

ཐུ། །རང་འཛོལ་ཐུབ་པའི་བོད་མིའི་གཞིས་སྐྱར་གོང་འཕེལ་ལས་གཞི།

Building SMART Tibetan Settlement

A Guidebook of Participatory Needs Assessment



Central Tibetan Administration

Department of Home (Central Tibetan Relief Committee) Tel: 00-91-1892-222214/222412 Email: isdp@tibet.net

༡༡། རང་འཛོུགས་སྤྱོད་པའི་བོད་མིའི་གཞིས་སྐྱར་གོང་འཕེལ་ལས་གཞི།

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Guidebook developed by



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ཨ་ རྒྱུན་ལས་ཁྲུང་སྤྱོད།
DEPARTMENT OF HOME
 Central Tibetan Administration

བཀའ་སློན་གྱི་གསུང་འཕྲིན།

༄༅། བོད་མིའི་སྤྱི་གཞི་འཛུགས་ཀྱི་ནང་སྤྱོད་ལས་ཁྲུང་སྤྱོད་ནས་གཞིས་ཆགས་གཅིག་བསྐྱས་ཡར་རྒྱས་འཛུགས་
 བསྐྱར་ལས་གཞི་ཞེས་རང་ཅག་བོད་མི་ནམས་འབྲེལ་ས་ནས་ལང་བྱ་བ་པ་དང་། རང་ཁྲུང་གསོ་བྱེད་རྒྱུ་ཅ་
 བའི་བསམ་གྲོ་འཛིན་སྤངས་ལ་སྒྲན་པའི་ལས་གཞི་ཁྲུང་གསར་ཞིག་འགོ་འཛུགས་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཡོད་པར་དགའ་འཛོམས་
 ཆེན་པོ་བྱུང་། ལས་གཞི་འདི་བརྒྱད་བོད་མི་སེར་སྤྱོད་ཆོགས་ནས་གཞིས་ཆགས་ནམས་སྤྱོད་བརྒྱར་ཐབས་
 ཐད་ལས་འགན་བསྐྱབ་རྒྱུ་ཡན་གྲོགས་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཡོད། གཞི་རིམ་མི་མང་གི་བསམ་ཚུལ་བརྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་ལྟེན་ལྟེན་ལྟེན་ལྟེན་
 སྤྱི་ཆོགས་ཡར་རྒྱས་གཏོང་རྒྱུ་ལས་དོན་སྤྲོད་གང་དུ་འང་རྒྱ་ཆེའི་མི་མང་གི་མཉམ་རུབ་ཆ་གསལ་བྱུང་རྒྱུ་ཅོད་
 མེད་ཀྱི་ཡན་ཐོགས་ཡོད་པར་ཡིད་ཆེས་ཡོད། སྤྱི་ཆོགས་ཡར་རྒྱས་སྤྱོད་པ་བརྒྱད་རང་ཅག་བོད་མི་ནམས་ཀྱི་
 འཕུལ་སེལ་གྱི་འདོད་དོན་དང་ཕྱགས་ཀྱི་མཛོན་འདོད་བསྐྱབ་པ་ལའང་ཡན་ངེས་ཡིན།

བོད་མིའི་སྤྱོད་པས་བཅོལ་སྤྱི་ཆོགས་གང་དུ་བཞུགས་པའི་མི་མང་གི་འཛོལ་རྒྱུ་དང་བདེ་སྐྱབ་ལ་གཞིགས་ཏོགས་བྱ་རྒྱུ་
 རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་སྤྱོད་ལས་ཁྲུང་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་འགན་ཁུར་ཡིན། འདས་པའི་ལོ་གྲངས་ ༥༤ ལྷག་གི་རིང་ལ་སྤྱི་ནོར་ལ་གོང་ས་སྐྱབས་
 མགོན་ཆེན་པོ་མཆོག་གི་དབུ་ཁྲིད་ལམ་སློན་དང་ཐུགས་རྗེ་བྱེད་མཁུ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་འགན་ཁུར་དེ་དག་སྐྱབ་སྐྱས་སྤྱོད་
 མཆིས། འོན་ཀྱང་དུས་ཀྱི་འགྱུར་བ་དང་ཐོག་མའི་དམིགས་ལུལ་ལ་འགྱུར་བ་རིམ་མོང་དབང་གིས་དགའ་ངལ་
 གསར་བ་རྒྱུ་འཕྲད་སྐྱེས་མ་ཟད་དེ་དག་སེལ་ཐབས་སྤྱོད་མཁུ་ན་བསམ་ཚུལ་ངེས་པར་འདོན་དགོས་ཤིང་།
 ད་ལན་གྱི་ལས་གཞི་འདི་སྐྱབས་བཅོལ་དུ་གནས་པའི་དགོས་དོན་མ་དོར་བའི་སྤྱོད་པས་གཞིས་ཆགས་ཀྱི་མི་མང་
 ནམས་ནས་འདས་པའི་དུས་ཀྱི་ཉམས་སྤོང་ལ་ཕྱིར་བརྒྱས་ཤིག་བྱེད་ཏེ་ཡོད་རྒྱུ་ལ་སྤྱོད་དཔག་གམ་འཆར་
 གཞི་འགོད་རྒྱུ་ལོ་སྐབས་བསྐྱར་ཡོད།



ཉེ་ཆར་བོད་མིའི་སློབ་འཛུགས་ཀྱི་སྐབས་ ༡༩ པའི་དཔལ་ལྷན་བཀའ་གཏམ་ནས་ཨ་རི་ USAID རོགས་ཆོགས་ལ་
རེ་བསྐྱལ་ཇི་ཞུས་བཞིན་གཞིས་ཆགས་ཀྱི་ས་ཁོང་འདེབས་ལས་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་ལས་རིག་དང་། ཆོང་རིགས་ལས་
དོན། ལས་མིའི་རྣམ་ཅུལ་སོགས་ལས་རིགས་བཅས་སྤར་ལྷག་ཡར་རྒྱས་གཏོང་བྱེད་ཆེད་དུ་ཨ་རི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཆེན་
པོའི་མི་མང་དང་སྤྱད་གཞུང་ནས་ཁོ་ཉེ་བཞིན་ཆེད་ཀྱབ་སྐྱོར་གནང་བར་བྱགས་ཤིང་ཆེ་ཞུ་བྱུ་ཡིན།

གལ་ཆེན་པོའི་སློབ་ཤོན་གསེ་ཞུ་དགོས་པ་ནི། འདས་པའི་ལོ་བཅུ་ལྷག་དུ་མའི་ཡར་སྤོན་དུ་བཅུགས་ཐེན་པའི་
སློབ་འཛུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་གཞི་ཁག་གི་དགེ་སློན་ལ་བསྐྱར་ཞིབ་ཀྱིས་མ་འོངས་ལས་འཆར་ཁག་ལྷགས་པན་ཆད་ལྷན་
བཟོ་བྱེད་ཀྱང་གྲིས་རྒྱས་འདོན་དགོས་པའི་རེ་བསྐྱལ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་དང་། སྐབས་བཙེལ་བོད་མི་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་འདོད་
དོན་དམིགས་ལུལ་མཐའ་དག་ལྟར་བར་བསྐྱབ་བྱེད་ཕྱིར་མང་ཆོགས་སྤྱི་དང་། ཡང་སློབ་གཞིས་ཆགས་ཀྱི་ས་
གནས་འགོ་འཛིན་དང་། ལས་ཀྱི་སྤྲོ་མོ་བ། ལས་གཞི་དོ་དམ་ནམ་པ་བཅས་ནས་རྒྱུན་དུ་མང་ཆོགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱགས་ལེར་
ལས་འཆར་ཁག་ལ་བྱགས་སྤར་ཆེ་བསྐྱོད་ཀྱིས་རྣམས་པ་ཇི་ཡོད་མཉམ་སྦྲངས་རྩལ་འདོན་བྱེད་དགོས་པའི་བསྐྱལ་མ་
ཞུ་བྱུ་ཡིན།

བཀའ་གིས་སློབ་ལམ་བཅས།

འཁོར་ལྷ་ཆོང་བསོད་ནམས་སློབས་རྒྱལ།

བཀའ་མྱོན།

ནང་སྤྱད་ལས་ཁུངས།



མང་ཁྲིད་བཀའ་ཁྲོན།



HOME MINISTER

Message

I am greatly pleased that the Department of Home, Central Tibetan Administration is going to launch a new and unique initiative known as Integrated Settlement Development Plan (ISDP). This initiative being an essential part of Tibetan Self-Reliance and Resilience (TSRR), it primarily facilitates the inhabitants of the settlements to play a vital role in contributing to the sustainability of Tibetan settlements. I strongly believe that the grassroots-level or bottom-up approach undoubtedly encourages people's participation in the processes of community development, thereby ultimately contributing to the realization of their objectives as well as the future of Tibetan people.

The Department of Home is mandated to look after the welfare and livelihood of Tibetan refugee communities stationed anywhere in the country. Ever since our esteemed leader His Holiness The Great 14th Dalai Lama arrived India in 1959 and under His kind leadership, blessing and guidance, the Department has been fulfilling its responsibility these more than five decades with a certain measure of successes. However, with the passage of time and changing objectives, the Tibetan people continues to face new challenges and problems warranting concurrent innovative solutions. This initiative is an occasion for the Tibetan inhabitants to revisit the past experiences and plan ahead for the future without ever losing the purpose of life in exile.

Recently, the USAID has, at the behest of 14th Kashag, generously approved to provide US \$ 23 million to Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) towards upliftment and development of the livelihood of Tibetan people. Inhabitants of the settlements can achieve this by engaging in agricultural development activities, initiating entrepreneurial projects and other workforce developments. A genuine and consistent effort invested in these directions will contribute to Tibetan people becoming resilient against all eventualities. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the people and government of the United States of America for their invaluable assistance.

It is necessary to remind ourselves that the Tibetan people are passing through difficult period in the contemporary history of Tibet. Availing this opportunity, I urge the Tibetan people, particularly the inhabitants of the settlements to work towards strengthening the institutions and communities that were established over the last many decades. This appeal is also directed to the larger Tibetan community, Settlement Officers (SOs), Project Officers (POs) and Community Mobilizers (CMs) whose concerted efforts and actions accompanied with urgency will enable each and every settlement to contribute to the overarching mission of the Tibetan people in exile.

My prayers and best wishes,


Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang (Mr.)
Kalon, Department of Home



DEPARTMENT OF HOME

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དབུས་བོད་མིའི་རང་སེལ་ལས་ཁུངས།

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA'S CENTRAL TIBETAN RELIEF COMMITTEE

(Amendments Registered under the Provisions of H.P. Societies Registration Act 2006)

Chairman : HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

Preface

Integrated Settlement Development Plan (ISDP) is a bottom up process of addressing the developmental needs of the Tibetan communities all over. This is where the community resolve to bring a development which brings about holistic development by integrating key sectors to build Tibetan settlement resilient and viable enough to face the challenges of the 21st century while adhering to the core values of Tibetan culture and traditions. It begins with mapping or scanning Tibetan communities -past with the help of the various stakeholder groupings for finding and understanding their aspirations. It can only happen when we could create an atmosphere where every individual or group can freely express themselves fully without any fear of unwanted repercussions. Only such a condition can create a collective vision for a common future. Hence let us take this rare opportunity to create this desirable situation for realizing the purpose of PNA and eventually the ISDP with high degree of ownership by the settlements.

As conceived, we are soon going to conduct the ISDP's Training of Trainers (ToTs) at three regional zones in Dharamshala, Salugara and Bylakuppe covering all Tibetan settlements in South Asia. The principal purpose of the ToTs is to learn best tools and techniques in the field of participatory developments where all designated participants will not just abreast with the techniques but adapt many of them to suite our situations so that it brings out the best of intended results for the ISDP. The appeal all SOs and CMs to attend the training to understand the tools so that you could conduct the actual exercises for your respective settlement with full confidence and technically sound. After regional trainings, you will have to collect the basic information about the settlement by using the formats developed for obtaining your serial numbers to conduct the actual PNA process. Please note the dates for submitting the draft format. The high-level technical committee from the CTA shall deliberate on your proposal for actual project proposal drafting and eventual submission to the donor agencies including USAID. As for now, we planning to narrow down to up to four settlements, of which three in India and one in Nepal for the FY'17-18. The remaining settlements will have its round as per serial number allocated.

PNA process in each settlement will lead by the SOs and CMs who have participated in the training and who will play an important role in making the PNA a success. You have the responsibility to facilitate the PNA meetings with various group of stakeholders in each settlement including women, youth, elders, farmers, community leaders, small business owners, school dropouts, monks & nuns, health workers and cooperative members. Always blend the prescriptive dos and don'ts with your creative improvisation and acute common sense, as you know your settlement and its people bests.

The Department of Home is ready to provide any facilitating supports you may need so the PNA and ISDP succeeds.

With my best wishes,

Chhimey Rigzen (Mr.)

Secretary, Department of Home



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CTRC is a wing of Home Deptt. which looks after the Socio-economic welfare of Tibetans in exile with an endeavour to preserve and promote their unique social and cultural characteristics.

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འཕེལ་རྒྱུ་འཇགས་པའི་འཛུགས་སྐོར་
PLANNING COUNCIL

Acknowledgements

The origin of the manual lie in the USAID's TSRR programme 2016 that addresses the livelihood issues of Tibetan refugees in exile as one of the core programmes. In the light of the dynamic complexities of the Tibetan community, it was thought that a wide scale and in-depth community level scanning is a prerequisite to understand the change and aspirations both at individual and community levels. Based on demographics, this time active participation of the young population especially women was thought to be the strategic for strengthening collective resilience and instituting a Tibetan model of sustainable development in the long run. For this to happen, it is imperative that we have a well-designed concept, processes and necessary tools that is tailor made to suite the specific conditions of our communities capable of generating the highest degree of participation and thus ownership. This manual is going to be the crucial guide and critical resource for all to carry various local level processes designed for the ISDPs.

Although the ideas for this manual came from the Planning Council, CTA, the actual conceptual write-ups of the PNA and its various methods outlaid into this form was done by the PRAXIS, Patna -one of the leading organization in India for participatory practices. Our special thanks goes to Mr. Anindo Banerjee, Director, Programme Initiatives, who most readily agreed to put all these efforts with his team in relatively short span of time. PRAXIS is a support organization committed to mainstreaming the voices of the poor and marginalized sections of society in the quest for equity and sustainable development through active promotion of practice of participatory system. We are grateful to Ms. Saleela Patker, Development Practitioner on whose technical expertise, we are going to conduct the south India regional PNA exercises with adaptations. We owe our heartfelt gratitude to Hon. Kalon and the Secretary of the DoH, CTA for their active efforts the in planning of ISDP-PNA and, the Planning Section represented by two coordinators for their most generous facilitating supports.

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Acknowledgements

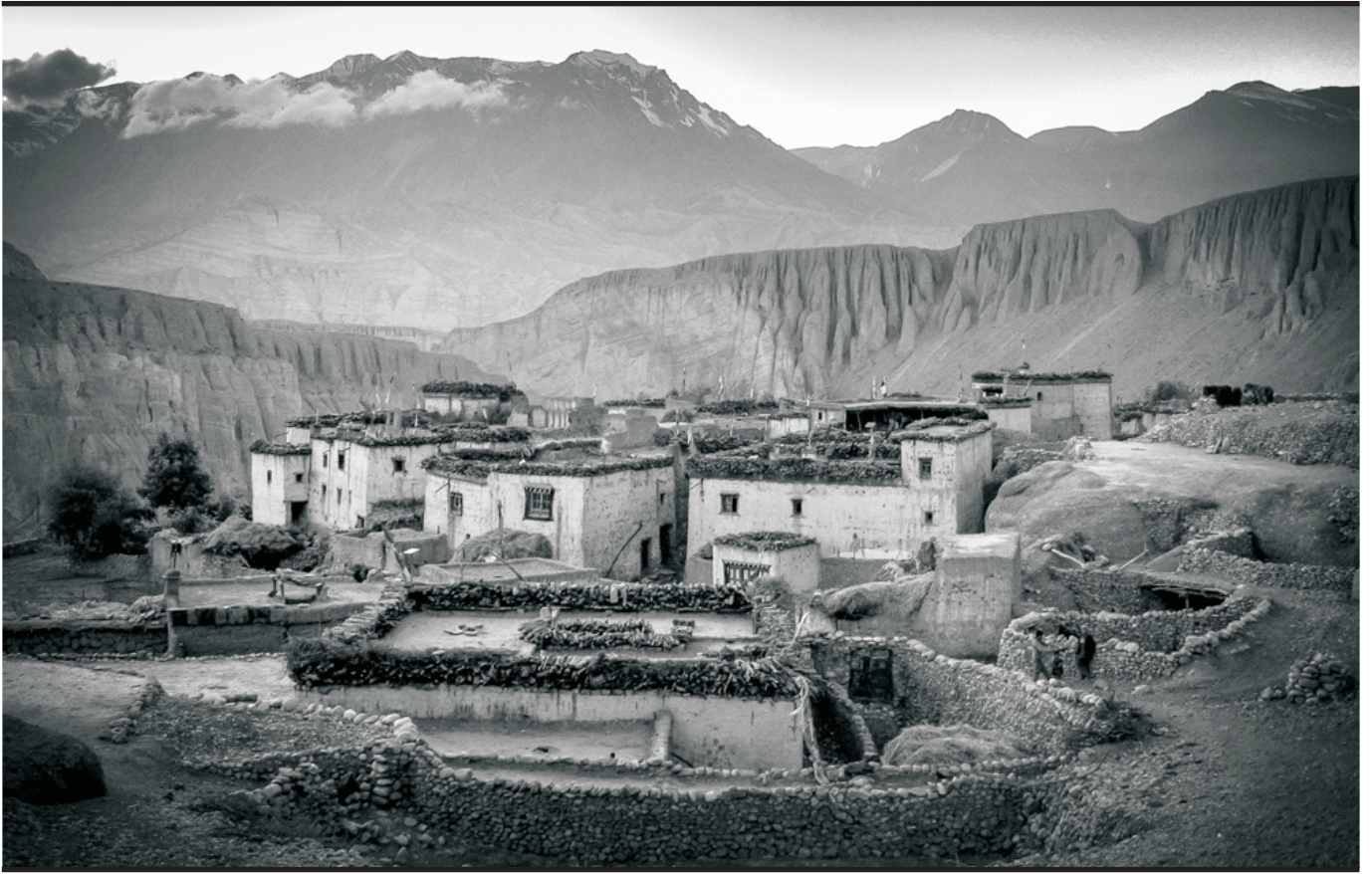
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1

An Overview of the Guidebook

1 An Overview of the Guidebook

Understanding the development needs of a community is a crucial imperative of responsive governance, in order that processes of development planning are effective in addressing the context-specific priorities of a community. A participatory process of understanding needs of communities assumes utmost importance in settlements of Tibetan refugees, who battle numerous odds in alien landscapes to live a life of dignity and resilience.

Needs may vary across diverse geographies of people's lives, economic choices, phases of time or varying institutional settings of delivery of essential services on the part of governments or other agencies. Understanding needs calls for sensitivities of the highest order, enabling people to articulate their development aspirations, analyze availability of vital resources, see through the institutional arrangements of delivery of essential services to identify gaps and to identify hardships that need to be mitigated; thereby demanding highly contextual, learning-oriented approaches to determine the most suitable interventions to improve the quality of lives of people.

One of the key intents of a Participatory Needs Assessment process is to ensure judicious allocation of limited resources of the Central Tibetan Administration, to address key development needs of Tibetan settlements and ensure their well being. The objective of this guidebook is to illustrate a range of participatory methods and approaches that extension functionaries of the Central Tibetan Administration can employ in determining the development needs of Tibetan communities in exile.

An overview of the Tibetan community in exile

Tibetan refugee community in exile is known to be one of the most successful refugee communities in the world. Tibetans in exile have managed to rebuild their lives in alien environments achieving almost total economic self reliance, supported well by the Central Tibetan Administration in achieving a cohesive society created within an environment where Tibetans have been able to preserve their age long rich cultural heritage and identity.

Today, after a long period of life in exile, Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan people are passing through a very crucial period. There are many challenges and issues facing the Tibetan exiled community; the most important being the advancing age of Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, which is a serious concern to all the Tibetan people. Some are of the opinion that there will be a leadership crisis in Tibetan community after the Dalai Lama, even though he has made all the preparation of a future Tibet, be it laying down a strong democratic institution in exile or setting a policy for resolution of the Tibetan issue with the Chinese government. Central Tibetan Administration headed by the Dalai Lama has left no stones unturned to resolve the issue of Tibet peacefully with the Chinese government since long, but there has been no positive response from the Chinese side. In stead, the Chinese

have strengthened their draconian rule in Tibet imposing strict restrictions on Tibetan people, their religious activities and human rights.

The Tibetan diaspora faces a threat of disintegration as many of the new generation exiles have started moving out from the existing Tibetan settlements and their urge to move to the west makes the situation worse. While Tibetans already settled in the west are in danger of assimilating into the western culture and life styles, many Tibetans believe that if Tibet issue is not resolved soon in future or during the Dalai Lama's life time, there is a real threat of extinction of the Tibetan identity. So the period of next ten to fifteen years is going to be very crucial for Tibetans inside and outside Tibet.

In the exiled community, a major challenge today is the growing unemployment among the Tibetan youth. According to the Tibetan Demographic Survey, the unemployment rate among the Tibetan youth is as high as seventy five percent. The steady increase in the number of school and college graduates, with about 1250 students passing out every year from schools and colleges in India, begets a possibility of a significant section of these youth remaining unemployed as job opportunities within the Tibetan community are limited on account of a low absorption capacity of only five percent. This has begun to lead to a shift in the economic structure of refugees in exile.

The early refugees have adopted agriculture and allied activities as their major sources of livelihood. Besides agriculture, Tibetans have also run their own enterprises by setting up sweater businesses in Indian towns and cities. But the new generation of exiles born and brought up in India, having acquired higher levels of education and skills, are evidently in need of better job opportunities. The new generation of Tibetans can be accommodated either in Tibetan administration service or in other services in exiled community. Thanks to the liberalization policy of Indian government, which has benefitted not only the Indian masses, but educated Tibetan youths as well by creating jobs in the corporate world in major cities, many Tibetan youths are presently employed in the corporate sector in jobs ranging from executive to providing customer care service. Although it seems to solve the unemployment problem to an extent, but this may have far-reaching consequences on Tibetan community as a whole in future. Until and unless Central Tibetan Administration is able to initiate sustainable rural based economy in the settlements, the problem of Tibetans migrating to other places will continue. Central Tibetan Administration understands the issue and has policies to make settlement's economy sound and sustainable.

About this guidebook

This guidebook is a result of an initiative of the Planning Council of the Central Tibetan Administration, aimed at compilation and customization of popular approaches to assessment of community needs using an empathic, community-centric approach. Such an approach aims to leverage the local knowledge and leadership potential of communities for bringing about sustainable improvement in the welfare of people, by employing participatory methods and tools specifically for this purpose. It rests on a group-based process in which

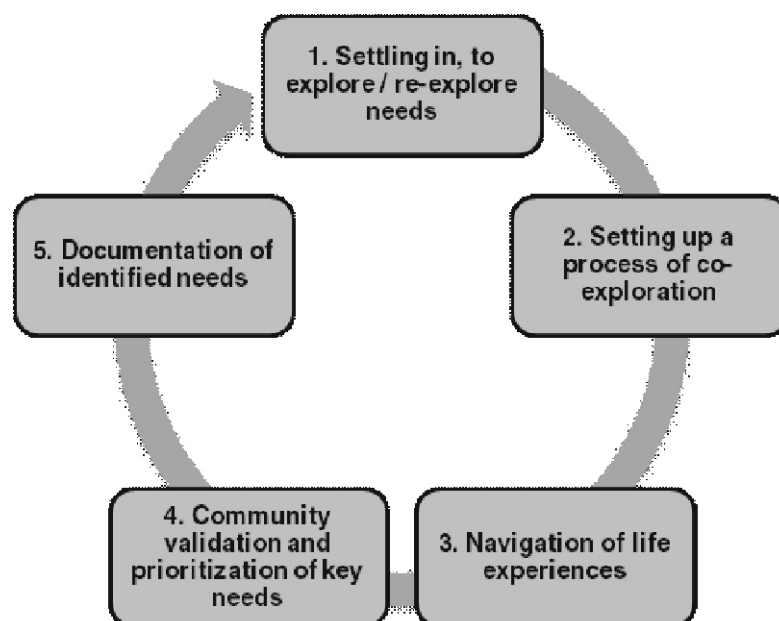
the community members analyze the adequacy of conditions essential for lasting welfare of people. Based on such an assessment, the local community agrees on essential actions at both individual and collective levels to improve the welfare of all community members and monitors progress towards this goal. Processes that help in realizing this intent have been summarized and included in this handbook in the form of a field manual for community facilitators.

The guidebook aims to help the grassroots-level facilitator to develop an understanding of varying demands of processes of participatory needs assessment conducted under the stewardship of primary stakeholders. It provides a broad explanation of strategies and approaches for improving welfare of people, looking at the specific context of different target populations in terms of their aspirations, challenges and vulnerabilities. It provides guidance for collective action through practical examples and illustrations of participatory processes and tools developed, besides discussing the use of a selection of popular methodologies to facilitate strengths-based approaches to community development. People working in the international development sector have developed and used a plethora of participatory processes, methods and tools to work with communities and enable identification of needs in various sectors of work, e.g. health care, water and sanitation, agriculture and many others. This guidebook borrows extensively from practices proven to be effective in identification of needs from the perspective of local communities. To improve and maintain welfare conditions of a Tibetan habitation it is critical to work with communities, as they are the primary decision-makers for a habitation and have a strong influence on the accessibility of resources and services.

This guidebook is written for Settlement Officers operating among Tibetan communities in exile, service providers or anyone else who comes into contact with Tibetan communities as a facilitator of development processes. It can be used by community based organizations who wish to be more effective in finding sustainable solutions to welfare issues of Tibetan people in exile. It is also written for development organisations that use inclusive approaches to engage with communities in identifying development needs from their own perspective and need specialist information to manage the welfare implications of their programmes.

The guidebook has three sections. Section 1 (Chapters 1, 2 and 3) provides an overview of this guidebook and lays down broad principles for guiding an inclusive process of engaging with Tibetan communities in exile. Section 2 (Chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7) provides guidance for deciding where to focus the efforts of assessing needs through discussions of appropriate participatory tools and their adaptations, besides detailed steps for applying them in the field for determining needs of Tibetan communities in exile. Section 3 (Chapter 8) presents a set of instruments to organize learning from application of various tools used as part of the process described in Section 2.

In Section 1 (Chapters 1, 2 and 3) facilitators learn about methods and challenges of putting themselves in the shoes of local communities; the crucial role of facilitative attitudes and behaviour; prerequisites of a truly participatory process and the critical importance of listening empathetically to the voices of different sections of a community, towards unlocking the potential of people in realizing their visions of change. In this section, the guidebook outlines a step-wise approach to Participatory Needs Assessment, through exercises designed to explore latent strengths of local communities and the power of appreciative enquiry. This section also sets up the framework for the process of needs assessment, a participatory process that consists of five stages (see diagram) along with their sub-steps, each explained in detail with its purpose and the recommended participatory tools to use. This section forms the core of 'Participatory Needs Assessment', in which a community is enabled to articulate its requirements for securing sustainable wellbeing.



Section 2 (Chapters 4 to 7) guides facilitative action to diagnose needs, through exploration of diverse dimensions of people's lives, their uses of time, practices of accessing key resources or the services of local institutions, and most significantly, accounts of diversity within such explorations. It describes how to identify specific sub-groups within Tibetan populations that are most in need of welfare improvements and how to decide which interventions are most appropriate for different groups of people. It also presents an approach to analyze stakes of various interest-groups in processes of development and methods of dealing with the same.

Chapter 8, with makes the third and the last section, discusses a methodology for validation and prioritization of needs emerging from various participatory processes and proposes a system for recording learnings from application of various methods. Based on learnings from various participatory processes, communities can themselves produce time-bound plans for individual and collective action, in ways in which a collectively evolved local institutional arrangement implements the agreed actions and repeats the needs assessment at regular intervals to monitor progress.

Box 1.1 outlines key steps of the process of Participatory Needs Assessment, outlined in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Box 1.1 – Key stages of the process of Participatory Needs Assessment

Stage 1– Settling in

Purpose: to spend quality time with people of varying profile within Tibetan settlements, understand the community better, gain trust and build confidence in people's ability to bring about positive change in their lives by working together as a group.

Stage 2 – Setting-up a process of co-exploration

Purpose: to bring together a group of people representing different social, economic or occupational groups within a Tibetan settlement, willing to be co-travellers in the process of exploring the lives of local people and identifying key development needs. In this stage, the facilitator of a needs assessment exercise must undertake thorough preparations for a comprehensive exploration of lives of people.

Stage 3– Navigation of Life Experiences

Purpose: to study different dimensions of everyday lives of Tibetan people in exile, besides their institutional experiences, occupancy of time, use of resources, etc., in order to determine their present welfare status and to identify key deficits or hardships that need to be addressed for an improved quality of life.

Stage 4– Community Validation and Prioritization of Identified Needs

Purpose: to move with the group from their new awareness of animal welfare issues, identified from the exercises carried out so far, towards individual and collective action for welfare improvement.

Stage 5– Documentation of key needs

Purpose: to capture learnings from various participatory processes in ways that facilitate the group to look for solutions together, implement agreed interventions, monitor the same regularly and reflect on their findings and experiences together.



2

Putting Ourselves in Their Shoes

Easier Said than done!

2 Putting Ourselves in Their Shoes!

“Behaviour and attitudes matter more than methods. At the personal level, practitioners and trainers have found that the major problem in development is not “them” - local people, the poor and marginalised, but “us” - the outsider professionals. Again and again, we have rushed and dominated, imposing our reality, and denying that of the weak and vulnerable. For the poor to be empowered requires us to change, to interact in new ways, to become not controllers, teachers and transferors of technology, but conveners, facilitators and supporters, enabling those who are weak and marginalised to express and analyze their realities, to plan and to act. For this we have to behave differently; it is our attitudes that have to change.

- Robert Chambers, 1996

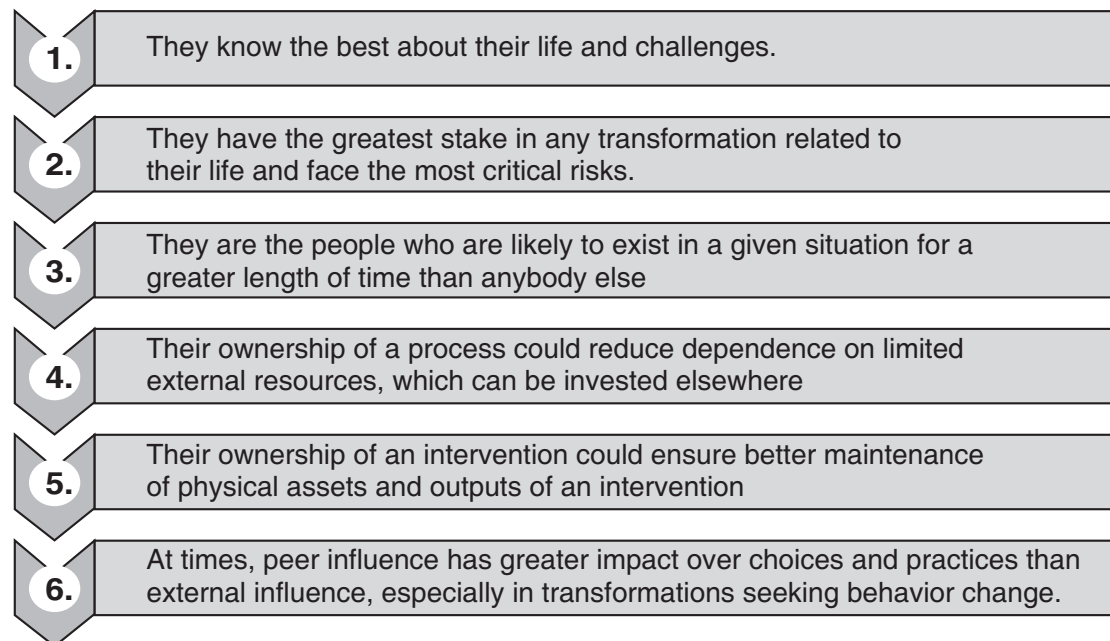
Relevance of participatory approaches in assessment of needs

While any meaningful development intervention intends to bring about sustainable improvements in the lives of people, at times communities attach little value to externally-anchored initiatives of change, especially when not involved from the conceptual stage of an intervention. Excluding communities from processes of envisioning any transformative process can limit their ownership of and involvement in development initiatives, which could in turn short-circuit prospects of sustainability. For instance, an agricultural technology introduced to communities with the intent of enhancing yield could fall apart if not accepted and practiced by people. The irony would be unparalleled if such a technology were to be promoted in a community of traditional artisans!

A meaningful process of participation involves people from the very beginning of an initiative of change and in all phases of the life-cycle of an intervention, viz. in identification and prioritization of needs; planning and implementation of interventions, and in processes of monitoring and evaluation. Participatory approaches enable and empower people to present, share, analyze and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan, act, reflect, monitor, continually improve and scale up community actions. When used well, it can empower people, giving them more control over their lives.

In a process of participatory development, it is of utmost importance that decisions related to choice of issues for action and preferred courses of intervention are made by the local community, and not by external agents of change. When outsiders design projects, decide interventions, set objectives or manage processes, it severely undermines the local ownership and sustainability of interventions, often leading to a decline in community's interest and involvement in development processes. In contrast, when people have an opportunity to articulate and prioritize their development needs, it serves as an empowering experience and is often backed by considerations of local challenges and opportunities.

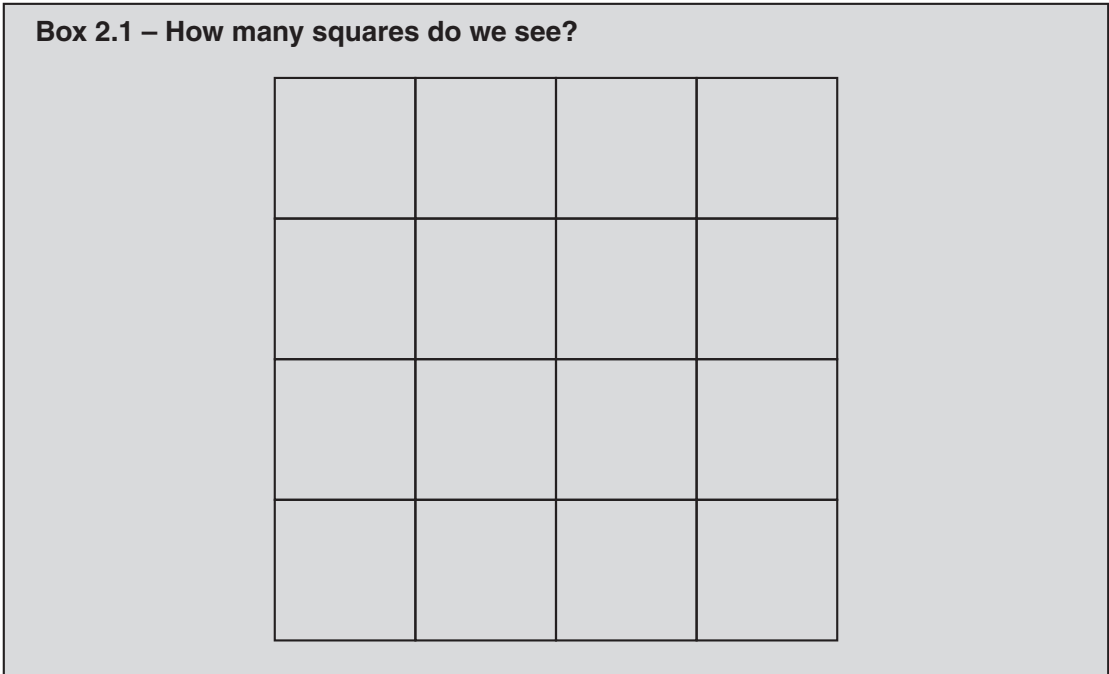
A bottom-up approach encourages, supports and strengthens communities' existing abilities to identify their own needs, to set their own objectives, and to monitor and evaluate them. It thrives on trust and communication between communities and facilitators holds great potential for sustainable development. The diagram below outlines key advantages of active involvement of local communities in development processes.



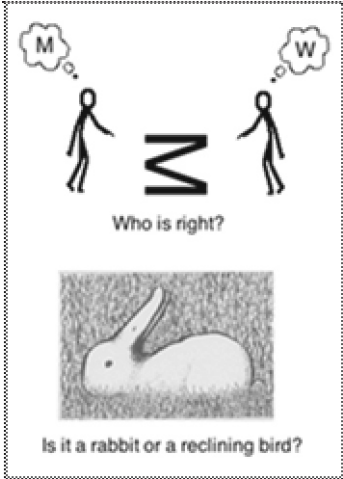
Seeing the world as they see it: The significance of empathic explorations

Approaches to engage with local communities need to be designed in ways that make it easy for people to take a holistic view of their lives and identify opportunities of improving the same. For triggering meaningful participation, a facilitator, who is often an external entity, should enjoy the trust of people and get them to apply their diagnostic minds in examining the degrees of wellbeing and resource endowments in various sections of a community, in ways that prompt a shared interest in collective pursuit of essential transformations. A facilitator needs to recognise the varying degrees of struggle that different sections of a community go through in shaping their lives, and should be able to apply an outlook of equity in discussions about lives of people. An outlook of equity calls for a greater engagement with the lives of people who suffers hardships of a relatively greater magnitude, which could be on account of age, gender, economic status, occupational choice, social profile or physical ability, among others. Some of these disadvantages could coincide together in the lives of some individuals, making them disproportionately marginalized. A facilitator needs to be able to understand different accounts of life from people's own perspective, recognizing that different people look at the same reality differently. Box 2.1 illustrates this plurality of perceptions in a striking way: when asked to count the number of squares contained within

the grid, different people count up different numbers, ranging from sixteen to thirty, choosing for themselves their own subjective scale of precision.



Box 1 illustrates an interesting asymmetry of perceptions – people tend to view their experiences or environments from their own unique lenses, which, more often than not, are guided by their own positions. For instance, rural women in a south Asian context, who often shoulder a greater burden of household chores, might describe issues related to scarcity of water much more poignantly than their male counterparts. Young women might sense the relative safeness of a space much more accurately than men, while only a true agriculturist might be able to tell the difference between the hues of an edible tuber and a toxic one.



The ABC of Participation

To be able to soak in the realities of people from their own perspective calls for readiness at multiple levels - Personal, Professional and Institutional. The most crucial of these transformations relates to one's personal self – requiring facilitators to inculcate inclusive attitudes and sensitive behaviors so that they can engage with people on friendly, trustful terms.

Tibetan communities in exile are based in diverse geo-political situations and have dissimilar developmental challenges, especially due to their status as refugees. They have a long history of struggle of safeguarding their ethnicity and identity, accentuated by the challenge to adapt to alien environments. This implies the need of highly sensitive approaches to understand the aspirations and trepidations of different sections of the Tibetan community in exile.

A competent facilitator of a needs assessment process would be expected to be highly respectful and sensitive to people knowledge and experience. The attitude of 'we know what they want' would have to give way to a zealous willingness to unlearn and perceive situations from the perspective of lived experiences of people. A facilitator, even if she or he belongs to the Tibetan community, may have her own perceptions of a situation, but in the course of a participatory assessment, she would be expected to overcome biases and be open to learning. The following principles can come in handy while approaching communities in exploration of their needs.

Principles of participation, especially in contexts of needs assessment

Treating People as Leaders of Change Processes

Local communities need to be involved in a development process right from the beginning. Involving communities in processes of transforming their lives from the outset has many distinct advantages. Not only can it instill valuable trust and confidence among people about their importance in a design of processes, but can also provide an understanding about local dynamics of cooperation and generate useful insights about how vital local resources are distributed and used within a community. It identifies key stakeholders who can play a key role in governance of processes and helps foster a sense of ownership among local people with regard to the outcomes of a development intervention.

Attaching High Premium to Local Knowledge and Experience

The fundamental truth that people living in a particular situation are likely to have the most credible view of that situation needs to be recognized. They might not have had opportunities to soak in academic theories around situations of crises, but would have experienced real crises and survived in situations of hardship. Investing time in pooling lived experiences of life in a given situation can bring about an unparalleled range of insights, an area where participatory approaches can make a huge difference.

Being Open to Learning

Facilitators of processes of change need to keep reminding themselves of the limitations of their role in triggering sustainable development and accord high importance to accommodating the continually changing dynamics of a community process under the influence of numerous social and political factors. Being open to keep learning about the changing dynamics and analyses and situational wisdom of local people can augur well for

the prospects of a development process. An attitude to keep learning plays a crucial role in enabling a facilitator to harness the power of people's participation.

Enabling Constructive Reflections

A cornerstone of good participatory processes relates to opportunities created by a facilitator to collectively reflect around learnings from a process, which often paves the way for moving forward in a constructive manner. Participatory processes must strive for creation of opportunities for participants to learn from each other's experiences and sharpen capacities to look at situations from multiple perspectives, analyze, question, and get empowered in the processes. The following are some of the key pointers for a facilitator's initiatives in this direction :

- o Encouraging people to speak and express themselves
- o Listening to diverse views
- o Asking constructive questions
- o Seeking clarifications
- o Respecting differences of opinion
- o Creating a non-threatening atmosphere

Demonstrating Inclusive Attitudes and Behaviours

A facilitator needs to lead by example in demonstrating inclusive attitudes and behaviours, so that people bearing limited degrees of articulation skills, physical ability, social standing or economic capabilities can participate in a process without any restraint. Processes of needs assessment do not merely entail application of a set of technical tools and techniques; rather they demand attitudes that can enable collaborations and expressions. Attitude and Behavior Change, literally as well as figuratively makes the ABC of meaningful participatory practices. Box 2.2 lists a sample of facilitative attitudes and behaviours.

Box 2.2 : An illustrative sample of attitudes and behaviours of good facilitators

- Trusting people's capabilities
- Not lecturing or dominating
- Listening to people
- Learning from people and sharing ideas as appropriate
- Not judging people
- Enabling people to participate on their own terms
- Respecting people
- Being friendly
- Being pro-actively inclusive
- Being honest about intentions
- Not rushing; allowing processes to evolve at a natural pace
- Being sensitive

Ensuring Transparency

While wrapping up processes of needs assessment, a facilitator should credibly present back a synthesis of needs expressed by various participants of a process and seek validation of the same in a public forum. While Chapter 7 deals with this dimension of a process in detail, an atmosphere of mutual trust is a basic requirement of a meaningful exchange of ideas. Being transparent about one's intent and the remit of a process preempts suspicions or misgivings amongst participants of a process.

Disability stemming from being in positions of authority

Participatory processes demand shifting of pre-held assumptions or mental images of situations to align with actual realities and lived experiences of people. Being able to 'place oneself in someone else's shoes' is a crucial challenge for facilitators to understand situations from different perspectives. Easier said than done!

Being in positions of authority can at times be a huge disability. Power imbalances tend to create barriers in communication in many deceptive ways. Even when authoritarian facilitators make a sincere effort to reach out to people, they may be at the risk of perceiving situations at a very surface level, as communities may hesitate to open up to them. Mutual trust and camaraderie are crucial demands of participatory processes, which serve well to offset the disadvantage of being in positions of power. At times, facilitators need to make pro-active efforts to allay any fears or inhibitions people may have, by investing time in building rapport, listening to people's experiences of struggle, sharing their workload, etc.

Building trustful relationships is an important prerequisite of processes of Participatory Needs Assessment. This can be approached in many different ways. Facilitators need to create opportunities for themselves to plug into the lives of people. Taking a relaxed stroll in a village, breaking into impromptu chats with people and finding opportunities to support them in their daily routines could be ways of addressing barriers of communication. Box 2.3 illustrates an example from India regarding how a group of researchers built rapport with farmers in a village.

Box 2.3 – Experiencing people's routines of life –a useful way to understand hardships and build rapport

Researchers from a reputed organization went to a village for assessment of prevalent agricultural practices. As part of the process, they had to interact with farmers and agricultural labourers in the month of November, which was the peak time of harvesting crops. The entire community was busy in their farms and not ready to talk to the researchers.

The researchers charted out a strategy to deal with this challenge. They asked the farmers if they could lend a hand in the farm activities. They performed a number of tasks in the farms for two days, including cleaning of storage yards, making bundles of harvested crops and carrying the bundles for storage. The farmers were overwhelmed by the gesture and on the third day, took out several hours to talk to the researchers about their agricultural practices.

Issues of power, however, are at the heart of participatory approaches. Power stems from being in important positions of authority and also when someone is highly knowledgeable, which create barriers in communication. Powerful or knowledgeable facilitators often have a tendency of suggesting solutions to problems of people or underestimating the gravity of an issue. Good facilitation demands restraint on the part of facilitators to bear the attitudes of a learner, through empathic listening and efforts to pool people's own ideas to resolve issues. Judging people's perceptions, ideas or knowledge can totally jeopardise the potential of participatory processes of assessing needs, as indicated in an example from Uganda in Box 2.4.

Box 2.4 – The importance of not judging

In a study on HIV in Uganda, researchers were collecting data on stigma prevalent around the issue. During discussions in a village, some of them started telling people how wrong their perceptions were. Suddenly, locals became very skeptical and stopped responding to their questions.

Later, the researchers found out from a local acquaintance the reasons of people withdrawing from the discussions. Two reasons were identified – a few people thought the researchers do not value their knowledge and some thought that they have come with some hidden agenda.

Power imbalances need to be addressed within the dynamics of a community level process as well. Facilitators need to ensure that a process of exploring needs is not manipulated by vested interests of powerful people within a community. The differential needs of different kinds of people need to be recognized and conditions need to be created for people on the margins to express themselves freely without any fear of backlashes.

Communities should not be viewed as homogeneous entities. Facilitators of processes of Participatory Needs Assessment need to be able to unravel the manifold layers of community needs by engaging with different sections of people and helping them articulate their priorities. While conducting participatory exercises, attempt should be made to listen to diverse voices in the community, particularly those with a high likelihood of exclusion, possibly due to gender norms, social hierarchies, physical disabilities, or any other socio-cultural dynamics in the community. It requires facilitators to put themselves in the situation of people and understand local perceptions rather than jumping to misleading conclusions. Box 2.5 outlines an interesting example from Bangladesh, showing how the arrogance of outsiders and technocrats who believe in technical solutions alone and fail to recognise local peoples' perceptions can lead to misleading conclusions (Ref. PLA Notes (1996), Issue 27, pp.70–73, IIED London).

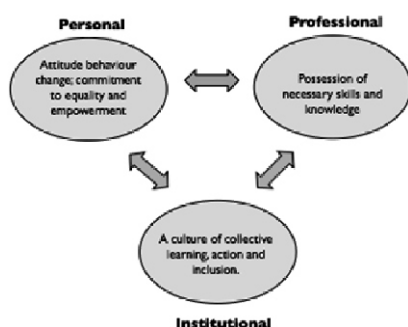
Box 2.5 – 'They don't know that rats are a problem'!

A rural community in Bangladesh listed and ranked their most pressing problems and produced a prioritized list of 44 problems, in which the menace of rats was ranked as low as 42. It is pertinent to mention here that the Directorate of Agriculture Extension has the month of October earmarked as the 'rat-killing month' when villagers are encouraged to kill rats and bring 'tails' to the office for which they are paid. Instead of looking into why the problem of rats was low in the villagers' priority, an officer associated with the Directorate had a different conclusion: "Ah! well, you see, the farmers don't know that rats are a problem!"

At times, processes of needs assessment may generate undue expectations, which needs to be preempted. An important challenge for facilitators of participatory processes is to "tread a careful path between generating sufficient interest for participation and not raising false hopes" (Cornwall, A., & Jewkes, R. 1995).

Meaningful facilitation demands changes at several levels. The most crucial domain of change relates to one's personal construct, requiring inclusive attitudes and behaviour on the part of the facilitator that nurture relationships of trust and encourage people to express themselves. Some ways that have proved effective for sustaining desired 'attitude and behaviour' change include: working in teams of motivated individuals, institutional support to juniors through mentoring by seniors, observing role models and appreciating field realities. A facilitator also needs to be skilled in using appropriate methods of facilitation to this effect, which is another important domain of change. Such capabilities can be acquired through training, self-critical awareness and field experiences, which can enhance a facilitator's professional capabilities of enabling meaningful participation. The most important sphere of change relates to the institutional character of the facilitating entity, which needs to build and thrive on a culture of learning and sharing. Normal bureaucratic tendencies to standardize, centralize and impose top-down targets impede or prevent the open-endedness, flexibility, creativity and diversity of effective participatory processes. Institutionalization of participatory approaches requires creation of spaces and processes to accommodate voices and influences of primary stakeholders. The following diagram highlights the three spheres of changes demanded by meaningful participatory processes.

Key changes demanded by meaningful participatory processes







3

Approaching a Process of Participatory Needs Assessment

③ Approaching a Process of Participatory Needs Assessment – Key Prerequisites

Participatory Needs Assessment is a way of taking cognizance of people's experiences of hardship and aspirations of change, especially concerning those living on the margins, who are vulnerable on account of various disadvantages and are rarely heard of. Any activity that excludes marginalized sections from processes of deliberation about one's life or decision making cannot be called participatory. Letting people have a say in the outcomes of processes having a bearing on their lives can be hugely empowering, by way of enabling people to influence decisions and have their voices heard. In a participatory exercise, the process is as important as the outcomes. The principles and methods of Participatory Learning and Action are extremely relevant in shaping the approach to a Participatory Needs Assessment process.

The PLA Approach

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA, henceforth) is a growing family of approaches, methods, attitudes and behaviors that are helpful in enabling and empowering people to present, share, analyze and enhance their knowledge of their own life and conditions, and to act upon the same for improving their quality of life through systematic planning, monitoring and evaluation. It can be used in both rural and urban settings and is usually guided by a facilitator, who enables people to come together to reflect upon their lives using inclusive methods. It's vitally important for a facilitator to have the right attitudes and behavior towards people. Box 3.1 outlines a selection of core characteristics of a participatory approach to engage with communities in identification of their needs.

Key Principles of the PLA Approach

- Ensuring people's participation in shaping decisions, which affect their lives.
- Valuing local knowledge and experiences.
- Empowering people to make choices.
- Facilitating analysis and learning, using a mixture of visual and verbal techniques.
- Having an inclusive and respectful attitude.

Box 3.1: Core characteristics of a meaningful participatory process

1. **Understands and offsets power imbalances** – A meaningful participatory process recognizes the heterogeneity and power imbalances in a community and strategically acts upon the same to ensure empowering engagements with people placed at the lower rungs of social or economic hierarchies.
2. **Enables analysis by local people** – Creating opportunities for local people to analyse their knowledge of local conditions is a crucial component of a participatory learning process. Such process tend to trigger a critical consciousness of issues faced by people, prompting them to seek their own solutions.

3. **Facilitates continuous and systematic learning** – The process of learning in a participatory process is continuous and cumulative, building on multiple layers of insight generated around a situation of common interest with the aid of suitable participatory methods.
4. **Seeks diverse perspectives** – Recognizing the diversity of life experiences and the varying complexities of situations faced by different people is a cornerstone of meaningful participatory processes. A good facilitator endeavours to look at situations from various perspectives.
5. **Seeks triangulation of learnings** – Insights gathered from participatory interactions with people need to be triangulated from different sections of people concerned with any given situation, especially from the point of view of primary stakeholders, to ensure validation of learnings.
6. **Employs visual mediums** – Visual mediums of recording ideas and analyses serve the purpose of offsetting barriers of literacy and language well, in enabling local level analysis of situations.
7. **Inculcates ownership of local communities** – Meaningful participatory processes are aimed at inculcating ownership of local stakeholders over insights generated from exchange of ideas, in order that learnings can be applied to seek continuous improvements. Contributors of learning in a participatory process must be duly acknowledged for their contributions and allowed primary rights over data outputs.
8. **Leads to change** – The process of exploring situations from the lived experiences of primary stakeholders should create strong convictions for change and stimulate people to take action.

The approach of Participatory Learning and Action has been known by many other names and forms, e.g. Participatory Reflection and Action, or Participatory Rural Appraisal. It draws from many sources, including Activist Participatory Research, Agro-ecosystem Analysis, Applied Anthropology, Farming Systems Research, Rapid Rural Appraisal, shortcomings of questionnaire surveys and biases of development tourism. A good practitioner of PLA needs to have the right attitudes and behaviour, needs to be skilled in using appropriate methods of facilitation and must act pro-actively towards following up the outcomes of a learning process. PLA methodologies are useful for interacting with communities, understanding them and learning from them. It is an intensive and systematic learning experience usually carried out by multi-disciplinary teams, including community members.

At times, being an outsider has its own advantages as well as disadvantages for a facilitator in the process of exploring communities and their diverse issues. On one hand, it brings up the challenge of acceptability and trustworthiness in a process of exploration of local

realities, while also bringing about a potential of detached objectivity on the other hand. Breaking the barriers to acceptance is a crucial challenge to get started; requiring substantial investments of time on the part of a facilitator in building rapport and trust for supporting a process of learning. Effective facilitation demands creation of an enabling environment where people feel encouraged to express their views and experiences, as highlighted in Box 3.2.

Box 3.2 – Ensuring good facilitation

The quality of facilitation is crucial in participatory interactions, particularly while discussing sensitive issues relating to life experiences. Unless a facilitator is able to bring about a safe and enabling environment for a group to express concerns and judgments of situations without fear or restraint, it might be difficult to generate good insights from processes. It is extremely important for a facilitator to:

- o Ensure that diverse ideas and perspectives are accommodated
- o Encourage analysis
- o Debrief key learnings from the process for all concerned; and
- o Ensure that processes are undertaken in an inclusive setting - for instance, at the right time and place. One strategy is to choose a location and a time that is convenient for the most marginalized groups and is beyond the reach of local elites or vested interests. Another is to conduct exercises in small groups to deal with apprehensions of disclosure of identity.

Overcoming entry barriers

Not knowing enough about a community before embarking on a process of exploration can undermine the purpose of learning and land extension workers in a difficult situation. Getting an incisive understanding of the context of a community is a crucial prerequisite of successful facilitation, which could enable one to locate the learnings from a participatory process against the backdrop of complex social and political landscapes. A facilitator needs to invest a good deal of time to understand the sensitivities of a context before embarking upon a journey of learning. Several participatory methods serve this purpose well and have been outlined in this Chapter.

1. Immersion

A few days of field immersion to place oneself in the situation of people, live their lives and learn directly from them is a good and non-threatening way to understand the realities of the daily lives and challenges faced by them. There is no better way to understand a context and concerns than living in the same condition with the people affected and taking notes of

concerns carefully. A period of immersion may range between 2-5 days with visitors staying overnight with hosts, participating in the daily chores and household activities of the host, e.g. taking cattle for grazing, helping in cooking food, going to work site, etc. so as not to cause any burden on the hosts. Immersions are usually very helpful in bringing about greater acceptability within a community and creating opportunities to learn about their issues in a relaxed and spontaneous manner without raising any apprehensions.

1. Pre-visits prior to a PNA process

Visiting a community before initiating a process of needs assessment is often a good strategy of familiarizing oneself with the context-specific demands of a process of participatory needs assessment. It not only helps in getting a broad sense of community lives but also brings about an opportunity to feel the pulse of different sections of people regarding their aspirations, which can be explored in greater detail later using suitable participatory methods.

“You never get a second chance to make the first impression.”

Making an informal visit to a community to gain a general sense of the prevailing situation can help immensely in setting the stage for a more structured exploration of needs along with members of local community. During such a visit, the facilitator can communicate the intent of spending some good time in the community to understand the needs of different sections and seek the consent of local leaders and representatives of various sections to this effect. Pre-visits can also enable a facilitator to discern the sensitivities in a community, e.g. power dynamics, vulnerable identities and inter-group relationships, which could be helpful in working out a suitable methodological design for exploration of needs. Getting to know a cross section of local people beforehand can also help in laying to rest any probable apprehensions about the process or undue expectations. A broad explanation of the intent of exploring the lives of different sections of people should suffice at this point. The facilitator can actively solicit the support of people appearing positive about the intent of assessing needs and seek their guidance.

Caution to be borne in mind while engaging with influential people in a community :

. A facilitator needs to consciously avoid creating perceptions of having any undue leaning towards influential people, in the interest of the credibility of the process. This may have implications on how openly or freely people express themselves.

Transect walks across a village, accompanied by few members of the local community, can be a very helpful method to get an overview of life in a community. While traversing the landscape of a village, a facilitator can meticulously observe variations in different dimensions of life and make notes. A few casual chats with local people on the way can add

to the pool of insights. Conversations could be initiated in an impromptu manner related to people's lives, their daily routines, livelihoods, children, education, etc. At this stage, sensitive questions should be avoided and the tendency to seek too much detail about people's lives should be kept under check. Box 3.3 presents an example of a facilitator's notes related to observations during a transect walk.

Box 3.3 – A sample of notes recorded during a transect walk

Space of exploration	Key social groups inhabiting the area	Common types/ structure of houses	Common sources of water	Particulars of vegetation
From the Western end of the village to the panchayat office	Tibetan settlers	Tiled roof ; brick walls	Private hand-pumps and wells	Plantations of a mix of fruit bearing trees
From the village market to the river-side	Dominant Hindu castes, Christians	Concrete roof; brick walls	Private hand-pumps and wells	Almost no vegetation
Down the main street up to the graveyard	Muslims	Mud houses roofed by earthen tiles.	Wells, 4 public hand-pumps	None, except a line of Acacia shrubs
From the bamboo orchard till the southern end	Scheduled Castes and Muslims	Thatched hutments	2 public hand-pumps	Scattered bamboo plantations

Before wrapping up a pre-visit, a facilitator could inform people about the expected time of the next visit and seek people's views regarding the most suitable time.

Planning the PNA process

For creating optimal value from a session of participatory needs assessment, it needs to be planned well in advance. Good planning of a PNA process can also ensure that the time invested by local people in the processes of identifying their priorities is used judiciously. A facilitator should be able to set directions for a process in ways that lead to realization of meaningful inferences and ideas for moving forward. Such an intent is served well by well-planned programmes for each PNA session, as outlined in Box 3.4.

Box 3.4: Designing a PNA session

Interviews and focus group discussions, at times geared upon participatory methods, are commonly used instruments of data collection during qualitative explorations. Integration of participatory tools with such instruments can make the process interesting and inclusive. It not only imparts greater vibrancy to a group process but generates well-structured outputs from discussions as well. The following are helpful steps for optimizing the usefulness of a process of participatory needs assessment based on application of methods of participatory learning and action.

Being clear of objectives

While identifying methods for applying during PNA sessions with different stakeholders, the first thing to be clear about is the objective of the session. For example, if the intent is to explore variations in accessibility of local resources, a mapping method might be most suitable. The objectives of a discussion can be different for respondents of different profile. Clarity of objectives can help in deciding what tools to use, how, when, where and with whom. Tools and objectives may vary according to the profile of respondent. Based on the choice of objectives of a session, specific topics or issues could be focused upon.

Identifying key questions

To explore situations comprehensively, it may be useful to prepare a list of key questions to guide a discussion. Effective questioning as well as listening enables a facilitator to get a good sense of all relevant aspects of a situation, from the perspective of different sections of people associated with the situation. Open ended questions, including prompts such as 'Why?' 'When?' 'Where?' 'Who?', 'How?', 'For How Long?', etc. can be very helpful in undertaking insightful conversations.

Matching tools with topics

In keeping with the objectives of exploration, a facilitator needs to identify appropriate tools to meet the information-needs related to a situation of interest. One of its biggest strengths of participatory tools is that they can be customized according to the objectives of a discussion to generate relevant insights. Some tools deal with several issues together, while others concentrate on specific issues in depth. Therefore, PLA activities need to be planned. In order to help people analyze and evaluate their situation in a comprehensive manner, several PLA tools may have to be used. Availability of time might be an important factor that needs to be considered before deciding the choice of tools for a process. Box 3.5 lists a selection of participatory tools that are commonly used in participatory processes of exploring situations.

Box 3.5 – Exploratory questions for understanding issues in a community

Variables of exploration	Useful methods
What resources/ amenities/ services are available/ not available within a community? How balanced is the distribution of the same? Do any sections of the community/ parts of village lack access to the same?	Transect walk; Village maps (social/resource) ; Social Analysis Matrix
Who are the most marginalized people in a community? What are the key disadvantages/ difficulties faced by them?	Well-being analysis
Where/ how far do people have to go to meet various key requirements of survival? What hardships are experienced in the process?	Mobility maps
What are the most difficult periods during a year? Does the severity of various problems and coping options change across seasons	Seasonality diagrams
What hardships are experienced by different kinds of people within a community in living their daily lives? What kinds of people find it most difficult to meet their essential requirements?	Daily activity schedules
What are the options available to a community for meeting each necessary requirement, e.g. food, livelihood, education, health care, shelter, sanitation, water etc. What are the relative advantages/ shortfalls of each option?	Preference matrix (need-specific)
How effective is the performance of vital institutions in delivering key services, vis-à-vis community's expectations? What are their specific areas of shortfall?	Cobweb analysis
Which of various institutions in the community need to improve the most, or need to be most responsive to meet community's needs?	Institutional matrix; Venn diagrams
Are the entitlements of any sections of community (e.g. women's compared to men's) less than those of any other section?	Cobweb analysis; Daily activity schedule
Prioritization of needs; articulation of programme needs on basis of identification of specific problems blockading fulfillment of key needs	Card sorting Voting Pair-matrix

Ensuring inclusivity

Meaningful PLA processes demand commitment on the part of facilitators to actively include and empower the most marginalized and vulnerable group. Therefore, it is less about what tool is used but how it is used. Based on the understanding gained from a prior reconnaissance visit to a community, a facilitator can customize relevant tools and make essential preparations to inclusively engage with different sections of people, especially the disadvantaged groups, to probe deeper into their aspirations of development from their own perspective.

Every person regardless of age, socio-economic status, disability, etc. should be treated equally and be extended the opportunity of participating in a process of needs assessment suiting her convenience. As a thumb rule a facilitator must ask the questions as presented in Box 3.6 to ensure an inclusive process.

Team orientation

Facilitators, while working in teams, should be adequately oriented on using tools effectively and having the right attitudes and behavior towards a community. A facilitator's attitudes and behaviors need to be empowering rather than distempering; facilitative rather than dominating; inclusive rather than excluding; flexible rather than rigid. While anyone can be a facilitator of a process of needs assessment, one should have the qualities listed in Table 3.7.

It's always helpful to facilitate participatory processes in a team because of the various demands of a process, requiring facilitation, recording of discussions, ensuring timely availability of materials, observing the dynamics of a process and managing dominators and saboteurs. Therefore, it's always helpful to decide in advance who will do what. Team members may take turns to perform each of these roles and divide tasks to plan PNA session.

Box 3.6– Ensuring inclusivity

- 1 Who are the most marginalized, vulnerable or excluded groups within a community?
- 2 Are the facilitators reaching out or listening to them?
Are there sections that haven't been reached or heard of enough but are affected (or may get affected) by any situation of alarm?
- 4 How sufficient are opportunities created for such groups to participate meaningfully?

Box 3.7– Qualities of a good facilitator

- 1 Trusted by members of community or group being facilitated
- 2 Able to relate with the culture of the group and preferably speak their language
- 3 Willing to learn from people
- 4 Skilled in using participatory tools, active listening, effective questioning and facilitating group processes.
- 5 Able to adapt processes to suit the sensitivities of a situation.

In field situations, things often don't go as per plan. The ability to anticipate difficult situations in advance and to deal with the same should be an added advantage. Making a group contract is a good way of doing it. It typically states what team members agree to do to deal with probable challenging situations arising during a process, e.g.

- One of the team members wishes to leave a day before the team completes field-work;
- A facilitator starts talking too much or asking too many questions without bothering to listen;
- Participants are quiet or inhibited during a discussion;
- A representative of another agency or from within the community misinterprets the purpose of the field-visit;
- One of the team members accuses another of insensitive behaviour;
- Team arrives at the site but members are nervous or unsure about how to start the process, etc.

Getting started

At times, seeking prior appointment from a community helps save the time of mobilizing people for a discussion. A prior understanding of the place and profile of a community also helps in scheduling processes suiting the convenience of people. The rapport built with people during a prior reconnaissance visit or a phase of immersion can be very helpful in getting started, which can help a facilitator immensely to apply the sensitivities required to engage with the unique demands of a situation and enable wide-ranging interactions.

A low-key entry into the village bereft of unnecessary noise or hype is usually helpful in allaying any apprehensions that local people may have about the motive of external facilitators. Sometimes trying to engage with a community without spending sufficient time in establishing a relationship of trust can jeopardise the prospects of a process. Many a times local leaders of a community are very helpful in facilitating outreach towards various sections of people. If facilitators are able to win their trust and respect, this can prove very helpful in reaching out to different sections of people for a process of needs assessment.

For processes of needs assessment, it's important to not impose one's own biases or understanding of a situation. It is always much more insightful when people are encouraged to express their life experiences from their own mouth. Using visuals that allow all participants irrespective of their literacy level, age, culture, etc. to participate equally in analysis of a situation can play a great role in enhancing learnings. PLA processes may also use performing arts (drama,

“Whose Reality Counts? Ours?
Local people's as we think it is? Or
Local people's as they express it?”

role plays etc.) to encourage people to express themselves in whatever way they feel comfortable.

Sometimes, people are scared of sharing their views, which should be respected and they shouldn't be pushed for it. However, a facilitator must be watchful of any probable form of exclusion of any section of people from having a say in discussions and decision making processes on account of their age, sex, sexuality, disability, socio-economic status or any other reason. Often, people having least say in decisions are those who are affected most by a situation of concern, which may include poor people, women, children, orphans, migrants, refugees, etc.

A stepwise approach to facilitate a discussion has been illustrated below in Tables 3.8 and 3.9.

Box 3.8 – Facilitating discussion	Box 3.9 – Facilitating tools
1 Facilitator should introduce herself and explain the purpose of meeting people.	1 Be prepared with questions to be explored during a discussion and tools matching the same.
2 Ask each participant to introduce themselves to the group.	2 Be judicious in choices of tools. Methods that delve into personal issues should be avoided in meetings of large groups and used only during interactions with individuals or during small, homogeneous groups, observing due sensitivities.
3 Explore if the choice of time and place for the discussion is suitable for the participants. Seek their consent to record the discussion, if needed.	3 Tools dealing with sensitive issues are also best used only with peer groups, i.e. constituted of people belonging to same age or sex.
4 Help participants to remain focused on the agreed aims of the session.	4 Create an easy frame or structure (e.g. a comparison table) to accommodate views of participants. Enable them to place their ideas within the proposed structure.
5 Enable all participants to contribute to the discussion, by paying attention to the level of participation of different people.	5 Think of some easy questions to initiate discussions on the theme of focus and help participants to flow with their expressions.

6	Summarize key learnings from the discussion for people to validate the same and know what has been captured.	6	Make tools look unthreatening by using local materials and encouraging people to work in their own ways.
7	Thank participants for their time and contributions and if required, agree on a time and place for follow-up discussion.	7	Use tools creatively and adapt them to suit the needs of the process.

No matter how confident and skilled a facilitator may feel about using PLA tools, getting desired outcomes from a PNA exercise would be a challenge without the ability of empathic listening and effective questioning. Empathetic listening is crucial to build the desired connect with individuals or groups being interacted with. It's helpful in improving mutual understanding and trust, which is the key to any community process. Such listening would preempt the chances of misinterpreting any views or ideas of the people. It helps immensely to acknowledge participants, as and when required, wear positive facial expressions, convey the right body language, and, most importantly, be 'non-judgmental' in the course of a conversation, which goes a long way in enhancing the interest, trust and confidence of participants during a process of listening.

Boxes 3.10 and 3.11 present some tips for active listening and effective questioning.

Box 3.10 – Active Listening		Box 3.11 – Effective questioning	
Notes for facilitators		Notes for facilitators	
1	Have the right body language to convey keenness to listen, e.g. nodding head, maintaining eye contact, maintaining respectful facial expressions that show interest, etc.	1	Ask open ended questions, for instance, employing the six key 'helpers' i.e. why, what, when, where, who and how, among others.
2	Ensure that the sitting arrangements are comfortable for the participants, and do not imply a hierarchy or equal positions of power.	2	Ask probing questions to dig deep into views expressed by people.
3	Do not interrupt a speaker in the process of communication. Try to listen as much as possible, without bombarding too many questions.	3	Repeat questions, if required, to ensure that the participant/s have understood it well. Encourage more and more participants to share their views.

4	Summarize or rephrase learnings from the process of listening from time to time, to ensure correct understanding of what has been expressed.	4	Include questions about personal points of view, e.g. 'how do you feel about it?', which can bring to the fore their analysis of a viewpoint.
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A brief summary of a few relevant tools is presented in this section, which are usually helpful for exploring different dimensions of the lives of people. Some other tools have been illustrated in the following chapters of this guidebook.

Mapping

Mapping is a popular approach to disaggregate a community, identify issues relating to availability and distribution of vital resources, amenities and services, and to identify pockets of population excluded from access to the same. Maps can be made on grounds by communities themselves, and the facilitator's main role should be to create enabling conditions, e.g. choosing an appropriate venue, arranging necessary materials, explaining the purpose of an exercise, controlling dominators, encouraging the silent people to participate, seeking clarifications, synthesizing the outcomes etc.

In the context of needs assessments, maps are useful tools to purposively identify households suffering different kinds of disadvantages, e.g. households with members migrating to cities in search of livelihood, heavily indebted households, those affected by disasters, women-headed households, families with out-of-school children. etc. It's a non-threatening way to start a discussion and gives opportunity to gradually proceed towards more sensitive issues.

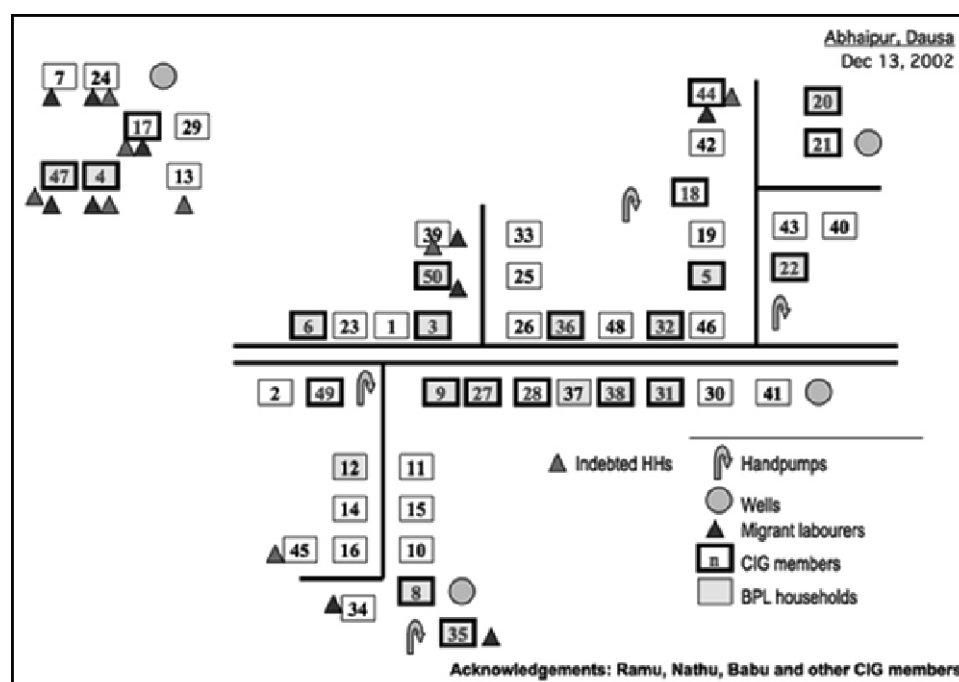
Mapping on ground offers several advantages. Many people can participate if a map is prepared on ground due to availability of more space. Mistakes can be corrected easily, and the control is not limited in few hands. Use of local materials can make it easier for illiterate people to participate in the processes. However, maps made on ground are not permanent, and can be spoiled by storms or movement of animals.

They need to be transferred on to paper, for preserving and future-uses. After transferring the maps on to paper, one needs to mention the name of the place and its location, the date, names of participants and facilitators, and must explain the symbols used and the directions shown.

Maps can be of various kinds, depending upon the purpose of making them. For instance, a social map shows all the households of a community, to identify the ones affected by problems and living in more difficult situations. A natural resource map shows all the natural resources located in a village, e.g. forests, agricultural fields, water bodies, grazing lands etc. to explore patterns of ownership, access, control and management of the same.

Mapping can be initiated in an informal, spontaneous way, by referring to any prominent landmark of the village and showing other features with reference to the same. A facilitator needs to encourage people to show different parts and features of a locality using appropriate symbols, in a step-by-step manner. Features depicted on a map could include key community resources, households of different social groups, household bearing specific features, e.g. women-headed households, various poverty indicators, etc. The diagram in Box 3.12 presents a tidily reproduced image of a map originally produced on the ground.

Box 3.12 – Example of a Social Map



Key uses of a social map are the following:

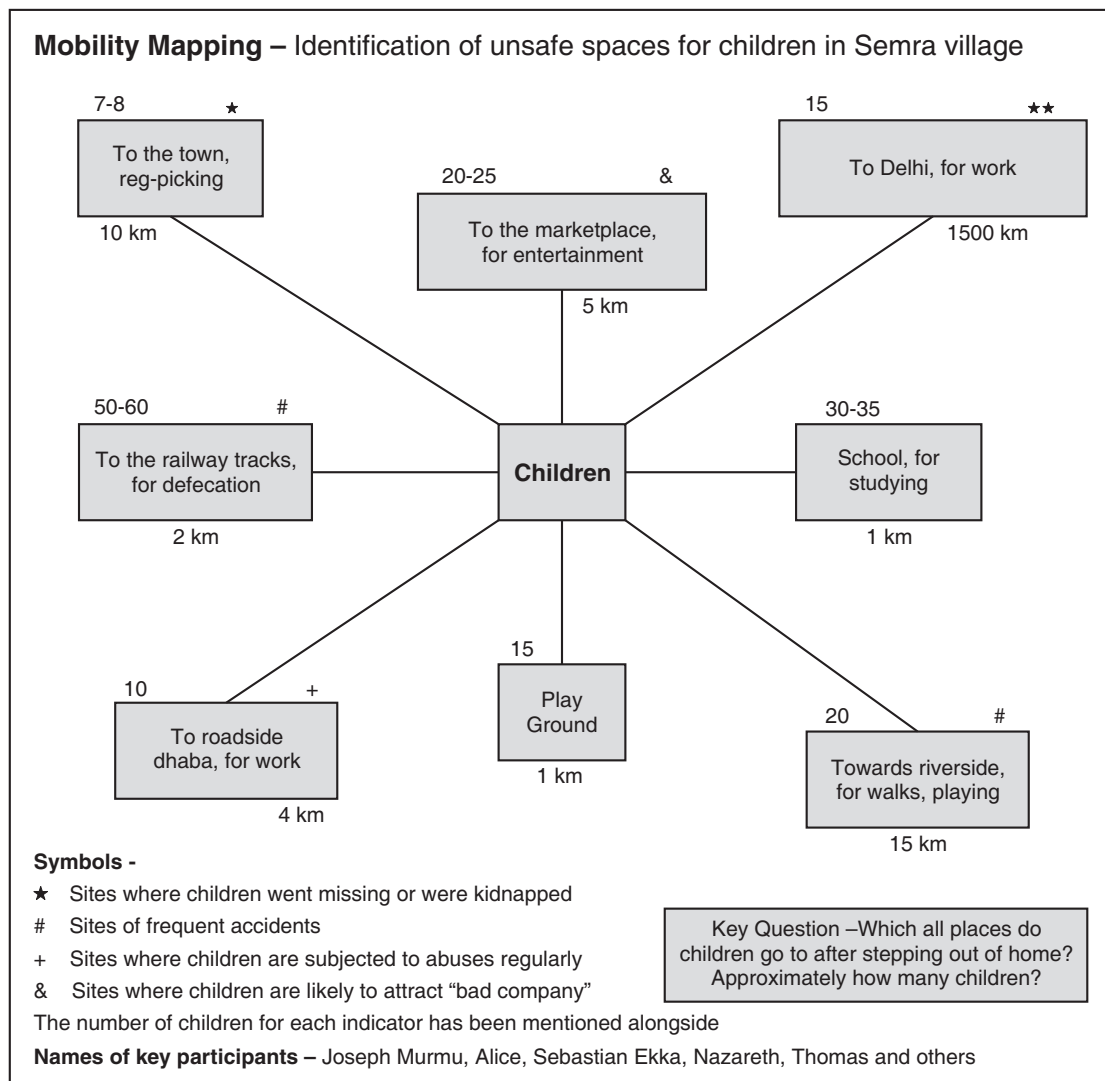
1. Identifying households of interest (e.g. households that should be covered by a particular scheme, or those affected by any issue of concern)
2. Identifying issues relating to distribution of key resources, facilities and institutions in a community, and for identifying excluded sections
3. Locating points of strategic importance (e.g. the most appropriate place to put up a medical camp)
4. For examining associations amongst key variables
5. For assessing changes over time, by comparing maps produced on different dates

Mobility maps

A mobility map (ref. Box 3.13) is used primarily to find out where and how far do people have to go to fulfill various vital requirements and to access basic services. Identification of hardships faced in fulfilling various vital requirements can help in identifying important needs.

Comparing the changes in the mobility of any section of community over time can indicate improvement/deterioration in the conditions of life. For instance, the women in a community might have to walk less to reach a water point, due to hand-pumps installed by a project.

Box 3.13 – Example of a mobility map




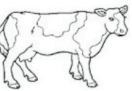


Matrix Scoring

Matrix Scoring can be a useful method for assessing the quality of choices available to people and their preferences. For instance, choices available for meeting water needs could include wells, ponds, rivers and other water bodies, which could be evaluated in relative terms by assigning scores (say, on a scale of ten) against multiple criteria, e.g. availability round the year, cleanliness, distance etc. It can be used for many purposes, e.g. for comparing livelihood options, diseases, different work-types, project activities or service providers, inter alia.

In the wake of any difference of opinion while according scores to various choices under evaluation, it is important not to force a consensus on the participants. The facilitator should probe into the reasons behind disagreements, and should properly record the same. Box 3.14 presents an example of an output of a Matrix Scoring exercise.

Box 3.14 – Example of an output of Matrix Scoring exercise

Analysis of livelihood options by the community of Poole village, Kenya

	Degree of risk	Skills required	Market prospects	Labour intensity	Acceptability	Water required	Returns
 Bee Keeping	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●
 Livestock Keeping	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●●
 Poultry Keeping	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●●
 Charcoal Burning	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●	●	●●	●●●

Steps for facilitating a Matrix Scoring exercise

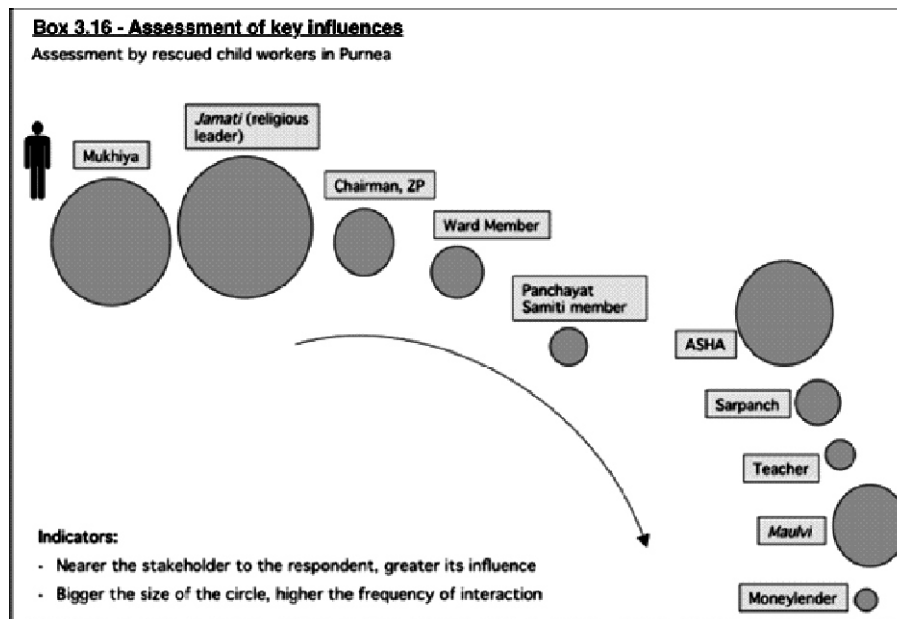
- Discuss the pattern emerging from the scores.

Paired-comparison Matrix method can be used to undertake prioritization of needs in a systematic manner. Needs identified from various processes could be listed on both axes of a matrix in the same order, and each box of the matrix, corresponding to a pair of needs could be used to indicate the preferred need of the people out of the two alternatives (ref. Box 3.15). In case of a difference of opinion, each box could carry votes in favour as well as against any of the two options, and in the end, the alternative with the maximum number of votes could be identified to the most important need.



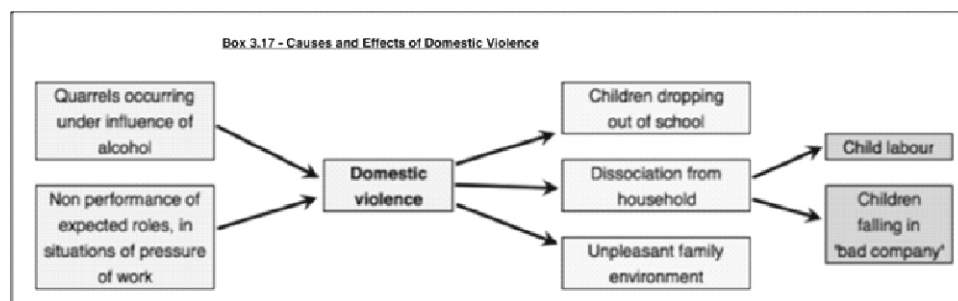
Venn Diagrams

Venn Diagramming method could be used to rate institutions in relative terms vis-à-vis indicators like effectiveness, capacity, sensitivity towards users etc. Each institution could be depicted on a separate card, kept at an appropriate distance from a point of reference in such a way that the distance indicated performance vis-à-vis any specific indicator, and additional indicators could be incorporated through various subsequent steps, e.g. placing stones of different sizes beside different cards to indicate performance with regard to the additional indicator (ref. Box 3.16).



Cause-effect Diagram

Cause-effect diagrams (ref. Box 3.17) can be used to know the causes and effects (as well as underlying and root causes) of any issue of concern, or to know the inter-relations / linkages between various issues or various component of a system. This method can be effectively used for identification of appropriate interventions for any issue and its key causes.



Steps of facilitating a Cause-Effect Analysis

- Start with an issue of common concern, for example, domestic violence. Depict the issue on a piece of card and place on the floor.
- Encourage participants to discuss the immediate causes of the problem.
- For each immediate causes encourage participants to identify underlying causes as well. Use arrows to show how one issue leads to another.
- Encourage participants to also identify immediate effects of the issue, which can be shown by arrows to be stemming out of the core issue of concern.
- Follow the same process for each issues included in the analysis and identify causes and effects of the same.
- Ask participants what could be done to address key causes of the issue of concern and to lessen its adverse effects.

The following Chapters contain examples of several other participatory methods, presented in contexts of discussions related to other challenges and imperatives of participatory needs assessment.







4

Exploring Diversity of Needs Within a Tibetan Settlement



4

Exploring Diversity of Needs within a Tibetan Settlement

Communities are not monoliths. Any collective of people has many visible and invisible layers of variations within its composition, which could be on the lines of ethnicity, gender, age, occupational choices, abilities or physical attributes, among others. Such attributes often have a bearing on one's quality of life and the development needs of people within a community tend to vary accordingly.

Identities are layered phenomena; for instance, a person belonging to a specific social group is also a bearer of several other identities, defined in terms of her location, religion, caste, sexual orientation, life choices, etc. Some of these identities are assumed by choice, while some others are inherited from one's social, political or economic circumstances. A community that appears to be homogeneous at surface level may include many diverse profiles of people and the differences are visible only when looked out for. Therefore, it is important to recognize that societies, almost as a rule, are unequal and that social, economic, political or cultural factors impact different sections of people differently.

Therefore, while conducting a participatory needs assessment it is crucial to recognize the likelihood of dissimilar entitlements and realities of different sections of a community, some of who have very little say in decisions that have a bearing on their lives. In most cases, such individuals or groups constitute the marginalized sections of a society, including women, children, elderly people or people with disabilities, among others. Therefore, a facilitator needs to be pro-actively inclusive of divergent viewpoints and experiences of identifies operating on the fringes of a community. There have been many instances of failure of well-meaning community interventions on account of lack of engagement with hard-to-reach groups, as illustrated in Box 4.1.

Box 4.1 – Blind spots of community participation

After several rounds of discussions aided by high-quality facilitation skills, a team of development practitioners managed to convince people in a village to send their children to school. A local organization also expressed willingness to extend support to the community to this effect, if required. Through a participatory discussion which involved parents from all social groups in the village, the facilitator tried to find out the reasons for a large number of out-of-school children in the community. It emerged from discussions that the distance to school was about 6 km and availability of local transportation was poor, which was a reason why many children could not go to school. The local organization offered to make arrangements in this direction so that children could safely go to school.

The organization decided to invest in buying a small vehicle, which could shuttle between the school and habitations in the area. They also identified a driver from the local community.

Happy with the arrangement, many families showed readiness to send children to school. Accordingly, a vehicle was arranged and handed over to the community in a formal community meeting and the local driver was explained his duties.

After about a month, a community meeting was conducted to take stock of the development. While many families confirmed sending their children to school, the marginalized section of people brought up a new issue: that their children refuse to attend school despite parents encouraging them. They explained their helplessness, as children were not showing any interest to attend school despite being pushed by their parents. This was unexpected and completely baffled everyone.

What went wrong?

This was the first question that popped in the minds of facilitators from the local organization. They decided to have a discussion with children the next day to explore reasons behind their lack of interest to attend school. The following day, children were mobilized for a discussion. It took the facilitators a lot of effort to get the children to open up. They played games and shared their own memories of attending school. After some time, one of the children remarked: 'we are not treated well in the school because of who we are. They humiliate us and don't show any interest in teaching us. Even if we go to school, we'll not be able to study in that kind of an environment!'

The story in Box 4.1 suggests that it may not be enough to merely go by a dominant democratic preference within a community, but it is crucial to pro-actively engage with groups that are likely to be most significantly impacted by any intervention, especially those belonging to exclusion-prone sections. In the story, children were not involved in any of the discussions at the stage of conceptualization of the intervention and therefore, despite huge investments in facilitating their access to school, the result didn't turn out to be as satisfactory as envisaged, as the intervention failed to grasp the cause of exclusion of children from marginalized background. Since children from disadvantaged backgrounds were not consulted, the facilitators failed to get an idea of their different needs.

Assessing different needs of key target population

An intervention would be meaningful only if it holds relevance for different strata of a target population. For this, not only the demographic diversity of a place should be taken into account, but various other factors as well, e.g. power dynamics, vulnerabilities, social norms, cultural taboos, circumstantial compulsions etc. especially concerning neediest sections of a society. Identifying their unique needs is a crucial obligation of processes of participatory needs assessment, and processes of participatory needs assessment need to accommodate as much diversity of life experiences as possible. Box 4.2 illustrates different forms of diversity within a community, that need to be pro-actively accommodated in any process of assessing needs.

Box 4.2 – An account of diversities within a community



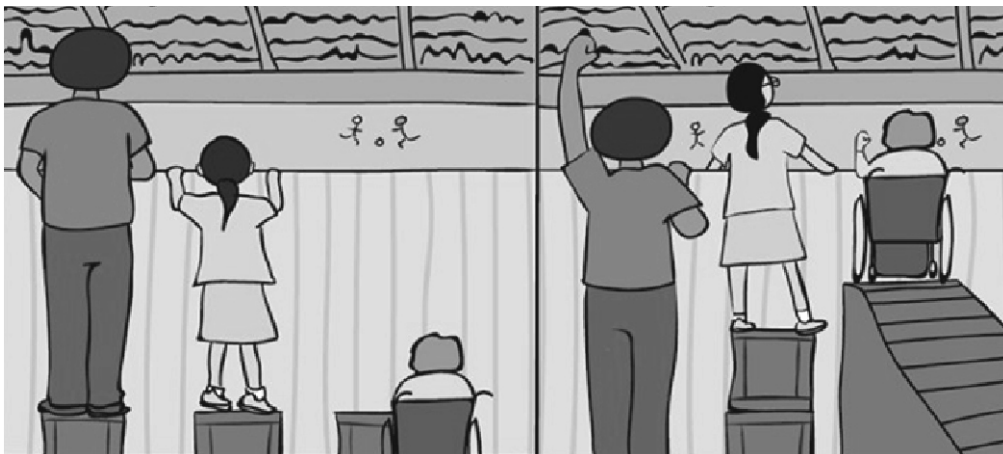
Demographic diversity, manifest in terms of:

Social status
Gender
Age
Ethnicity
Culture
Disability
Sexual orientation
Religion
Status of domicile

The illustration on the left captures different dimensions of demographic diversity that need to be understood and accommodated by a facilitator in processes of assessing needs of a community. Each segment of population illustrated in the diagram has unique needs specific to the lives they live, which need to be taken into account in implementation of development programmes and services. For example, every child of 0-6 years of age-group is entitled to receive free vaccinations in India irrespective of economic profile. A recognition of prevalent inequalities in a society is crucial to plan effective outreach vis-à-vis disadvantaged population groups in order that their access to services, entitlements and crucial resources are not jeopardized.

Recognizing prevailing inequalities also allows examination of the adequacy and accessibility of available services and resources from the perspective of the neediest sections of a community. A child of an economically disadvantaged family from a marginalized section of society not having access to quality services would need health care services the most than children in better off sections, whose guardians might be able to access the required services through other means. The diagram in Box 4.3 illustrates the unequal situations of different kinds of people, who need different degrees of support to access their choices in an equal manner.

Box 4.3 – Differential responses to different degrees of disadvantage



The diagram in Box 4.3 explains the difference between approaches of equality and equity, based on a recognition of diversity of needs. In the first panel, all the three people are treated 'equally', by being provided with boxes of similar height to watch a game of sports. However, this treatment fails to recognize the different needs of the relatively younger girl child and the child with disability, who are unable to watch the game. The treatment depicted in the second panel recognizes these differences and makes a 'equitable' arrangement by making unequal arrangements so that all three can avail of the opportunity of watching the game. It's important to recognize that the approach of equality is rational only when everyone is at the same level of advantage and needs the same quantum of support.

Therefore, while assessing needs and planning interventions, differences among various sections of communities need to be recognized. Building on the knowledge that already exists in communities about unequal situations can result in better outcomes as well as enhance the credibility of interventions among communities.

Key dimensions of exploration in processes of needs assessment

Every individual has unique needs and so have groups with dissimilar characteristics. For assessment of community needs, the focus should more be on processes of reaching out to groups of people having largely similar characteristics, given the challenges of reaching out to each and every individual. The section below presents different dimensions of exploration and explains how a common need might have different meanings and implications for people of different sections, because of varying social, economic or political factors. It's important to understand that these dimensions are not mutually exclusive but very much interdependent and intertwined.

1. The gender dimension

The needs of men and women can be same or different. Even if the needs are same, their importance and the implications of realizing them could be different for men and women because of varying physical, societal, religious or political factors facing them, manifest in terms of different gender roles played by them. The same factors are responsible for causing differences in accessibility of services and service-seeking behaviors of men and women. Therefore, a facilitator must take into account various factors that determine the uptake of services delivered to people.

Additionally, diversity can be explored within a group of women as well. The relevance of any intervention and its accessibility can vary across different social groups or age-groups. For example, the health needs of women in the early phase of reproductive age would be different than the health needs of relatively older women in the later phase of reproductive age. Likewise, the needs of women from marginalized sections would be different from the needs of women from better off sections of the community, and so on. The illustration in Box 4.4 presents the diversity of needs of women of different profile and how economic, marital, physical, social, natural or political factors have a bearing on their differential needs. Each

additional layer of disadvantage facing a woman augments her vulnerability and explains why in any participatory process it is important to include the voices of people having least or no say in any decision making process.

Box 4.4 – Differential vulnerabilities among women

2. Economic dimension

Varying economic strengths of different sections of people often determine their ability to avail opportunities of development. The needs of families deprived of land, dependent on alms or migrating out to earn a livelihood would be very different than those having access to stable local opportunities of employment. Many a times, despite having similar needs, the challenge of fulfilling the same might be different for different social groups because of prevailing socio-economic and structural inequalities. It is of utmost importance for a facilitator of participatory processes to understand needs from the perspective of people belonging to varying economic profile. Box 4.5 summarizes a classic case of exclusion of economically disadvantaged families from a scheme of toilet construction on account of their inability to afford their share of the unit cost.



Box 4.5 – Exclusion of economically deprived families from benefits of a scheme

Several habitations of a village lacked in sanitation facilities and it was women who suffered the most due to the absence of toilets. People had no option but to use open spaces in their neighborhood, making the practice of open defecation common in the area, which put them at risk of various diseases. Despite the government promoting several schemes for construction of household toilets, the uptake of the same was limited among poor families because 10% of the cost of construction needed to be borne by families desirous of availing benefit of the schemes.

Families living in hand to mouth situation in the village were already indebted, and were unable to bear the 10% contribution. They were also suffering from exploitation at the hands of village leaders who were doubling up as moneylenders and also as agents of the scheme. Most families in the village were woman-headed in the absence of their migrant husbands.

They lacked awareness regarding the modalities of availing of benefits of the schemes. They were overly burdened with various works and had no savings to be able to avail benefits of the scheme.

As a result, only those able to bear the 10% cost of constructing toilet and bribe local leaders could avail of the scheme. Despite having a scheme available to address an important need, the practice of open defecation didn't change in the village.

3. Seasonality dimension

Seasonality is a key feature of livelihoods of rural households as well as phases of hardship faced by them. The seasonality dimension refers to cyclic variations in conditions facing various dimensions of life. One such pattern of variation can be seen vis-à-vis availability of job opportunities. Often families not having stable opportunities of employment in the local area have to migrate in search of jobs. Therefore, the needs of families with members having stable jobs and families compelled to migrate cannot be same. Women and children have to often bear the additional burden of managing a household in the absence of men for prolonged phases of time; requiring their unique needs to be taken into account from their own perspective.

Exploring relationships between different variables of change i.e. relationship between income levels and changes in patterns of expenditure, crimes, trafficking, migration, etc. can also contribute to one's understanding of the diverse needs of different sections. Also, exploring seasonal patterns of well-being and how people struggle to make both ends meet is helpful to understand their needs. For instance, people living in low-lying areas of a village are often more prone to water logging during rainy season, which may affect their accessibility to important resources during that period of time. Therefore, their priorities might be different from the rest of the community living in the same location.

Box 4.6 illustrates the significance of responsive interventions, in order that variations in local conditions of life are incorporated in the design of interventions.

Box 4.6 – The need for interventions to be cognizant of variations in local conditions

Recognizing the flaws in implementation of several schemes meant to benefit disadvantaged families and their impact on lives, an organization launched a new programme for community empowerment, which intended to form committees at community level in the identified areas of intervention. These community level committees were envisaged to monitor the implementation of various schemes besides identifying families that needed to be covered under suitable schemes and report the same to the concerned organization.

The organization systematically selected a few such locations and also formed committees, which had representation of men from all sections of the community. All required processes were done and members were explained their responsibilities. These committees were supposed to conduct meeting once every month. The organization ensured regularity of meetings and also extended support to committee members in discharge of their role of effective monitoring of the implementation of schemes. After three months, the committees produced their first report, which highlighted the discriminatory behaviour of some local service providers and instances of corruption.

After a few months, the organization came to know of increasing irregularity in conduct of meetings, caused by non-availability of many members. On making a follow up visit to know the reasons, it realized that most members of the committee were migrants to urban areas. Whenever opportunities of livelihood were not available in the local area, they used to migrate for a few months to explore job opportunities in the cities. In the absence of a good number of members, the committee failed to generate enough insights about the reach of interventions vis-à-vis different sections of community. This caused a suspension of activities of the committee in the villages of intervention.

In this case, the important fact that women did not migrate and stayed back to take care of farm activities of the household was ignored. Had this reality been taken into consideration and had women been involved in the committees as well, the initiatives of the committees would not have been interrupted in the absence of men.

4. Power dimension

Power is generally defined as the ability to influence situations or people, often by means of control over important resources. Usually, power is seen as a synonym of authority but there is a difference between the two. Power refers to the capacity to influence others. Authority, on the other hand, is the source of power. Authority is legitimate and it confers legitimacy to power. Power itself need not be legitimate.

In the context of needs assessment, recognizing the manifestations of power dynamics on the choices and behaviors of people can help one to understand the compulsions driving one's strategies of survival and to formulate an effective plan to deal with power imbalances.

Knowledge, resources, decision-making opportunities and networks can be important sources of power and facilitator can analyze the power dynamics of a community by exploring all such sources of power. Families deprived of land, lacking proximity to influential people, unaware of government schemes, lacking access to or control over resources, excluded from opportunities of decision making or in positions of vulnerability and exploitation, etc. are likely to be powerless and should be pro-actively reached out to in a process of needs assessment.

Additionally, gender dynamics within family and communities define relationships and interactions between males and females and are guided by socio-cultural ideas about gender and the power relationships between males and females. These need to be taken into account in processes of assessing needs or designing interventions. Men are often the head of a household because they own property and often women and children are also treated as properties. Traditionally, domestic violence against women is often not taken as seriously as it should be; instead, violence is often wrongly justified by being associated with alcohol, stress, women's obligations, etc. It's a result of a complex interplay of psychological and social factors, which creates an imbalance of power between the sexes, often resulting in violence or sexual abuse against women.

Therefore, in the context of any intervention aimed at benefitting disadvantaged sections of society, power dynamics needs to be taken into account to plan interventions in the best interest of disadvantaged groups.

Reaching out to people from diverse backgrounds is relatively easy; but understanding their needs and lives requires a high level of empathy. Communities have different cultures, opportunities and challenges that need different responses. Therefore, being able to enable people to share their experiences and perspectives is key to understanding their diverse needs. A facilitator must explore factors embedded in gender, economic, seasonal and power differentials to understand the varying needs of different sections of community. Men, women, children, person with disability, marginalized communities, etc. all have their unique needs and their voices needs to be accommodated without any dilution in processes of assessment of needs.





5

Understanding Temporal Variations

In Needs and Opportunities



5

Understanding Temporal Variations in Needs and Opportunities

Communities adapt to situations of hardship in many different ways for their survival, which often lead to changes in their living environment as well as life choices. Sustainable development demands that changes do not have a regressive footprint. Changes can have many dimensions – social, cultural as well as economic, and is a continuous process affected by a number of factors that impact on people's well being. For a thorough assessment of needs of a community, one needs to examine the choices and life experiences of people over different phases of time, in order to understand the cyclic or seasonal patterns of occurrence of certain conditions, besides factors contributing to the same.

Several tools of Participatory Learning and Action serve the purpose of exploring temporal dimensions of community needs well. This Chapter of the Guidebook outlines a selection of participatory methods that are helpful in exploring variations in needs of people across different phases of time.

Time Line

Time Line refers to chronologically sequenced compilations of important events or milestones from the history of any community or process. In the context of needs assessment, it can generate helpful insights regarding the background of any potential intervention, e.g. initiatives of local community to resolve any issue on their own, or their experience of availing an entitlement, in order that difficult stages of their initiative could be identified for a process reform.

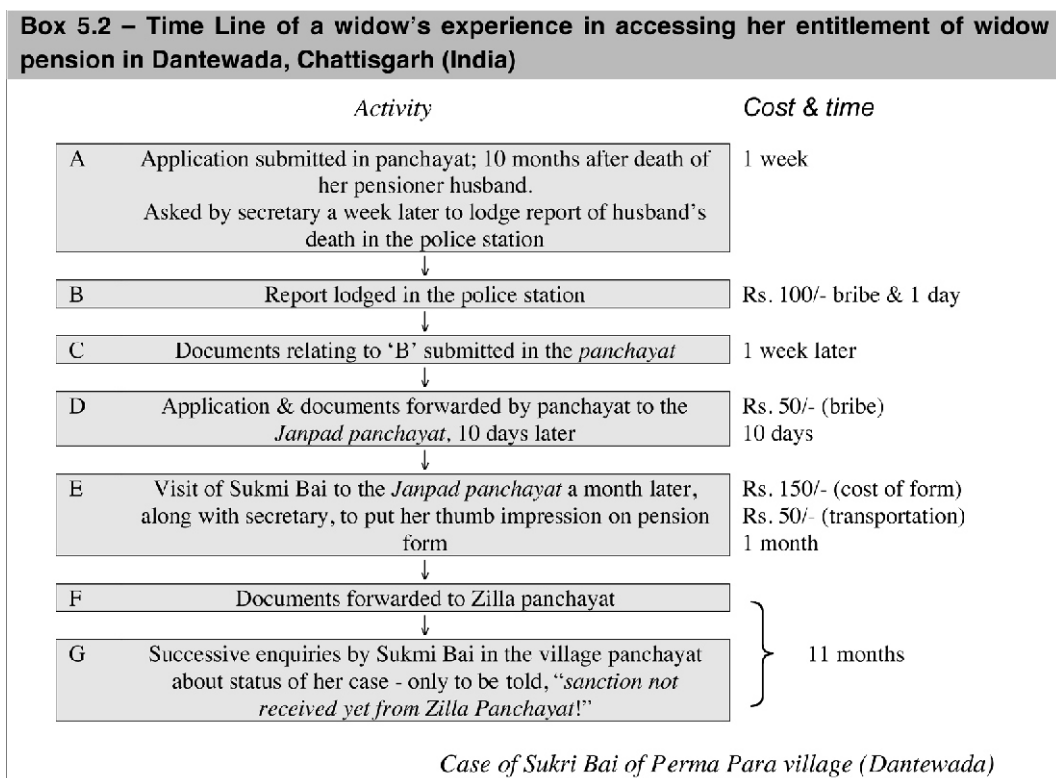
The diagram in Box 5.1 brings together recollections of a group of elderly people in one of the villages of India, regarding the build-up of different kinds of infrastructure and services in their village, alongside the time of each event.

Box 5.1 – Time Line of build-up of key services and infrastructure in Simra village of Bihar (India)

1935	A primary school was started by a religious trust.
1954	The school got recognition from the government and was upgraded to a middle school.
1972	The village got electricity. For the first time, a transformer was installed in the village.
1979	A Primary Health Sub-Centre was set up in the local panchayat.
1985	Demonstration staged by villagers outside the block office to demand up-gradation of the middle school to a high school.

1997	Floods washed away a culvert connecting the village with the main road. Restored five months later. A makeshift bamboo bridge was constructed by the villagers during the phase of waterlogging.
2006	Employment Guarantee Programme launched in the village. 35 villagers worked at the local work-site on the first day.
2010	Five new teachers appointed to the local elementary school.

Box 5.2 presents an example of the experience of an old lady in availing of widow pensions in India, by spelling out various steps of the process and her experience related to each step.



Historical Transect

The method of Historical Transect enables an assessment of trends of change in variables of interest, in order that timely decisions can be made to arrest alarming trends that point at aggravation of situations of concern, or to maintain favourable trends. The method has been known by various names, e.g. Trend Analysis, Before and Now Analysis, etc.

The following are some of the typical applications of Historical transects:

- To identify changes in practices and preferences of local people, related to seed use, cropping pattern, livestock choices, etc.
- To track the impacts of successive disasters on the lives of people
- To understand conditions of living in the past.
- To identify patterns of occurrence of events such as disasters or availability of natural resources, for envisioning future situations.

Box 5.3 outlines key steps for facilitating a Historical Transect exercise with groups of people.

Box 5.3 – Key steps for facilitating a Historical Transect exercise

- Initiate an exploratory discussion about changes in conditions of life, and identify variables that have witnessed change, or those for which changes need to be explored.
- Agree on a time frame for exploring change, e.g. a decade or two, or between successive generations.
- Identify well-spaced landmarks of time that participants of the process can easily relate with (e.g. Indo-China war, to represent the time of early sixties; or the period of emergency, to represent late seventies);
- Explore how easy or difficult were times against each variable of interest, for each landmark of time, one by one. For convenience, variables of change could be plotted on one axis of a tabular arrangement, and landmarks of time on another axis, as illustrated below :

Variables of change ↓	Landmarks of line →			
	1	2	3	4
A	♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦	♦♦♦	♦♦ ♦♦
B	♦	♦♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦
C	x-20% y-8%	x-15% y-45% z-40%	x-10% y-35% z-5%	x-25% y-75%

- To indicate how favourable the situation was across various phases of time against each variable of change, scores could assigned by participants on a user-friendly scale, e.g. ten, where a higher score could mean a more favourable scenario. If variables of change are descriptive in nature, e.g. cropping pattern, key elements of the pattern could be spelt out, as shown in Row C above.

- In case there are disagreements within the group of participants regarding their rating, the facilitator should seek out reasons for different positions and record the same, instead of imposing consensus.

Historical Transect provides an understanding of typical impacts that a community may face in the wake of different kinds of situations, in order that adverse impacts could be mitigated. It provides a good view of changes in the resilience of a community. Box 5.4 presents an example of Historical Transect tracing changing in the lives of women on indicators of empowerment.

Box 5.4 – A Historical Transect tracing changes in the lives of women

Indicators	Situation then	Score	Situation now	Score
Women's participation in economic activities	It wasn't common for women to work for a livelihood at all.	••	Over two-thirds of all women in the community are working.	••• •• •••
Marriage of women at the right age	Girls used to be married off before onset of puberty.	•	It is rare for a woman to be married before turning an adult.	••• ••• •••
Enrolment of girls in schools	Only a handful of children were enrolled in school, mostly boys.	•	Almost every child of the community is in school.	••• •••• •••
Rationality of family size	The average size of a family was large, with each couple having at least 4-5 children.	•	Family planning practices have become popular. Couples opt for birth control after 1 or 2 children.	••• •••
Women's mobility	Women's mobility was restricted to her household, and at best, confined to her neighbourhood.	••	Women travel far and wide in pursuit of livelihoods and hardly face any restriction.	••• •• •••

Seasonal Calendar

Situations do not remain the same. In the process of a needs' assessment exercise, it is important to identify the most difficult periods in the life of a community, so that greater efforts can be made to address their needs of survival. Seasonal calendars can be used to understand changes in the experiences of life across different months/seasons, and to identify the most difficult periods. For instance, income and workload of agricultural workers do not remain constant round the year, and vary from month to month. A seasonal calendar can clearly indicate months of high vulnerability, maybe due to limited food availability, low income and high expenditure. The diagram in Box 5.5 presents an example of a Seasonal Calendar from Chhattisgarh state of India, exploring variations in livelihood conditions.

Box 5.5 – Seasonal Calendar of Tendudand village in Sarguja (Chhattisgarh, India) indicating critical dependence on forest produces during lean period (early summer)												
Months →	Ashad	Sawan	Bhado	Kawar	Kartik	Aghan	Poos	Magh	Phagun	Chait	Baisakh	Jeth
Livelihood parameters ↓	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Wage labour availability	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦	♦	♦♦♦				
Stock of harvested food-grains			♦♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦	♦♦ ♦♦	♦	♦				
Prevalence of ailments	♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦♦	♦	♦♦							♦♦	♦♦
Availability of forest produces	♦								♦♦♦	♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦
Household income	♦			♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦			♦♦	♦♦♦	♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦♦
Household expenses	♦♦♦ ♦♦♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦♦	♦	♦			♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦		♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦
Dependence on credit	♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦♦	♦♦	♦♦♦			♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦	♦	♦♦♦ ♦♦	♦
Participants: Devnath, Kunjlal, Chatur, Vasant, Salbina, Sukro etc. The scores are on a scale of ten												

Seasonal Calendars are very helpful in enabling assessment of livelihood choices in a community, a crucial domain for understanding needs. The choices of livelihood made by the community has a direct bearing on the quality of their life and several other factors.

These choices vary overtime depending on availability and various other factors such as variations in flow of income, skills requirement, availability of raw materials etc. A seasonal calendar is a useful tool to understand the suitability of various livelihood opportunities at different points of time during a period.

For purposes of livelihood assessment, Seasonal Calendars enable the following:

- Mapping of various livelihood choices available for a community and identification of primary and secondary livelihood activities over different months or phases of a year;
- Identification of temporal variations in availability of different livelihoods during a year (or any period of time).
- Identification of variations in relevant aspects related to available livelihoods, e.g. demand and supply, income, number of days of availability, etc..

Box 5.6 presents an output of a Matrix Scoring exercise focusing on livelihoods, capturing also the seasonal dimension of availability in one of the columns.

Box 5.6 – Matrix Scoring of livelihood options

Semra Village, Balan GP, Khunti / Dec. 22, 2015

	Availability (no. of days in a year)	Months of availability	Contribution to annual income	Competition	Risks
Own cultivation	••••• ••••	Jul – Aug; Nov	••••• ••••	••••• ••••	••••• ••••
Agricultural labour	••• •••	Jun – Sept; Nov – Dec	••• •••	••• •••	••• •••
Daily wage labour	••• ••	Oct – Jan	••• ••	••• ••	••• ••
Construction works in cities	•• ••	Round the year	•• ••	•• ••	•• ••
Plying rickshaws	••• ••	Round the year	••• ••	••• ••	••• ••
Headloading work	•• ••	Round the year	••	••	••
Selling vegetables	••• ••	Round the year	••• ••	••• ••	••• ••
Rag picking	••	Round the year	••	••	••

Names of key participants – Joseph Murmu, Alice, Sebastian Ekka, Nazareth, Thomas and others

Steps to facilitate a livelihood seasonality diagram

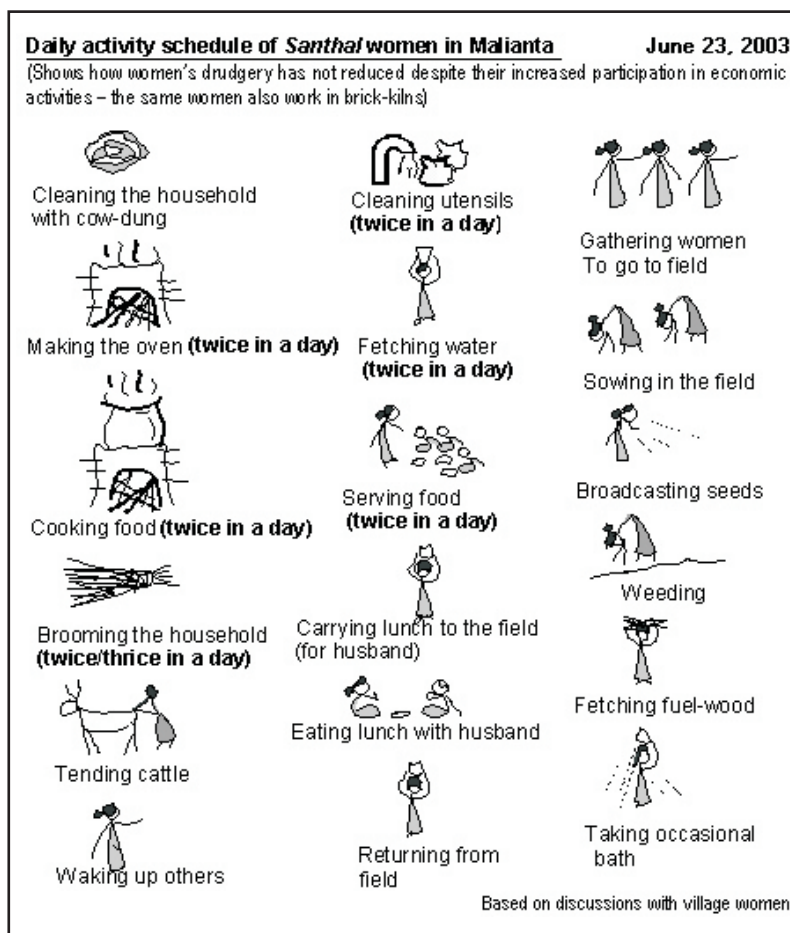
- Bring together a group having working adults, preferably from as common a background as possible.
- Explain the purpose of the discussion, i.e. understanding variations in conditions of livelihoods over different phases of a year.
- Identify all types of livelihood choices available to people in the locality and list them in a linear sequence so that they form one axis of a tabular matrix.
- Ask people to indicate availability of each livelihood option across different months of a year, by assigning scores on a scale, say of ten, for each month. Higher the availability, greater the score. Months can be depicted on the other axis of the matrix.
- In a similar way, assess changes in income drawn from each livelihood for each month.
- Initiate a discussion on the patterns visible in the matrix, e.g. which are the months when accessibility of livelihoods or income drawn from them are at the lowest level.
- Undertake the exercise from different perspectives (i.e. respondents of different social and economic groups).

This exercise helps understand different livelihood choices available to the community and also shifts in such choices during recent times. The variations in availability of work and income flows for different sections of a community can also be mapped using this exercise, in order that most difficult phases of a year can be easily identified.

4. Daily Activity Schedules

Daily activity schedule can be a useful method to identify hardships faced by different kinds by people in living their daily lives. For instance, if a woman in a village spends a substantial amount of time every morning fetching drinking water, the quality of her life can be enhanced substantially by meeting her need of easier availability of drinking water. Daily activity schedules can help also in exploring difference in the workloads and responsibilities of men and women, or different kinds of people, for identifying lives facing greater difficulties. Box 5.7 illustrates a typical day in the life of women in a village in Jharkhand.

Box 5.7 – A sample of daily activities of women in a Santhal community in Jharkhand.







While discussing change it is important to allow different views related to changes in conditions of daily life to emerge. The Daily Activity Schedule method helps in understanding variations in the level of drudgery faced by various kinds of people in a community, thus creating an opportunity to identify feasible interventions that can reduce the same.

5. Well being analysis conducted for multiple points of time

Well-being Analysis, a method usually employed for marking out the most disadvantaged households in a community on people's own criteria, can be employed effectively to get a

sense of changes in the overall wellbeing status of a community, in order that the factors responsible for improvements in status or deterioration could be understood. The method can be used on a time-scale, e.g. ten years, in order that the ascent or slide of a household during the period could be tracked in relative terms and the specific reasons responsible for the same could be understood. In the process, all households in a village could be arranged on a well-being continuum ranging from the highest to the lowest levels of well-being, and clustered into appropriate categories, based on locally defined criteria. Box 5.8 presents an example of a 'Wellbeing Analysis' conducted over two points of time, leading to an analysis of causes of improvement or deterioration in the relative status of well being of local people.

Box 5.8 – An output of Wellbeing Analysis conducted in Sarguja (Chhattisgarh)

Well being analysis conducted in Badhni Jharia (Sarguja)			
Well being category	Criteria	Households included in the category	
		(Today)	(10 years back)
 Well-to-do!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 5 acres of land Small family Own irrigation arrangements, e.g. tube-wells 12 months' food security from own agriculture Availability of govt. jobs Ownership of motor-cycles 	17, 26, 41, 43, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 59, 71, 82, 93, 101	26, 28, 29, 37, 45, 47, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 64, 68, 71, 77, 78, 79, 82, 101
 Mediocre!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 2 acres of land Qualified skilled labourers, e.g. masons, carpenters, confectioners etc. Ownership of bahra land 8 months' food security from own agriculture Daily wage labourers 	2, 3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 33, 34, 39, 40, 44, 50, 56, 60, 62, 65, 73, 74, 75, 76, 86, 96, 102, 103	2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 13, 18, 21, 60, 65, 73, 74, 75, 76, 86, 96, 102, 103
 Poor!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 1 acres of land 4 months' food security from own agriculture Dependence on wage labour for 8 months Ownership of poor quality of land; no bullocks Land locked in mortgages 	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 19, 24, 32, 37, 38, 42, 46, 47, 48, 49, 65, 66, 69, 70, 77, 78, 79, 83, 84, 85, 95, 104	7, 12, 14, 26, 33, 34, 40, 41, 44, 48, 49, 56, 57, 58, 69, 77, 83, 84, 85, 93, 94, 95, 104
 Poorest!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 0.5 acres of land, or landless Dependence on wage labour round the year Land locked in mortgage Ownership of poor quality of land, often unfertile Destitute women, widows, people with disability 	1, 5, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35, 36, 45, 57, 58, 61, 63, 67, 68, 72, 80, 81, 92, 94, 97, 98, 99	1, 5, 10, 11, 32, 35, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 50, 58, 61, 62, 64, 66, 67, 70, 72, 80, 81, 92, 97, 98, 99, 100
Households showing improvement in well being		Reasons	Reasons
10, 11, 12, 14, 26, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 50, 56, 62, 64, 66, 67, 93		Use of diesel-pump for irrigation; giving up of alcohol; availability of widow pension and antyodaya benefits; engagement in businesses	Alcoholism; discontinuation as govt. employee; death of primary bread earner in family; division of land; aging; mortgaging of land
Households showing decline in well being		Reasons	Reasons
9, 24, 28, 29, 35, 37, 45, 47, 49, 68, 77, 78, 79			
Participants: Mahesh Ram, Dil Raj, Dev Ram, Shiv Nath, Saranmet Bai, Marmen Bai etc.			

Well-being analysis methods are useful to understand different people's views of well-being and problems. For example, how do people perceive well being? What are the problems that affect people's well being the most? It also helps to explore the factor that contribute to enhancement or decline in people's experience of well-being. A well-being analysis is useful for also assessing the quality of targeting of development interventions.

6. The 20-seeds method to compare changes in income/ expenditure pattern

As the living conditions of a community changes with time, it becomes important for development agencies to understand the changes. Changes might be influenced by a number of factors, including improvements in income levels and availability of services. Examination of changes in the consumption pattern of local households belonging to different income groups over two points of time can also provide a good sense of changing priorities in life and implications on well-being. Analysis of changes in consumption pattern can be undertaken for households belonging to different income categories, for arriving at a holistic understanding of changing economic priorities.

The 20-seeds method is a useful way to examine changes in consumption patterns as a measure of changing wellbeing. In this, respondents belonging to a specific income category are given a bunch of 20 seeds to divide among various heads of expenditure, in proportion to the share of expenditures on different heads (ref. Box 5.9).

Box 5.9 – Examining changes in household expenses – the 20 seeds method

Tracking changes in patterns of household expenses – the 20 seeds method		
Heads of expense	Share of expense	
	20 years back	Now
Food	●●●●●● ●●●●●●	●●●●●●●● ●●●●●●
Health care	●●●●●	●●●●
Cloths	●●	●
House repair	●●	●●
Education	–	●●
Saving	●●	●

Once the trends of change in consumption pattern over time are known, a facilitator can also look into factors responsible for the change. It must be borne in mind that the expenditure pattern could be different for different periods of time due to seasonal variations in income as

well as changes in needs. The adjustments made by people to cope with difficult phases of time should also be discussed, e.g. during times of indebtedness, which would make a process of needs assessment truly rich and meaningful.

The 20-seeds method is useful for the following purposes:

- To understand major avenues of expenditure and differences therein for different income groups.
- To study patterns of association between income and expenditure over time.
- To identify new avenues of expenditure, as an indicator of changing priorities.

Steps to facilitate the 20-seeds method

- Broadly identify different income categories in the given community.
- Identify respondents representing different income group for current times as well as periods from the past. Preferably, respondents belonging to a comparable age-range and family profile should be included
- Explain the purpose of the exercise to the respondent.
- Identify key heads of expenditure for each respondent. Try to capture seasonal variations as well, by pooling as many relevant patterns of expenditure as possible. Try to pool such patterns for a period from the past that the respondents can easily recall.
- Assign sets of 20 seeds to the respondents to distributed across each pattern of expenditures identified in the exercise.
- Compare changes and initiate a discussion on the patterns of change and underlying reasons.

Paired-comparison matrix to assess changing influences in a community

Decisions that drive a society are influenced by a number of people. At times, such influences are direct and discernible, at times they are remotely exercised. Like most other variables of life, relative influences of different people too vary over time. Influences and underlying vested interests tend to have a bearing on people's actions and choices, and therefore need to be understood well in a process of participatory development.

The Paired-comparison Matrix (ref. Box 5.10) can be a helpful method to understand influences in a systematic way. It is helpful for the following purposes :

- In identification of stakeholders who have a say in community decisions
- To understand the relative influence of each stakeholder
- To understand factors contributing to various influences

Steps of facilitating a Paired-comparison matrix for assessment of influences :

- Identify a heterogeneous group from the community representing all social groups, but preferably not the stakeholders themselves or people directly connected to them.
- Explain the purpose of the exercise.
- List out important personalities who can take decisions on behalf of the community or whose clout holds importance in implementation of decisions.
- Place the names of stakeholders thus identified by the group on both the axes of the matrix in the same order.
- Examine the relative level of influence of various stakeholders by picking up one from each axis, one pair at a time, and placing an arrow pointing towards the person with greater influence within any pair.
- A similar process can be undertaken with reference to a situation dating back by ten years, to see how influences have changed in the community.

Box 5.10 – Paired-comparison Matrix, to assess key influences on community decisions

Influences	Religious leader	Counselor	Senior community member	Teacher	Employer	Local leader
Religious leader (2)	x	x	x	x	x	x
Counselor (5)	←	x	x	x	x	x
Senior community member (0)	↑	↑	x	x	x	x
Teacher (2)	←	↑	←	x	x	x
Employer (3)	←	↑	←	←	x	x
Local leader (3)	↑	↑	←	←	←	x

- Direction of the arrow indicates who within a pair of stakeholders has greater influence.
- Numbers written in parentheses in the first column indicates the strength of overall influence of stakeholders, determined on the basis of number of arrows pointed towards them within the matrix.

This process helps in understanding community level decision-making processes and the influence of important stakeholders in such decisions. Changes in political conditions often result in changes in dynamics of control over essential resources and therefore understanding influences as part of a process of assessment of community needs makes an important exercise.





6

Exploring Needs for Greater Self-Reliance and Wellbeing



6

Exploring Needs for Greater Self-reliance and Wellbeing

This Chapter of the guidebook seeks to identify needs associated with governance of local institutions, resources and socio-cultural practices from the perspective of local communities, to assess the degree of wellbeing and self-reliance of the community. It presents an approach to take stock of existing situations and charts out a course of reform for future, guided by community wisdom and aided by suitable participatory methods.

The chapter has been divided into three important segments, related to institutions, resources and practices respectively. Each segment contains a narrative along with key steps for assessing needs. A facilitator may apply her discretion to start assessing needs related to any of three segments as per her convenience. In every section, relevant exercises have been summarized.

Assessing needs related to institutions

Assessing the functioning of institutions can identify essential areas of reform of the institutional processes and resource-endowments, in order that the quality of services delivered by the institution can get better. Institutions play an important role in the lives of people and need to run efficiently in the interest of everyone. Box 6.1 outlines key steps for assessing needs of institutions operating in a community.

Box 6.1 – Steps for assessment of needs of institutional reforms

Notes for facilitators

- Identify institutions which are of great relevance in the day-to-day lives of people in the community. Generate an exhaustive list of formal as well as informal institutions. Institutions could be private, public or community owned.
- The facilitators can ask participants to envision an ideal scenario surrounding the institutions: a vision of a scenario in which services of the institutions are delivered to the highest level of satisfaction of local community.
- The participants can be encouraged to identify essential activities and resources that would help them to achieve their vision. They may be asked to also identify what and whom to involve in availing of the aspired provisions and articulate every aspired reform for strengthening of the institutions.
- This exercise can be done in a mixed group of respondents. It must draw upon the views and analyses of vulnerable groups in particular.

For assessment of services delivered by local institutions, the questions listed in Box 6.2 can be helpful. In the course of discussions with different sections of a community, their views regarding the quality of services delivered by local institutions may be solicited on pertinent indicators, using the prompts/ questions listed in Box 6.2.

Box 6.2 – Triggers to assess the delivery of services

1. What are the essential services that a community should get?
2. How equipped are service-delivery institutions with required amenities? Do they have adequate staff, resources and essential standard procedures in place?
3. Do members of all social groups have an easy and equal access to these services? Do any sections of community face barriers in accessing services?
4. How timely and responsive are the services of the institutions?
5. What are the mechanism of quality control in the institutions? Do people have any opportunity of providing feedback based on their satisfaction from services.
6. What reforms or changes are required for improved delivery of services?

To make the process interesting, PLA tools like Matrix Scoring can be customized to assess the relative strengths of local institutions. For this, all local institutions can be identified and listed on one axis of a matrix. Thereafter, each institution could be rated on a scale (say, of ten) on various criteria generated from discussions with the local community, as illustrated in Box 6.3.

Box 6.3 – Assessment of local institutions on locally identified criteria – an example

Assessment of key institutions					
Village & Gram Panchayat - Birasal (Ward-02), Block - Kankadahad, District Dhenkanal Date: 17.12.2001					
Institutions	Importance	Prompt Service	Attitude of Service Provider	Corruption	Overall Satisfaction
Gram Panchayat	••••• •••••	••• •••	••••• •••••	----	•••• ••••
Community Health Centre	••••• •••••	••••• •••••	••••• •••••	----	•••• •••
Block	•	•••••	•••	----	•••
R. I. Office	•••••	•	••	•••	•
Post Office	••• •••	••• •••	••••• •••	----	••• •••
Ration Shop	•••	•••	•••••	----	••••
L. I. Office	••• •••	••••• •••	••• •••	----	••••• ••••
Anganwadi	•	•••••	•••••	----	•••
Forest Office	•••••	•	•••	•	•
Fixed Scoring (0 – 10): Higher number signifies higher score, which is positive except in the case of corruption, where a higher score is negative implying more corruption.					

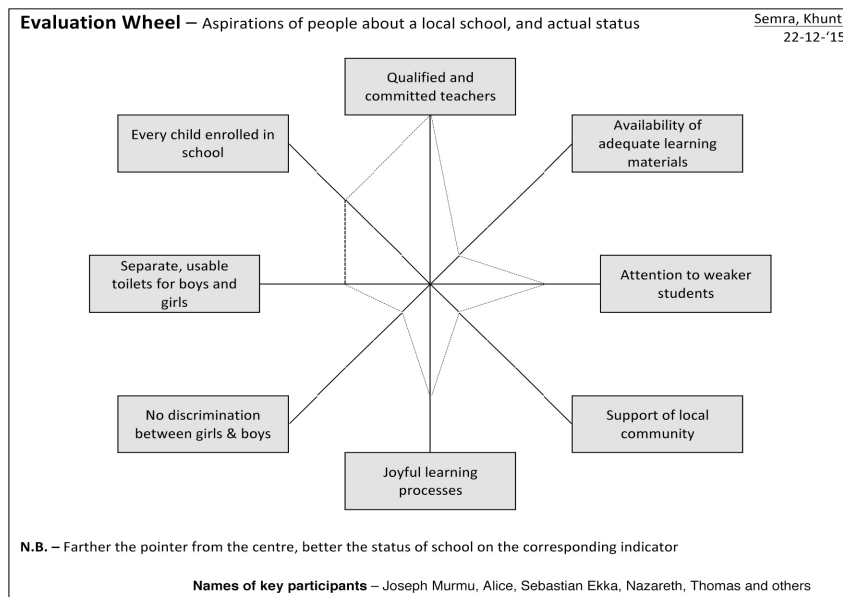
In case the facilitator wishes to undertake a focused assessment of any institution in particular, using criteria relevant to the character of the institution, the method of 'Evaluation Wheel' can be helpful.

Evaluation Wheel

Evaluation Wheel exercise could be used to rate an institution on a satisfaction-scale vis-à-vis various expectations of people. Each expectation could be written on separate cards, placed on the circumference of an imaginary circle and representatives of people could be invited to place their ratings on the lines joining the centre with the corresponding card, in such a way that distance from centre indicated performance of the institution with regard to the corresponding expectation. The Evaluation Wheel exercise can be facilitated also to understand relative status of groups of interest, e.g. relating to the influence of women in various decision matters, e.g. sale/purchase of assets, marriage, divorce, education of children, deciding number of children etc. This exercise can also be effectively used for project evaluation, whereby the performance of the project can be measured vis-à-vis different indicators of success.

In the illustration presented in Box 6.4, an Evaluation Wheel shows the extent to which a local school meets the aspirations of the local community. The exercise helps to understand the actual status of services vis-à-vis aspirations of people and to generate ideas around what more need to be done to improve the services of the institution, by comparing an actual situation with an ideal or potential situation. Also, the discussion can focus on the gaps and the respondents can be encouraged to suggest remedial measures towards better delivery of services.

Box 6.4 – Assessment of a local school on locally generated criteria

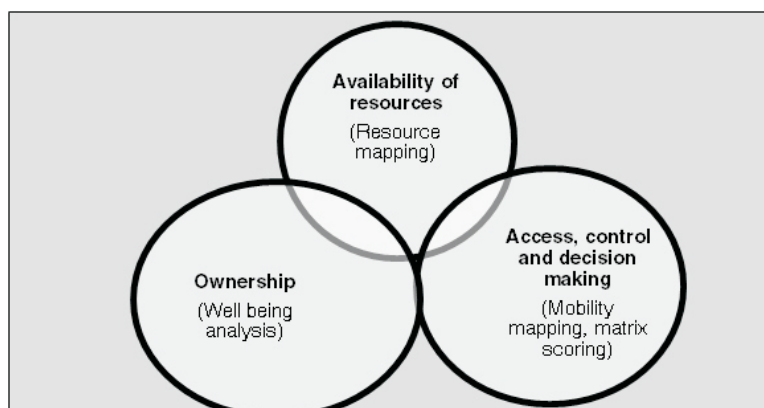


Box 6.5 – Notes for facilitators: Facilitating an Evaluation Wheel

- Encourage participants to imagine an ideal scenario relating to any institution or situation.
- Collect their ideas related to an ideal scenario on separate cards and place each on the circumference of an imaginary circle, well spaced out against each other, as shown in Box 6.4.
- Invite a representative of participants to initiate the process of taking stock of the actual status related to the institution or situation under assessment. Hand over a bunch of seeds/ markers to the representative and ask her to place them against each indicator of an ideal scenario, one by one, in such a way that distance of the seed/ marker from the centre of the circle indicates the level of satisfaction against each indicator; greater the distance, higher the level of satisfaction.
- After markers are placed for all the indicators, these may be joined by lines drawn with a piece of chalk, generating a polygon shape that looks like a spider web. The space on the outer side of the polygon and inside the circle represents unmet expectations from the institution or situation being assessed.
- The emerging output of the exercise should be discussed with the participants. In case any participant has any difference of opinion regarding the ratings given by the first participants, she could also be invited to place her ratings on the frame of the assessment.
- The ideas of participants regarding what interventions could bring their ratings closer to the ideal situation should be solicited.

Diagnosing the resource base of the community

A number of relevant needs of a community can be identified from a systematic analysis of the local resource base of the community, by examining dimensions of adequacy, accessibility, control, ownership and decision making relating to the same, as shown in the intersection of circles in the following diagram (Box 6.5).

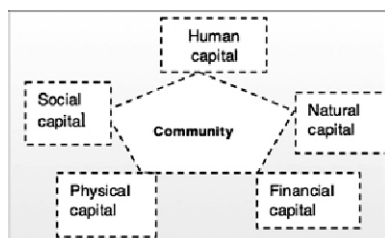
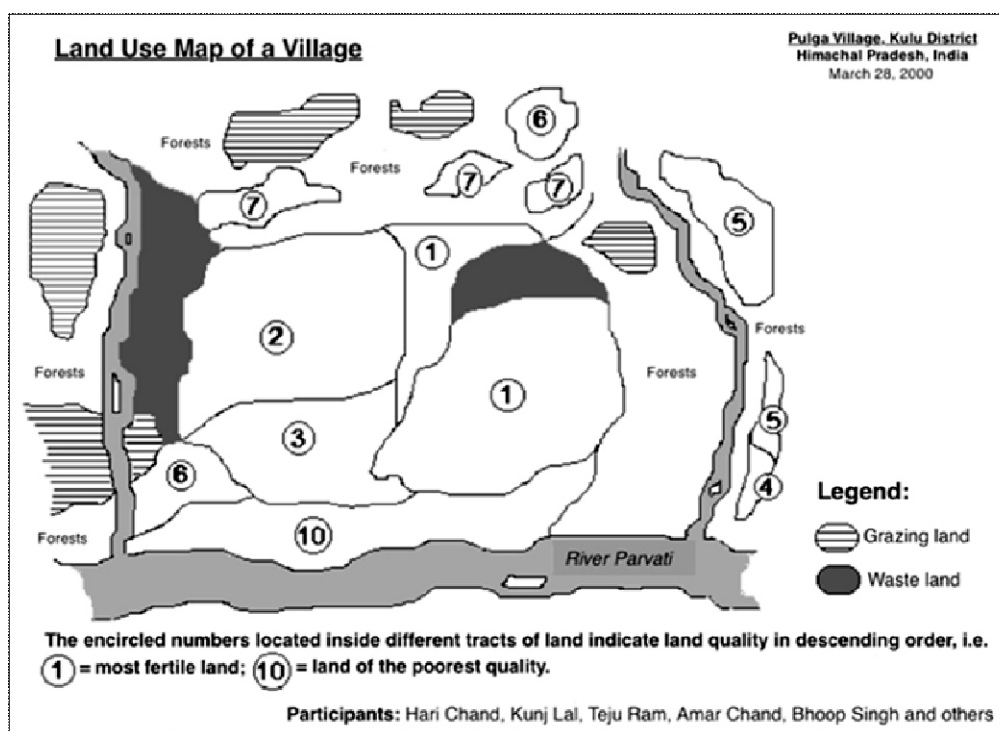


Steps of diagnosis of resource base of a community

Using tools like resource mapping and mobility mapping with different segments of the local community, the facilitators can explore issues within the pattern of distribution of existing resources within the community and also beyond the boundaries of a community's own space, and also the experiences of accessing vital resources.

Resource mapping is useful method of generating a bird's eye view of available resources in a community, as indicated in the land use map below (ref. Box 6.6). Once different kinds of resources are identified, people could be invited to share their analysis of patterns of access and control of the available resources. Facilitators could run a standard set of queries to ascertain how equitable are the patterns of access and control of the resources and the dynamics of decision making regarding use and disposal of the resources.

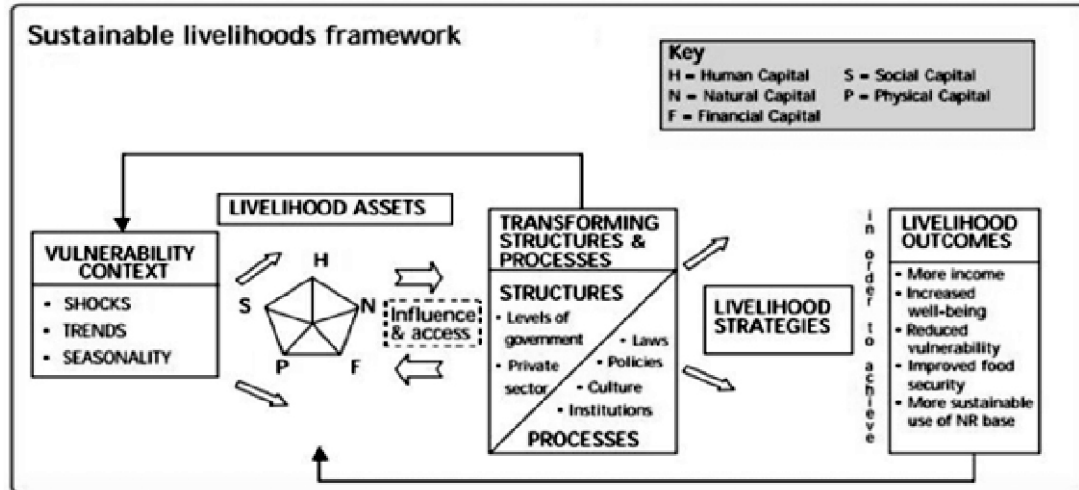
Box 6.6 – Example of a land-use map



Resources can be of many different kinds, as indicated in the 'Sustainable Livelihoods Framework', which is a tool to improve understanding of livelihoods, particularly the livelihoods of the poor. The tool can provide useful insights related to multiple dimensions of management of resources in a community. The approach classifies a

community's capitals into five categories: Human, Social, Natural, Physical and Financial (ref. Box 6.7). On the lines of the framework, a range of questions can be raised to assess the availability of various kinds of resources or capitals in a community, from the perspective of different sections.

Box 6.7 – The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework



The following questions (illustrative) can be asked to get a better understanding of the resource base in a community:

- How adequate is the availability of natural resources in the community? Can every section of the community access available natural resources in the village? Are there specific norms governing use of such resources?
- Are there collective platforms within the community where people come together pursuing a common interest? Can any significant instances of collective actions be identified from the recent history of the community?
- How adequate is availability of vital human resources within the community? From where does the community access services of electricians, masons, agricultural labourers, cooks, carpenters, drivers, etc.?
- Are there sufficient sources of credit available for needy people in the community? How borrower-friendly are the terms of credit available from such sources? Does the community have any funds of its own, which can be used for helping the needy?
- What are the various forms of physical resources / infrastructure available in the community? How are their uses governed in the community? Does every section of the community get to access them on convenient terms?

Access to different kinds of resources should be examined separately for different sections of a community, in view of the high likelihood of variations in the same. Box 6.8 illustrates use of the Matrix Scoring method to explore variation in access to different kinds of resources across various groups within a community, which can be analyzed along with members of a community to understand the access barriers faced by some sections.

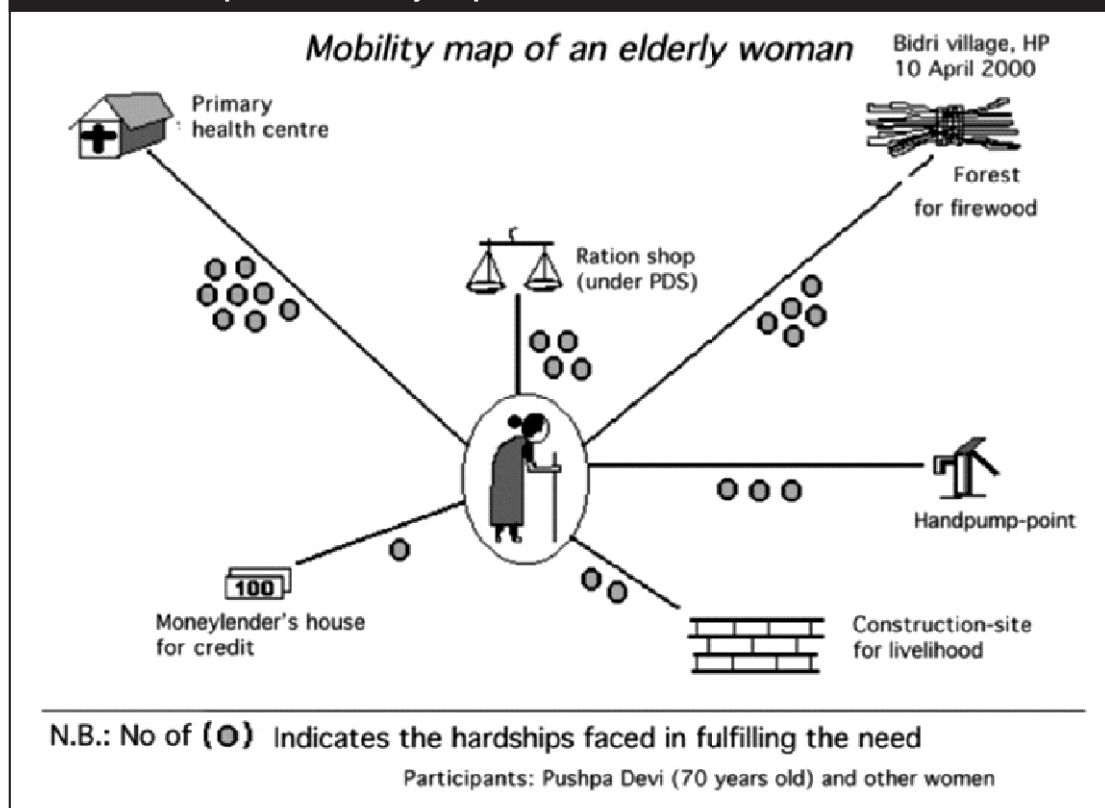
Box 6.8 – Assessment of relative accessibility of vital resources for different groups

Resources	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Women	Refugees
Agricultural land	●●●●● ●●●●●	●●●●● ●●	●●	●●●	●	●●
Livestock	--	●●●	●●	--	●●	●
Medicinal plants	●●●	--	--	●	--	●●
Forest resources	--	--	●●●●● ●●●	●●●	●●●	●
Water bodies	●●●●● ●●●●●	●●● ●●●	●●	●●●●●	●●●	●●
Orchards	●●●	--	●●●●●	--	●	--

Often access to various local resources is not equal for all members in a community. It helps to have a good understanding about the terms and dynamics of resource-use for moving towards a more equitable situation. Mobility mapping is one such exercise that helps in determining the physical distance of different kinds of resources from different sections of community, as well as differences in experiences to accessing the resource on the part of various social groups.

In mobility maps, the movement of people can be marked in terms of distance or time taken to reach the locations of resources, as well as in terms of frequency of visits, which can be indicated by the thickness or number of lines leading to the locations. Means of transport can also be indicated, if relevant. Different colors could be used to illustrate the trajectories of different social groups (for example men, women and children but also those in different well being categories such as single parents, refugees, etc.). These maps can be general, illustrating either by location or schematically the main places that people travel to or that are of significance to them. The purpose of the visit can also be mentioned for greater understanding and analysis. A great amount of detail about markets and flows of resources can be analyzed in this way. There is a great deal of potential for analysis of needs using mobility mapping. The first layer of insight, which indicates the availability of resources of different kinds, can be complemented by introduction of additional layers, e.g. ratings assigned to each resource on a scale to indicate the relative ease of accessing them, which can bring up interesting insights from the perspective of different sections of local community. Box 6.9 presents the output of a mobility mapping exercise, conducted from the perspective of an elderly woman in Himachal Pradesh state for India.

Box 6.9 – Example of a mobility map



Steps of facilitating a mobility map :

- I. Mobility maps can be drawn to understand the experiences of accessing key needs of life by individuals as well as groups. A facilitator should help a group to arrive a rationale for exploring the experiences of any specific section of people.
- II. All the places visited by the reference group/ individuals for fulfilling vital needs of life can be illustrated on separate cards or depicted by suitable symbols and placed at suitable distances, preferably in exactly the way different resources are placed at different distances. All the locations thus included in the exercise could be connected with a point of reference that depicts the base of the respondent group/ individual, with a piece of chalk.
- III. Additional layers of analysis can be accommodated in the exercise by using lines of different kinds or colors (e.g. dotted lines to indicate movements related to livelihoods, or thicker lines to indicate more frequent movements).
- IV. Once the entire gamut of movements of the reference group for fulfilling key needs is shown in the map, different layers of analysis could be introduced, e.g. identification of places that are relatively more unsafe, or places that are accessed mostly by women, etc.

- V. At the end of the process, the contents of the map should be studied together along with participants to decipher any significant patterns or concerns that need to be addressed through a suitable intervention.
- VI. For generating a sense of direction of change in the quality of life of the reference group, retrospective mobility maps can be drawn depicting a time of interest from the past and compared with a map showing a current-day pattern of mobility.

Assessing the desirability of social customs and practices

Customs and rituals practiced by a community on occasions of happiness or mourning or as part of traditions play an important role in nurturing the spiritual well-being of community. Yet, at times customs bear elements that need to be reformed to guard against probable abuse of human rights. Practices like child marriage or child labour serve as pertinent examples of regressive practices prevalent in many societies that need to be scrapped.

The purpose of delving into the gamut of practices and rituals prevalent within a community is to explore the probable existence of practices that expose any section of community to avoidable harms, risks or hazards. At times, practices of celebrating occasions of happiness, observing traditional rituals or redressing grievances may have elements that are unjust or harmful for any section or cause avoidable tension. Examples of such practices or rituals could include early marriage or children, excessive alcoholism or censoring of freedom of girls on the pretext of abiding by tenets of morality or traditions. The facilitator could play a role in initiating community level dialogue on such issues in a subtle and non-intrusive way. At times, such explorations inspire participants to commit themselves to values of peace and harmony within community life.

The following questions (ref. Box 6.10) can be asked in a process of exploring the gamut of practices and rituals prevalent in a community.

Box 6.10 – Questions to assess the nature of practices

1. What are the various occasions of happiness that are celebrated in the community? Are there rituals that mourn grief?
2. Do practices of celebration or mourning differ across social groups or tribes?
3. Are there any practices in the community where privileges or entitlements of women and men are different?
4. Are there any practices that might expose some section of people to specific risks or hazards?
5. Are there any differences in the roles of men, women or children in performing the rituals?
6. Are there any social arrangements that come into play for resolution of disputes?
7. Is there a need of any reforms towards making any of the customary practices more inclusive, just or enjoyable?



7

Conducting Stakeholder Analysis



7 Conducting Stakeholder Analysis

For any initiative of change to be effective, a good understanding of stakes of various interest-groups can help in a big way. Different people tend to get affected by a situation in different ways. For example, construction of a bridge connecting two sides of a river might enhance the accessibility of markets for a community of local artisans, but might adversely affect the lives of farmers losing agricultural land for the purpose of construction of the bridge. A striking example of differential impacts of development choices is the recent introduction of e-rickshaws in various cities of India. While it has opened opportunities of livelihood for a large number of people and has benefited short-distance commuters by bringing down costs of local travel, it has, on the other hand, cut into the business of a large number of cycle-rickshaws and auto-rickshaws.

There is perhaps no development action that doesn't have unequal outcomes for different stakeholders. It is imperative for development processes to identify and assess the legitimacy of different stakes at the stage of conceptualization of interventions and formulation of decisions or policies, in order that an action doesn't lead to unwanted consequences. Stakeholder Analysis plays an important role in facilitating assessments of how different people or interest-groups stand to gain or lose differentially from a process of change.

Conducting Stakeholder Analysis – key steps

Step 1 – Identification of development scenarios

A comprehensive analysis of stakes of different interest-groups can be undertaken only in view of the likely scenarios of change that might result from any process of development. Articulation of all likely scenarios of change is an important first step for identification of stakes. Box 7.1 illustrates a set of hypothetical outcomes likely to result from post-disaster development interventions in a village. For each of the identified scenarios, implications for various stakeholders need to be carefully articulated, as discussed in the following step.

Box 7.1 – Expected outcomes of a post-disaster development intervention

No.	Box 6.10 – Questions to assess the nature of practices
1	Establishment of a cooperative store for artisans to sell their produces for fair returns, during times of crises
2	Construction of a helipad for emergency supply of essential goods in the aftermath of a disaster
3	Relocation of fish-workers settled on the banks of a river to safer areas, for greater safety from disasters

Step 2 – Identification of stakes

For each identified development scenario, decision makers need to identify people who are likely to be affected by a change favourably or adversely. All such people or interest-groups need to be clearly identified and listed, possibly by having their names written on separate cards or listed in a table, along with expected gains or losses for different people. Box 7.2 identifies a range of gains and losses of various people for each scenario, in order that any planning of actions incorporates essential safeguards to protect desirable stakes and stay clear of potential backlashes on the part of people likely to be adversely impacted by any choice.

Box 7.2 – An illustration of likely gains and losses of various development scenarios

Development scenarios	People / interest groups likely to be impacted, and expected impacts					
	Gains / Positive impacts			Losses / Negative impacts		
Establishment of a cooperative store for artisans to sell their produces for fair returns, during times of crises	Artisans	Unemployed youth		Pick-up van operator	Middlemen	Land owners
	Will get fair returns from sale of products even during crises	At least 2 local unemployed youth would find employment at the store		Will lose commission earned from transporting artisanal products to stores	Will no longer be able to purchase goods at throwaway prices and make profit	Might not get artisans to work on their fields, if artisanal businesses do well
Construction of a helipad for emergency supply of essential goods in the aftermath of a disaster	Flood-affected people	Contractor	Village leader	20 families settled on govt. land	Plantation owners	
	Will benefit from timely availability of relief materials	Will get business for supplying materials for construction	Will gain credibility just before the upcoming elections	Land on which the habitation is based might be acquired	High-rise plantations might need pruning for construction of helipad	
Relocation of fish-workers settled on the banks of a river to safer areas, for greater safety from recurrent floods	Land mafia	Village leaders		Fish-workers settled on river banks		
	Real estate agencies to benefit from evacuation of river-front	Won't have to account for people going missing or losing life due to floods		Livelihoods to be hugely affected on relocation		

Step 3 – Evaluation and prioritization of potential gains or losses

Evaluating the desirability of various stakes is a crucial step of Stakeholder Analysis. Given the conflicts of interest surrounding such an exercise, retention or dismissal of any stake needs to be guided by values that any development intervention wants to uphold. For instance, in case of a potential conflict where a group's existence is at stake vis-à-vis a commercial entity's stake in harnessing profits from a given situation, the former might be accorded a greater importance. Box 7.3 illustrates an evaluation of stakes, whereby each conflicting interest has been scored and ranked on the yardstick of its relative desirability.

Box 7.3 – Evaluating the desirability of stakes

No.	Stakes	Nature of stake – Potential gain or loss?	Relative desirability of protecting the gains or offsetting the losses	Potential of mitigation of adverse consequences
1	Flood-affected people to benefit from timely availability of relief materials due to construction of helipad	Gain	●●●●● ●●●●	--
2	Local contractors to get business for supplying materials for construction of helipad	Gain	●● ●●	--
3	Village leaders to gain credibility just before the upcoming elections	Gain	●● ●	--
4	20 families settled on the piece of land that is likely to be acquired for construction of helipad expected to suffer displacement and threats to their life and livelihood	Loss	●●●●●● ●●●●●●	Low (rehabilitation measures lack clarity and credibility)
5	High-rise plantations owned by a group of people needing pruning for construction of helipad	Loss	●● ●●	Medium (Adverse impacts can be partially mitigated through compensation)

Step 4 – Exploration of measures of mitigating adverse consequences

Any legitimate stakes seeking protection from adverse consequences need to be accorded due importance in a Stakeholder Analysis. For each such likelihood, decision makers need to explore the potential of mitigating adverse consequences. In case credible options of mitigation are not available, it might be prudent to discard the corresponding scenario. For example, in the likely event of displacement of families on account of acquisition of land for construction of a helipad, the proposition could be rejected if meaningful alternatives of rehabilitation and compensation for people likely to suffer land losses and displacement are not available. The last column of the Table presented in Box 7.3 indicates the likelihood of mitigation of adverse consequences of a choice, which if low, could lead to rejection of the choice.

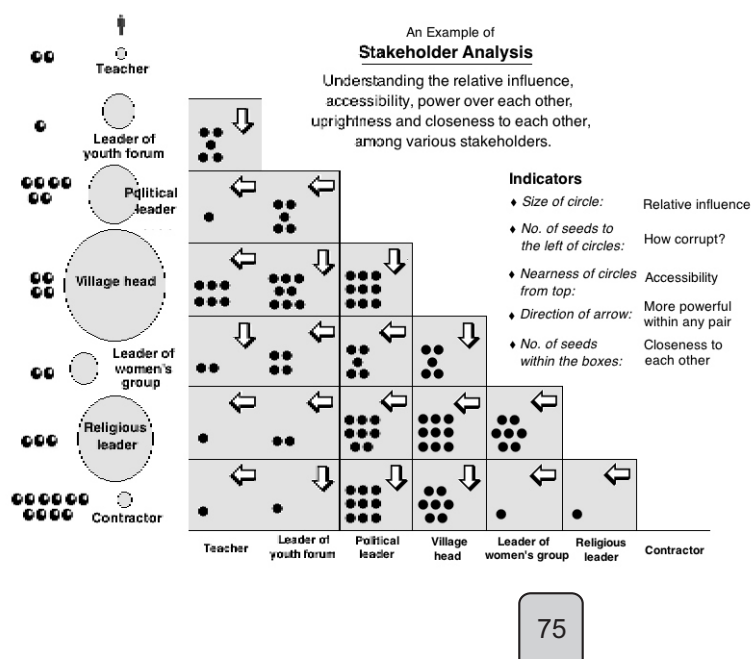
Step 5 – Identification of most desirable scenario

The most desirable scenario in any process of development would be one that maximizes the gains and advantages of primary stakeholders, without causing unreasonable backlashes or losses for any section. In such a scenario, any adverse consequence of development choices, if unavoidable, need to be backed by suitable and credible measures of mitigation of adversities.

Step 6 – Exploring the desirability of involvement of various stakeholders in implementing the chosen paths of development

Combinations of PLA tools can be creatively applied to judge the desirability of involving various stakeholders in any process of change, in order that a process benefits from the proven strengths of any stakeholder and keeps away people likely to negatively impact a process. Box 7.4 (described on the following page) presents an example to this effect.

Box 7.4 – An example of Stakeholder Analysis using a combination of PLA methods



Box 7.4 presents relative strengths of various stakeholders in relative terms, assessed through a combination of Venn Diagram and Paired-comparison Matrix methods, exploring dimensions of accessibility, relative influence over the local community, uprightness, ability to influence each other and closeness to each other. This not only facilitates a judicious choice of stakeholder for alliance, but also generates insights about how well do they get along with and influence each other, thereby producing a map of politics in the community.

The Diagram in the example establishes the judiciousness of allying with the leader of the youth forum, who is perceived to be highly upright, shares good rapport with the village head, the teacher and the political leader; and is powerful enough to keep the corrupt contractor under check.





8

Validation and Recording of Needs



8 Validation and Recording of Needs

As discussed in earlier chapters, a number of participatory methods can be used for assessing needs of Tibetan communities in exile. Salient prerequisites for an effective PNA process include the need of a shared and common understanding among key stakeholders regarding the purpose and scope of such an exercise, besides sound methodological preparedness, good facilitation, inclusive processes, participatory synthesis of learnings and suitable institutional arrangements.

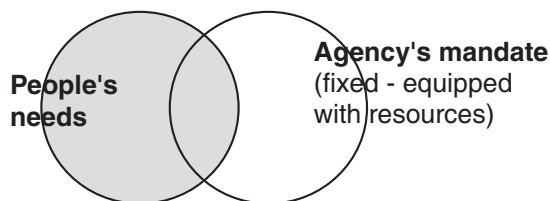
Given the diverse contexts of Tibetan communities in exile, it would be best to enable local communities to articulate their own development needs pertaining to different spheres of their life. Once such needs are articulated, every possible effort needs to be made for the needs to be addressed through resources available under schemes like Integrated Settlement Development Project.

Favourable scenarios for acting upon needs identified from a PNA process

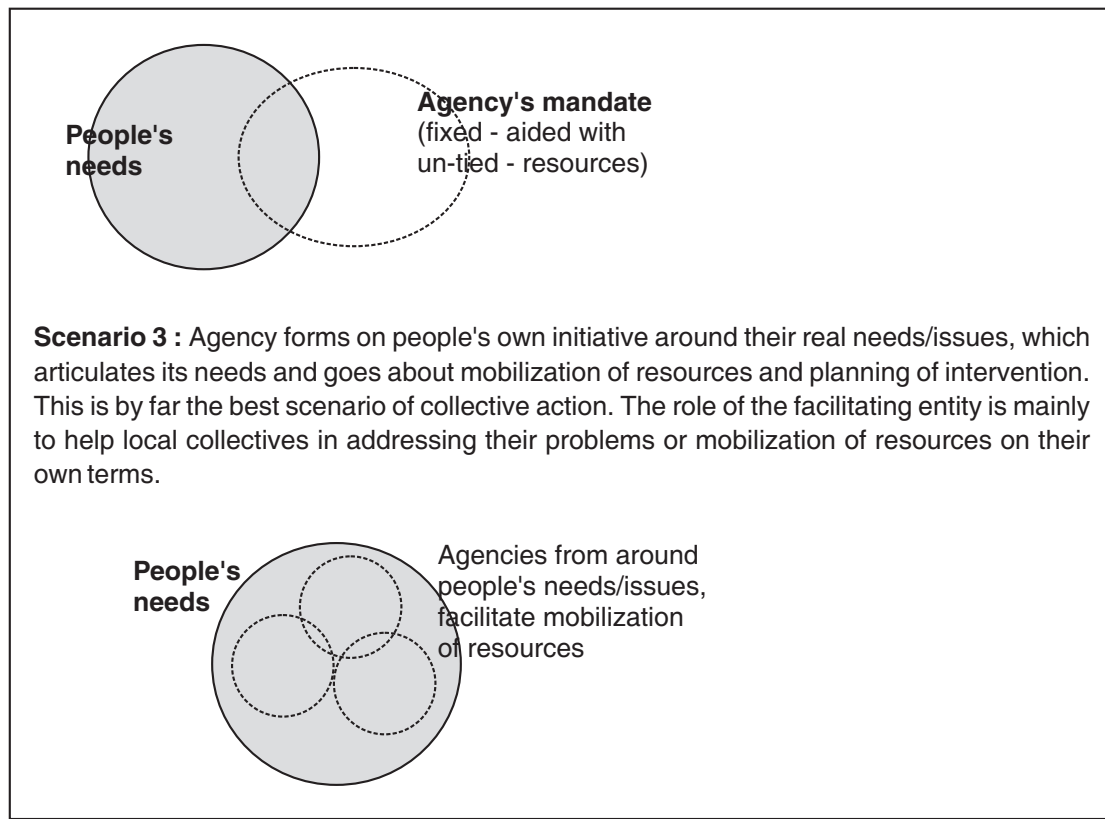
A scenario wherein loose, untied resources are available to be allocated to specific needs of a community is the most favourable scenario of community-led collective action, compared to situations where a development agency can only implement a rigid, pre-determined mandate, or has limited flexibility to expand the gamut of possibilities of financing any need emerging from consultations with communities but lying beyond its mandate. Box 7.1 outlines three different scenarios with varying potential of fulfillment of community needs, wherein the third scenario appears to be most favourable for action through collective action.

Box 7.1 Acting upon needs identified from participatory processes – Three Scenarios

Scenario 1 : The facilitating agency has its own programme goals (which may or may not overlap with people's real needs). People are at best involved in planning of location-specific implementation logistics. Such a scenario may not offer a great scope for undertaking inclusive needs assessment.



Scenario 2 : The development agency, besides carrying its own development mandate, is able to provide untied resources that are not attached to any fixed mandate, and can be used to address needs / issues of people based on their own priority. Compared to Scenario 1, this is a more meaningful scenario for inclusive needs assessment for development planning.



Zeroing down upon key needs based on analysis of outputs of participatory interactions

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Social Map / Resource Map / Mobility Map**

- Does the habitation pattern of the community cause any disadvantage to any section of the community?
- What are the resources that are located beyond easy reach of any section of community?
- What are the indicators of hardship that have been marked against specific households in the community? Which sections of the community face a greater incidence of such hardships?
- Are there any resources that aren't available in adequate quantity to suffice the needs of community?
- What are the needs, for fulfilling which people have to traverse unreasonably long distances?

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Wellbeing Analysis**

- What are the locally defined criteria of well-being and ill-being?
- What profile of households have a greater share of indicators of ill-being?
- Are there any significant changes in the well-being status of households over time?
- What factors are responsible for improvement, stagnation or deterioration of households, in terms of their status of relative well-being?
- What kinds of households experienced deterioration in their well-being status?
- What could be done to address factors responsible for stagnation or deterioration of certain households in terms of their status of relative well-being?

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Seasonal Calendar**

- What are the most difficult months / phases of time faced by the local people? What reasons make these phases difficult?
- How adequate are opportunities of livelihood available to the local community round the year? When are livelihood opportunities scarcest?
- Are there phases of time when outflow of expenditures far exceeds income? How do people make both ends meet during such phases? Are there any alarming strategies adopted by any section of people to cope with their hardships?
- How helpful are local sources of credit for tiding over such phases? What are the terms on which credit is extended to a needy household?

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Daily Activity Schedules**

- What kinds of people live the most difficult life in terms of quantum of hardship faced in a typical day?
- What are the key forms of hardship faced by different sections of local community in their day-to-day lives?
- What can be done to mitigate the hardships faced by people? Do people have any specific aspirations to this effect?

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Historical Transects**

- Has overall quality of life of local people improved over the years? On what counts it has, or hasn't?

- Are there any issues that are felt to be getting aggravated over the years or showing alarming trends for future?
- Are the rates of utilization of natural resources (water, firewood, miscellaneous forest produces) sustainable? Are there any resources getting depleted at an alarming rate?
- Are there any specific ways in which growth in availability of development resources is not keeping pace with growing needs of local population?
- How have gender relations evolved in the community? Are there areas where greater parity is desirable between women, men or trans-genders?

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Matrix Scoring / Ranking**

- What are the domains in which available choices are not up to the satisfaction of local people?
- What are the key deficiencies related to available choices (institutions, services, various consumables, other choices, e.g. livestock, seed varieties, etc.)
- Which social groups or habitations in the locality have a greater incidence of manifestations of under-development? What are the key causes for the same?

A sample of questions for arriving at needs by analyzing outputs of **Evaluation Wheel**

- What are local people's expectations from key institutions in the locality? What is the extent to which such expectations are fulfilled?
- What are the visions of development that local people have? To what extent have such visions been realized so far?

Documentation of outputs of a PNA process

In a process of participatory needs assessment, each analysis produced by any group of primary stakeholders needs to be preserved well for use in drawing lessons from, or for revisiting later. Key elements that must be recorded while preserving any output include the following:

- Broad title of the exercise conducted
- Name and particulars of the locations of assessment
- Date of assessment
- Visual output generated from the assessment (e.g. a 'seasonality' diagram)

- Particulars of specific symbols or indicators used
- Names of key participants
- Any explanatory notes

Box 7.2 shows a typical frame used in capturing the outputs of any participatory exercise.

Box 7.2 – Framework of visual documentation of outputs of PNA process

<p>Title of the exercise (E.g. Assessment of local institutions using Matrix Scoring)</p>	<p>Name and location Date</p>					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-end;"> <div style="width: 60%;"> <p>Names of key participants : Explanatory Notes, if any :</p> </div> <div style="width: 35%; text-align: center;"> <p>Legend / Symbols</p> <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 30px; height: 20px;"></td><td rowspan="4" style="width: 150px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>						

In addition to the outputs of any participatory process, additional notes that should be recorded could relate with the following:

- Key steps of process followed
- Key learnings from discussions
- Specific pieces of data generated from the process
- Key inferences and conclusions
- Gaps in insights, if any
- Names of facilitators

Prioritization of needs

In situations of resource constraints, needs identified from a PNA process need to be weighed in terms of their relative significance. This can be done in several ways. For instance, the Matrix Scoring method can be used to understand the implications of picking up specific needs to address through a programme like ISDP. In the process, each identified need can be assigned a negotiated score by local stakeholders, on yardsticks such as the number of people for whom a particular holds relevance, the relative urgency of action, the demand of resources and the expected impact on quality of life of the concerned populations. Box 7.3 outlines the frame of such an exercise.

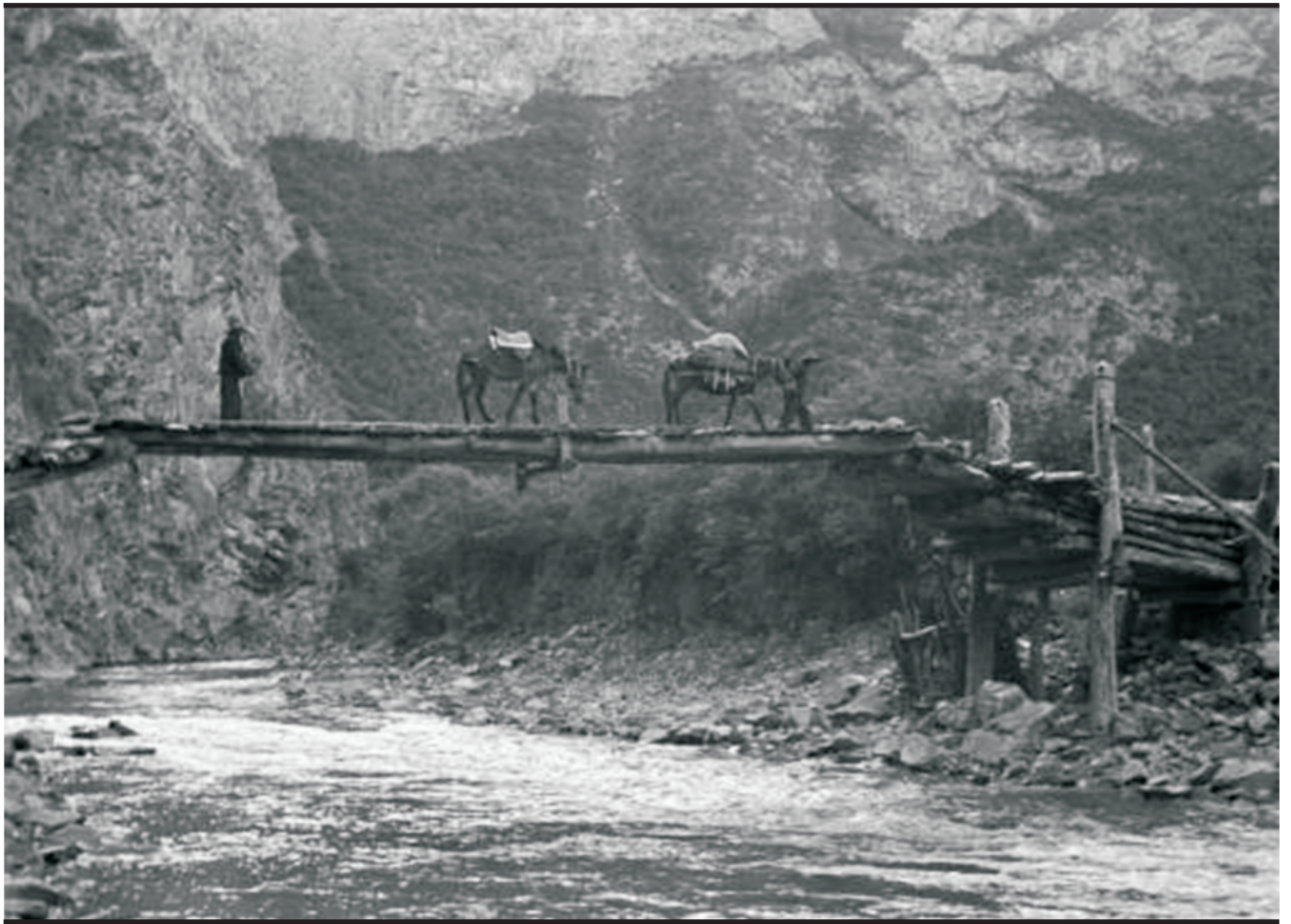
Box 7.3 – Prioritizing needs by assessment of relevance and feasibility

Needs identified from various PNA processes	Approx. no. of people for whom the need has relevance	Relative urgency of action	How resource-intensive (i.e. requirement of resources for addressing the need)?	Relative impact on quality of life
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
--.				
n.				

Alternatively, prioritization of needs can also be undertaken using the method of Paired-comparison Matrix or Card Sorting.

Processes of Participatory Learning and Action demand application of inclusive methods, attitudes and strategies, and a team of facilitators can evaluate itself on some of these yardsticks, by reflecting around some of the following processes:

- How well did the team of facilitators introduce themselves and the purpose of their visit to the community?
- Did the process and the conduct of facilitators raise any undue expectations among members of the local community?
- Did the facilitators spend sufficient time in familiarizing themselves with the conditions prevalent in the local community, and in building relationships of trust and rapport?
- How joyful were the processes of interaction with members of local community? Would the participants of the exercise want to see the facilitators back in the village?
- To what extent did the processes ensure the convenience of participants of the local community, e.g. in matters of choice of time and venue for the exercises?
- How well-planned were the processes undertaken by the team of facilitators? To what extent was each exercise thought through thoroughly in advance? Was there clarity within the team of facilitators regarding division of labour?
- Did the facilitators spend sufficient time after each exercise to identify key learnings along with members of local community? Were the learnings presented back to local participants and validated?
- To what extent did the facilitators reach out to different sections of the local community? Was there any group that could not be reached?
- Did the processes of PNA generate any significant new learnings or realizations for the local community?
- How well have the learnings and outputs of various PNA processes been preserved? Do all sections of the community have access to the same? Did the facilitators take the permission of local community before walking out with any output of the process (diagrams, photographs, audio-tapes etc.).
- Did the facilitators express their gratitude to members of the local community for sparing their time and knowledge in the PNA processes? How tidily were the processes wrapped up?



Appendix



Appendix

Annex. 1 – Glossary of key terms used in the guidebook

ABCD	Assets-based Community Development is a bottom-up way of working with communities that focuses on a community's strengths and assets. For details, refer Annex. 4B.
AI	Appreciative Enquiry, refers to a constructive, strengths-based process of inquiry and change, based on exploration of the best in people, their organizations and the relevant world around them. Propounded by David Cooperrider, the approach involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. For details, refer Annex. 4C.
Card Sorting	Card Sorting refers to a method of ranking different objects with respect to each other, in such a way that the relative position of a card in a linear arrangement indicates the rank of the object depicted on the card.
Cause Effect Diagram	Cause-effect diagrams can be used to know the causes (including underlying and root causes) and effects of any issue of concern, or to know the inter-relations / linkages between various issues or various component of a system. This method can be effectively used for identification of appropriate interventions for any issue and its key causes. For details, refer Chapter 3.
CM	Community Mobilizer
CPO	Chief Planning Officer
CTA	Central Tibetan Administration
CTRC	Central Tibetan Relief Committee
Daily Activity Schedule	Daily Activity Schedule is a useful method to identify hardships faced by different kinds of people in living their daily lives. It can help in exploring differences in workloads and responsibilities of men and women, or different kinds of people, for identifying lives facing greater difficulties. For details, refer Chapter 5.
DoH	Department of Home

Evaluation Wheel	Evaluation Wheel, also referred to as Cobweb Analysis, refers to a method of determining the actual status of any object of assessment, indicated on radial scales ranging from the centre of a circle and points on its circumference indicating various evaluation criteria. For details, refer Chapter 3.
Historical Transect	Historical Transect enables an assessment of trends of change in variables of interest, in order that timely decisions can be made to arrest alarming trends that indicate aggravation of situations of concern, or to maintain favourable trends. The method is also known as Trend Analysis and Before and Now Analysis. For details, refer Chapter 5.
ISDP	Integrated Settlement Development Plan
Mapping	Mapping is a popular approach to disaggregate a community, identify issues relating to availability and distribution of vital resources, amenities and services, and to identify pockets of population excluded from access to the same. Maps can be of many types, based on their scope of exploration: Social diversities, Mobility, Resources etc. For details, refer Chapter 3.
Matrix Scoring / Ranking	Matrix Scoring is a useful method for assessing the quality of choices available to people and their preferences, on a set of common criteria. For details, refer Chapter 3.
Paired - Comparison Matrix	Paired-comparison Matrix method is used to undertake one-to-one assessment of objects in a systematic manner. Comparable objects are listed on both axes of a matrix in the same order, and spaces corresponding to any intersection of objects are used to indicate the hierarchy within any pair of objects. For details, refer Chapter 3.
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action, refers to a family of approaches and methods that enable people connected with a situation to pool and analyze their knowledge of the situation, to act upon the same.
PNA	Participatory Needs Assessment
Praxis	Praxis – Institute for Participatory Practices, is an international organization working for promotion of participatory approaches to development and democratization of development processes and institutions.
SARD	Social and Resource Development
Seasonal Calendar	Seasonal calendars can be used to understand changes in the experiences of life across different months/seasons, and to identify the most difficult periods. For details, refer Chapter 5.

SO	Settlement Officer
Stakeholder Analysis	Stakeholder Analysis is a systematic approach to understand the implications of any development choice on different kinds of people or interest groups, in order that desirable stakes are protected and avoidable backlashes of any choice are minimized. For details, refer Chapter 7.
Strengths Based Community Development Approach	The strengths perspective and strengths-based approaches refer to ways of working that focus on strengths, abilities and potential rather than problems, deficits and pathologies. For details, refer Annex. 4B.
Sustainable Livelihoods Framework	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is a tool to improve understanding of livelihoods, particularly the livelihoods of the poor. The tool can provide useful insights related to multiple dimensions of management of resources in a community. The approach classifies a community's capitals into five categories: Human, Social, Natural, Physical and Financial; and builds on the same to address vulnerabilities and achieve desired livelihood outcomes. For details, refer Chapter 6.
Time Line	Time Line refers to chronologically sequenced compilations of important events or milestones from the history of any community or process. For details, refer Chapter 5.
TSRR	Tibetan Self-Reliance and Resilience
TTF	The Tibet Fund
U Theory	Theory U is an approach to develop essential leadership capacities that seeks to evolve to the highest future possibility associated with one's self by letting go of everything that isn't essential. Propounded by Otto Scharmer, the approach is based on an integration of science, consciousness and social change methodologies. For details, refer Annex. 4A.
Venn Diagram	Venn Diagrams are used to rate comparable objects in relative terms on multiple indicators. Indicators are depicted creatively in a 2-dimensional space, e.g. in terms of relative proximity of an object from a point of reference and its relative size. For details, refer Chapter 3.
Wellbeing Analysis	Wellbeing Analysis refers to an approach of categorizing a community in terms of locally defined criteria of well-being. The categorization can be undertaken over two or more points of time, to determine changes in conditions of wellbeing in a community. For details, refer Chapter 5.

Annex. 2 - Tools, checklists and forms for various exercises

2A – Format for recording contents of Social Maps

(Tick marks can be placed against households conforming to any of the indicators)

[illegible]

2C – Format for recording learnings from Wellbeing Analysis

Wellbeing category	Criteria	No. of households today	Unique nos. of households in the category today	No. of households x years back	Unique nos. of households in the category x years back

Unique nos. of households showing improvement in wellbeing over time	Key reasons for improvement in wellbeing	Unique nos. of households showing deterioration in wellbeing over time	Key reasons for deterioration in wellbeing

2D – Format for recording learnings from Community Time Lines

Year / Key milestones of time	Specific events of significance in the history of the community

2E – Format for recording contents of Seasonality Diagrams

Seasonality of livelihoods and other relevant variables											Name of place Date of exercise	
Livelihoods and variables of change ↓	Months of a year →											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Availability of livelihoods round the year												
Livelihood A												
Livelihood B												
Livelihood C												
Livelihood D												
Livelihood E												
Adequacy of income from various livelihoods												
Livelihood A												
Livelihood B												
Livelihood C												
Livelihood D												
Livelihood E												
Other relevant variables												
Festivals, celebrations												
Household expenditure												
Dependence on credit												
Incidence of diseases												
Migration												
Household food-stock												
Scarcity of water												

Names of key participants :												

2F – Format for recording contents of daily activity schedules

Profile of group/individual:

Daily activities	How tedious / stressful (Score on a scale of 10)	Contribution to income (Score on a scale of 10)	Any other criterion of analysis (Score on a scale of 10)
↓			
↓			
↓			
↓			
↓			
↓			
↓			

2G – Format for recording learnings from Matrix Scoring exercises

Objects of comparison ↓	Criteria of comparison →			
Names of participants :				

2H – Format for recording learnings from Venn Diagramming exercises

Institutions	Rank-orders as per different criteria used in a Venn Diagram				
	Accessibility	Cost of access	Value for money	Integrity in operations	-----
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					

Annex. 3–Formats to be used in capturing outputs of PNA processes

3A – Formats to be used in capturing visual outputs of each tool

Title of the exercise (E.g. Assessment of local institutions using Matrix Scoring)	Name and location Date									
Space for reproducing visual output of the exercise :										
Names of key participants : Explanatory Notes, if any :	Legend / Symbols <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td rowspan="8"></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr><tr><td></td></tr></table>									

3B – Structure for capturing key elements of PNA processes

Objective of the exercise
Method used
Profile of participants
Key steps of process
Key observations related to process
Key learnings / insights generated from the method
Gaps in insights, if any

Annex.4 – Recommended readings and references

1. Robert Chambers (October 1992). 'Rural Appraisal–Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory'. Discussion Paper 311, Institute for Development Studies, Sussex, UK.
2. Robert Chambers (1997). 'Whose Reality Counts?: Putting the First Last'. Intermediate Technology Publications.
3. Cooperrider, D. L. (1995). 'Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry'. Published in Organization Development (5th edition). Edited by W. French & C. Bell. Prentice Hall.
4. David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney (2005). Appreciative Inquiry -A Positive Revolution in Change. McGraw-Hill Education.
5. Otto Scharmer (2007). 'Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges'. 2nd Edition published by McGraw-Hill Education, September 2016.
6. Somesh Kumar (2002). 'Methods for Community Participation – A Complete Guide for Practitioners'. Sage Publications.
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Annex. 5— A selection of complementary approaches to constructively engage with situations

5A. THEORY U: LEADING FROM THE FUTURE AS IT EMERGES

Using his experience working with some of the world's most accomplished leaders and innovators, Otto Scharmer shows in Theory U how groups and organizations can develop seven leadership capacities in order to create a future that would not otherwise be possible.

Tapping Our Collective Capacity

We live in a time of massive institutional failure, collectively creating results that nobody wants. Climate change. AIDS. Hunger. Poverty. Violence. Terrorism. Destruction of communities, nature, life—the foundations of our social, economic, ecological, and spiritual well-being. This time calls for a new consciousness and a new collective leadership capacity to meet challenges in a more conscious, intentional, and strategic way. The development of such a capacity would allow us to create a future of greater possibilities.

Illuminating the Blind Spot

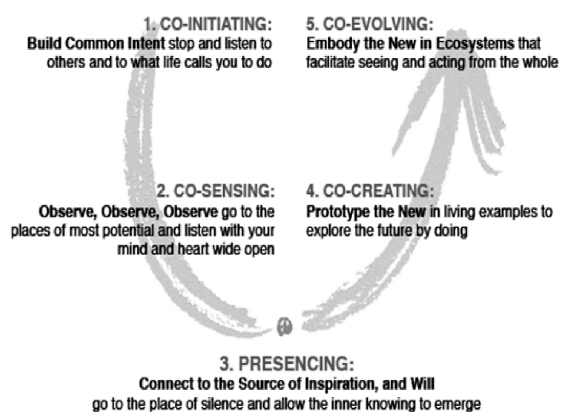
Why do our attempts to deal with the challenges of our time so often fail? Why are we stuck in so many quagmires today? The cause of our collective failure is that we are blind to the deeper dimension of leadership and transformational change. This “blind spot” exists not only in our collective leadership but also in our everyday social interactions. We are blind to the source dimension from which effective leadership and social action come into being.

We know a great deal about what leaders do and how they do it. But we know very little about the inner place, the source from which they operate. And it is this source that “Theory U” attempts to explore.

The U: One Process, Five Movements

When leaders develop the capacity to come near to that source, they experience the future as if it were “wanting to be born”—an experience called “presencing.” That experience often carries with it ideas for meeting challenges and for bringing into being an otherwise impossible future. Theory U shows how that capacity for presencing can be developed.

Presencing is a journey with five movements:



As the diagram illustrates, we move down one side of the U (connecting us to the world that is outside of our institutional bubble) to the bottom of the U (connecting us to the world that emerges from within) and up the other side of the U (bringing forth the new into the world).

On that journey, at the bottom of the U, lies an inner gate that requires us to drop everything that isn't essential. This process of letting-go (of our old ego and self) and letting-come (our highest future possibility: our Self) establishes a subtle connection to a deeper source of knowing. The essence of presencing is that these two selves—our current self and our best future Self—meet at the bottom of the U and begin to listen and resonate with each other.

Once a group crosses this threshold, nothing remains the same. Individual members and the group as a whole begin to operate with a heightened level of energy and sense of future possibility. Often they then begin to function as an intentional vehicle for an emerging future.

Seven Theory U Leadership Capacities

The journey through the U develops seven essential leadership capacities.

1. Holding the space of listening

The foundational capacity of the U is listening. Listening to others. Listening to oneself. And listening to what emerges from the collective. Effective listening requires the creation of open space in which others can contribute to the whole.

2. Observing

The capacity to suspend the “voice of judgment” is key to moving from projection to true observation.

3. Sensing

The preparation for the experience at the bottom of the U—presencing—requires the tuning of three instruments: the openmind, the open heart, and the open will. This opening process is not passive but an active “sensing” together as a group. While an open heart allows us to see a situation from the whole, the open will enables us to begin to act from the emerging whole.

4. Presencing

The capacity to connect to the deepest source of self and will allows the future to emerge from the whole rather than from a smaller part or special interest group.

5. Crystallizing

When a small group of key persons commits itself to the purpose and outcomes of a project, the power of their intention creates an energy field that attracts people, opportunities, and resources that make things happen. This core group functions as a vehicle for the whole to manifest.

6. Prototyping

Moving down the left side of the U requires the group to open up and deal with the resistance

of thought, emotion, and will; moving up the right side requires the integration of thinking, feeling, and will in the context of practical applications and learning by doing.

7. Performing

A prominent violinist once said that he couldn't simply play his violin in Chartres cathedral; he had to “play” the entire space, what he called the “macro violin,” in order to do justice to both the space and the music. Likewise, organizations need to perform at this macro level: they need to convene the right sets of players (frontline people who are connected through the same value chain) and to engage a social technology that allows a multi-stakeholder gathering to shift from debating to co-creating the new.

Theory U Encourages You to Step into the Emerging Future

Examples of these seven Theory U leadership capacities can be found in a number of multi-stakeholder innovations and corporate applications. The Presencing Institute is dedicated to developing these new social technologies by integrating science, consciousness, and profound social change methodologies.

5B – The Strengths Based Community Development Approach

The strengths perspective and strengths-based approaches offer ways of working that focus on strengths, abilities and potential rather than problems, deficits and pathologies. It is not a model of practice but rather a “collation of principles, ideas and techniques”.

The following are seven important principles of the strengths perspective:

1. People are recognised as having many strengths and having the capacity to continue to learn, grow and change
2. The focus of intervention is on the strengths and aspirations of the people we work with.
3. Communities and social environments are seen as being full of resources.
4. Service providers collaborate with the people they work with.
5. Interventions are based on self-determination.
6. There is a commitment to empowerment.
7. Problems are seen as the result of interactions between individuals, organisations or structures rather than deficits within individuals, organisations or structures.

ABCD – A Strengths Based Approach to Community Development

Asset-based community-driven development (ABCD), or just asset-based community development, is a bottom-up way of working with communities that focuses on a community's strengths and assets.

ABCD is built on four foundations:

1. It focuses on community assets and strengths rather than problems and needs;
2. It identifies and mobilises individual and community assets, skills and passions;
3. It is community driven, aspiring to 'build communities from the inside out';
4. It is relationship driven.

Focuses on community assets and strengths

Many traditional approaches to community development start with a needs analysis or some other way of focusing on the community's needs (Henry, 2013; Hipwell, 2009; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; Peters, 2013). This gives us the half empty glass. In creating a needs map we focus on the problems in a community, and can overlook many community strengths. When talking about individuals we might focus on how they are unemployed, drug users, apathetic or unskilled. Families are seen as being dysfunctional, abusive, or violent. Communities can be labeled as being toxic, disconnected or unsafe, with high levels of unemployment and isolation. So it isn't surprising that, with all these problems, the control of funds and services go to external organisations.

Kretzmann (2010) suggested some potential consequences of the needs map when communities are labeled being needy and deficient. People living in the community may begin to internalise this portrayal and see themselves as being deficient. It can be a vicious cycle. As a community is labeled as unsafe, toxic and deficient, residents stop turning to each other for support and can become scared of their own community. Relationships within the community thus start to deteriorate.

As funding comes into the community, the funds can go to professional helpers and external services (often for narrowly defined programs) rather than to the community itself. In this context, the best way to obtain funding is to emphasise community problems and 'how bad things are here' (Kretzmann, 2010, p. 485). When I worked on caravan parks, we were more likely to get funding if we talked about unemployment, domestic violence and marginalisation, rather than the sense of community and informal social networks. (See 'I try and make it feel more like a home' – families living in caravan parks for two different ways of seeing caravan parks.) The irony is that if programs are unsuccessful in addressing the 'problems' with in the community, more resources often flow into the community. As Kretzmann (2010) suggests 'All of this tends to feed a downward spiral, leading to residents who share a negative self-image and an experience of growing hopelessness'.

But we can ask questions in two ways.

We can ask:

What are the needs of your community? What needs to change in your community? What are the barriers to creating change?

Or we can ask:

What are the strengths and assets of your community? When was a time you felt your community was at its best? What do you value most about our community? What is the essence of our community that makes it unique and strong?

By focusing on the strengths and assets of a community, we can create a very different picture to the needs-based one. We start with what helps make the community strong. All communities have strengths and assets (Kretzmann, 2010; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003) and ABCD recognises the everyone in the community (including individuals, voluntary groups, businesses and organisations) has skills, interests and experience that can help strengthen their community.

So rather than starting with what is wrong with the community – the half-empty glass – we start with the half-full glass – what the community already has that helps strengthen the community. Like the 'two' communities mentioned above, how we see the community really shapes our response to it.

Identification and mobilisation of individual and community assets

There are at least six broad types of assets in communities, many of which are likely to be missed if one focuses purely on community needs.

- We recognise the skills and abilities of individuals within the community and find people who are passionate about the community and who are good at making connections.?
- We identify voluntary community organisations and networks and what they offer (or could offer) to the community. (These are often called associations in literature from Northern America).
- We look at what institutions (e.g. non-government organisations, not for profits, government agencies, businesses) are already connected to the community. We pay particular attention to small, local institutions.
- We look at our physical environment (both natural and built) in a new way.

- We consider the local economy in a broad way so that we include the informal economy (e.g., people swapping goods and services, voluntary work) as well as the traditional economy (e.g. production, consumption).
- And finally we appreciate the stories, culture and heritage of the community

When looking at individual and community assets, it is important to remember that we are looking for opportunities to build relationships and to build connections. We aren't creating a directory. The value in asset mapping is bringing people together so they discover each other's strengths and resources, and to think about how they can build on what is already in the community. One way we can do this is by fostering the relationships, or the place, where assets can be productive and powerful together.

Community driven

Originally ABCD was called asset-based community development, but some of us are beginning to use asset-based community-driven development (or asset-based and citizen-led development) to emphasise that ABCD is driven by the community not external agencies. While external catalysts can play an important role, their focus is to assist communities to drive their own development: ABCD emphasises that one leads best by stepping back (Bergdall, 2003, p. 3). If we start with the strengths and assets of communities we are more likely to see how they can take control of their future rather than relying on other people. We are more likely to draw upon, and harness, the skills and experience of local people to create change (Cameron, 2000).

Relationship driven

ABCD is also relationship driven. Not only are the relationships and social networks that exist within communities assets in their own right, but building relationships between 'assets' within the community is an important part of ABCD and asset mapping (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Mathie and Cunningham (2002) suggest that 'BC is a practical application of the concept of social capital' (p. 9) because of the emphasis it places on informal networks and by drawing on their power to mobilise other community assets. Through building relationships, communities are able to gain access to resources, networks and energy that might otherwise remain hidden.

Because ABCD starts with the strengths and assets of communities, some people worry that it overlooks needs and problems. When using this approach, we don't ignore community needs and concerns (Central Coast Community Congress Working Party, 2003) but our focus is on the resources the community has to address them. One way we can do this is by being future oriented. By exploring a community's dreams and vision for the future, we do hear about what needs to change, but we do it in a positive way that provides a way forward.

Underpinnings

In essence, ABCD is built on the following foundations⁵

- Appreciative inquiry which identifies and analyses the community's past successes. This strengthens people's confidence in their own capacities and inspires them to take action
- The recognition of social capital and its importance as an asset. This is why ABCD focuses on the power of associations and informal linkages within the community, and the relationships built over time between community associations and external institutions
- Participatory approaches to development, which are based on principles of empowerment and ownership of the development process
- Community economic development model that places priority on collaborative efforts for economic development that makes best use of its own resource base
- Efforts to strengthen civil society. These efforts have focused on how to engage people as citizens (rather than clients) in development, and how to make local governance more effective and responsive. (For more of the theoretical underpinnings see [Mathie and Cunningham, 2002](#))

Asset-based community-driven development challenges many of the ways professionals work with communities and requires us to think carefully about our role. We need to give up our role as an expert and start listening to the communities we work with, and belong to. It can be the start of an interesting adventure.

5C – Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) refers to a constructive, strengths-based process of inquiry and change, based on exploration of the best in people, their organizations and the relevant world around them. Propounded by David Cooperrider, the approach involves systematic discovery of what gives “life” to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. In essence, it involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential.

In AI, the power of imagination and innovation drives the process of transformation; instead of negation, criticism, and spiraling diagnosis. It seeks, fundamentally, to build a constructive union between people and what they talk about as past and present capacities: achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, insights into the deeper corporate spirit or soul-- and visions of valued and possible futures. Taking all of these together, AI deliberately, in everything it does, seeks to work from accounts of this “positive change core”—and it assumes that every living system has many untapped and rich and inspiring accounts of the positive. Linking the energy of this core directly to any agenda of change can be supremely effective in bringing about sudden and democratically mobilized changes never thought possible.

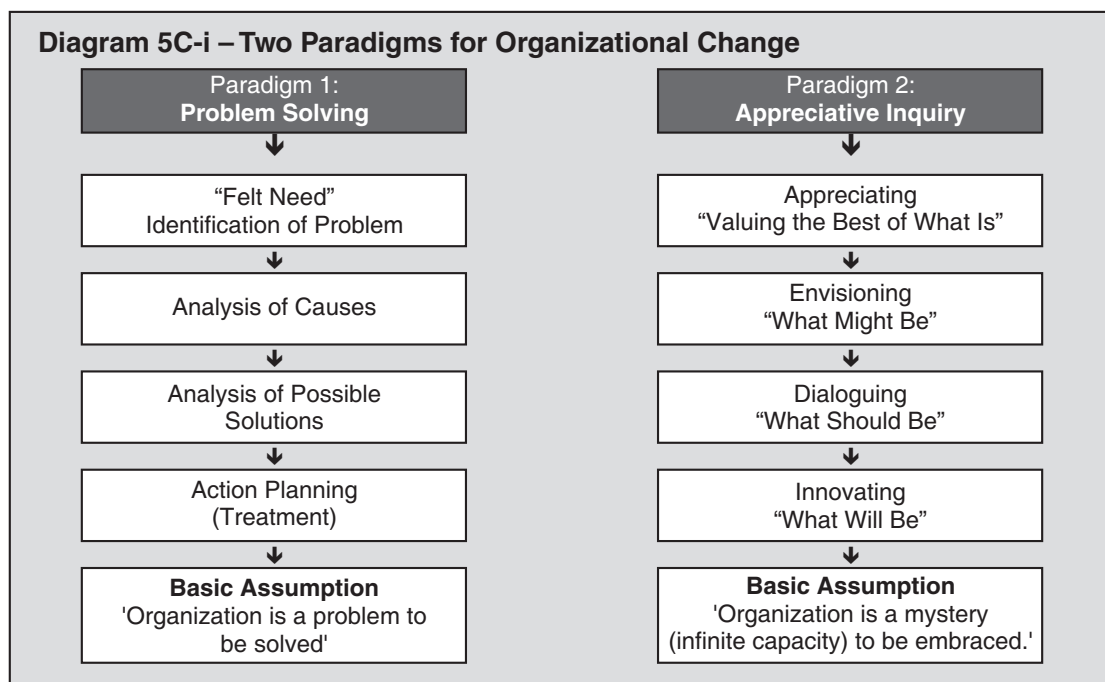
Appreciative inquiry shows that change is more powerful, energizing, and effective when we inquire into the true, the good, the better and the possible—everything that gives life to a system when it is most alive and at its exceptional best.

Beyond problem solving to AI

Organizations, including community organizations, often have a “deficit-based” approach to problem solving. It typically begins with seeking out the problem, the weak link in the system. Then, typically, it involves a diagnosis, and alternative solutions are recommended. AI challenges this traditional paradigm with an “affirmative” approach, embracing an organization's challenges in a positive light. AI offers an alternative -- to look for what is good in the organization, its success stories.

Diagram 5C-i illustrates two contrasting paradigms to engage with desired transformations within an organizational context. The basic assumption of Paradigm 1 is that an organization is a problem that needs to be solved. It pictures organizations as broken-down machines in need of fixing; they are problems to be solved. Every analysis begins, therefore, with some variation of the same question: What is wrong? What are the problems? What are the causes?

In contrast, Paradigm 2's basic assumption is that an organization is a mystery that should be embraced as a human center of infinite imagination, infinite capacity, and potential. The word mystery signifies, literally, a future that is unknowable and cannot be predicted. And this is true of organizations, because nobody really knows when or where the next creative insight will emerge that can shift everything or how a fresh combination of strengths will open to horizons never seen before. It firmly believes that no organization was created as a problem. If anything, organizations are meant as solutions. But even more than that, organizations are not even singular solutions. They are creative centers of human relatedness, alive with emergent and unlimited capacity. Paradigm 2 is "life-centric." It searches for everything that gives life to a living human system when it is most alive. It is creative and in a healthy relationship with its extended communities.



AI is an approach to organizational change that is unique and refreshing. Observers of AI say that it is one of the greatest, yet largely unrecognized, models available to the OD field.

Affirmative topic

The first step in an AI intervention is selecting the affirmative topic choice. This is, in short, the selection of topic(s) that will become the focus of the intervention. Selecting the affirmative topic choice begins with the constructive discovery and narration of the organization's "life-giving" story. The topics, in the initial stages, are bold hunches about what gives life to the organization. Most importantly, the topics (usually three to five for an inquiry) represent what people really want to discover or learn more about. The topics will likely evoke conversations about the desired future.

The seeds of change are implicit in the first questions asked. The following two broad questions form a basis by which groups and organizations can create their own customized topics.

What factors give life to this organization when it is and has been most alive, successful, and effective? This question seeks to discover what the organization has done well in the past and is doing well in the present.

What possibilities, expressed and latent, provide opportunities for more vital, successful, and effective (vision-and-values congruent) forms of organization? This question asks the participants to dream about and design a better future.

Since human systems typically grow in the directions about which they inquire, affirmative topic choices encourage people to select topics they want to see grow and flourish in their organizations. The choice sets the stage for AI through the application of the 4-D Cycle.

Careful, thoughtful, and informed choice of topics defines the scope of the inquiry, providing the framework for subsequent interviews and data collection. When AI was first being used, the design was an open topic choice, the "homegrown topic." The power of this type of discovery and dream led to the affirmative topic or topics to be studied by the organization, beginning with the AI foundational questions, as follows:

- Describe a high-point experience in your organization, a time when you were most alive and engaged.
- Without being modest, what is it that you value most about yourself, your work, and your organization?
- What are the core factors that give life to your organization, without which the organization would cease to exist?
- What three wishes do you have now to enhance the health and vitality of your organization?

The 4D-Cycle

In essence, AI is more than a simple 4-D cycle of discovery, dream, design, and destiny (ref. Diagram 5c-ii); what is being introduced here is something deeper at the core.

The phase of 'Discovery'

The core task of the discovery phase is to discover and disclose positive capacity, until an organization's understanding of this “surplus” is exhausted, which is hardly a likelihood. AI provides a practical way to ignite this “spirit of inquiry” on an organization-wide basis. The spirit of inquiry is something all aspirants of change need to reclaim and aspire to: openness, availability, epistemological humility, the ability to admire, to be surprised, to be inspired, to inquire into our valued and possible worlds. What distinguishes AI, especially in this phase of work, is that every carefully crafted question is positive. Knowing and changing are a simultaneous moment. The thrill of discovery becomes the thrill of creating. As people throughout a system connect in serious study into qualities, examples, and analysis of the positive core – each appreciating and everyone being appreciated – hope grows and community expands.

From Discovery to 'Dream'

During the dream phase the insights generated from inquiries are put to constructive use. As people are brought together to listen carefully to the innovations and moments of an “alive” organization, sometimes in storytelling modes, sometimes in interpretive and analytic modes, a convergence zone is created where the future begins to be discerned in the form of visible patterns interwoven into the texture of the actual. The amplified interaction among innovators and innovations makes something important happen: it unravels the outlines of the New World. Some organizations turn the learnings into a special commemorative report

celebrating the successes and exceptional moment in the life of the organization, or create a thematic analysis – careful to document rich stories and not succumb to “narrative thin” one line quotes. In all cases the learnings serve as an essential resource for the visioning stages of the 4-D model of appreciative inquiry.

The 'Design' phase

Once the strategic focus or dream is articulated (usually consisting of three things: a vision of a better world, a powerful purpose, and a compelling statement of strategic intent) attention turns to the creation of the ideal organization, the social architecture or actual design of the system in relation to the world it is part. Moving first through in-depth work on Dream before Design, followed with back and forth iterations, plays a crucial role in envisioning the most attractive scenarios of change. One aspect that differentiates Appreciative Inquiry from other visioning or planning methodologies is that images of the future emerge out of grounded examples from an organization's positive past. Sometimes this “data” is complimented with benchmark studies of other organizations, introduced to craft possibility propositions that bridge the best of “what is” with collective speculation or aspiration of “what might be”. People are invited to challenge the status quo as well as common assumptions underlying the design of the organization. People are encouraged to “wander beyond” the data with the essential question being this: “What would our organization look like if it were designed in every way possible to maximize the qualities of the positive core and enable the accelerated realization of our dreams?”

Realizing 'Destiny'

AI accelerates the nonlinear interaction of organizational breakthroughs, putting them together with historic, positive traditions and strengths to create a “convergence zone” facilitating the collective re-patterning of human systems. At some point, apparently minor positive discoveries connect in accelerating manner and quantum change, a jump from one state to the next that cannot be achieved through incremental change alone, becomes possible. In the Destiny Phase of AI, a convergence zone is established for people to empower one another—to connect, cooperate, and co-create. Changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized when people constructively appropriate the power of the positive core and simply... let go of accounts of the negative.

Diagram 5C-ii – The 4D-Cycle of Appreciative Enquiry



Basic Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

The following five principles are central to AI's theory-base of change:

The Constructionist Principle, which suggests that human knowledge and organizational destiny are interwoven. To be effective as agents or leaders of change, one must be adept in the art of understanding, reading and analyzing organizations as living, human constructions. Knowing an organization stands at the center of any attempt at change.

The Principle of Simultaneity, which recognizes that inquiry and change are not separate moments, but are simultaneous. Inquiry is intervention. The seeds of change — that is, the things people think and talk about, the things people discover and learn, and the things that inform dialogue and inspire images of the future - are implicit in the very first questions we ask. The questions we ask set the stage for what we “find”, and what we “discover” (the data) becomes the linguistic material, the stories, out of which the future is conceived, conversed about, and constructed.

The Poetic Principle : Human organizations are much more like an open book than, say, a machine. An organization's story is constantly being co-authored. Moreover, pasts, presents, or future visions of an organization are endless sources of learning, inspiration, or interpretation—precisely like the endless interpretive possibilities in a good piece of poetry or a biblical text. The important implication is that we can study virtually any topic related to human experience in any human system or organization. One can inquire into the nature of alienation or joy, enthusiasm or low morale, efficiency or excess, in any human organization. There is no topic related to organizational life that one can not study in an organization.

The Anticipatory Principle : People's collective imagination and discourse about the future of an organization is an infinite human resource that can be leveraged for generating constructive organizational change. One of the basic theorems of the anticipatory view of organizational life is that it is the image of the future, which in fact guides what might be called the current behavior of any organism or organization. Much like a movie projector on a screen, human systems are forever projecting ahead of themselves a horizon of expectations (in their talk in the hallways, in the metaphors and language they use) that brings the future powerfully into the present as a mobilizing agent. To inquire in ways that serves to refashion anticipatory reality — especially the artful creation of positive imagery on a collective basis – may be the most prolific thing any inquiry can do. Positive images of the future lead positive actions—this is the increasingly energizing basis and presupposition of Appreciative Inquiry.

The Positive Principle : This principle grows out of years of experience with appreciative inquiry. Building and sustaining momentum for change requires large amounts of positive affect and social bonding — things like hope, excitement, inspiration, caring, camaraderie, sense of urgent purpose and sheer joy in creating something meaningful together. The more positive the questions people ask in their work the more long lasting and successful the change effort. It does not help to begin inquiries from the standpoint of the world as a problem to be solved. The longer one retains the spirit of inquiry of the everlasting beginner,

greater is the effectiveness. The major thing that makes the difference is to craft and seed, in better and more catalytic ways, the unconditional positive question.

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- 1 Current Situation of Tibetan Refugees in Exile – by Tsering Paljor, Tibetan Homes School, Mussoorie, India
 - 2 Chapin, 1995; Early & GlenMaye, 2000; Saleebey, 1992d; Weick et al., 1989
 - 3 Chapin, 1995; Early & GlenMaye, 2000; Kisthardt, 1992; Miley, O'Melia & DuBois, 2001; Poertner & Ronnau, 1992; Rapp, 1992; Saleebey, 1992c; Sullivan & Rapp, 1994; Weick et al., 1989
 - 4 Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993
 - 5 Cunningham and Mathie, 2002
 - 6 Liebler, 1997
 - 7 Ludema, 1996

PNA processes for TSRR: The stakeholders meeting

by CPO, 21 June 2017

First stage: The preparation

1. Read manuals (principles) and recollect your training notes (dos and donts) to strengthen your theories/concepts;
2. Check the list of stakeholders -locations, size, gender, characteristic, age -make sure that you are well informed about the group such as -problems faced, values, stakes, issues, sensitive points, important incidents/events associated with group;
3. Select popular medium to inform ALL members without failing or lapses with key messages concerning the specific group and about the meeting and its purpose;
4. Choose an appropriate time & venue (not office/hall) (arranged logistics and physical set ups well) where all participants would feel free to express themselves -sub divide into several groups if group turn out to be too big. And consolidate them at final result stage.

Performance indicators for SO/CMs: Highest turn out rate in the locality in recent years-say over 95%

Second stage I: The discovery & visioning

5. Briefly introduce yourself (SO/CMs) without many formalities and of the participants while explaining the purpose of the meeting in more details -key words SMART SETTLEMENT & TSRR;
6. Begin by asking any success stories/positive incidents (you may know or do homework for this as icebreaker) for discovering strengths leading to creating collective future they so share -rest will follow -in case of black out or blank faces all around at this stage -break the meeting to be met again at convenient time. We are expecting several meetings/sessions for groups whose distractions probability is very high say YOUTH. Exclude/sideline/contain dominating voices.

Performance indicators for SO/CMs:

- a) Stories comes out effortlessly -story that connects all takes the center stage
- b) Group get energized -positivity fills the atmosphere as future seen emerge

Second stage II: The planning intervention

7. This could be done in a separate session with limited people if situation so demands/first session takes longer than expected.
8. Gradually bring back the group from dreaming/visioning stage to reality to identify some doable intervention in their areas of work/livelihood/lives with clear priority. Follow all democratic principles to bring everyone on board with high degree of participation where almost all should be seen taking seriously, engaged and involved.
9. Based on impact -which activity/intervention would benefit whom/how many/how lasting impact one would have over others -gradually prepare the list and get their approval

Performance indicators for SO/CMs:

- a) Group harmony and readiness to commit themselves

Final stage: The formulation of results

10. Search for appropriate concepts/vocabularies to formulate all results -capture in Tibetan where necessary
11. After seeing all results -common and shared vision for your settlements, take a brief time out to hear the voices of various stakeholders to build a vision that you as SO/DoH could pursue hereafter

Performance indicators for SO/CMs:

- a) Vision statement for your settlement

TSRR: PNA result sheet 2017

(Use one sheet for each stakeholder)

I Stakeholder profile

Name of settlement:..... Name of stakeholder:..... Size. Males..... Females..... Average group age

No of sub groups No of sessions held Facilitated by Dates

II Stakeholder dreams/wish list

Priority scale	AREAS of intervention opted for 2017-2019 (not a project or solution*)	Core strength(s) (none material) that would directly contribute for its success if some funds made available.	Tangible/material/financial contributions committed as cost sharing
1			
2 Mini			
3			
4			
5 Max			

**It should be a broad area of the sector for which an intervention is sought towards making your settlement SMART & TSRR goal. For example for a farming community: Organic farming, vegetable farming not ginger cultivation, plantation crops not coffee cultivation, livestock raising not dairy development, horticulture not mango farming per se etc.. Do not write/ mention any known projects or solutions. It should be better left to the visiting experts following the successful PNA exercises.*

III Stakeholder PNA analysis

Sessions narratives (50-100 words based on stage wise performance indicators) by the facilitators

Checked and submitted by SO Signature Dated:

Building SMART Tibetan Settlement:

ISDP's Preliminary selection forms for the PNA settlements -2017

I. RESOURCE PROFILING:

1. Name of the settlement:		2. State	
3. Natural resources:			
i) Total land (in acres)			
ii) Climate regime			
iii) Three most important Crops grown		1.	2.
		3.	
iii) Types of vegetation			
iv) Others:		1.	2.
		3.	
4. Economy/Workforce			
i) Population	1998 (TDS)	2009 (TDS)	2017
	M: F:	M: F:	M: F:
ii) Education/skills	1. No. Graduates M: F:	2. No. Post graduates M: F:	3. No. Vocational skills M: F:
			4. Others (if any) M: F:
iii) Important goods & services activities with estimated turn overs (in Rs)	1.	2.	3.
			4.

II. SITUATION ANALYSIS: Discover your success stories in the past that help shape your settlement unto this day.

Year	Name and describe events (up to 50 words)	What was the driving force/values and visible impacts?

III. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS: Who are the group(s) likely to be affected by the above programme? and What are their characteristics?

Types of Stakeholders	Brief description (interest/stakes/size/gender)	Core strengths/assets	Expectations & contributions/commitment

IV. SCANNING YOUR EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: Look around and beyond your situation for developments or conditions that supports the success stories and values for the future activities.

1. 2. 3.

V. DREAMING/VISIONING FOR FUTURE:

A) In what ways, do you -SO and CMs think, the above situations (strengths/assets/values) could be engaged to make your settlement SMART?

1. 2. 3.

B) Of those scenarios/ideal state suggested, which one would like to carry, on your own, without external AIDs or Funds?

1. 2. 3.

Notes for the SOs and CMs:

II. Situation Analysis- Try to flash back with the help of records/elderly people/historical memories to generate complete story of important/most significant events of the settlements the settlement to identify strengths and driving force behind events. For example 1. Taj Mahal -Love for Wife (Greatest wonder of the world); 2. Great Wall of China -Protect from invasion (Object visible from Space) 3. Pyramid -Heavenly abode after life (Giant Geometric precision structure-we still wonder). Just ponder how our ancestors have built -Potala, Samye and Yumbu Lagang in similar fashion.

III. Example of a stakeholder in a settlement - 1. A group 50 youths out of which 30 are females and 20 males. Their key stake/interest is to have good and standard life befitting their qualification. Their expectations is to obtain gainful employments as soon as possible. Their core strength is an excellent language proficiency for voice BPO and assets are physically fit and full of enthusiasm to learn new things.

IV. If your success stories goes around say successful handicraft products, which is still strong enough to build around, you should be looking around for a new markets and new form of marketing including export markets or opportunities to sale them at a premium prices. Or a new technology which can make it more efficient. Or government policies favouring its growth.

V. Be creative and forward looking at this stage. Try to visualize your settlement when 2020 comes -which part will it remain which part would go off. The part that would remain should be the foundation for building the SMART settlement. It is the core strength of your stakeholders. It has to be something that you could work or start now not in the distant future. Presencing the future as it emerges!

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༡༡། མཚུངས་མེད་ཏེ་རྩ་དང་། ཀོ་ལེ་གླེལ། བདེ་སྲིད་སྲིད་། སྒྲན་པར། རྩོམ་སྒྲིག་ས་གནས་འགོ་འདྲིན་ལྷན་ཁྲིམས་ལ།
ཆེད་ལྷ།

དགོངས་མངའ་བཞེན་ཨ་རི་གཞུང་གི་རོགས་རམ་འོག་ (USAID) གཞིས་ཆགས་གཅིག་བསྐྱེད་ཡར་རྒྱས་ལས་གཞི་དང་
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མཉམ་ཞུགས་གནང་མཁན་ས་གནས་འགོ་འདྲིན་དང་འབྲེལ་ཡོད་ནུས་ལ་གསལ་འབྲེལ་དང་སྒྲགས། སྟོན་འགྲོའི་གཞིས་
ཆགས་འདེམས་རྒྱུ་དཔུང་ཞིབ་འགོངས་ཤོག་ཕྱི་ལོ་འཕྱོད་ཕྱོད་བཀའ་ལ་ཞིབ་འཇུག་གནང་འབྲས་སུ་རྩུབ་འཇུགས་འདེམས་
སྒྲུག་ཚོགས་རྒྱུ་ནས་བྱུང་ཤར་ཁུལ་ནས་ཏེ་རྩ་དང་། རྩོམ་སྒྲིག་ས་གནས་ཀོ་ལེ་གླེལ། བྱུང་སྟེ་སྤྱོད་སྤྲོད་། དབུས་ནས་
སྒྲན་པར། བལ་ཡུལ་ནས་རྩོམ་སྒྲིག་བཅས་ལ་ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༢༠༡༧ ལོའི་ལས་འཆར་བཟོ་འགོད་གནང་མཁན་ཁོངས་སུ་འདེམས་ཐོན་
བྱུང་མོང་ན། གོང་གསལ་ས་གནས་སོ་སོ་ནས་(PNA) ལས་འཆར་དངོས་གཞི་ལས་སྟོན་ཟབ་འཕྲིད་སྟོན་མོང་ལྟར་རིང་མིན་
ལག་བསྟར་འགོ་འཇུགས་ཞུ་རྒྱུ་བཞེན། འདི་གའི་འབྲེལ་ལས་རྩུབ་སྤྱོད་སྤྲོད་ལས་རིམ་ལྟར་ས་གནས་སུ་ཆེད་གཏོང་ཞུ་
རྒྱུ་དང་། འདི་གའི་འབྲེལ་ལས་ས་གནས་སུ་མ་འཕྱོད་སྟོན་དེ་ནས་འབྲེལ་ཡོད་ས་གནས་ཚོགས་མི་(CM) ལྷན་གོ་བསྐྱེད་གྱིས་
ལས་རིམ་ཞུ་སྟེ་གསུམ་རིམ་གཏན་འབེབས་ཞུ་དགོས་དང་། དེ་བཞེན་ས་གནས་སོ་སོའི་ཚོགས་རྒྱུང་(Stakeholders) རིམ་རིམ་
སྒྲུབ་ཡང་དོ་འདྲིན་གཏན་འབེབས་གནང་ཐོག་ཁུངས་སོ་སོའི་མང་ཚོགས་ལྷན་འདོམས་གནང་རྒྱུ་ལས་རིམ་དང་འགན་འཁུར་
ཞུ་སྟེ་གསུམ་ཚོགས་ལྷན་འབེབས་ཀྱི་སྟེན་རྒྱུ་དཔུང་དགོས་དང་། གོང་གསལ་ས་གནས་དོན་
ཐོག་ས་གནས་སོ་སོར་དམིགས་གསལ་ལས་སྟོན་ཞུ་དགོས་འགྱུར་ཆེ་འདི་ལས་སུ་སྟོན་མོང་དང་སྒྲགས་སྤྱི་ཁྲབ་འཆར་འགོད་
པར་ཐད་ཀར་འབྲེལ་བ་གནང་དགོས་དང་། (PNA) ལས་རིམ་འདི་ཕྱི་ཟླ་ ༧ ཚེས་ ༢༡ རན་རྒྱུད་མཇུག་བསྒྲིལ་ཟིན་པ་
དགོས་ཀྱི་ཡོད་པས་དེ་དོན་དམ་དོན་གནང་སྟེ་གསལ་ཡོང་བ་དགོངས་འཇུགས་ཞུ། རན་སྤྱོད་ལས་ཁུངས་ནས་ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༢༠༡༧ ཟླ་
༦ ཚེས་ ༡༩ ལ།

ཕུལ།
རྩུང་ཆེ་ལས་འཁར་





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Understanding the development needs of a community is a crucial imperative of responsive governance, in order that processes of development planning are effective in addressing the context-specific priorities of a community. A participatory process of understanding the real needs of communities assumes utmost importance in settlements of Tibetan refugees, who battle numerous odds in alien landscapes to live a life of dignity and resilience.

‘Building SMART Tibetan Settlement – A Guidebook of Participatory Needs Assessment’ is the outcome of an initiative of the Planning Division of Central Tibetan Administration. The objective of this document is to illustrate a range of participatory approaches that extension functionaries of the Government of Tibet in exile can employ in determining the development needs of Tibetan settlements and local communities. The initiative of Participatory Needs Assessment intends to facilitate the involvement of local communities in Tibetan settlements to articulate and prioritize their development needs, to ensure judicious allocation of limited resources in bringing about sustainable wellbeing of Tibetan communities in exile.