initiative would have to come from Dingiraay;

While Dingiraay did not conclude its PRA with a specific plan of who would construct the borehole, they did achieve unity, resolve, and motivation. That the first stage of implementation is to organize and train a water committee and then to contact several organizations for help is probably the most significant step they can take at the present time.

For Ndawen, the discussions were quite similar -- borehole as number one priority -- though they also agreed they would get started on some of the smaller projects. They opted to rehabilitate two wells while working on their borehole priority. Ndawen planned carefully which institutions in the community would take responsibility for providing cement and other materials (see Technical Survey, Figure 13). Labour will come from the community. Their plan is about to get underway.

5. Lessons Learned

The experiences of Dingiraay and Ndawen suggest a number of lessons for NGOs such as AA/TG and for government agencies. These lessons are especially important for groups that are contemplating use of PRA in programme or operational modes. The thoughts are clustered in four sets of lessons: About PRA; About Village-Based Methodologies; About Procedures; and Beyond Village PRAs.

Lessons About PRA

PRA Structures Information One premise of PRA is that villagers know a great deal about their community and that visual diagrams linked with extended group discussions draw it out. Dingiraay and Ndawen provided dramatic support for this premise. The diagrams and charts in this report underscore the point. PRA is also cost effective. The PRA team collected all of the data in a total of 15 hours field time for each community. While more time would have been desirable, the data produced in Dingiraay demonstrate the efficiency and low cost of village-based data collection, analysis, and planning.

PRA Mobilizes Community Institutions Dingiraay already has a cluster of strong organizations. Yet these groups had not previously initiated any community projects (other than building the mosque) on their own nor had they assumed that such actions were even within their range of op-

tions. Village committees such as Red Cross, CRS, ActionAid, PTA, PHC, and even the younger women's committee had been organized because an external agent had taken the first step. PRA demonstrated that communities do not have to wait for outside forces, agencies, or money to arrive. The impact of this lesson may take a few years to become fully internalized in Dingiraay. Yet understanding this simple tenet may be the most profound benefit that PRA has to offer.

Technical Information Critical In addition to local information and involvement of community institutions, technical input proved to be vital. Weighing water options between rehabilitating wells, drilling new boreholes, introducing rain harvesting techniques, or installing roof top catchments requires estimates of cost, feasibility, and maintenance. In the absence of sound technical information, Dingiraay will continue to be vulnerable. That the technical survey was conducted and that its information was used heavily as the people ranked their opportunities confirms that PRA, to be of maximum utility and sustainability for Africa's villages, requires good technical information.

Lessons Learned: PRA The overall lesson which Dingiraay demonstrates is that without sound technical information, projects are doomed; without clear involvement of the community's experience and information, projects are doomed; without well organized and capable community institutions,

projects are doomed; and without full community ownership of choices, projects will not be sustained. PRA integrates these elements: village information, village institutions, technical appraisals, and community ownership. PRA users contend that these four elements must be in place before external inputs can be considered. This message is powerful and needs to be considered at all levels and by all varieties of development agencies and practitioners.

Lessons About Methodology

Importance of Orientation Dingiraay's experience stresses need for the PRA team to be open, direct, and fully honest with village leadership. Rural communities have grown accustomed to outside entities bringing packages of money, seeds, tools, food, medicine, or credit. Most communities, on initial encounter, assume that PRA will do the same.

Several instances arose during the Dingiraay and Ndawen PRAs in which village leaders wanted ActionAid to come do their development for them. Potential misunderstanding, conflict, and major disillusionment will appear if it is not made clear at the beginning that PRA is a means to bring unity and coordination to the community, but not necessarily money. While money and other external resources may come at some later date as a result of the PRA process, PRA does not bring money as a direct result of preparing a Community Action Plan.

The point is so important that additional comment is necessary. Prior to starting the orientation session, the PRA team were briefed, noting that the following points should be stressed during the launching ceremony:

- ... PRA builds partnerships
- ... PRA brings no money
- ... PRA helps to organize and analyze information
- ... PRA helps to rank needs
- ... PRA helps to put solutions in priority order
- ... PRA helps communities to agree on an action plan
- ... PRA helps build partnerships to find resources to implement the community action plan

Having good awareness of what PRA can and cannot do is fundamental to avoid raising expectations among community groups.

Partnerships for Development Another PRA lesson is helping communities to unlearn the lesson of waiting. Past experience demonstrates that initiatives which communities take will attract outside attention. In the case of Dingiraay, because ActionAid initiated the inquiry, they are prepared to review seriously any plans that Dingiraay produces. Yet there is no assurance that ActionAid will automatically "buy" anything that the village wants. Instead, it is a commitment to build a partnership in which ActionAid will consider support for things that the village begins.

The lesson of partnerships between communities and NGOs, or communities and government agents, or among all three is a basic message about how to sustain rural development and rural natural

resources. While many organizations have talked about partnerships in the past, PRA offers a concrete way in which the concept can be implemented.

Wealth Ranking Brought Division Another important methodological lesson relates to the use of wealth ranking. ActionAid requested help in PRA techniques of wealth ranking. They wished to have better analytical tools to identify target groups and to determine whether assistance was reaching a full cross section of the community. Given apprehension about how the community would react to questions about individual household wealth, the ActionAid PRA training group changed the name to "resource access ranking."

In spite of the altered name, the Dingiraay women's group that ranked resource access of all 48 households, as noted earlier, demonstrated dissatisfaction and even suspicion or hostility to the process. To the extent that the Dingiraay PRA was designed to elicit community backing for a unanimous CAP, the resource access ranking produced a negative influence. In formulating longer term policy and use of PRA, it is essential that AA/TG think seriously about how important it values information on individually ranked household wealth. If the data on wealth are essential, AA/TG should use wealth ranking or resource access ranking. But there should also be awareness that the present means of wealth ranking, either through a small number of private informants or the more public process used in Dingiraay, exacts a cost. The community may feel some mistrust of the PRA team. The community solidarity which PRA seeks to instill may be weakened.

Wealth ranking, like many development methodologies, is a trade off, bringing benefit from one data set but creating potential liabilities. Its use must be carefully considered in this context.

Focus on Community Institutions PRA works directly with community institutions. It is essential that a portion of the PRA analysis consider the current capacity as well as needs of individual village organizations. Dingiraay residents stated on several occasions and included in their final CAP the need for better skills in management, literacy, bookkeeping, proposal writing, and conflict resolution. They also asked for sector training, for example, with the PHC group asking for more substantive knowledge in primary health care. The PRAs in Ndawen and Dingiraay reinforced a momentum that has been building in Kenya and Uganda which indicates that resource sustainability can be achieved primarily through more effective community-based management where upwards of 80% of Africa's resource users live. Conscious and explicit focus on community institutions on the part of donors, NGOs, and governments will be required to carry out the long term strengthening that these village groups desire and need.

Lesson About Procedures

Organizing of Village Groups Should be Flexible For the Dingiraay case study, the PRA team chose to divide the community into three data gathering groups: men, women, and the young (up to age 25). These divisions worked well in developing communication among the group and in having, for example, women express themselves without fear of intimidation from men. The goal of the discussion and data collection groups was maximum involvement, so the tactic of gender separation was effective. Women spoke more when they were separated than if they had been left with men.

For ranking opportunities, however, the full community was involved. This was because the full community would work together in the implemen-

tation. The turnout for all sessions in both Dingiraay and Ndawen had been averaging about 150 people. The PRA team therefore brought all elements within the community together as a single group for ranking, making arrangements for large posters and charts to be visible for such large groups. This process of smaller groups for data collection and a large group for the ranking seemed to work well and the morale was indeed high at the end of each PRA.

Yet there are other ways to organize data and ranking groups. Each PRA team should determine what arrangement will be best for the particular community involved.

Beyond Village PRAs

Larger National Collaboration Needed PRA is working well at village levels. Case examples from East Africa as well as The Gambia document that point. But PRA will not have a major impact on sustainable resources management if it does not find ways to pass the information and planning process from village levels “up” to division, district, and provincial levels. There is a strong tide of decentralized planning and decision making sweeping across Africa. PRA offers one way in which the decentralization can open a new era of development activity. Yet more research is required on techniques of scaling PRA up to work with larger units and involving more villages in collaborative approaches.

Further, PRA works well to integrate sectors and different types of development agencies at the village level. An important research question is whether the problem-centered and community-level message of the present PRA approach can bring similar integration at district and regional levels.

New Applications of PRA PRA has been used largely for community mobilization, data analysis within the community, local level planning, and project implementation. There are many other ways in which the PRA methodology can be used. Several are considering ways in which PRA can help to establish baseline data and then have communities monitor their own progress in, for example, increasing tree cover or decreasing soil loss. PRA also has application in overcoming community stratification among age, gender, ethnic, class, and religious groups. Finally, PRA can be an important tool in helping communities to meet on a regular basis to revise action plans and respond to problems arising from new developments. Research is needed to understand how these new uses can make village institutions even more effective and powerful in managing their own development.

Follow-up Fundamental A final lesson concerns follow-up by both community and outside agents. One of the lessons noted earlier is that of building partnerships. PRA will work if groups both inside and external to the community will work together. There are many resources available within a community. There are also external technologies and funds to help a community break out of problems in water, income, nutrition, and more. PRA takes the first step by placing the initiative within the community. This is an important step to reverse some of the development dependency that has accrued in recent decades. Follow-up by the community alone will be frustrating and possibly demoralizing. External agencies need to consider how they can structure staffing, resources, and technical advice to respond to queries that communities will raise. There must be mechanisms in place to enable the inside and outside units to join together to develop a JOINT plan of action. PRA starts this process. Yet institutions must be ready to follow-up.

ANNEX A

Institutional Profiles

The PRA exercises in both Dingiraay and Ndawen paid explicit attention to community institutions. Given PRA's assumption that village groups are important units to manage rural development, this focus on institutions becomes vital. The data presented in Annex A is a small sample of the total for each village. In the case of Dingiraay, villagers identified nine institutions. For Ndawen, eight groups were functioning.

Focus on village institutions is a relatively new dimension of development planning and project design. The methodology of PRA makes it possible; the energy and commitment of community groups increases possibilities of sustainable activities; the concept of partnerships and cost sharing make the approach attractive to NGOs, governments, and donor agencies. The process of institu-

tional analysis also enables villages to look at their own capabilities and to join with external groups to identify training and capacity building activities to increase the effectiveness of village groups.

For example, in both Ndawen and Dingiraay, several groups noted that they would be stronger if they had training in literacy, numeracy, financial management, and the substantive area of their committee, ie, health or water.

Four samples of the community institutional inventories are included in Annex A. They are presented to suggest the flavor of information to be collected quickly. These data provide extensive background on what institutions have done and what they would like to do in the community.

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION INVENTORY

Institution: Ndawen Women's Cultural Committee

History and Objectives	Leadership and Management	Management Capacity	Achievements	Institutional Needs
<p>Formed in 1977;</p> <p>Objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. to created unity and understanding in the village; .. to promote collective action for income generations; .. to encourage and protect cultural beliefs; .. to help in village celebrations such as weddings; .. to extend sympathy to members of the village when someone has died. 	<p>Leadership includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. president .. vice president .. treasurer .. auditor .. judicial branch .. police <p>Leadership qualifications include ability and willingness to work.</p> <p>Total membership is currently 110 women.</p>	<p>The constitution calls for helping to settle domestic problems, provide free labour and assistance during wedding and naming ceremonies;</p> <p>The group meets once a week;</p> <p>Lateness is punished with a D3.00 fine; absence is a D5.00 fine; fines are also levied for being late to farm work;</p> <p>Takes care of sick member's farms; brings water to women who have given birth;</p> <p>Provide training in their own ideals and skills.</p>	<p>Helps many sick people, especially looking after their farms when they cannot work;</p> <p>Contributions toward community social and self-help programs;</p> <p>Acquired a milling machines;</p> <p>Dispenses farm inputs;</p> <p>Runs a seed store;</p> <p>Creates unity and understanding within the community.</p>	<p>Borehole</p> <p>Water</p> <p>Threshing machine</p> <p>Milling machine</p> <p>Ground nut machine</p> <p>Farming inputs</p> <p>Capital</p> <p>Skills.</p>

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION INVENTORY

Institution: **Ndawen ActionAid Committee**

History and Objectives	Leadership and Management	Management Capacity	Achievements	Institutional Needs
<p>There are two groups, one for men and a second for women. They date back to 1972, before AATG came on the scene. They united in 1990 when AATG came to Ndawen;</p> <p>Objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. to raise their standard of living through improved and approved agricultural practices; .. to improve the health standard of the community through primary health care; .. to promote social relationships within the community. 	<p>Each gender group has its own executive committee but comes together as one committee as and when common activities are to be undertaken.</p> <p>Membership is: 45 men; 103 women or 148 total;</p> <p>The leadership was selected through a group general meeting that included all membership of the committee;</p> <p>The constitution calls for fines of D5.00 for men and D3.00 for women who fail to attend meetings;</p> <p>The group meets weekly with general meetings as and when necessary.</p>	<p>ExComm for each gender group provide rules and regulations and are then ratified by the general membership;</p> <p>The secretary of the men's groups keep records of the group's accounts and meetings;</p> <p>The women's group do not keep accounts but can keep track of all of their money through good memories of the leaders.</p>	<p>Tesito work such as: village cleaning, building bantaba, helping weak and poor members of the community, financial aid to members with pressing problems, group farm with early millet and groundnuts;</p> <p>Achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. farm inputs and credit from AATG .. community seed store with AATG help and food for work from the WFP; .. loans to needy members from the group farm; .. increased hectares under cultivation. 	<p>Leadership training;</p> <p>Skills training such as carpentry, masonry, tie-dye;</p> <p>Farming inputs including fertilizer, farm implements, animals, carts;</p> <p>Health education;</p> <p>Labour saving devices;</p> <p>Water.</p>

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION INVENTORY

Institution: **Dingiraay Mosque Committee**

History and Objectives	Leadership and Management	Management Capacity	Achievements	Institutional Needs
<p>Formed in 1914;</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. to promote Islam; .. to provide a leadership core for the community; .. to serve as a Council of Elders; .. to safeguard the interests of the vulnerable and strangers in the community. 	<p>Membership:</p> <p>8 men and 4 women;</p> <p>Head of committee is Imam, assisted by 3 assistant Imams, 4 muzzien, the Alkalo, and 4 women who sweep the mosque and fetch water;</p> <p>Selection process for committee members is informal and based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. regularity at prayer times; .. righteousness; .. protect confidentiality; .. peaceful; .. knowledgeable in the Quran; .. 18 years or older; .. exemplary character. 	<p>All members are literate in the Quran. At least two committee members have literacy and numeracy skills.</p> <p>The committee's authority is maintained by an unwritten constitution eg members who refuse to participate in communal endeavors are sanctioned.</p>	<p>Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. sustaining the norms and values of the community; .. assisting vulnerable groups; .. settling disputes; .. taking decisions and mobilizing villagers for communal work; .. looking after funeral rites and burials; .. settling immigrants and providing land for NGO projects, newcomers, etc. <p>Achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. organized religious programmes eg "Gammos;" .. maintain cohesiveness; .. mobilized the community 	<p>Training and leadership assistance;</p> <p>Provision of materials;</p> <p>Buckets and kettles for the mosque;</p> <p>Communal work tools such as rakes, wheelbarrows, spades;</p> <p>A written constitution;</p> <p>An annex block for the women at prayer time.</p>

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION INVENTORY

Institution: **Dingiraay Primary Health Care Committee**

History and Objectives	Leadership and Management	Management Capacity	Achievements	Institutional Needs
<p>Formed in December, 1991;</p> <p>The committee's objectives are to improve village health services and the environmental sanitation of the community.</p>	<p>Selection process for membership includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. core group identified itself; .. core group selected additional members on basis of honesty and hard work; .. total membership is 16; .. ExComm of president, secretary, auditor, vice president, treasurer, organiser, health inspector, VHW, TBA, and an advisor; <p>Operating rules, with authority derived from Public Health Act include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. membership is indefinite; .. regulations enforced through fines; .. an advisor (ombudsman) settles disputes. 	<p>Two members of ExComm have western education;</p> <p>VHW and TBA have training in their fields;</p> <p>No management training has been provided.</p>	<p>Activities include village cleaning and looking after village health;</p> <p>Achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> .. introducing PHC; .. improved hygiene in the community, from their own perspective; .. revolving fund to finance health activities is in effect, with current balance about D140.00. 	<p>ExComm needs training in PHC concept;</p> <p>ExComm needs training in management and financial monitoring;</p> <p>Health inspector and team need training in subject matter of public health inspection.</p>

Those who wish additional information should read:

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