

Empowering Communities

PARTICIPATORY TECHNIQUES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED
PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 2: PARTICIPANT'S HANDBOOK



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Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS)

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Introduction to the Handbook

This participant handbook was written as an accompaniment for the training course *Empowering Communities: Participatory Techniques for Community-Based Programme Development*. The purpose of this handbook is to provide course participants with key points for each session, case studies, exercises and a structured format for keeping notes during their field experience. **Therefore, the handbook is not meant to serve as a stand-alone guide to participatory programme development (PPD), but as a hands-on tool for use during the course.**

The handbook is divided into three main sections:

- I. Key Points from the Training Sessions
- II. Case Studies, Exercises and PLA Resources
- III. Field Notes

The information about PPD which is provided in this handbook is by no means exhaustive, and is only meant to provide the key points of the information presented during the training. The *Empowering Communities* course is based on experiential learning, so that participants learn by doing instead of by listening to lectures. Therefore, the key points are provided so that participants can focus less on taking notes and more on participating actively during the sessions.

In addition to the key points, the participants are encouraged to read any additional materials which might be distributed during the course and to obtain other PPD resource materials on their own.

List of Acronyms

APC	action plan committee
B&A	behaviour and attitudes
CAP	community action plan
EDI	Economic Development Institute (The World Bank)
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IPC	interpersonal communication
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
NGO	non-governmental organisation
PLA	participatory learning & action
PM&E	participatory monitoring & evaluation
PPD	participatory programme development (see definition on next page)
PRA	participatory rural appraisal
RDWSSP	[Kenya] Rural Domestic Water Supply and Sanitation Programme
RRA	rapid rural appraisal
SA	sponsoring agency (see definition on next page)
SSI	semi-structured interview
WBS	well-being sorting
VIPP	visualisation in participatory programmes

Definition of Terms

Action plan committee (APC): A group of community members, chosen or elected by the community, that is responsible for writing the community action plan and coordinating its implementation.

Community action plan (CAP): A written document created by the community that outlines the activities the community would like to implement as a result of the participatory learning and action (PLA) workshop.

Community link persons: Two or three community members who are chosen by community leaders to work with the PLA team during the PLA workshop.

Field sub-teams: Sub-groups of the PLA team, consisting of two or three people, who work simultaneously with different community groups. One or two people in the sub-team are facilitators and one person is a note taker.

Participatory learning and action (PLA): A community development approach whereby facilitators work with communities to help them analyse their needs, identify solutions to fill those needs and develop and implement a plan of action. PLA is based on many different participatory approaches, including participatory rural appraisal (PRA), rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and applied anthropology.

Participatory learning and action team (PLA team): A group of six to eight people who work together to facilitate the PLA process within a community. The team consists of PLA experts, members of the sponsoring agency, members of other local non-governmental organisations or government agencies, and community link persons.

Participatory learning and action workshop (PLA workshop): A series of meetings with the community, usually lasting from three to seven days, during which the PLA team works with the community to analyse its needs, identify solutions to meet those needs, and develop a community action plan. The PLA workshop is not to be confused with the **PLA course**, which is the subject of this training manual.

Participatory programme development (PPD): The process of working in partnership with communities to develop feasible, desirable and sustainable programmes. The PPD process utilises participatory learning and action methods.

Sponsoring agency (SA): The organisation initiating a health or social programme within the community, and which has organised the participatory learning and action workshop.

Course Overview

Empowering Communities: Participatory Techniques for Community-Based Programme Development is a two-week course (suggested length) for the staff of organisations aiming to encourage community participation in health or other related sectors. Participants are ideally those who work directly with the communities involved in their programmes. This course trains participants to work with communities to improve their well-being through the use of participatory learning and action (PLA). While the course focuses heavily on the health sector, the skills that are taught can be applied to other development sectors, such as education or environment.

PLA is a process enabling community members to...

- Analyze their needs;
- Identify possible solutions and resources to meet those needs; and
- Develop a plan of action for implementing their solutions.

This process takes place through a PLA workshop which is conducted in a community. Why use PLA within programmes?

- Because when communities identify problems themselves and come up with their own solutions, the results can be both spectacular and sustainable.
- PLA allows communities to discover their own wealth of knowledge and capacity for problem identification and problem solving.
- The solutions that the communities identify are more likely to be feasible and implemented than those that have been created by outsiders.

PLA is based on participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and other participatory approaches. In its traditional form, PLA has been used to empower communities to identify problems and solutions in all sectors. The authors of this manual recognise that course participants will have to work within the pre-set agendas of their sponsoring organisations, which will have specific objectives in different areas of health and related sectors. Therefore, most of the course's classroom learning activities use examples from the health sector. For the field experience, participants will work with a project in the health sector or another related sector (e.g., water and sanitation, education, gender).

This hands-on course uses *experiential learning* to help participants become proficient in participatory programme development. Course participants learn by discovering concepts and practising skills. They are also asked to draw heavily on their experiences for many of the learning activities. The course covers...

- The participatory programme development process;
- The attitudes, behaviours and skills necessary to be a successful PLA facilitator; and
- The specific techniques that can be used.

Course participants will learn how to use these approaches for planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

Approximately half of the course focuses on the participatory programme development process; attitudes, behaviours and skills of the participants; and classroom practice of various PLA techniques. The other half is devoted to facilitating and/or observing a PLA workshop in the field, which will take place within the context of an existing community development project. For this reason, the field experience may occur at any time during the training, depending on the project's schedule. The course finishes with the presentation of field experiences and participants' reflections on how to successfully integrate these new skills into their work.

The authors recognise that PLA is a continually evolving field, with new methods and techniques being discovered all the time. Therefore, the authors will also continue to adapt the content of this course according to the latest innovations. The trainer will also need to adapt the course according to the different field experience sites and the participants' needs and expectations.

I. Key Points from the Training Sessions

SESSION 1

Course Overview and Ice Breaker

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...appreciate the variety of work done by your fellow participants
- ✓...have a better understanding of the way you currently develop programmes
- ✓...understand the course objectives and agenda
- ✓...reconcile your personal expectations with the course objectives



CONTEXT: *This first session is designed to introduce you to the other participants and to the course. In addition to receiving the workshop agenda and objectives, you will be given the opportunity to express your own expectations. The introductory case study serves two purposes: 1) It provides the trainers with a baseline for assessing the success of the training; and 2) It orients you to the types of things that you will be learning in the course.*

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to...

- ✓ Understand the history and foundations of participatory learning and action (PLA) approaches
- ✓ Identify and implement the different steps of the participatory programme development (PPD) process
- ✓ Practice the behaviours and attitudes which are necessary for the successful implementation of PLA
- ✓ Facilitate the use of various PLA techniques

SESSION 2

Introduction to Participatory Programme Development (PPD)

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Reach a consensus on the meaning of “participation”
- ✓...Be able to define Participatory Programme Development (PPD) and the word “community”
- ✓...Understand the basic concepts of PPD
- ✓...Understand the history and foundations of participatory learning and action



CONTEXT: The main goal of this session is for participants to come to a consensus on two of the main concepts that are the basis of the training: participation and community. In addition, you will learn about the history and theory of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) and watch a video to illustrate these basic concepts. This session builds the foundation necessary for learning about the specific steps of the Participatory Programme Development Process and specific PLA techniques.

Participation can take many forms within development programmes, and some types of participation are more “participatory” than others. A participatory continuum is on the following page¹, laying out different forms of participation, from the least participatory to the most participatory. Which type of participation best matches your drawing of participation?

The goal of PPD is to enable communities to engage in *collective action*, which is the most participatory form of participation.

¹Adapted from Pretty (1995) in Cornwall, A. 1996. Towards Participatory Practice: Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and the Participatory Process. In *Participatory Research in Health: Issues and Experiences*. de Koning, K. and M. Martin, eds. p. 96. London: Zed Books.

THE PARTICIPATORY CONTINUUM

<u>Mode of Participation</u>	<u>Involvement of Local People to Local People</u>	<u>Relationship of Research and Action</u>
Co-option	Token representatives are chosen, but have no real input or power.	ON
Compliance	Tasks are assigned with incentives; outsiders decide agenda and direct the process.	FOR
Consultation	Local opinions are asked; outsiders analyse and decide on a course of action.	FOR/ WITH
<u>Mode of Participation</u>	<u>Involvement of Local People</u>	<u>Relationship of Research and Action to Local People</u>
Cooperation	Local people work together with outsiders to determine priorities; responsibility remains with outsiders for directing the process.	WITH
Co-learning	Local people and outsiders share their knowledge to create new understanding and work together plans, to form action with outsider facilitation.	WITH/ BY
Collective action	Local people set their own agenda and mobilize to, carry it out in the absence of outside initiators and facilitators.	BY

Definition of Participatory Programme Development

Participatory Programme Development (PPD) is the process of working in partnership with communities to develop feasible, desirable and sustainable programmess.

PPD uses an approach known as Participatory Learning and Action (PLA). PLA is a process that enables community members to 1) analyse their needs; 2) identify possible solutions to meet those needs; and 3) develop, implement, and evaluate a plan of action. The background and foundations of PLA are discussed in greater detail below.

Focussed or Unfocussed PPD?

PPD can be either focussed on a specific sector or issue, or it can be “open”, meaning that the community is free to implement projects addressing any issue that it chooses. Many sponsoring agencies (SAs) are not able to do open PPD, however, because they receive money from donors to do work on specific issues. Although this situation may not be ideal, because it limits

the community's freedom to decide which issues to address, it is important to recognize this reality and work within it.

If the sponsoring agencies faces these types of constraints, they have one of two options:

1) They can be direct with the community before the PPD process begins, and tell them that it will focus on a specific sector or issue (e.g., health or education); or

2) They can conduct the PPD in an "open" fashion, and hope that the community identifies their issue as one of their priorities. If this does not happen, the SA should be willing to link the communities with other SAs who could help them address their priority issues.

Definition of "Community"

Before learning the principles and techniques of PPD, it is helpful to define the word "community", since the community participation is the heart of PPD. *Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary* gives two definitions for the word "community":

A group of people residing in the same region and under the same government

and

A class or group with common interests

In rural areas, the first definition generally applies. In urban areas, the first definition could also apply (e.g., in a neighbourhood), but there are also many other types of communities that are not dependent on geography to define them as a community. For example, urban residents may have little in common with their neighbours, but they may be linked to other urban dwellers through work, studies or common interests. Examples of urban communities include factory workers, commercial sex workers, members of social clubs and university students.

Facilitating PLA with these "non-traditional" types of communities can pose special challenges, because the people may come together in one place only for a few hours each day (or even less frequently). Therefore, the scheduling of PLA activities may be more complex in urban areas than in rural areas.

The PLA Team

An ideal PLA team is composed of six to ten people, although this number is not fixed, and the team may be larger or smaller. It is also multidisciplinary, which means that the team normally has a mix of different genders, disciplines and career statuses. In addition, there are often representatives of different groups or organisations, including the following:

- ◆The agency sponsoring the PLA workshop
- ◆Other NGOs or development agencies that are working in sectors related to the PLA workshop (e.g., health, agriculture, education, environment)
- ◆Local government representatives (e.g., extension officers, members of district development committees)
- ◆Community members (community link persons)

Note that this team composition is not fixed; it is possible that not all of these groups will be represented, or that other groups not mentioned will be a part of the team. Every team will be different, depending on the community.

Each team member has a well-defined role². One person takes on the role of team leader, and the others act as both facilitators and note takers. The PLA team often divides up into pairs or groups of three in order to work with different community groups simultaneously.

- ◆ The **leader** is in charge of making the initial contact with the community; serving as the primary link with village leaders; coordinating logistics of the field work; introducing the team to the community; supervising the work of other team members; ensuring that activities stay on schedule; moderating conflicts between team members; facilitating daily team meetings; overseeing the report writing and editing; distributing the final report; and making arrangements for follow-up after the workshop (by assuring that there are appropriate liaisons from the sponsoring agency). The leader may be either a staff member of the sponsoring agency or an external PLA consultant. He or she should have extensive PLA experience and should be charismatic, dynamic, organized and a good communicator.

The trainers will take on many of the responsibilities of the team leader during this course, since the initial contacts and logistics will have to be taken care of before the course begins. Within each of the three participant PLA teams, however, one person should be the leader.

- ◆ The **note takers/recorders** are responsible for observing and recording the PLA activities. This includes both written notes and hand-drawn copies of maps and diagrams that community members create on the ground. In addition to writing down key remarks that are made during activities, the note taker also records who is talking and describes the group dynamics. The note taker should be observant, a good listener and familiar with the local language. The note taker should also be able to summarize information and present it in a clear, concise format.
- ◆ The **facilitators** conduct the PLA activities with the community members. They ensure that all members of the community are given the chance to participate, and they keep the different groups on task. They must have excellent interpersonal skills and a good sense of humour, and be flexible and patient.

NOTE: The note takers/recorders and facilitators often switch roles during the course of a PLA workshop. Participants should be encouraged to do this during the field work.

- ◆ Approximately two **community link persons** are identified by the PLA team to assist with the PLA workshop. These link persons serve as liaisons between the community and the team. In addition to helping with logistical arrangements, they help to facilitate the PLA activities. They should be people who are respected, dynamic and willing to learn from their fellow community members. They should also have schedules permitting them to attend the entire PLA workshop.

²Schubert et al. 1994b. p. 19-24.

History and Foundations of Participatory Learning and Action

Participatory learning and action (PLA) is based on the assumption that community members are the best “experts” about their own health and social situations. The role of PLA facilitators is to help community members tap their own knowledge and resources and

use them effectively. According to Robert Chambers of the Institute of Development Studies, PLA has its roots in a variety of participatory methodology approaches³:

- ◆ Activist participatory research
- ◆ Agrosystems analysis
- ◆ Applied anthropology
- ◆ Field research on farming systems
- ◆ Rapid rural appraisal (RRA)
- ◆ Participatory rural appraisal (PRA)

The principal pioneers of these techniques include...

- The Brazilian activist Paulo Freire;
- The University of Khon Kaen in Thailand;
- The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in London; and
- The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Sussex, England.

The PLA process and techniques taught in this course are most heavily based on **rapid rural appraisal (RRA)** and **participatory rural appraisal (PRA)**. RRA emerged in the late 1970s in the agriculture and environment sectors as a reaction against “rural development tourism”-- whereby urban-based development officials were taken on specially arranged tours of rural areas and given a very biased view of “successful” development projects. RRA was used to gather information more quickly and with a higher level of community involvement than was the case in large, quantitative surveys. RRA was a largely *extractive* process, however. After the information was collected, it was taken out of the community and brought back to the development agencies to be analysed by “experts.”

PRA evolved out of RRA in the 1980s, mainly through experimentation by small non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It focussed more on the appreciation of local people’s *capabilities* to plan and implement their own projects (as opposed to RRA, which stopped at an appreciation of local people’s *knowledge*). PRA took many of the methods invented by RRA and added the concept of local ownership of the information generated through participatory techniques. PRA emphasized local analysis of data, or “handing over the stick” to communities.

In summary, RRA is a process designed to promote learning by outsiders, where data are collected and then taken out of the local community to be analysed. PRA, on the other hand, enables local people to conduct their own analyses and to develop their own plans of action.

³Chambers, R. 1992. *Rural Appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory*. Discussion Paper no. 311. p. 2. Brighton, England: Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex.

The term participatory rural appraisal was coined in Kenya when the National Environment Secretariat and Clark University (Massachusetts, USA) worked with a community in Machakos District to develop a village resource management plan. At the same time, several NGOs in India were beginning to conduct PRA. Since the early 1980s, the use of PRA has extended to countries in all regions of the world, mainly through the work of NGOs⁴. Although it was originally used in rural villages, PRA has begun to be conducted in urban areas as well.

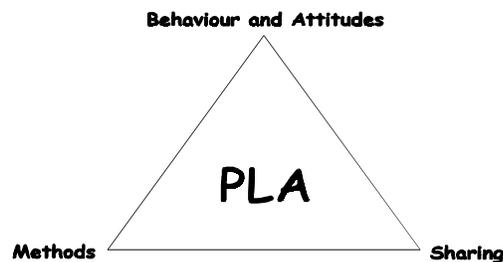
The term **participatory learning and action** (or PLA), which has been used in recent years to designate the whole family of participatory approaches mentioned above, emphasises the ACTION phase of the process; that is, the phase when the community implements its solutions. PLA can be conducted in all types of communities (e.g., rural, peri-urban and urban).

Although originally conceived for use in agriculture, environment and natural resources sectors, the use of PLA has expanded into other sectors, including health, gender, education, and violence prevention.

Within the health sector, PLA has been used in projects dealing with women's reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention, nutrition, child survival, health care financing, and water & sanitation.

The Foundations of Participatory Learning & Action

PLA has three foundations, which can be visualized as a triangle:



1. **Behaviour and Attitudes** are at the top of the triangle, because many PLA practitioners believe that these elements are the key to successfully facilitating community participation. The kinds of behaviours and attitudes which are necessary for the successful facilitation of PLA include the following:

- Respect for local knowledge and capabilities (Reversal of Learning)
- Rapid and progressive learning
- "Handing over the stick"
- Flexibility and informality
- Offsetting biases

⁴Chambers, R. 1992. *Rural Appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory*. Discussion Paper no. 311. p. 11. Brighton, England: Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex.

- Seeking diversity
- Self-critical awareness

2. **Methods** are used to gather and analyse information during the PLA process. Following are some examples of methods:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| ● Mapping and diagramming | ● Time lines, schedules and seasonal calendars |
| ● Semi-structured interviews | ● Matrices |
| ● Sorting and ranking | |
| ● Transect walks and observation | |

Because many of these methods are visual, they can be used by those who are illiterate or low-literate, which encourages the participation of ALL members of the community.

Two key strategies for the use of PLA methods include having a multidisciplinary team and practising triangulation.

A multidisciplinary team is composed of representatives of both sexes, different sectors (e.g., health, agriculture, education, etc.) and different disciplines (e.g., research, programme management, field work). This kind of team ensures that all viewpoints are represented.

Triangulation refers to using diverse sources of information and different techniques of data gathering to achieve a high level of accuracy. (e.g., using semi-structured interviews to cross-check the information gathered during a mapping exercise).

3. **Sharing** of information and experiences is a key element of PLA and takes place on several levels:

- Local people sharing information amongst themselves
- Local people and outsiders sharing information with each other
- PLA facilitators sharing information amongst themselves
- Organisations conducting PLA sharing experiences with each other

At the community level, free sharing of information ensures that communities truly own the knowledge that is generated and that the outside facilitators gain a complete picture of the communities. On a global level, NGOs and other organisations working with PLA learn from each other's successes and challenges by sharing their experiences⁵.

⁵Chambers, R. 1994. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA): Challenges, Potential and Paradigm. *World Development*, 22(10):1-17. p. 3.

SESSION 3

The Participatory Programme Development (PPD) Process

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Be able to describe the order and content of the different PPD stages
- ✓...Apply your knowledge of the PPD stages to a case study
- ✓...Understand the PPD process in the context of an actual project



CONTEXT: This session is designed to give you an overview of the whole Participatory Programme Development Process, and how the steps relate to one another. After this session, you will explore each of the steps in more depth.

Ordering the PPD Process

PPD is a process that consists of several stages. There is no set length for the process--it will be different in every community, and may vary from months to years. PPD is more than just a collection of participatory techniques, and it does not end once the PLA team leaves the village after the PLA workshop. PPD begins with the identification of a project site and ends with an evaluation of activities undertaken by the community as a result of the community action plan.

The PPD process usually consists of the following stages:

1. Selection of the community and formation of the PLA Team
2. Training of the PLA team and logistical preparations
3. Preliminary site visit
4. The PLA workshop: data collection
5. The PLA workshop: data synthesis and analysis
6. The PLA Workshop: ranking of problems and solutions
7. The PLA Workshop: presentation of results
8. The PLA Workshop: creation of an action plan committee and development of a community action plan (CAP)
9. Workshop follow-up and implementation of the CAP
10. Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Description of the PPD Stages

Following is a detailed description of the different PPD stages⁶:

⁶Adapted from: 1) Schubert et al. 1994a. *Facilitating the Introduction of a Participatory and Integrated Development Approach (PIDA) in Kilifi District, Kenya. Volume I: Recommendations for Institutionalizing PIDA Based on Four Pilot Projects.* Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. p. 22, and 2) Kabutha et

1. Community selection and logistical preparations

Ideally, the communities themselves request a PLA workshop from the sponsoring agency (SA). Sometimes, however, SAs are required to develop projects in specific regions, districts, or villages. Therefore, the SA project manager (who may also be the PLA team leader) may decide to approach a specific community to ascertain its interest in participating in a PLA workshop.

What kind of community would benefit the most from a PLA workshop? PLA is likely to be successful in communities with the following characteristics⁷:

- Communities with a strong sense of “community” (either geographical or based on mutual interest)
- Communities that have already participated in self-improvement projects
- Communities that are aware of the health issue that your organisation is prepared to address
- Communities that have strong leadership
- Communities that have decision-making power over resources that are given to them
- Communities that have the time to devote to PLA.....both the time for the PLA workshop and the time to implement projects (Keeping in mind that PLA is not a fast process.)

After a potential community has been identified, the first step is to contact community leaders to see if they would be interested in participating in the PLA process. Communities have many different kinds of leaders, both formal and informal. It is essential to contact the formal leaders (e.g., local political or religious officials) in order to gain initial access to the community. Once the approval and commitment of the formal leaders has been obtained, the PLA team can seek out informal leaders who would also play a key role in the PLA process (e.g., the president of the women’s group or the head of the local labour union).

The team leader meets with community leaders as early as possible in order to determine dates when it would be most convenient for the community to participate in a PLA workshop. The team leader clearly explains the purpose of the PLA workshop and the different steps of the process, emphasizing that the goal is to help the community help itself.

The team leader is responsible for coordinating logistical arrangements for the PLA workshop (e.g., transportation, food and lodging). These are discussed in more detail in Session 7.

2. Formation and Training of the PLA Team

al. 1993. Participatory Rural Appraisal: A Case Study from Kenya. In *Rapid Appraisal Methods*, K. Kumar. (ed.) Washington, DC: The World Bank. p. 179-84.

⁷Howard-Grabman, Lisa. Save the Children. Personal conversation.

Once a village or community has been identified, a multidisciplinary PLA team of approximately six to ten people is formed. The team includes both men and women, and at least one person speaks the local language. The members should have different skills and backgrounds. These will be discussed in more detail in Session 6 (Team Building). All members of the team should have training and/or experience in PLA.

NOTE: The team leader or person responsible for organizing the PLA workshop will need to organize a **short training** for members of the team, especially the community link persons. The training will need to cover the basic principles of PLA and how to facilitate the different techniques. This training can be conducted in the community a few days before the PLA workshop (unless the community link persons are able to travel to another training site).

3. Preliminary site visit

After the PLA team has been trained, they make an initial visit to the community in order to introduce themselves prior to the PLA workshop. They meet with community members and familiarize themselves with the village or neighbourhood. The team meets with different groups of community leaders during this initial meeting (village elders, administrators, women's groups, the health committee, etc.).

By making this initial visit, the team gains an initial impression of the community and ideas about some priority health problems or other issues of importance. The team also uses this first visit to collect secondary data which will be reviewed before the village workshop (reports, statistics, maps, etc.).

4. The PLA workshop: data collection

During the first part of the workshop, the team spends approximately four to six days in the village collecting information about community problems (in health and other relevant sectors) by using a variety of techniques, including mapping, diagramming, transect walks, semi-structured interviews, listing, sorting, ranking and sequencing. When problems are identified, community members are asked to suggest possible solutions.

During this data collection phase, the community members may be divided in order to allow the full participation of everyone (e.g., young women, elderly women, young men, village leaders, etc.). The team generally spends half the day working with the community and the other half working together to organize the information collected and plan for the next day.

5. The PLA workshop: data synthesis and analysis

After the data have been collected, the team takes a day to compile and organize the information into a format that can be easily understood by the community members (e.g., large charts and tables, maps, time lines, etc.). The information is organized according to problems identified and possible solutions.

6. The PLA workshop: ranking of problems and solutions

The PLA presents the different community groups with a summary of the main problems and the solutions that were identified. The PLA team then facilitates sorting and ranking exercises with community members to help them prioritize the problems. Once the most

important problems have been identified, the sorting and ranking process is repeated for the possible solutions. The PLA team helps the community members reach a consensus about which solutions to implement and which indicators to use to measure the progress of each solution.

7. The PLA workshop: presentation of results

The community groups come together and present the results of their problem and solution rankings to each other. The PLA team helps the community to reach a consensus on which solutions to implement.

8. The PLA workshop: creation of an action plan committee and community action plan

After consensus has been reached on which solutions to implement, the PLA team leader asks the community to select an action plan committee (APC), which will be responsible for writing the community action plan (CAP). The members of the committee should represent all segments of the community, and there should be at least one person who is literate and can write. Once a committee is chosen, members of the PLA team may choose to leave the community for several days (preferably no more than a week), so that the APC can develop the CAP.

Although the PLA team explains the format of the CAP and provides guidance if requested, they do not participate directly in the writing of it. It is up to the community members to create this plan themselves, so that they will have complete ownership of it.

Once the CAP is finished, the APC presents it to the PLA team and the rest of the community. The PLA team and the community provide feedback on the feasibility of the CAP and identify activities that would need support from the SA. Based on the feedback from the community and the PLA team, the development committee revises the CAP as needed. The PLA team then works with the committee to discuss the next steps for working with the SA. One or more members of the PLA team should be designated to follow-up on the implementation of the CAP.

9. Workshop follow-up and implementation of the CAP

At the end of the workshop, the PLA team writes a report of the workshop, which is translated into the local language and presented to the community.

Once the community has finalized the CAP, the SA works closely with the APC and other community groups to implement the project. The SA continues to let the community take the lead and be responsible for completing various activities, although the SA may provide guidance.

10. Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E)

The APC and the SA decide how often they want to conduct monitoring activities and when would be an appropriate time to conduct a mid-term and a final evaluation. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a continuous process which is overseen by the APC. The indicators to be measured are determined during the creation of the CAP.

SESSION 4

Behaviour & Attitudes of the PLA Facilitator

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Be able to describe the behaviours and attitudes which are beneficial in PLA
- ✓...Apply their knowledge of behaviour and attitudes to a video scenario
- ✓....Understand the differences in perception between “insiders” and “outsiders” in PLA



CONTEXT: *Before beginning the PPD process, it is essential for you to practice behaviours and adopt attitudes (B&A) which allow you to interact in a respectful and sensitive way with community members. These B&A are crucial in order to effectively facilitate the PLA techniques which will be learned in the upcoming sessions. An entire session is devoted to the adoption of these B&A, since they may be very different from the way you have traditionally interacted with communities.*

Good behaviour and attitudes (B&A) is one of the most important elements in PLA, because it determines how successfully the PLA facilitators will interact with community members. By striving to adopt these B&A, the facilitators show their respect for community members and their willingness to learn from the community.

Following are some of the behaviours and attitudes (B&A) which are necessary for the successful facilitation of PLA. Many of them may be very hard to adapt, especially if the PLA facilitator has been used to working in a different way for many years.

Role Reversal

Learning from and with local people and striving to appreciate their knowledge, instead of teaching them or imposing your knowledge or ideas. Information is gathered using local people's criteria and categories, instead of the criteria and categories of the facilitator.

Rapid, Progressive Learning

The learning process doesn't follow a set plan. It is flexible, exploratory, interactive and inventive.

Keeping Things Simple

Not trying to find out more than what is really needed for your purposes, not measuring what really doesn't need to be measured, and not trying to be more accurate in your analysis than is really necessary.

Handing Over the Stick

Letting the local people do the investigation, analysis and presentation themselves. The facilitator starts the process and then steps back and lets the local people take charge.

Seeking Diversity

Actively looking for differences, dissenters or outliers, instead of seeking out the average. Recognizing that the diversity of information is a rich resource to be embraced and not avoided.

Self-critical Awareness

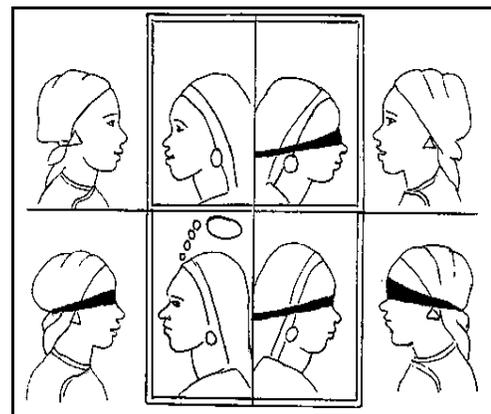
The facilitators are constantly examining their own behaviour and trying to do better. They embrace error and welcome it as a learning opportunity.

Offsetting Biases

Being relaxed instead of rushing. Listening instead of lecturing. Probing instead of being content with superficial answers. Being unimposing instead of dominating. Seeking out those who are difficult to reach instead of only working with those who are easily accessible.

☛ Johari's Window

Johari's Window was originally developed by two psychologists, Joe Luft and Harry Ingham, who were interested in exploring different styles of interpersonal communication. The "window" illustrates the degrees to which two people are aware of what each other knows, or how they can perceive the same situation two different ways. The person inside of the box represents a local person, or "insider", and the person outside of the box represents the development worker, or "outsider". During the PLA process, participants should strive to create an "open" window when interacting with the community.



Following are descriptions for the different windows⁸. Which description goes with which window?

OPEN: The insider and the outsider understand each other and are aware of each other's needs and priorities. They can communicate openly.

BLIND: The outsider feels that she sees the problems and solutions clearly and the insider does not. The outsider considers the insider to be ignorant, or "blind".

HIDDEN: The insider has beliefs, knowledge or feelings that she keeps to herself. They are hidden from the outsider's view. The insider may feel misunderstood and unappreciated by the outsider.

UNKNOWN: There is a lack of communication between the two people. Neither the insider nor the outsider is aware of the other person's beliefs, knowledge, or feelings.

⁸ Adapted from Srinivasan, L. 1993. p. 166.

SESSION 5

Encouraging Communication

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Understand ways that PLA facilitators can hinder or promote communication
- ✓...Apply your knowledge of communication to a video scenario
- ✓...Demonstrate active listening skills
- ✓...Demonstrate other types of non-verbal communication



CONTEXT: While the last session presented the general behaviours and attitudes which are necessary for the successful facilitation of PLA, this session teaches you specific interpersonal communication skills which you will need as PLA facilitators.

There are many ways that PLA team can encourage or hinder the participation of community members. The team members may or may not even be conscious of some of these factors, which can nevertheless have an impact. Following are some of the things to keep in mind when interacting with community members:

Seating arrangement

The facilitator should encourage community members to sit in a circle for discussions so that everyone can see each other and participate equally. The facilitators may want to have community members seated according to group (e.g., men and women, youth and elderly) in order to encourage fuller participation. Everyone should be as comfortable as possible in order to enable them to concentrate on the discussion. The facilitator should also sit in the circle, at the same level as the community members (e.g., on the ground, instead of in a chair). If the facilitator sits higher or stands up while community members are sitting, this suggests that the facilitator is of higher status than the community members. The facilitator should make an effort to “stand on equal ground” with the community members.

Facilitator’s dress

The facilitators should try to dress in a fashion similar to the community members, in order to put them at ease. They should wear comfortable clothing for sitting on the ground and walking around rural areas, and they should make an effort to respect local cultural norms. If facilitators wear uniforms or official clothing, this implies that they are of higher status and may make it harder to put the community members at ease. To avoid this, facilitators should keep their dress informal.

Interpersonal communication (IPC)

Interpersonal communication (IPC) consists of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Good IPC can foster a positive relationship with community members and encourage them to “open up” to PLA facilitators. Poor IPC, on the other hand, can cause people to “turn off”,

withdraw, or become angry. IPC consists of both verbal and non-verbal communication, both of which are equally important. Below are some examples of these two types of communication:

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Hand gestures (pointing, beckoning, pushing away)
- Arm position (closed or crossed vs. open)
- Eye contact
- Posture (slouching vs. sitting or standing straight)
- Facial expressions (smiling, frowning, etc.)
- Touching

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Vocabulary level (technical jargon vs. simple language)
- Dialogue vs. monologue
- Tone of voice
- Giving orders or directions
- Asking closed-ended vs. open-ended questions
- Giving positive or negative feedback

Active Listening

Active listening is more than just hearing what others say. It involves listening in a way that communicates *respect*, *interest* and *empathy*. These three emotions can be conveyed through both verbal and non-verbal communication.

- Examples of **verbal** cues:
- “Mm hmmm....”
 - “Yes, I see...”
 - Repeating what the person has just said

- Examples of **non-verbal** cues:
- Not interrupting the speaker
 - Nodding your head and smiling
 - Leaning forward
 - Maintaining eye contact (if appropriate)
 - Avoiding distractions

Conveying Emotions

Every day, we express emotions both verbally and non-verbally. These emotions can send positive and negative messages to people which may or may not be intentional. When working with a community, the PLA team needs to be conscious of the emotions that they convey, because these emotions can influence how much community members are willing to participate in the PLA process. Following are some examples of emotions which might either encourage or discourage community participation. Try and reflect on other emotions which could be added to the list.

Emotions that encourage participation

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Empathy | Concern or caring |
| Friendliness | Humility |
| Affirmation or praise | |

Emotions that discourage participation

Boredom
Anger
Impatience

Superiority or haughtiness
Hostility

Different Types of Questions

Many PLA techniques involve asking questions of community members. This may seem simple, but the way that the questions are phrased can have a big impact on the types of responses that community members give. There are two types of questions:

Closed-ended questions ask for factual information that can be answered with one or two words.

Open-ended questions allow respondents to express their opinions and feelings about a subject. They encourage respondents to elaborate on a subject and are usually answered in more than one or two words.

Consider the following two questions, which ask similar things:

- ◆ *Did you feel frustrated when the doctor refused to see you?*
- ◆ *How did you feel when the doctor refused to see you?*

The second question, which is an open-ended question, encourages the respondent to give much more information than the first question, which requires only a “yes” or “no” answer.

Open-ended questions are the most useful in PLA, because they encourage community members to give more information than closed-ended questions. PLA facilitators should try to use open-ended questions as frequently as possible in order to encourage community members to give in-depth responses.

Even though they do not produce long responses, closed-ended questions can be useful in certain situations. For example, since they are easier to answer, they may help to make anxious or timid respondents feel more comfortable about talking. In such situations, a few closed-ended questions can be asked before the open-ended questions. Therefore it is not always necessary to reword closed-ended questions as open-ended questions.

Following are examples of open-ended and closed-ended questions.

Open-ended Questions		Closed-ended Questions	
<i>Begin with...</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Begin with...</i>	<i>Example</i>
Could...?	Could you say more about how you feel?	Do...?	Do you feel angry?
Can you tell...?	Can you tell me what happened?	Did...?	Did you like it?
How...?	How did you feel then?	Is...?	Is she coming too?
What...?	What happened after?	Are...?	Are you going today?
Why...?	Why do you think he did it?	When...?	When will you go?
		Where...?	Where does she live?
		How long...?	How long have you felt it?
		How many...?	How many months..?
		What/which...?	Which bus do you use?

SESSION 6

Team Building

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Be able to define the word "team"
- ✓...Form your field work team
- ✓...Solve a team-building puzzle
- ✓...Resolve hypothetical field work problems



CONTEXT: *The purpose of this session is to have you form your field teams and get comfortable working with each other. The teams are formed before you learn the PLA techniques, because you will be practising the techniques as teams.*

What Is a Team?

According to *Webster's New College Dictionary*, a team can be defined as "a group organised to work together." This definition can be expanded to read "A group organised to work together towards a common goal."

You are going to pick the team that you will work with for the field practice during this course. To do this, you need to fill out a Team Member Questionnaire, like the one below. The questionnaire asks you about certain characteristics which need to be balanced on a PLA team. In other words, the teams should not be composed of people who have all of the same characteristics.

While you are filling out the questionnaires, the trainers will post the names of teams on the wall. When you have finished, post your questionnaire on the wall under one of the teams. Before posting the questionnaire, read the others that have been posted. Do not choose a team where the other team members have your same characteristics. The goal is to have teams which are multidisciplinary and well-balanced.

Team Member Questionnaire

Name: _____

1. Do you know the local language of the field site?

_____yes _____no

2. How familiar are you with the community or culture that we are visiting?

_____not at all _____somewhat familiar _____very familiar

3. Are you a...

_____female _____male

4. Which sector do you work in? (Check all that apply)

___ Health/family planning/AIDS prevention

___ Education

___ Agriculture

___ Water and sanitation

___ Forestry/natural resources/environment

___ General community development

___ Other: _____

SESSION 7

PLA Preparation

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Address any hypothetical field problems that could not be resolved during the previous session
- ✓...Understand how to organize and manage a PLA workshop
- ✓...Be able to describe what the PLA team does during an initial site visit
- ✓...Identify ways to include hard-to-reach groups in PLA activities



CONTEXT: This session covers the logistics of organising and managing a PLA workshop, as well as how to conduct the initial site visit in the community. It also increases your awareness of the need for full participation of all community groups in the PLA workshop.

Logistical and Management Issues

Participatory programme development requires a lot of logistical preparation and good management. The sponsoring agency which is coordinating the PLA workshop and follow-up should make sure that all of the following issues are addressed:

- Training of the PLA team: Once a PLA team has been formed (including the community link persons), the first step is to conduct a brief training (a few days) in order to ensure that all team members have a basic knowledge of PLA principles and techniques. The exact length of the training will depend on the team members' level of experience with PLA. The training can be conducted by the team leader or another qualified trainer.
- Transportation: Arrangements need to be made for transportation of the PLA team to and from the community during the PLA workshop. In addition, the staff of the sponsoring agency who are responsible for following up with the community after the workshop will need transportation to and from the community.
- Food and lodging: If the PLA team members do not live near the community, it will be necessary to arrange accommodations during the PLA workshop (both for the PLA team and drivers). In addition, the team will need to arrange to either eat at local restaurants, cook food themselves or hire a community member to cook food for them (often a local woman will gladly welcome the opportunity to earn some extra money). The PLA team will either need to purchase cooking ingredients in the community or bring the ingredients with them if they are not available locally. The team leader should also verify whether or not the team needs to bring its own drinking water.

● **Translators:** Unless everyone on the PLA team is able to communicate in the local language, it will be necessary to hire at least one translator. The translator should be thoroughly briefed about the purpose of the PLA workshop and the kinds of information that the PLA team members are trying to elicit from the community members. It is especially important to emphasize what kinds of information should not be omitted in translation (e.g., a translator may omit or “tone down” negative opinions which he or she is afraid would insult the PLA team members. The goal of PLA, however, is to solicit all opinions, whether they be positive or negative).

● **Supplies:** The team leader needs to ensure that the PLA team has all of the supplies that it needs to carry out the PLA activities. Some basic items include pencils, notebook paper, flip chart paper and markers, sticks, beans or stones, chalk (for drawing on concrete in urban areas), and tape. Local facilities for making photocopies should also be identified.

● **Meeting place:** The PLA team can ask the local leaders to provide a meeting place which is accessible to all community groups and which can be used for several hours at a time. This is typically the village square, a school, a church or other location.

● **Funding for projects:** Before entering a community, the sponsoring agency (SA) needs to ensure that funding will be available for implementing community projects. Of course, it is not possible to know exactly how much funding will be needed until the community develops its action plan, but the SA should know approximately how much it is able to provide. It is possible that the community will also seek funding from other external sources. If this is the case, the SA may need to train members of the action plan committee (APC) how to write proposals and approach other donors.

Once the community receives funding, either through the SA or another external agency, a mechanism needs to be established for transferring the money to the community (e.g., through the bank account of a community organisation). A responsible person in the community also needs to be identified to manage the funds.

● **Monitoring:** The SA needs to make regular follow-up visits to the community in order to meet with the action plan committee and monitor the implementation of the projects. The timing and frequency of these visits should be decided jointly by the SA and the APC.

● **Documentation:** Each step of the PPD process should be thoroughly documented in order to provide a record of the process to the community and to ensure adequate follow-up on the part of the SA. This documentation should include a PLA workshop report, copies of the information collected during the PLA activities (e.g., maps, charts) and progress reports on the implementation of the community action plan.

Introduction to the Community

The goal of the PLA team’s initial visit to the community is to introduce the team members to the local people in a non-threatening way and to become familiar with the village or neighbourhood. Community members need time to get comfortable with the “outsiders” before they are willing to participate in a PLA workshop. During this first meeting the following issues are discussed with community leaders:

- Purpose of the PLA workshop
- Process and concepts (e.g., self-help, community empowerment)
- Logistics and management (e.g., meeting times and places)
- Maximizing participation (e.g., how to make sure that all groups are invited to participate, emphasizing that participation is strictly voluntary)

Other activities during the initial visit might include the following:

- A walk around the community to introduce the team members to local people;
- Informal chats with community members about current and past development projects in the community;
- If possible, an activity in which the local people teach the team members a local skill or something about the culture of the community (e.g., how to process a specific food or how to do a traditional dance). This will help to establish the two-way flow of knowledge between the PLA team and community member; or
- Collection of background (or “secondary”) data (e.g., statistics, reports, photographs, maps).

The team members should make an effort to introduce themselves to as many segments of the community as possible during their initial visit (e.g., women’s groups, teachers, traditional healers, community leaders, school children, market vendors, etc.). They should make a special effort to reach groups that might not be easily accessible, such as the handicapped. Each time that they meet local people, the team should explain the purpose of the PLA workshop that will be taking place, emphasizing that it will be an activity that will allow the community members to promote their own development. (It is important that local people realize that the PLA team is not there to give out money or food).

Revealing Perspectives

The short video clip “Revealing Perspectives” from the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender & Environment* highlights the importance of including all segments of the community in the PLA workshop, especially women. Some ways to include these hard-to-reach groups include:

- Having separate meetings for men and women so that they will feel free to talk about sensitive issues;
- Scheduling activities at times that are convenient for each group;
- Making the groups as small as possible during activities so that timid people will feel more comfortable and talk more; and
- Making sure that the activities can be conducted by both literate and non-literate people (e.g., not doing activities that require the community members to write or draw with a pencil and paper).

Often one of the gatekeepers in the community (such as a village elder) will try to dominate the discussion. It is important to resolve this problem quickly, so that the community members won’t feel intimidated to share their own opinions. Suggestions for dealing with these situations include:

- Tell the gatekeeper that you appreciate his or her input, but that you would also like to hear from the other community members. Ask the gatekeeper to help you devise a strategy to ensure that everyone participates as fully as possible.
- Call on other community members to participate so that the gatekeeper sees that you would like to include them.
- If all else fails, find a task to distract the gatekeeper. For example, tell the gatekeeper that his or her opinion is needed in another group, ask the gatekeeper to help copy something onto paper, or have one of the other facilitators take the gatekeeper on a mini-transect walk to learn more about the village.

SESSION 8

Introduction to PLA Tools and Semi-Structured Interviews

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Be able to name different PLA tools
- ✓...Understand the purpose and elements of semi-structured interviews (SSIs) in PLA
- ✓...Demonstrate SSI skills through a role-play



CONTEXT: Now that you have been introduced to the PPD process, the principles of PLA and the behaviours and attitudes of good PLA facilitators, you are ready to learn specific techniques. This session also introduces semi-structured interviews as the first PLA technique, because they are used in conjunction with all of the other techniques, as well as by themselves.

Up to this point, the course has covered the history and theory of PLA, in addition to the behaviours and attitudes that are needed to be a successful PLA facilitator. You have learned about the first three stages of the PPD process:

1. Selection of the community and formation of the PLA Team
2. Training of the PLA team and logistical preparations
3. Preliminary site visit

The next phase of the course starts with Stage 4 (The PLA Workshop: data collection). You will be learning and practising the tools and techniques which are used in PLA. These tools can be divided into several broad categories as follows:

Information/data gathering tools

SPATIAL DATA: Mapping (geographic and physical)
Transect walks and observation

TIME-RELATED DATA: Time lines
Seasonal calendars
Daily schedules

SOCIAL/HEALTH DATA: Semi-structured Interviews
Well-being sorting
Body mapping
Pie charts
Venn diagrams
Flow diagrams

Analytical tools

Preference ranking
Pairwise ranking
Matrices

The **information/data gathering tools** are used during the first part of the PLA workshop to gather information about the community and its problems. The **analytical tools** are used during the second part of the PLA workshop to prioritize the community's problems and solutions.

When do you use each tool?

There is no set order or "recipe" for when to use which tools, although some tools are more effective as introductory tools at the beginning of the PLA workshop, while others should be used later to explore specific topics. The tools should be chosen based on the types of questions that need to be answered. More information about the uses of specific tools is presented in the sessions.

NOTE: The tools presented in this course are a sampling of the most commonly-used tools in PLA. Other tools and techniques exist which you may find more appropriate or useful in your own communities. Refer to the other PLA resources listed in this handbook in order to learn about additional tools. You may not need to use all of the tools that are presented here when you do PLA workshops in your own community.

Elements of Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) are informal conversations for gathering information. They are based on a pre-determined set of topics, which can be added to and modified as needed. The interviewers prepare a list of questions to use as a general guide, rather than reading questions from a fixed questionnaire.

SSI form the core of PLA, since they can be used in combination with all of the other information-gathering techniques presented in the previous sessions. SSIs enable the PLA facilitators to examine community issues in depth and to explore the perceptions, feelings and opinions of community members. They can be conducted individually (one-on-one) or in groups.

~~~~EXAMPLES OF USES FOR SSIs~~~~

The uses for SSIs in PLA are endless. Following are just a few:

- Identifying problems (e.g., during transect walks)
- Obtaining more details about the results of other activities (e.g., diagramming)
- Exploring causes of problems
- Exploring reasons for adopting or not adopting specific health behaviours
- Discussing possible solutions to problems

For SSIs that are planned ahead of time, several things must be prepared and considered. Of course, these steps may not be able to be followed if the semi-structured interviews are

impromptu, in conjunction with another PLA technique (e.g., talking with a community member who is encountered during a transect walk)⁹:

- 1. Preparing of the interview guide:** An interview guide is developed based on research questions and issues relevant to the community.
- 2. Discussing the interview context:** The time, place, seating arrangements, body language and biases are discussed ahead of time. Remember: The context of the interview is just as important as the questions that are asked.
- 3. Active Listening:** The PLA facilitators listen in an attentive, open-minded, non-judgmental and empathetic manner. It must be emphasized that the respondent's answers will be kept confidential!!
- 4. Sensitive Questioning:** The facilitators ask open-ended, probing questions. They don't ask two questions at once and are careful to avoid leading questions.
- 5. Judging and cross-checking responses:** Information received from discussions is evaluated and the facilitators probe further if responses are not accurate or sufficient.
- 6. Recording the interview:** Notes are taken during the interview because diagrams cannot convey the richness of the responses given. Interviewers should always get permission from the respondents to take notes, and then use a small, discreet notebook. In addition to recording what is said, non-verbal communication and respondent emotions (e.g., tension, laughter) should also be recorded. It is important to note the respondents' gender, age, and other important characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status) when recording their responses. The process of how the interview evolved should also be noted, as well as the interviewer's personal impressions.
- 7. Doing a self-critical review:** After the interview, the PLA facilitators discuss which parts of the interview went well and which ones need improvement. Questions may need to be revised in order to be more effective. In addition, team members discuss how the context of the interview affected the outcome. Team members should be honest about critiquing each other and do it with a positive attitude.

Individual interviews are most useful for conversing one-on-one with a community member about sensitive or private topics. It is also better to conduct individual interviews if the respondents are of different socioeconomic statuses, which might prohibit those of lower status from participating fully.

Group interviews are informal, directed conversations with a large heterogenous group of people (e.g., people with different characteristics), usually ranging in number from fifteen to fifty. A group interview is often conducted as a village meeting to which the whole community is invited. The community group is heterogeneous, and therefore it is important to ensure that

⁹Adapted from Pretty, J. et al. 1993. p. 74-76.

everyone in the group has a chance to participate fully. If necessary the groups can be split into smaller groups.

As with individual interviews, the interviewers have a topic guide that can be modified during the interview as needed. One or more of the PLA facilitators should serve as note takers in order to ensure that all of the relevant information is recorded.

You may have experience conducting focus groups. **Focus group discussions** are less structured than group interviews. The discussion guide is less rigid, and the conversation is free to shift to topics that are unplanned. In contrast with group interviews, the participants are usually homogenous in focus groups (e.g., they all share a specific characteristic). Focus groups are often smaller than groups interviews; while the ideal size for a focus group is six to ten people, there is no limit on the number of participants for a group interview (although, ideally, it should not be too large, so that everyone can participate).

Probing

Probing is the use of open-ended questions to encourage someone to give more information about a subject. In PLA, probing is often used in the context of (SSIs), although it can also be used to foster discussion during other PLA activities, such as mapping. Probing is a crucial skill for PLA facilitators because it can be used to encourage community members to express their opinions and feelings to the fullest extent possible. Probing also allows the PLA facilitators to move beyond the superficial; in other words, to explore issues in depth. Probing can be used to learn about the root causes of problems, to explore community members' perceptions of various issues and to clarify points that might be unclear.

Probing questions often begin with "Why?," "What?," or "How?". Examples of probing questions include:

*What kinds of problems do people face when there is a drought?
Why do you think that children in this village get diarrhoea?
Why do young girls here drop out of school?
How is the birth of a girl child celebrated differently from the birth of a boy child?
Could you say more about how you feel?
Can you tell me what happened?*

Leading questions encourage respondents to answer in a certain way. The way that these questions are worded expresses an opinion on the part of the interviewer, and may cause the respondents to give a different answer than they normally would. For this reason, leading questions should be avoided during PLA, so that the information gathered is completely unbiased. Examples of leading questions include:

*Don't you think it's good to have your children immunized?
Why don't people here use condoms if it is the best way to prevent AIDS?
Breastfeeding is very good for babies. What proportion of women in this village breastfeed?*

SESSION 9

Mapping

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Understand the purpose of mapping
- ✓...Be able to describe different types of maps
- ✓...Demonstrate two different types of mapping skills



Introduction to Mapping

Maps are **spatial data gathering tools** which provide a visual representation of the community (either the whole community or part of it). They can be used to:

-Do an informal census of how many people or households are in the community
-Learn about the presence and location of community resources
-Identify which resources are important to different community groups (e.g., men might focus on roads, while women might focus on schools)
-Establish dialogue between different community groups
-Learn about general community problems
-Form a list of households to sample for in-depth interviews
-Provide a visual resource that can be used as a baseline for assessing change
-Learn about specific characteristics of community members

~~~~WHEN TO DO MAPPING~~~~

Because it is easy to get people to participate, mapping is usually one of the first activities conducted during a PLA workshop. Doing a map as the first workshop activity has two advantages: 1) Because a lot of people participate, it helps to get the rest of the community interested in the PLA workshop; and 2) It generates a lot of information which can be used to plan the rest of the PLA workshop (e.g., it can be used to identify households for in-depth interviews).

Maps have enormous potential to generate discussion among community members, since everyone can participate. This may be the first time that a village or neighbourhood has ever been represented visually, which can be a very exciting event. Mapping does have constraints, however. Some community members may resist mapping because they don't want the boundaries of their property to be known for security reasons (e.g., cattle rustling). In addition, it can be hard to manage mapping with large groups, and the maps can be difficult to interpret later if everything is not labelled clearly on the paper copy.

~~~~EXAMPLES OF MAPS~~~~

Many different kinds of information can be generated using maps. Maps can either focus on one specific type of information, or they can be used to gather many different types of information at once. Following are different types of information that can be gathered with maps, but it is by no means exhaustive. Some maps are used to gather general information, such as:

- Geographical features
- Infrastructure (roads, telephone lines, water pipes)
- Types of facilities (e.g., health facilities, schools, stores, factories)
- Number and types of houses
- Natural resources
- Livestock
- Water sources
- Land use

Maps can also be used to explore specific topics, for example:

- Which families use family planning
- The number of children in and out of school in each household
- The location of trained birth attendants or midwives households
- Households with family members who have migrated elsewhere
- Skills of community members (e.g., carpenters, people who know how to write)
- Household suffering from different diseases
- Violence against women
- Tribes or ethnicities

In addition, maps can be used to show changes over time: how things have changed from the past to the present, or how community members would like things to look in the future.

Body Maps

Body maps are **health data gathering tools** that illustrate all or part of the human body. They can be used to describe the location of body organs and to describe bodily functions. The maps may consist of one large drawing, or of several smaller drawings that illustrate a process.

Body maps can be very useful in participatory research to gain an understanding of how the local culture perceives health issues. Different cultures have different ideas of bodily functions and how medical interventions work within the body. Gaining insight into the local perceptions of these issues can help health communications projects to better meet the expectations of their target audiences.

It can be difficult to explore these issues verbally because community members may be unfamiliar with anatomical vocabulary, and words may have different cultural meanings. Visual body mapping helps to overcome these barriers because it provides a shared point of reference

for researchers and community members¹⁰. Issues such as the following can be explored with these techniques:

- ◆The reproductive system
- ◆Behaviours that have positive or negative effects on the body
- ◆Nutrition
- ◆How specific diseases affect the body

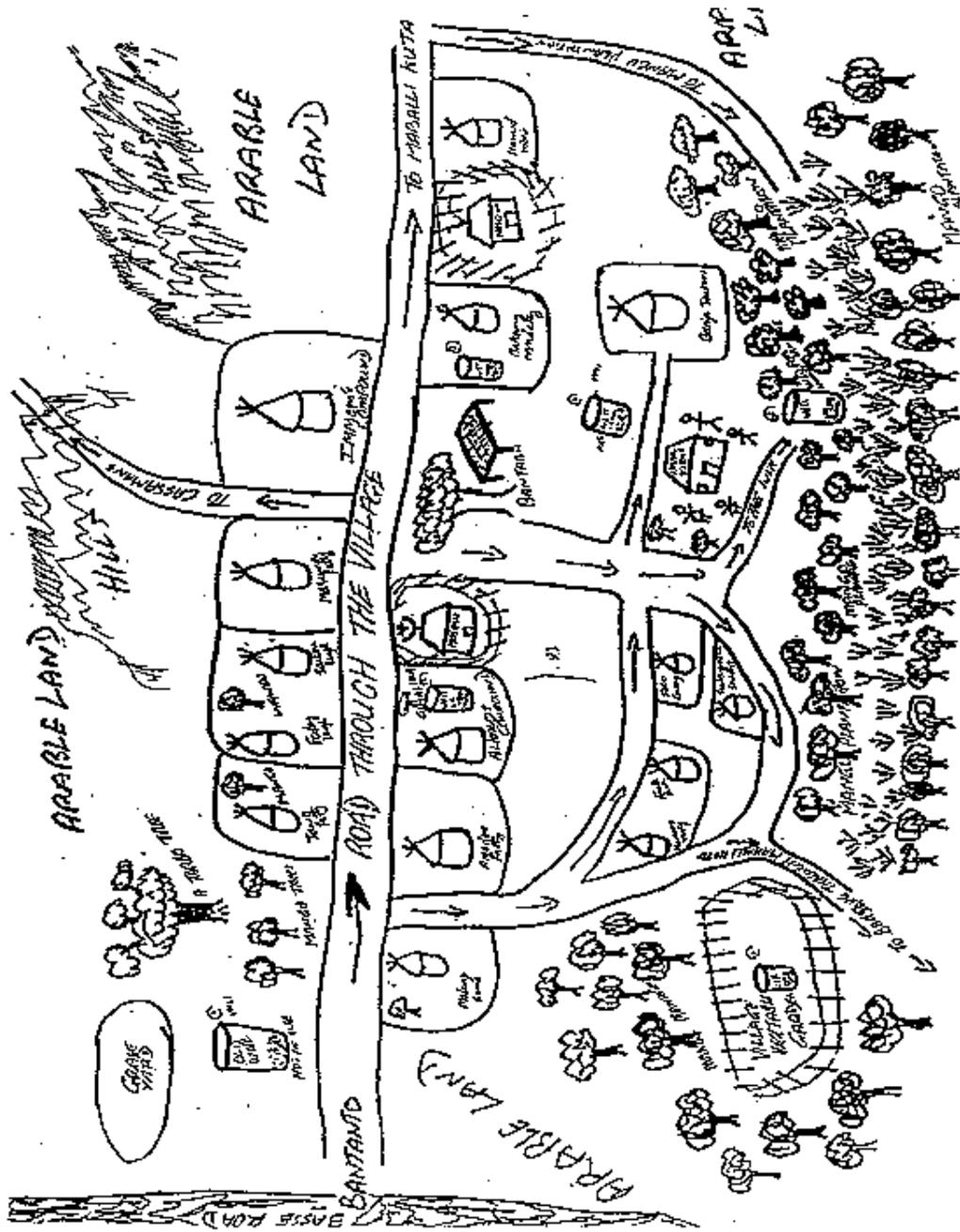
CAUTION: Some of the subjects explored in body mapping can be embarrassing or sensitive. It may make sense to divide participants by gender or age group, depending on the situation¹¹.

Following this page are some examples of social maps and body maps that have been created during PLA workshops conducted by other organisations around the world.

¹⁰Cornwall, A. 1992. p. 69.

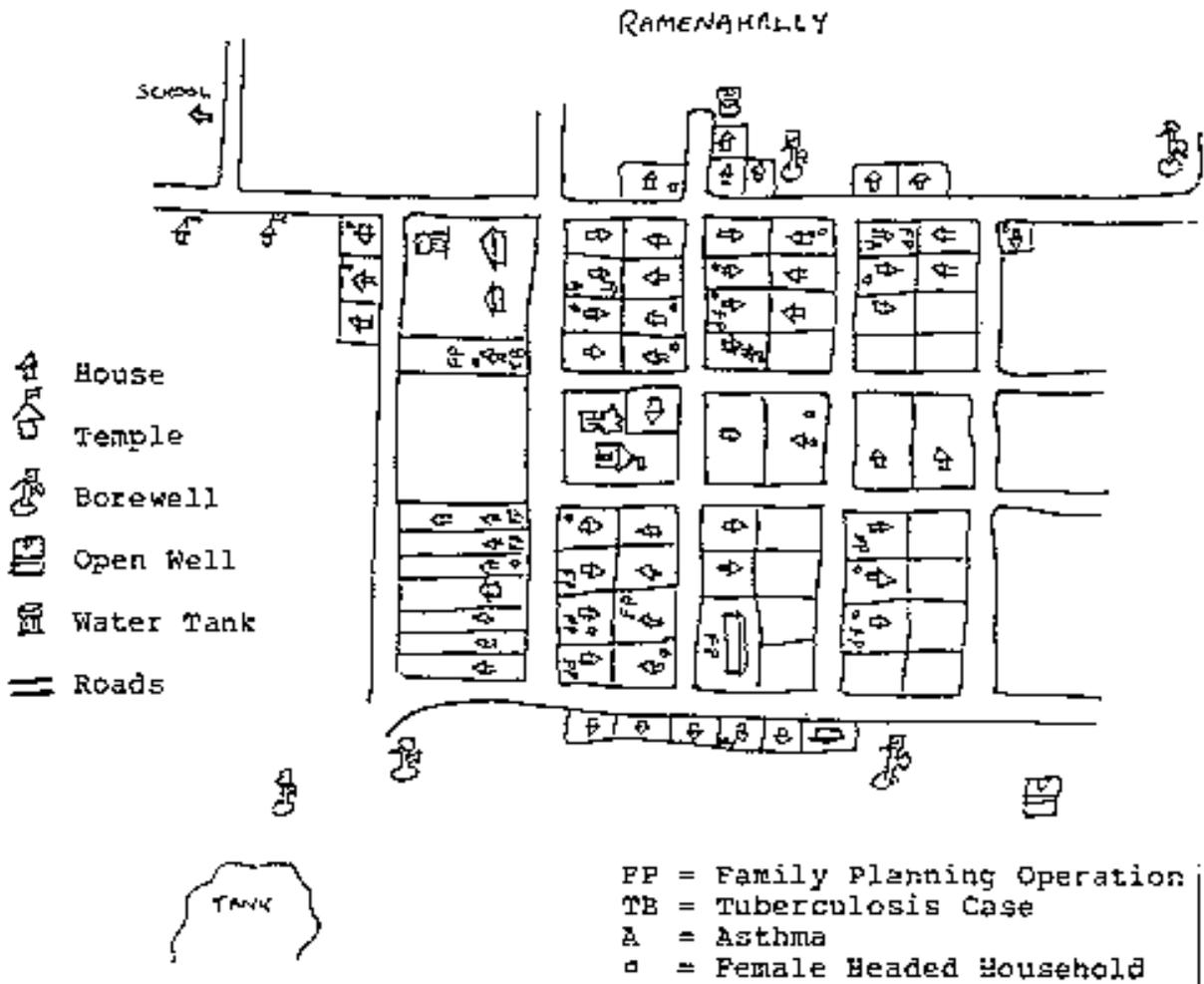
¹¹Archer, D. & S. Cottingham. 1996. p. 176.

Village map from an ACTIONAID project in The Gambia.



Source: Institute for Development Studies. 1996. PRA Tools and Techniques Pack.

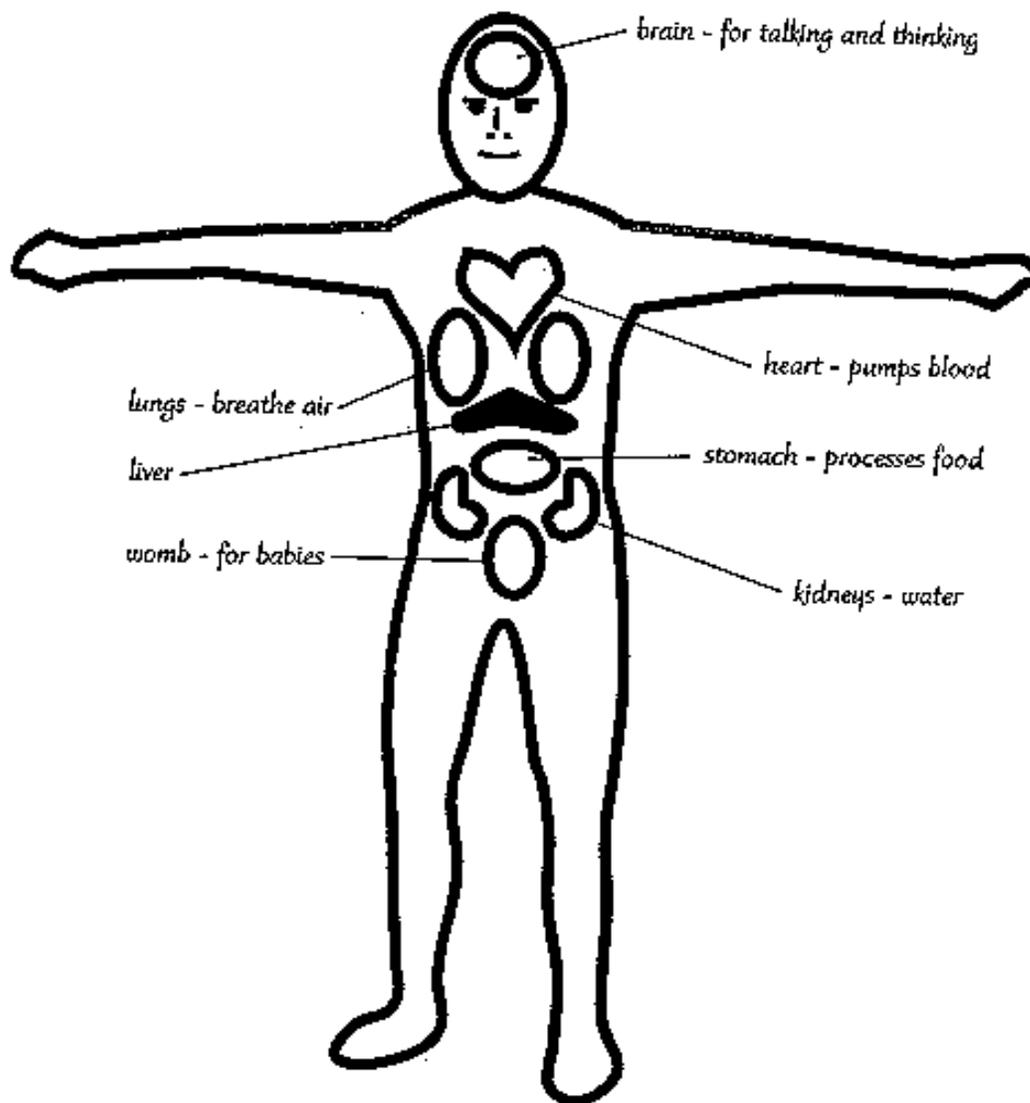
Example of a farm sketch from Kenya.



Source: Kabutha, C. et al. 1993. Participatory Rural Appraisal: A Case Study from Kenya. In Kumar, K. (Ed). *Rapid Appraisal Methods*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Example of a body map.

body mapping



Source: Archer, D. and S. Cottingham. 1996. *Reflect Mother Manual: Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community Techniques*. London: ACTIONAID.

SESSION 10

Transect Walks and Observation

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Evaluate your own observation skills
- ✓...Understand the importance of observation in PLA
- ✓...Identify uses for observation and transect walks in PLA
- ✓...Demonstrate observation skills during a transect walk



CONTEXT: This session covers transect walks, which usually follow mapping. You will also learn good observation skills, which are necessary for transect walks as well as the other PLA techniques.

Transect walks are walks which PLA teams take around the community in order to observe the people, surroundings and resources. Transect walks are therefore **spatial data-gathering tools**.

~~~~WHEN TO DO TRANSECT WALKS~~~~

Transect walks should be conducted early in the PLA process, after the mapping exercise. Transect walks provide the PLA team with an overall view of the community and help it to identify issues that might merit further exploration. They can take as little as an hour or as long as a day, depending on the size of the community and the amount of time available.

Transect walks are planned by drawing a “transect line” through a map of the community (such as the map that has been developed as part of the PLA process). The line goes through, or “transects” all zones of the community in order to provide a representative view.

Accompanied by several community members, members of the PLA team follow the line on the map during their walk in order to observe conditions, people, problems and opportunities in each of the zones. Members of the PLA team talk to the local people they meet along the way in order to obtain additional information. Depending on the focus of the PLA workshop, the team members will be interested in observing different types of things in the community. Following are examples of different things that transect walks can be used to observe:

~~~~EXAMPLES OF THINGS TO OBSERVE DURING TRANSECT WALKS~~~~

- Housing conditions
- Presence of “street children” (urban areas)
- Informal street commerce and prostitution
- Availability of public transportation
- Types of non-governmental organisations or church organisations in the community
- Types of stores in the community (e.g., pharmacies, grocery stores)
- Interactions between men and women
- Food sold in open-air markets
- Sanitary conditions
- Children’s labour
- Presence of health facilities

Before conducting a transect walk, it is helpful to develop an **observation guide** to provide a reminder of general themes for the walk. In a multidisciplinary team, each member develops his or her own observation guide, according to the members’ sector or specialty.

Information gathered during transect walks is presented in a diagram showing the different zones of the community along the top of the page, with columns descending from each zone. In the lefthand column, different categories are written (e.g., social conditions, hygiene conditions, types of stores). Information is filled in for each category and zone.

Following this page is an example of a transect diagram from Sudan.

VILLAGE OF SIDRA  
KORDOFAN, SUDAN



|                                 |                                |                                        |                                                                          |                                             |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>SOIL</u>                     | rocky                          | gravel                                 | gravel                                                                   | sand                                        | clay                           |
| <u>LANDUSE</u>                  | forest                         | farmland<br>grazing                    | village                                                                  | farmland<br>grazing                         | farmland                       |
| <u>CROPS AND<br/>VEGETATION</u> | trees,<br>bamboo               | grass,<br>shrubs,<br>millet,<br>sesame |                                                                          | sesame,<br>beans,<br>hibiscus               | sorghum,<br>groundnuts         |
| <u>PROBLEMS</u>                 | erosion                        | drought,<br>pests                      |                                                                          | drought,<br>pests,<br>low soil<br>fertility | drought                        |
| <u>OPPORTUNITIES</u>            | fuelwood,<br>timber,<br>bamboo | pasture,<br>rainfed<br>farming         | market,<br>transport,<br>water,<br>credit,<br>health-<br>care,<br>school | pasture,<br>rainfed<br>farming              | flood-<br>recession<br>farming |

Source: Thies, J. and H. Grady. 1991. *Participatory Rapid Appraisal for Community Development*. Save the Children and IIED.

# SESSION 11

## Time Lines and Sequencing

### Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Understand the purposes and uses of time lines, seasonal calendars, and daily schedules in PLA
- ✓...Demonstrate the creation of time lines, seasonal calendars and daily schedules



**CONTEXT:** *This session introduces PLA techniques which explore temporal relationships and sequencing.*

### Time Lines

Time lines are **time-related data-gathering tools** that link dates with historical events. A time line is usually divided into many sections, with the date written on one side and the event written on the other side. Time lines can cover any time period, but they are most commonly used to examine a sequence of events over many years. They can be used to describe a community's history, personal histories, or project histories. In addition to presenting significant events, time lines identify changes over time.

#### ~~~~WHEN TO DO TIME LINES~~~~

Time lines are good ice breakers, because people generally like to talk about events their community. Therefore, the PLA team may want to construct a time line at the beginning of the PLA workshop, along with the map and transect walk. The construction of time lines is a good way to involve elders, since they often know the most about the community's history.

Time lines can easily be drawn on the ground with sticks and other objects. Another variation (in communities with high literacy rates) is to have each person involved to write different events on paper and then have the group arrange the papers in chronological order. This helps to ensure that one group member does not "hijack" the pencil.

When constructing a time line, it is not necessary to have absolute dates, especially in cultures that do not put an emphasis on calendar dates. Time lines can simply be used to put events in chronological order, and time can be illustrated by the distance between events.

Time lines can be used not only to get a general idea of the community's history in terms of major events, but also to examine specific trends in different sectors. In addition, they can be used to construct personal histories of selected community members. Below are some examples of how time lines can be used:

~~~~EXAMPLES OF TIME LINES~~~~

- Political events
- Major disease outbreaks
- Periods of crisis or emergency
- Development of educational systems
- Changes in natural resources
- Cultural changes (e.g. changes in social values)
- Development of project histories
- Development of infrastructure
- Introduction of modern technology
- Changes in industry or agriculture
- Personal histories of selected community members

Following this page is an example of a village time line from East Java, Indonesia.

| | |
|--------|---|
| ? | original forest cut |
| 1860 | Kater Village is established |
| ~1910 | Acacia/Teak plantation already established by Dutch |
| 1938 | 20 Houses |
| 1942 | 45 Houses |
| 1945 | All teak already cut by farmers during WWII |
| 1962 | Land reform by Agraria |
| 1962/3 | All 'durian' trees already cut down |
| 1967 | Replanting of Teak by Perum Perhutani |
| 1969 | Typhoon - subsequent cutting of trees surrounding houses |
| 1976 | Extension began for tegal and sawah, on fertilizers, pesticides. |
| 1977 | Introduction of Orange trees and ceramic production began |
| 1978 | Dissemination of Katiandra / Elephant Grass regreening seeds from Kabupaten |
| 1979 | Introduction of Clove trees |
| 1980 | Transmigration |
| 1981 | Off-farm 'Kanaksi' work began |
| 1983 | Transmigration |
| 1985 | Introduction of UESA regreening experiment; Check dam constructed |
| 1987 | 867 houses; Introduction of UACP |

Source: McCracken, JA et al. 1988. *An Introduction to RRA for Agricultural Development*. International Institute for Environment and Development. In Institute for Development Studies. 1996. *PRA Tools & Techniques Pack*.

Seasonal Calendars

A seasonal calendar is a **time-related data-gathering tool** that shows in diagram form the main activities, problems, and opportunities throughout a recurring time cycle. A seasonal calendar helps identify periods of greatest difficulty and vulnerability, or other significant variances that have an impact on people's lives. Seasonal calendars are also useful for exploring the temporal relationships between recurring events in a community.

~~~~**WHEN TO DO SEASONAL CALENDARS**~~~~

Seasonal calendars can either be conducted early in the PLA workshop, in order to get a general information about a community (e.g., workload patterns, income flow, harvests), or later in the PLA workshop, in order to explore relationships between events in more depth (e.g., the relationship between migration patterns and disease outbreaks).

Seasonal calendars are often drawn with the months of one year (or another time period chosen by the community) laid out in a horizontal row. Remember that a seasonal calendar should reflect the indigenous concepts of time and does not have to start with January. Be sure to ask community members how *they* would organize the calendar. In some parts of the world the Western calendar is not used, and non-monthly intervals are more relevant. For example, communities may decide to use rainy and dry seasons instead of months. After the time intervals are laid out horizontally, vertical rows are then created, with each row representing a different seasonal factor (e.g., diseases, income, workload).

Like maps, seasonal calendars can be drawn on the ground, and objects such as seeds, rocks or leaves can be used to indicate the intensity of different factors for each time period. Sticks can be broken into different lengths and used to indicate relative magnitudes.

Often, it will be necessary to improvise when collecting data if exact statistics are not available. For example, if you are unable to obtain monthly data about rainfall, determine the four wettest months, the four driest months and then subsequently the four middle months. When asking for quantitative information, also try to probe for qualitative information. For example, if asking a community member to name the busiest months of the year, ask also what activities are conducted during those months.

Following this page are some examples of different types events that can be plotted on seasonal calendars and relationships between events that can be explored.

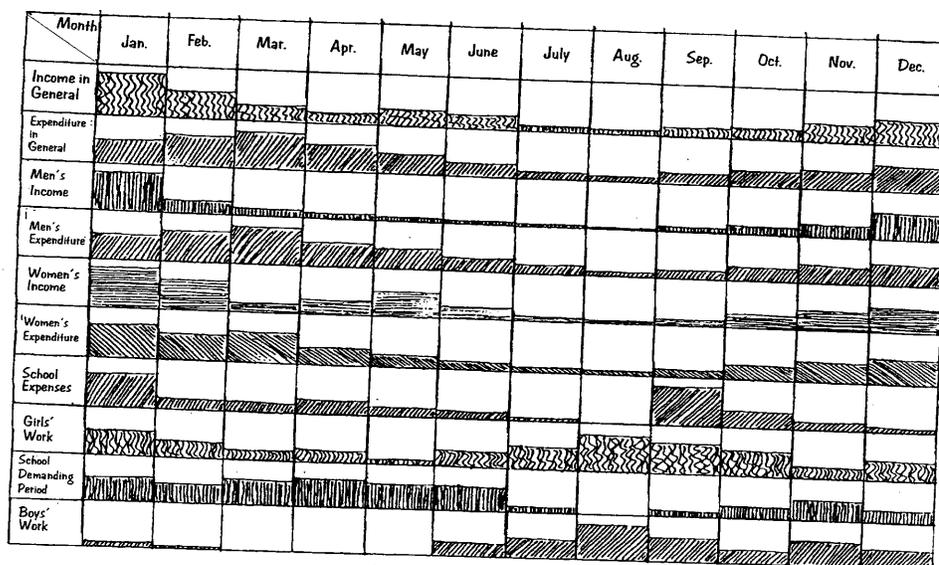
**~~~~EXAMPLES OF SEASONAL CALENDARS~~~~**

- Price variations for food or other items
- Patterns of disease prevalence
- Types and quantity of cooking or heating fuel
- Social events
- Migration
- Income and expenditures
- Annual holidays
- Indigenous seasons
- Climate (rain fall and temperatures)
- Crop sequences, pests and diseases
- Variations in food supply
- Livestock diseases
- Income-generating activities
- Workload of men, women, and children

**~~~~EXAMPLES OF RELATIONSHIPS TO BE EXPLORED WITH SEASONAL CALENDARS~~~~**

- Income and expenditures
- Weather and disease outbreaks
- Home workload and school drop out
- Income and health centre utilisation
- Pregnancy patterns and income
- Migration and disease outbreaks
- Initiation ceremonies and school workload
- Workload and disease patterns

Below is an example of a seasonal calendar from The Gambia.



Source: Kane, E. 1996. *Groundwork: Participatory Research in Girls' Education. A Manual to be Used with Groundwork: The Video.* Washington, DC: The World Bank/Economic Development Institute.

**Daily Schedules**

Daily schedules are **time-related data-gathering tools** that explore daily work patterns and other activities. They allow researchers to examine one person's daily activities and to compare the daily activities of two or more people.

In general, daily schedules have been used to....

- Look at the timing of activities
- Note periods when two or more activities are being carried out concurrently
- Discuss new activities and their implications for time use
- Compare differences between schedules
- Explore convenient times for meetings, training sessions and other activities
- Generate discussions about gender issues (e.g., comparing the schedules of women and men or girls and boys and how these differences have an impact on health or education)
- Explore daily workloads of different community groups (e.g., factory workers vs. street vendors, or students vs. children not in school)

#### ~~~~WHEN TO DO DAILY SCHEDULES~~~~

Daily schedules are often conducted early in the PLA workshop, in order to get general information about men's and women's workloads and identify subjects to be explored in more depth through other techniques. They can also be conducted late in the PLA workshop, however, in order to determine the most convenient times for scheduling project activities.

There are three principal ways to construct daily schedules:

1. Make a daily time line, divided by hour, time period (morning, afternoon, evening) or changes in activity. Different activities are placed along the time line, and are either represented by words, symbols, blocks of time, or graphs.
2. Use a daily time line with an emphasis on symbols. Symbols are placed along the time line, and then small objects (e.g., seeds or beans) are placed next to the symbols to indicate the amount of effort expended for each activity.
3. Construct a matrix of activities, with the time blocks along one side and activities along another side. This makes it easy to illustrate multiple activities taking place simultaneously.

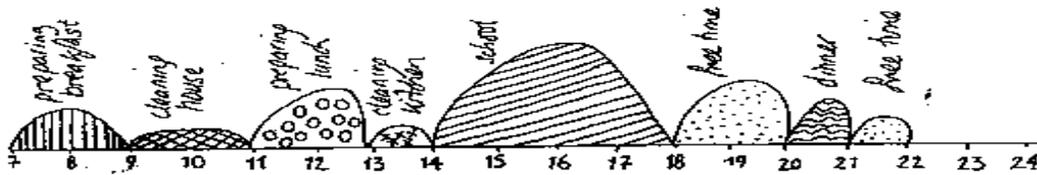
#### ~~~~EXAMPLES OF DAILY SCHEDULES~~~~

Daily schedules are generally used to map out all of the activities in the typical day of men, women or children, and to compare the workloads of the different groups. They can be done with focuses on special issues, however, such as the following:

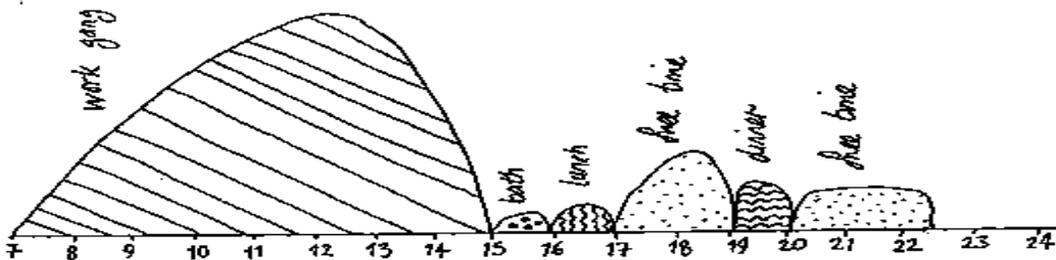
- Domestic chores
- Tasks outside the home (e.g., factory work, farming, income generation)
- A typical school day (from either the students' or the teachers' viewpoint)
- A typical day in a health centre (e.g., created by health centre staff)

Below are examples of daily schedules from Cape Verde and Gaza.

### Daily routine of a young woman in a village in Cape Verde



### Daily routine of a young man in a village in Cape Verde

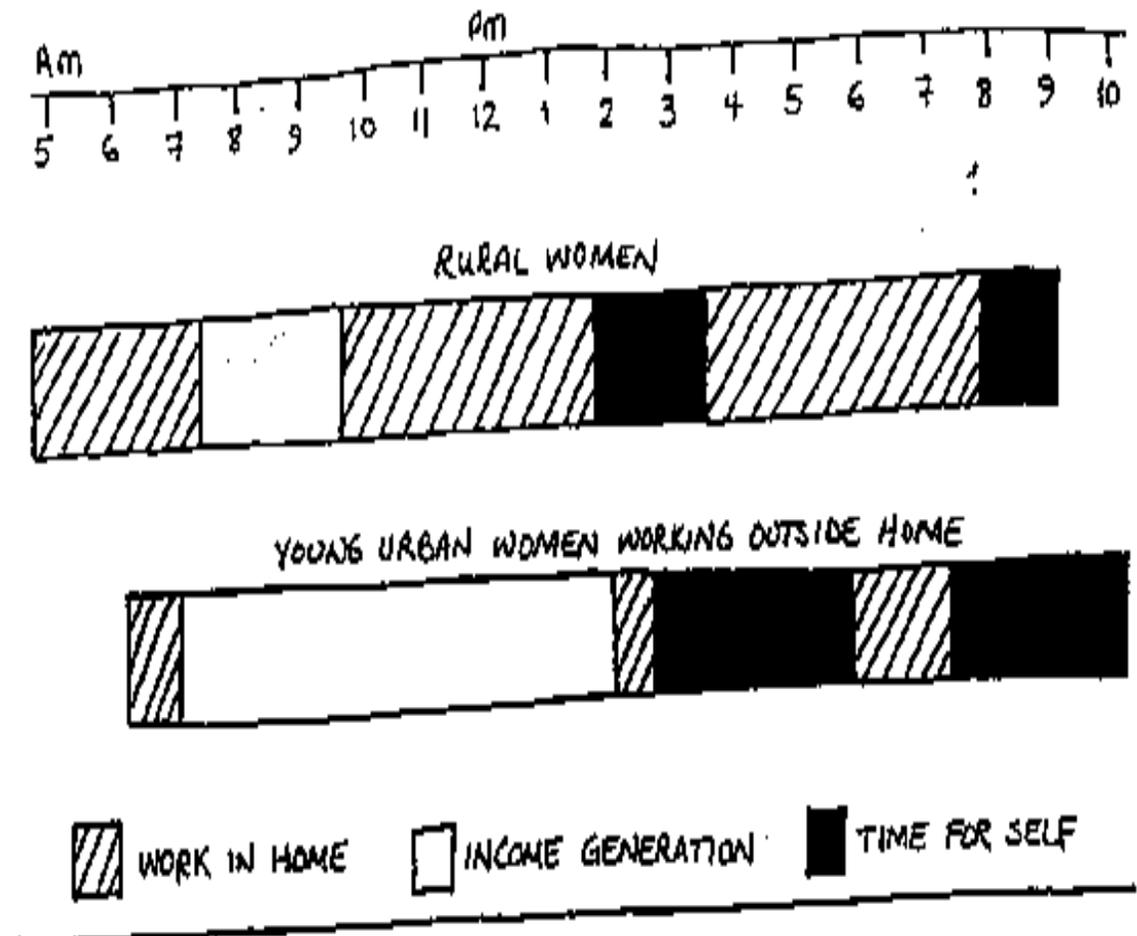


Source:

Guijt, I. 1992. Gender Differences and PRA. International Institute for Environment and Development. In Institute for Development Studies. 1996. *PRA Tools & Techniques Pack*.

ce:

## TYPICAL DAILY ROUTINE WOMEN IN THE GAZA STRIP



Source: Guijt, I. 1992. Gender Differences and PRA. International Institute for Environment and Development. In Institute for Development Studies. 1996. *PRA Tools & Techniques Pack*.

## SESSION 12

### Diagramming

#### Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Understand the purposes and uses of chappati diagrams, Venn diagrams, and flow charts in PLA
- ✓...Understand the use of diagramming in the context of an actual PLA project
- ✓...Demonstrate the creation of three different diagrams
- ✓...Identify additional uses for diagrams in PLA



**CONTEXT:** This session covers different types of diagrams, which have a variety of analytical and data-gathering uses in PLA.

#### Chappati diagrams

Chappati diagrams (also known as pie charts) are **social data-gathering tools** that can be used to illustrate proportions. They consist of a circle which is divided into different sized “slices”, depending on the importance of the different elements being discussed.

#### ~~~~WHEN TO DO CHAPPATI DIAGRAMS~~~~

Chappati diagrams can be conducted early during the PLA workshop, because they are short exercises which are easy to do. This helps to build the confidence of the community members. The information generated through chappati diagrams is used to generate more in-depth discussions. Chappati diagrams can also be used later in the PLA process, however, to explore specific topics which have been identified through other methods.

The diagram can either be drawn on the ground, or sticks can be placed in the circle to represent the lines. The advantage of using sticks is that they can be moved around during the discussion. If it is not possible to use the ground, a large round bowl can be filled with grain or seeds, and participants can use small sticks to divide the chappati.

Chappati diagrams can be used to examine a community’s demographics, explore people’s perceptions of issues and identify constraints or problems. Following are some examples<sup>12</sup> of the ways chappati diagrams have been used in PLA:

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<sup>12</sup>Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

~~~~**EXAMPLES OF CHAPPATI DIAGRAMS**~~~~

- Ethnic or religious composition of communities
- Occupations of community members
- Educational level or literacy
- Reasons for girls dropping out of school
- Causes of maternal mortality
- Main health problems
- Sources of drinking water
- Distribution of household expenses
- Types of family planning methods used in the community

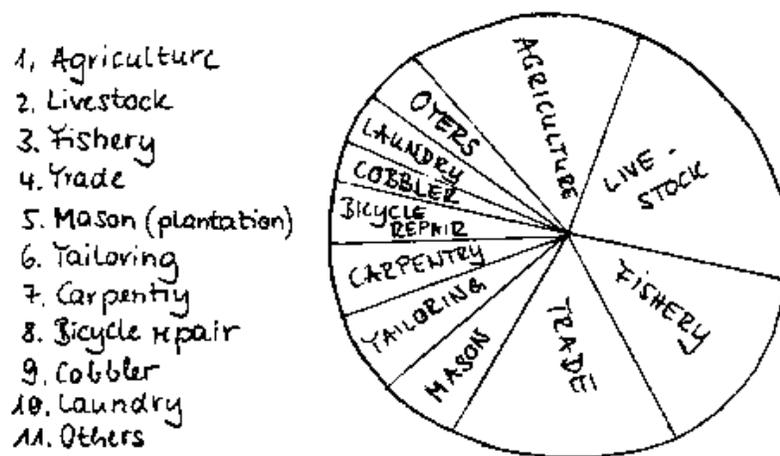
Pie diagrams (also known as “Chappati” diagrams) are **social data-gathering tools** that can be used to illustrate proportions. They can be used to examine a community’s demographics, explore people’s perceptions of issues and identify constraints or problems. Examples¹³ of the ways pie diagrams have been used in PLA include:

- Ethnic composition of villages
- Use of health care facilities
- Land use or allocation
- Educational level or literacy
- Proportion of people involved in different occupations
- Distribution of household expenses

The diagram can either be drawn on the ground, or sticks can be placed in a circle to represent the lines. If it is not possible to use the ground, a large round bowl can be filled with grain or seeds, and participants can use small sticks to “divide the pie.”

¹³Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

Below is an example of a pie chart showing sources of income in Kenya.



Source: Schubert, et al. 1994b. *Facilitating the Introduction of a Participatory and Integrated Development Approach (PIDA) in Kilifi District, Kenya. Volume II: From Concept to Action: A Manual for Trainers and Users of PIDA.* Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Venn diagrams

Venn diagrams are **social data-gathering tools** that use circles to illustrate how different components of the institution or community are linked. They are especially useful for showing relationships within an institution or community, which would be important to know when discussing solutions or sources of help for problems.

Larger circles represent larger, or more important components and smaller circles represent smaller, or less important organisations. (NOTE: This "importance" is very subjective.) The distance among the circles represents the level of interaction among the organisations. The circles are drawn to overlap each other in areas where the different components of the institution collaborate or participate in joint decision-making. A small circle can be drawn within a larger circle to illustrate that one component is part of another (e.g., a clinic can be drawn inside of a health district).

~~~~WHEN TO DO VENN DIAGRAMS~~~~

Because the concepts behind a Venn diagram can be difficult to grasp, it is better to use this tool after you have established a rapport with the community and they have been able to build their confidence through other activities. It can be particularly useful to do this exercise after the community's problems and solutions have been identified, since it can help to identify the organisations that would be involved in implementing the community action plan.

Venn diagrams can be created by cutting out paper circles of varying sizes. The circles can be labelled with words or symbols to represent different organisations (with the larger circles representing organisations that play a more important role in the community). The papers can also be different colours to signify different types of organisations (e.g., non-governmental, governmental). Community members arrange the circles on the ground, with the circle in the middle representing the community. Other circles are placed around the community circle, with the distances among the circles representing the level of contact among (and NOT geographical distance between) various organisations. To create the diagrams on the ground, community members can draw symbols to represent each organisation on a piece of paper.

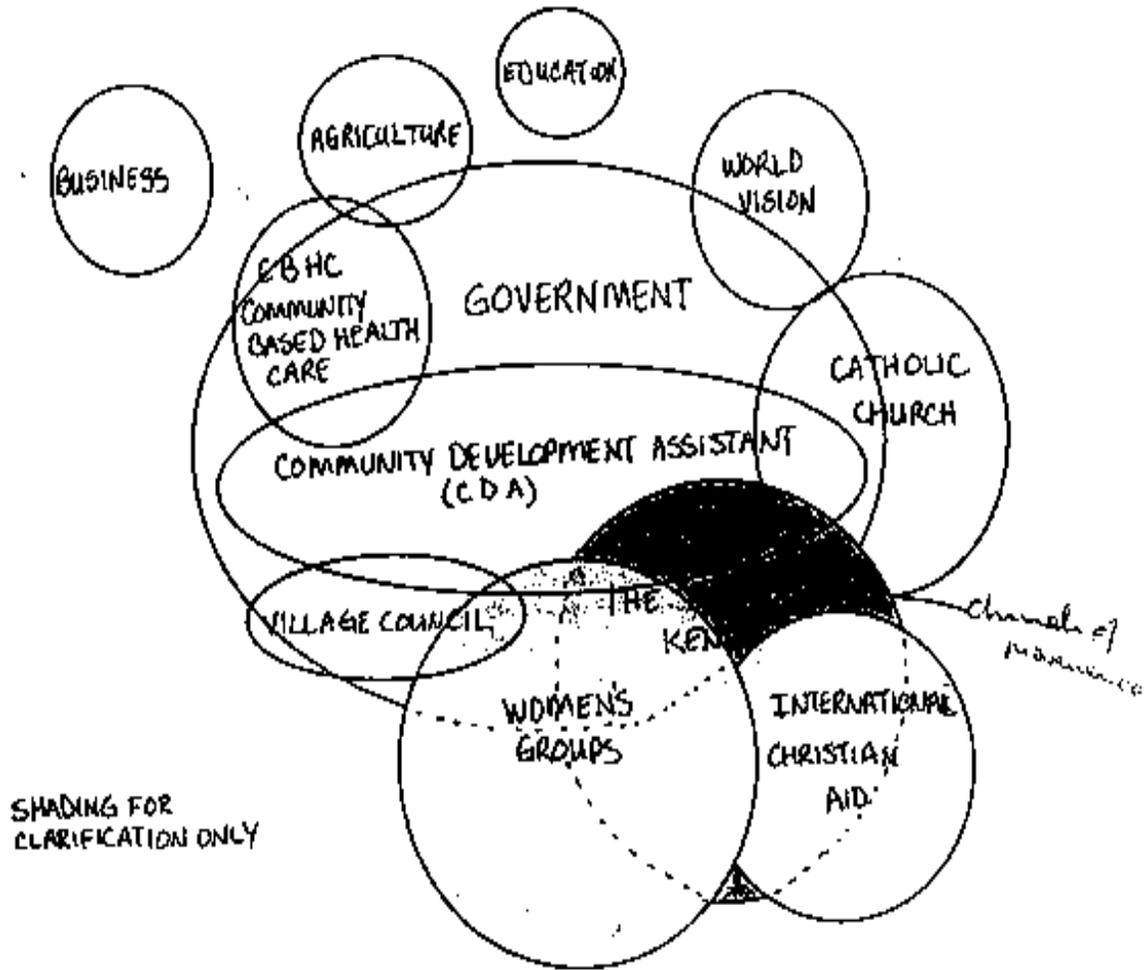
Another way to create the diagram is to tape small pieces of paper to rocks of varying sizes in order to represent the different organisations. Both local and external institutions can be represented in the diagrams. The diagrams have been used to generate the following types of discussions¹⁴:

~~~~EXAMPLES OF VENN DIAGRAM DISCUSSIONS~~~~

- Levels of communication among organisations
- The role of project bodies
- The improvement of missing links between organisations
- The potential for working through existing organisations
- The roles and significance of various institutions to community members
- The potential roles for new organisations
- The roles and significance of various institutions to a specific organisation

¹⁴Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

Example of a Venn diagram from The Gambia.



Source: Ford, R. Et al. 1992. Sustaining Development Through Community Mobilization: A Case Study of Participatory Rural Appraisal in The Gambia. Clark University. In Institute for Development Studies. 1996. *PRA Tools & Techniques Pack*.

Flow Diagrams

Flow diagrams are graphical representations of processes or chains of events. They help communities to analyse the impact of different problems and solutions and they help to illustrate linkages between different events. PLA facilitators can use flow diagrams to...

- Identify problems
- Explore the feasibility of proposed solutions
- Highlight gaps in understanding or identify potential connections
- Evaluate activities

~~~~WHEN TO DO FLOW DIAGRAMS~~~~

Flow diagrams are best conducted later in the PLA workshop, because they are relatively complex diagrams which require analysis. They can be used to examine the causes of problems which have been identified through other activities in order to come up with potential solutions. They can also be used to look at the potential impact of solutions that have been proposed.

Flows can be represented by lines of different thicknesses and colours, in order to represent different types of relationships and their significance. The lines can be drawn in the dirt or created with chalk, and local objects can be used to represent the different events or stages in the process.

Flow diagrams can be used to examine many different types of processes and chains of events¹⁵:

~~~~EXAMPLES OF FLOW DIAGRAMS~~~~

- Causes and effects of diseases
- Resources flows (income/expenditures)
- Reasons for non-use of health facilities
- Reasons for school drop out
- Effects of unhealthy behaviour
(e.g., drinking alcohol)
- Functioning of agricultural systems
- Functioning of credit systems
- Differences in life cycles of girls and boys
- Impact of drought and pollution
- Effects of harmful traditional practices
(e.g., female circumcision)

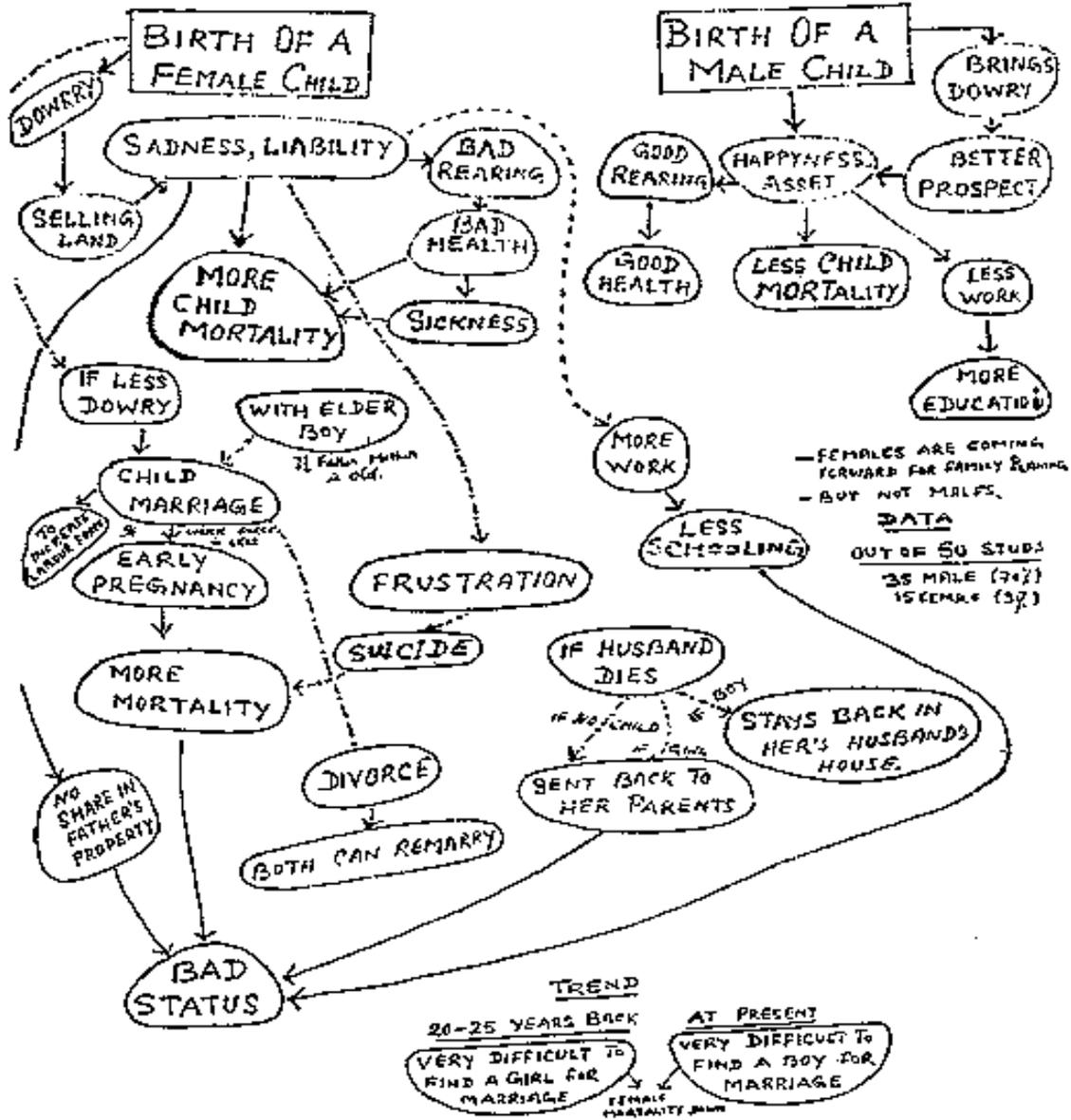
Following are two examples of flow diagrams from India describing the life paths of boys and girls and the causes of child mortality:

¹⁵Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

CONDUCTED
BY: RD STUDENTS
XISS.

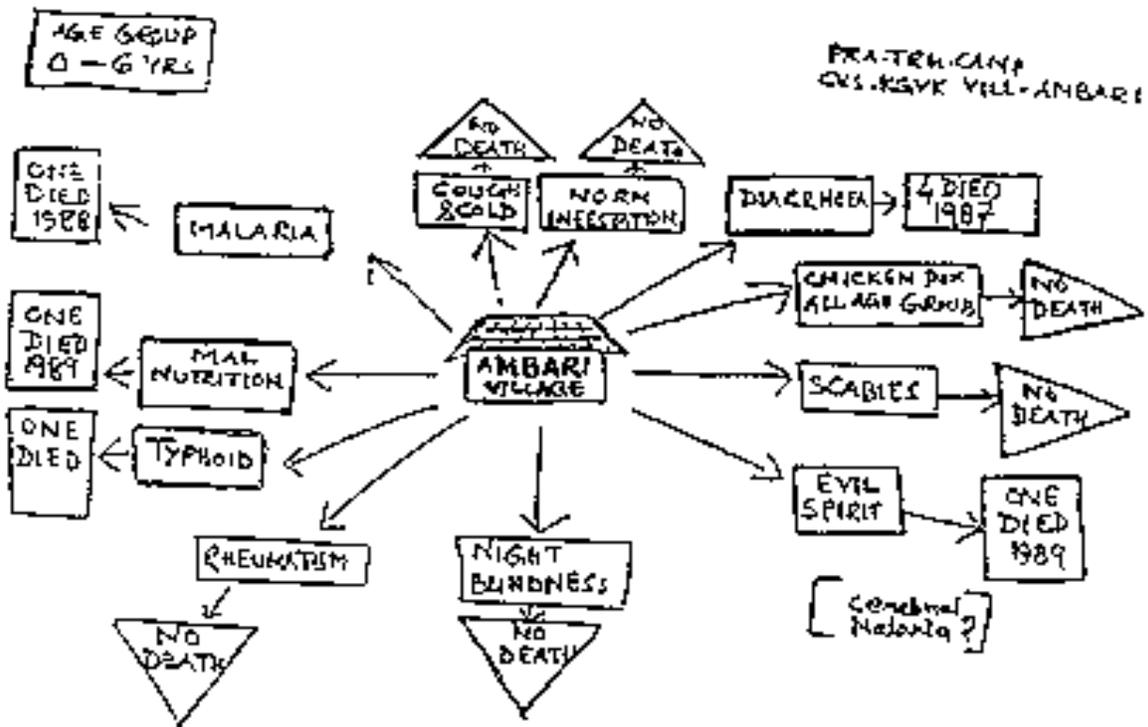
WOMEN'S STATUS

VILL: GANJU TOLI
(HESALONG)
DATE: 29.10.91.
INDIA.



Source: Jones, C., ed. 1996. *PRA Methods Pack*. Institute of Development Studies.

CHILD MORTALITY



Source: Kumar, A. (Undated). Trends in Health Care. In Institute for Development Studies. 1996. *PRA Health Pack*.

SESSION 13

Card Sorting

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Understand the concept of card sorting by applying it to yourself
- ✓...Be able to define Well-Being Sorting and describe how it is conducted
- ✓...Understand the use of Well-Being Sorting in the context of a real PLA activity
- ✓...Identify other uses for card sorting in PLA



CONTEXT: This session covers different types of card sorting that are used in PLA, including well-being sorting.

Well-Being Sorting

Well-Being Sorting (WBS), which is also known as wealth ranking, is a **social data-gathering tool** that classifies households into different categories according to locally-developed criteria of well-being. The PLA facilitators do not impose these criteria on the community--they let members of the community sort the cards according to their own ideas of well-being.

~~~~WHEN TO DO WELL-BEING SORTING~~~~

WBS is usually conducted after the mapping exercise, which provides the PLA team with a list of households. It is best to do a few other activities before WBS in order to let the community get comfortable with the PLA team, since the discussion of well being may be a sensitive topic.

There is no set approach for conducting WBS. One suggested way is to create WBS cards using information from the community map that was created at the beginning of the PLA workshop¹⁶. Household names are written on the cards, and the two community link persons work with the PLA facilitators to ensure that no households have been left out. The sorting exercise should be done either with groups of five to seven people or with individuals, since there is a need to reach a consensus (which can take a long time in larger groups). Ask the community members to sort the cards according to their idea of what it means to be well-off, secure or comfortable.

After community members have sorted the cards, ask them to explain how the people in the first pile are similar to and different from the people in the second pile, how the people in the second pile are similar to and different from the people in the third pile, and so on. Once the well-being

¹⁶Kane, E. 1996. p. 28.

categories have been created, the facilitators may want to use them to relate well-being to a specific behaviour, e.g., using family planning, sending girls to school. For example, the facilitators could ask the community members questions such as “Tell me about the families in the first pile. Do they practise family planning? Why or why not? How about the families in the second pile?”

#3 Other Types of Sorting

One variation of well being sorting is the exploration of people’s perceptions of health and disease through the sorting of **health behaviour cards**¹⁷. This exercise can either be done early in the PLA workshop, to help identify health problems, or later, after specific problems have been identified, in order to generate discussion about the causes.

The first step is to create twenty-four illustrated cards--half of them with good health behaviours (e.g., weighing a baby, washing hands, breast-feeding) and the other half with bad health behaviours (e.g., garbage in yard, flies on food, unprotected sex). Community members are given the mixed set of cards and asked to sort them into two piles of good and bad health behaviours. When they are finished, the PLA facilitators ask the community members their reason for the placement of each card. They can also use the cards to facilitate a discussion of which health practises (both good and bad) are prevalent in the community. These health behaviour cards can either be drawn during the PLA workshop by a local artist or be prepared ahead of time by the facilitators.

There are many other ways that card sorting can be used in PLA in addition to examining health behaviours. Following are some examples:

~~~~EXAMPLES OF USES FOR CARD SORTING~~~~

- Examining good and bad behaviours for other sectors besides health (e.g., environment, education, water and sanitation, agriculture)
- Sorting problems in terms of which community groups are most affected by them
- Sorting solutions according to their level of feasibility
- Determining who will be responsible for different activities in the community action plan (sorting cards into different piles, such as “community”, “government”, or “both”)

As demonstrated by these examples, card sorting can be used during all stages of a PLA workshop.

¹⁷Narayan, D. 1996. p. 187.

SESSION 14

Ranking, Scoring, and Matrices

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Be able to explain the process of identifying problems and solutions with a community
- ✓...Understand the purposes and uses of preference ranking, pairwise ranking, and matrix scoring
- ✓...Demonstrate preference ranking, pairwise ranking, and matrix scoring



CONTEXT: *In the previous sessions, you learned how to help communities identify different problems through mapping, diagramming, time lines, sequencing exercises, card sorting and semi-structured interviews. These techniques typically generate an enormous quantity of data, which must be organised and presented back to the community. The community can then move onto the next step of prioritizing the problems and formulating solutions to the problems.*

Moving on to Problems and Solutions

This is one of the most important steps of the participatory programme development process, because the prioritization of problems and the identification of solutions form the basis of the community action plan. Therefore, it is essential that the exercises be done systematically, thoroughly, and with the participation of all segments of the community.

The PLA team may want to divide the community into smaller groups by gender and/or age when conducting these exercises. This is especially important for ensuring the participation of women, who may be reluctant to express their opinions in the presence of men.

Preference Ranking and Scoring

If there are only a few (less than five) problems to be ranked and the number of community members is small (less than ten), the problems can be prioritized using a simple ranking technique.

Ask community members to find local objects to represent each problem, or have them draw symbols for each problem on pieces of paper. Have each person place the symbols or papers on the ground in order of priority, from the most important problem to the least important. Then make a chart on paper to tally the results. An example is provided below.

| Community Problems | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Respondent</i> | |
| Problem | A B C D E F Total Score Ranking |
| No school | 3 2 5 5 4 1 19 3 |
| Bad roads | 4 3 4 4 5 2 22 1 |
| AIDS | 5 4 3 3 2 3 20 2 |
| Malaria | 2 5 2 1 3 4 17 4 |
| No health post | 1 1 1 2 1 5 11 5 |

Respondent Scores:
5= biggest problem 1= smallest problem

Although ranking accomplishes the prioritization of problems, it does not show how much more important one problem is than another; in other words, the priorities aren't weighted. One way of weighting the priorities is to conduct a **preference scoring** exercise using beans, seeds or pebbles. Everyone is given the same number of beans and they use the beans to give each problem a score (e.g., a score from 1 to 5, where 5 is very important). When everyone has finished, the PLA facilitators tally up the number of beans for each problem in a table similar to the one above.

When doing either preference ranking or scoring, the PLA facilitators should be sure to ask **why** the community members rank one problem as more important than another.

Pairwise Ranking

With large groups of people (more than ten), pairwise ranking works better than preference ranking. Pairwise ranking compares several items in relation to one another by comparing two items at a time. Each item is therefore compared to every other item in the group. For this reason, pairwise ranking can be difficult if more than five or six items are to be compared.

As with preference ranking, each problem is represented by a local object, or a symbol for the problem is drawn on a piece of paper. There must be two identical objects or two pieces of paper for each problem. A matrix is drawn on the ground, and the objects or papers are placed both along the top and down the left side (and placed in the same order both times). The PLA facilitator then goes through the grid pair by pair, asking community members to decide which of the two problems is more important. In this way, each problem is compared with every other problem.

The results can be tabulated in a table like the one below.

| Importance of Health Problems | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------|------|
| | Diarrhoea (D) | Malaria (ML) | Measles (MS) | AIDS/STDs (A/S) | Pregnancy Problems (P) | SCORE | RANK |
| Diarrhoea | | D | D | A/S | D | 3 | 2 |
| Malaria | | | ML | A/S | ML | 2 | 3 |
| Measles | | | | A/S | P | 0 | 5 |
| AIDS/STDs | | | | | A/S | 4 | 1 |
| Pregnancy Problems | | | | | | 1 | 4 |

HINT: If you already know that one of the problems listed is very important in the community, do not put it at the top of the table, otherwise it will be named all of the time and this might divert attention from the other problems.

Identifying Problems and Solutions Using Matrices

Once the different groups have finished ranking their problems, the PLA facilitators organise a session for each of the groups to present their results to the rest of the community. During this session, the different groups discuss the results and come to a consensus on a short list of priority problems which they would like to address. It is important to have a skilled facilitator for this session, since the discussion may get heated if there are disagreements between the groups. The PLA facilitator also needs to ensure that the community doesn't try to tackle too many problems at once.

Once the community has reached a consensus on the problems they would like to address, the next step is for the community to come up with a list of possible solutions for each problem. To ensure everyone's participation, the community may need to be divided into the same small groups that were used to identify problems.

Once solutions have been identified, the PLA team helps the community members to come up with a list of criteria for evaluating the solutions. Some examples for criteria include¹⁸:

- ✓Cost
- ✓Technical feasibility
- ✓Sustainability
- ✓Equitability (who will benefit?)
- ✓Time to benefit (short or long)
- ✓Social/cultural acceptability

While the PLA team members can suggest criteria, it is up to the community to decide which criteria to actually use when evaluating the solutions.

¹⁸The PRA Programme. 1995. *PRA Field Handbook for Participatory Rural Appraisal Practitioners*. Njoro, Kenya: Egerton University.

Facilitating Matrix Scoring

The matrix scoring exercise is done for every problem that the community has decided to address. For each problem, the PLA facilitator draws a grid on the ground, with the solutions listed down the left side and the criteria listed across the top (local objects can be used as symbols or symbols can be drawn on pieces of paper).

The facilitator then asks the community members to score the solutions according to the criteria by placing 1, 2 or 3 seeds next to each criteria (three seeds if the solution scores high according to the criteria, two seeds if it scores medium, and one seed if it scores low). The participants can reach consensus on how many seeds to place either by voting or another means. The number of seeds for each solution is tallied to determine which solution is most feasible. One of the PLA facilitators records the grids on paper for future reference.

Following this page is a sample of a matrix scoring grid that was constructed in The Gambia. The community members prioritized solutions for the problem of school fees, which was one of the causes of girls dropping out of school.

| PROBLEM: School Fees | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Solution | Criterion 1:
Time to Benefit* | Criterion 2:
Cost** | Criterion 3:
Feasibility | Criterion 4:
Sustainability | Score |
| Generate extra income through women's gardening | • | •• | ••• | ••• | 9 |
| Pay fees at end of harvest season | ••• | • | ••• | ••• | 10 |
| Get sponsors for girls' education | • | •• | ••• | • | 7 |
| Generate income--carpentry programme | • | • | ••• | ••• | 8 |
| Get government to reduce fees | • | • | •• | ••• | 7 |

Notes: *For "Time to Benefit", a high score (3 beans) equals a short time to benefit.
 **For "Cost"--a high score (3 beans) equals a low cost.

Adapted from: Kane, E. 1996. p. 41.

Following is an example of a matrix table that was done in The Gambia to score crops (the "solutions") according to their different uses (the "criteria"):

Figure 16 Matrix scoring of crops grown (young men)

| | CINCU | L/MILLET | CON-ROA | RICE | MAIZE | Pumpkin | Sorghum |
|------------------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| CRITERIA | | | | | | | |
| FOOD | ●●●●● 5 | ●●●●● 5 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 1 |
| CASH | ●●●●● 1 | — 6 | ●●●●● 2 | ●●●●● 4 | — 6 | ●●●●● 2 | ●●●●● 4 |
| FODDER | ●●●●● 3 | ●●●●● 3 | ●●●●● 2 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 3 | — 7 | ●●●●● 3 |
| GIFT & SAKAL | ●●●●● 3 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 3 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 3 | ●●●●● 1 |
| STORAGE (months) | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 7 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 5 | ●●●●● 1 |
| SEEDS (amount) | ●●●●● 2 | ●●●●● 2 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 2 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 2 |
| LABOUR INTENSIVE | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 3 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 1 | ●●●●● 5 | ●●●●● 6 | ●●●●● 3 |

Source: From Input to Impact: PRA for ActionAid in The Gambia. 1992. IIED. In Institute of Development Studies. PRA Tools & Techniques Pack.

Once all the groups have scored the solutions for each problem, the PLA team organises a session so that they can present their results. The PLA facilitators help the community reach a consensus about which solutions to implement.

Once the community has decided how it would like to address its problems, the sponsoring agency (SA) needs to decide what role it can play. If the PLA has been “open” (not focussed on a specific sector or issue), however, the problems and/or solutions that are identified by the community may not fall within the mandate of the SA. For example, the SA might work in the area of public health, but the community decides that lack of electricity is its biggest problem.

If this is the case, then the PLA team could acknowledge the needs or problems that it is not able to address and offer to link the community up with other SAs that may be able to provide assistance. The PLA team should encourage the community to develop an action plan and approach these other SAs for assistance. The SA may also want to consider doing an awareness-raising campaign around the issues that it works with. This might encourage the community to approach the SA for assistance in the future.

Before embarking on a PLA workshop, the SA should contact other local organisations that might be willing to work with the community on issues in other sectors that might be identified as priorities.

SESSION 15

Community Action Plan Creation and Follow-Up

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Understand how to use a story to help community members address their problems
- ✓...Be able to describe the elements of a community action plan (CAP)
- ✓...Be able to explain the composition of an action plan committee (APC)
- ✓...Identify strategies for follow-up of the CAP



CONTEXT: In Sessions 8 through 14, you learned the different techniques for gathering data (Stage 4) and identifying problems and solutions (Stage 6). Although Stage 5 is not simulated in this training, remember that after gathering data, the PLA facilitators present the data to the community before going on to identify problems and solutions.

In Stage 7, after the different community groups have ranked their problem and solutions, everyone comes back together to present their results to the others. The community reaches a consensus on the problems to be addressed. They then move onto Stage 8, which is the development of the community action plan (CAP).

Forming an Action Plan Committee

At the end of the PLA workshop, the community members need to choose or elect an action plan committee (APC), which will be in charge of developing and monitoring the implementation of the Community Action Plan (CAP) (NOTE: This committee can be called by another name that is more appropriate for the community). The APC also monitors the progress of the CAP on a regular basis by examining the indicators created during the PLA workshop. It is up to the community to decide how this team will be selected; some communities may choose to elect the members, while others may choose to have them appointed by community leaders. It is possible that there is already an existing community group or committee that can take on the role of the APC, especially if such a group has initiated the PLA workshop.

While the PLA team is not directly involved in choosing the APC, it can suggest the types of people who should belong to the committee. Ideally, an APC is representative of the entire community, and is not composed exclusively of community leaders. The APC typically has representatives of the following groups:

- men and women
- youth and elderly
- special community groups (e.g., the disabled)

At least one person should be able to read and write, and all of the members should be well-respected and trusted by the community. The PLA team should work with the community to

make sure that groups that are traditionally excluded from positions of power are included in the APC.

The PLA team should also emphasize that although the community will select an APC to coordinate the implementation of the CAP, doing so does not relieve other community members of the responsibility for implementing the activities--the success of their project will depend on the participation and hard work of EVERYONE!

Before leaving the community, the PLA team needs to decide which team member(s) will be the main liaison(s) with the APC. For the purposes of this training, the main liaison will be a member of the sponsoring agency which is hosting the course participants for the field practise.

Creating a Community Action Plan

For a community to promote its own social development, as in the stories created above, it must have a well-defined strategy and a concrete implementation plan. A CAP is a summary of the priority problems, the proposed solutions to those problems, the strategies for implementing the solutions and the monitoring and evaluation plan. The CAP is created by the community members after the PLA team has facilitated the ranking and scoring of problems and solutions.

There is no set process for how the community develops its plan. One approach is for the community to choose or elect an action plan committee (APC), which is responsible for developing the CAP and monitoring its implementation. The PLA team suggests the composition of the APC and provides general guidelines for writing the CAP, but the community does the rest. Members of the PLA team can either leave the community for a few days while the APC develops the CAP, or they can remain in the community to provide guidance if requested. Before leaving the community, the PLA team should provide the APC with general guidelines for developing a CAP and an example of a CAP (both translated into the local language).

It is important for the PLA team to recognize the community's ability to create the CAP without outside assistance. The team members should make an effort to remove themselves from the process as much as possible and give input only when requested to do so by the community.

Guidelines for Developing a CAP

The CAP contains the following elements¹⁹ for each project that the community decides to undertake:

- ✓Name of the project
- ✓Persons or groups in charge of the project
- ✓Project objectives
- ✓Project outputs
- ✓Activities to be undertaken to produce the outputs
- ✓Resources needed (both community resources and external resources)
- ✓Time line
- ✓A monitoring and evaluation plan; that is, indicators and techniques that will be used on a regular basis to track the progress and outcomes of the project. ***(NOTE: It is important for the community to plan its activities with monitoring and evaluation in mind. Members of the community should be encouraged to reflect on how they can use the same PLA exercises that they used during the workshop to monitor and evaluate the success of their activities.)***

The format for the CAP can either be a narrative or a table, or a combination of both. What matters most is that it can be understood easily by all members of the APC. Once the APC has finished the CAP, a public meeting is scheduled so that it can be presented to the rest of the community and the PLA team. The PLA team leader moderates the meeting and ensures that all community members are given a chance to voice their opinions and concerns. The PLA team provides its own feedback, especially regarding the technical feasibility of activities and available resources.

Below is an example of a CAP that was created during a PLA workshop in Kenya:

¹⁹Schubert et al. 1994b. p. 155-57.

| PROBLEM: LIVESTOCK DISEASES | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------|--|---|
| Opportunity | Actions/Resources Needed | Who Will Provide | Date to Start | Who Will Follow Up | Comments |
| Education on livestock management | Animal Health Asst.
Teaching materials | Ministry of Livestock and Marketing and Limuru Dairy Society | November 1994 | Robinson Muchai
Francis Kihumba | In. Nov. the two will consult the named bodies |
| Rehabilitate existing cattle dip | Water
Dawa
Repair
Dip Attendant | Community
Ministry of Livestock | January 1995 | Michael Nyingi
Daniel Kamau K. | The two will consult the former committee of the Dip |
| PROBLEM: LACK OF FUEL WOOD | | | | | |
| Plant more agroforestry trees | Seeds
Water
Polythene bags
Labour | Plan and Ministry of Research and Forestry | November 1994 | Robinson Githuku
Robinson Muchai | To bring feedback to the chairman of the village development committee by end of Nov. |
| Use of Energy Saving Jikos | 3 pots
2 empty kimbo tins
Sand
1 bag of "Munyu"
1 debe of ballast
1 debe of cowdung
1 debe of ash
Any kind of wire | Community | November 1994 | Peris Njambi
Mary Wambui
Nancy Njambi
Peter Kimenia | To start with immediate effect |

Source: The PRA Programme. 1995. *PRA Field Handbook for Participatory Rural Appraisal Practitioners*. Njoro, Kenya: Egerton University.

PLA Workshop Follow-Up

After the workshop in the community, the PLA team does the following:

1. The team writes a PLA workshop report summarizing the PLA activities, their results, and the problems and solutions that were identified. The report is distributed to the SA and to the APC (after being translated into the local language). A copy of the CAP can be included with the report. The SA and the APC use this workshop report as a point of reference during the implementation and monitoring of activities.
2. Before leaving the community, the PLA team identifies one or more persons from the SA and other relevant agencies (e.g., local government or other non-governmental organisations) that will work closely with the community to implement, monitor and evaluate the CAP. These liaisons meet with the APC to discuss exactly what kind of assistance they will be able to provide, and when they should return in the future to meet again.

One challenge that many PLA projects have faced is how to keep the community motivated after the excitement surrounding the PLA workshop wears off. Some PLA practitioners have suggested that this decrease in motivation is due to the fact that the communities often don't have access to increased financial resources after the PLA workshop. This lack of resources can make it difficult for them to implement the activities that they have outlined in their CAP. Perhaps one way to maintain motivation (and therefore to promote sustainability) is to help communities either develop or link up with grassroots credit schemes that could provide small loans for development activities. PLA practitioners should be encouraged to think of other ways that they can maintain motivation in the communities that they work with.

ACTIVITY REPORT FORM²⁰

Facilitator(s): _____

Note taker/recorder: _____

Name of activity: _____

Date and place conducted:

Materials used: _____

Process: _____

Key Findings: _____

Daily Summary Matrix²¹

²⁰Adapted from Pretty, J. et al. 1993. p. 108.

²¹Adapted from Schubert et al. 1994b.

Below is a sample of a daily matrix, which summarizes the results of activities conducted by the field sub-teams. The trainers can draw the matrix on flip chart paper and have participants fill it out at the end of every day, *in addition to the activity summary sheets*. The information captured in the matrix can be adapted to the trainer's needs.

| | Sub-team/Activity/Community group | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Issues Addressed | Sub-Team A
Resource Map
Men | Sub-Team B
Resource Map
Women | Sub-Team C
Resource Map
Community
Leaders | CONCLUSIONS |
| Main problem | | | | |
| Other problems | | | | |
| Constraints in
using available
resources | | | | |
| Potential new
resources | | | | |
| Other important
information | | | | |

SESSION 18

Presentations and Closure

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will...

- ✓...Learn about the field experiences of the other participants
- ✓...Appreciate the challenges of implementing PLA in urban areas
- ✓...Identify institutional barriers to implementing PLA
- ✓...Be able to see how your knowledge and attitudes about PPD have changed during the course
- ✓...Evaluate this course



Implementing PLA in Urban Areas

Although participatory learning and action has traditionally taken place in rural areas, it can also be adapted to urban and peri-urban areas. The PLA process can be very fruitful in these areas, especially when the issues being addressed by the programme are urban-based (e.g., AIDS and commercial sex workers, urban sanitation). Urban and peri-urban areas may pose special challenges, however, as discussed below:

Different Definition of “Community”

While rural residents tend to share the same background and have a strong sense of community, urban residents come from a wide variety of backgrounds and geographic regions. Urban residents may have little in common with their neighbours, but they may be linked to other residents through work, studies or a common interest. Therefore, a different type of community may exist, which is defined not by geographic boundaries, but by other criteria.

Members of such communities may be less familiar with the geographic characteristics of their neighbourhood than they are with other characteristics, such as available resources. Therefore, some activities such as mapping will need to be adjusted accordingly.

Scheduling

Urban and rural residents have different labour patterns. Urban residents may work long hours in the formal sector or informal sector, and may spend a lot of time commuting between their work and their home. In addition, some urban residents, such as commercial sex workers, may work at night. Due to these varying work schedules, the trainers need to be flexible and creative when scheduling PLA activities. It is essential that trainers thoroughly inquire about community members' work patterns to determine whether or not the field practise will fit in with the community members' schedules.

“Ground Work”

It may be hard to conduct some of the participatory activities on the ground in urban areas, because of unsanitary conditions or lack of large, open spaces. Therefore, it may be helpful to bring a large, collapsable table which can be used for visual activities such as mapping and diagramming. Instead of drawing on the ground, moveable objects can be placed on the table.

PLA “Out of the Vacuum”

In this session, you and your teammates will present the results of your field work. You probably found the field work to be both challenging and rewarding. Although you may have faced some difficulties, the course trainers and other participants were supportive of your work. This is because they are committed to community participation and strongly support the use of PLA.

This may not be the case when you return to your own organisation, however. Many people who take PLA courses find it difficult to implement PLA in “the real world”, because they do not have the support that they need from their supervisors or co-workers. For this reason, it is important to recognize that *PLA cannot be conducted in a vacuum*. Within an organisation, the participatory programme development process is affected by existing policies, working mechanisms, hierarchies and organisational philosophy. Each of these factors can either help or hinder the implementation of PLA. Therefore, the success of PLA requires more than just the training of one or two staff members. There is a need for a serious commitment to participation within all levels of the organisation. In other words, junior level field workers must be empowered to facilitate PLA, just as communities must be empowered to promote their own development. This successful institutionalisation of PLA may take many years and prove to be very challenging.

Following are some obstacles that you may face when trying to implement PLA in your organisation²²:

²²Absalom, E. et al. 1995, p. 5, and Adhikari et al. 1996.

- Lack of senior management's commitment to community participation
- Pressure from donors and/or senior management for “instant” results
- Emphasis on products instead of processes
- Rigid hierarchy that discourages decision-making by field workers
- Operating procedures that discourage creativity and flexibility
- Top-down planning processes
- Lack of respect for community knowledge and abilities (i.e., belief in the superiority of “technical experts”)
- Lack of local capacity building as an institutional goal
- Emphasis on quantitative evaluation indicators that may not accurately reflect the success of PLA
- Frequent changes in staff (i.e., lack of continuity)

Perhaps one of the biggest obstacles is the desire for a “blueprint” or “recipe” for participatory programme development, or a predetermined procedure and set of techniques for conducting PLA in every community. Every community is different, however, and every PLA workshop will be different. Some techniques may be appropriate for one community yet inappropriate for another. It may be very hard for some organisations to accept this need for flexibility and the lack of a blueprint or recipe.

There are several strategies that can help organisations to institutionalize PLA²³:

- Exposing senior management and field work supervisors to PLA philosophy (e.g., through short orientation workshops)
- Rewarding staff who use participatory methods in their projects
- Placing importance on processes instead of products
- Increasing recognition of the value of qualitative indicators
- Decreasing time pressure to implement projects and allowing more time for the early development stages of projects
- Promoting continuity in job posts

²³ Absalom, E. et al. 1995, p. 5, and Adhikari et al. 1996.

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ARUNET is a regional network founded to bridge the gap between participatory research and the use of research results for project implementation. It is active in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It offers training courses, small grants for experimentation in participatory methodologies and it publishes a quarterly newsletter (free of charge).

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IDS has a large collection of articles about PLA and different "topic packs" (health, refugees, behaviour and attitudes, overview of PLA methods, gender, etc.). It also offers training courses and information about PLA networks around the world.

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*IIED publishes **PLA Notes**, an informal report of PLA experiences around the world which is published three times per year. It is free to organisations in developing countries. IIED also distributes other books and training manuals about PLA.*

For Internet Users:

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) administers a **listserv** called the Global Participation Network, which allows professionals around the world to share information about participatory development.

To subscribe, send a message to: listproc@info.usaid.gov

In the body of the message, type: `subscribe gp-net <YOUR NAME>`

After subscribing, you will automatically be sent information about the listserv through the internet.

Books and Manuals

- *Facilitating the Introduction of a Participatory and Integrated Development Approach (PIDA) in Kilifi District, Kenya. Volume I: Recommendations for Institutionalizing PIDA Based on Four Pilot Projects. and Volume II: From Concept to Action. A Manual for Trainers and Users of PIDA.* Bernd Schubert et al. 1994.

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- *GROUNDWORK: Participatory Research for Girls' Education.* Eileen Kane. 1996.

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- *PRA Field Handbook for Participatory Rural Appraisal Practitioners*
The PRA Programme, Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya

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PRA Programme
Egerton University
P.O. Box 536
Njoro - Kenya
Fax: 254-37-61527 (Specify PRA Programme)

- *Participatory Learning & Action: A Trainer's Guide.* Jules N. Pretty, Irene Guijt, John Thompson and Ian Scoones. 1995.

Contact Information:

International Institute for Environment and Development
3 Endsleigh Street
London WC1H 0DD United Kingdom
Tel: (44 171) 388-2117
Fax: (44 171) 388-2826
E-mail: mailbox@iied.org
Internet: <http://www.iied.org> (Publications)

- *Participatory Research in Health: Issues and Experiences*. Korrie de Koning and Marion Martin, eds.

Contact Information:

Zed Books
7 Cynthia Street
London N1 9JF United Kingdom
Tel: (44 171) 837- 4014
Fax: (44 171) 833-3960
E-mail: sales@zedbooks.demon.co.uk
Internet: <http://www.zedbooks.demon.co.uk>
When ordering, please include ISBN number: ISBN 1 85649 351 2 Hb

- *REFLECT Mother Manual: Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community Techniques*. David Archer and Sara Cottingham. 1996.

Contact Information:

ACTIONAID
Chataway House
Leach Road
Chard, Somerset TA20 1FR United Kingdom
Tel: (44)1460-62972 Fax: (44)1460-67191
E-mail: mail@actionaid.org.uk
Internet: <http://carryon.oneworld.org/actionaid/pubs/index.html>

Cost: £10.00

- *Tools for Community Participation: A Manual for Training Trainers in Participatory Techniques.* Lyra Srivivivasan, PROWESS/UNDP. 1990.

Contact Information:

PACT, Inc.
777 UN Plaza
New York, New York 10017
Tel: (212) 697-6222

- *Toward Participatory Research.* World Bank Technical Paper 307. Deepa Narayan. 1996.

Contact Information:

The World Bank
P.O. Box 960
Herndon, VA 20172-0960 USA
Tel: (703) 661-1580 Fax: (703) 661-1501
E-mail: books@worldbank.org
Internet: <http://www.worldbank.org> and look in the

Cost: US\$16.95

- *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last.* Robert Chambers. 1997.

Contact Information:

Publications Office
Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 9RE United Kingdom
Tel: (44 1273) 678269 Fax: (44 1273) 621202/691647
E-mail: ids.books@sussex.ac.uk
Internet: <http://www.ids.susx.ac.uk> (Publications Index)

Cost: £3.95

III. Field Notes

First Impressions of Community

Name of community:

Sponsoring agency and contact person:

Description of the community:

People met during the initial visit:

Initial impressions of the community and what problems might be important:

Field Work: Day 1

Partner:

List the activities you conducted and specify the community groups that you worked with:

Results of the activities:

Evening Session Notes:

Field Work: Day 2

Partner:

List the activities you conducted and specify the community groups that you worked with:

Results of the activities:

Evening Session Notes:

Field Work: Day 3

Partner:

List the activities you conducted and specify the community groups that you worked with:

Results of the activities:

Evening Session Notes:

ADDITIONAL NOTES