



Fieldbook

for Participatory
Learning and Action

Go to the people,
Live with them
Learn from them
Love them.

Start with what they know.
Build with what they have.

But with the best leaders,
When the work is done,
The task accomplished,
The people will say,
"We have done this ourselves!"



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Fieldbook for Participatory Learning and Action

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Preface

All over the world there is an increasing demand from all sides for more involvement of the rural poor in decisions that affect their lives. Participatory approaches are gaining ground in international and national strategies for reducing rural poverty. The voices of the poor, their aspirations, needs and potentials are becoming the point of departure for local development efforts.

Lessons learned in past development work indicate that participation makes a difference. Yet the practice of participation is lagging behind its great potential. Observations indicate that participatory approaches have to be persistently promoted at the grassroots where the vast majority of the poor people live.

The Fieldbook is designed with the aim to stimulate and facilitate the involvement of local people in strategies to reduce rural poverty. It provides an overview on the basic principles and on some of the most frequently used methods for promoting participatory learning and action at village level.

The materials documented in the Fieldbook reflect on the one hand several years of experience in promoting participatory methods through training by InWEnt and DWC. On the other hand, they have been compiled from the very rich literature and internet-sources listed in the Annex.

We are most grateful to all those people and organizations in Southeast Asia who supported and guided us over many years of practice and reflection.

It is hoped that the Fieldbook will reach the hands and hearts of development practitioners and facilitators working face-to-face with the rural poor and their community-based organizations.

It is expected that this guidebook may form a small contribution to bring participatory approaches into the mainstream of development practice and to make them an integral part of the daily activities of institutions seeking social and economic change.

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Vietnam: Participation and CPRGS

Poverty is a problem of countries all over the world, and we are actively searching for solutions to eliminate poverty globally. In Vietnam, poverty reduction is taken as a cutting through objective in the process of country socio-economic development.

Poverty reduction is a necessary element to ensure social justice and sustainable growth; and in return, high and sustainable growth can bring about physical energy to support and provide opportunities for the poor to get out of poverty holes.

What is CPRGS?

The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) is an action program that fulfils the Government's Ten-Year Socio-economic Development Strategy and Five-Year Socio-economic Development Plan. In addition, it provides other sectoral development concrete measures with well-defined road maps for implementation. This is an action program to achieve economic growth and poverty reduction objectives. The official document of the CPRGS was approved by the

The implementation of the CPRGS is based on an integrated approach that includes institutional reform, increasing the resources and strengthening the capacity of implementing agencies as well as building mechanisms to ensure the participation of agencies. Also, it is aimed at people at all levels, from the policy making stage to monitoring and evaluation, of the strategy to ensure the sustainability of the results and to avoid risks in the



Being the result of InWent-DWC cooperation, this guidebook was compiled to be used as a handbook of participatory methods in poverty reduction. It contains the basic useful information with the purpose of serving to enhance participatory approaches in national programs to reduce poverty and mobilize the community for a sustainable economic growth in Vietnam.

Vietnam: Process of Participation

In the Congress VI of Vietnam Communist Party (December 1986), the motto "The people are informed - The people directly discuss - The people do - The people supervise and inspect" was officially confirmed for applying in the whole country.

The people directly discuss



The people do



The People's Council and the People's Committee at the commune level are responsible for implementation of terms of the Decree to ensure the sufficient participation of people in the process of

The people are informed



These are instilled/penetrated into the Government's resolutions, policies and legal documents of Vietnam. On 7 July 2003 the Government promulgated the Regulations on the exercise of democracy in communes in conjunction with Decree No.79/2003/ND-CP with the main terms:

- 14 works to inform the people;
- 5 works to be discussed and directly decided by the people;
- 9 works to be discussed or commented on by the people and decided by the commune administrations;
- 11 works to be supervised and inspected by the people;
- modes of implementation;
- responsibilities of agencies, organizations and individuals for the

The people supervise and inspect



What is participation?

Participation means:
Let us discuss it, and let us do it together!

Participation is a collective action for achieving our common objectives. It means that everyone who is interested takes part. Everyone gets involved in planning, decision-making, implementing and evaluating local activities to overcome



Levels of participation



Self-Management

People take initiatives and collective actions for their own



Partnership

Exchange and sharing of benefits as well as responsibilities to achieve a common goal. Outsiders



Consulting

Villagers are given the opportunity to express their concerns and

Informing

Outsiders merely let people know about projects to be undertaken.

What is Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)?

PLA stands for learning together for collective actions!

"Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is a growing family of approaches, methods, attitudes and behaviours to enable and empower people to share, analyze and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate and reflect."



Plan collective actions

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) recognizes local people, both men and women as active analysts, planners, organizers and evaluators of their own

Analyze our situation

The point of departure of any sustainable development process is the aspirations, reflections and actions of local people.



Share our knowledge

Participatory approaches are one of the most effective ways of achieving social, political and human development.



Key principles of PLA

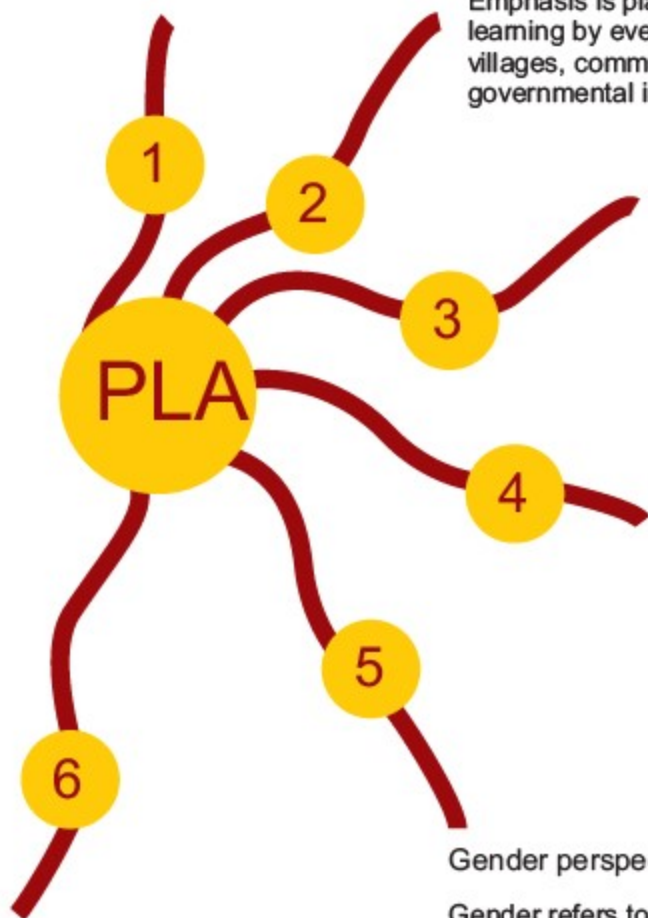
They can do it!

All villagers, men and women alike, the poor and illiterate, are encouraged and enabled to voice their aspirations, to analyze their situation, and to implement



Learning process

Emphasis is placed on facilitating a continuous learning by everyone involved: individuals, families, villages, community based organizations, governmental institutions and supporting agencies.



Mixing techniques

Using the broad range of participatory methods facilitates the process of analyzing the village situation from different perspectives and helps to gain a deep understanding of the

Leading to change

Local change processes provide a collective learning platform for villagers to build up their capacities. They acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes, and gain confidence for initiating and managing actions on their

Gender perspective

Gender refers to the culturally established roles of women and men in a society. The analysis of the different roles, activities and responsibilities of women and men forms an integral part of all

Visual sharing

The intensive use of visual aids such as diagrams, maps, and matrices makes it easier for villagers to adapt these methods to their specific needs, to bring in their ideas, and to develop a



Evolution of PLA

Some of the principles and methods of PLA have their roots in Participatory Action Research in South America. Other methods such as diagramming were developed in

Additional participatory methods have been evolved in the 1980s in South Asia and Africa. Today, participatory methods are being used around the world.

Changes in the early 1980s (Rapid Rural Appraisal - RRA):

- From conventional academic research to interactive, semi-structured interviews.
- From formal questionnaires to the use of tools for visualization, diagramming, mapping, etc.
- From extracting information to learning



Changes in the 1990s (Participatory Rural Appraisal - PRA):

- From "doing it for them" to "they can do it", outsiders acting as facilitators.
- From field work in rural areas to mainstreaming participation in supporting organizations.
- From appraisal and analysis to participatory planning for actions.

Current challenges (Participatory Learning and Action - PLA):

- From applying tools and techniques to the individual change of attitudes and behaviours.
- From isolated activities to institutionalization of participatory approaches in development work.
- From rural development to sensitive questions of empowerment and political decision making.



Methods for PLA

Participatory methods are the key for putting our ideas into action !

A wide range of participatory methods has been developed over the years. All these methods are excellent helpers for translating the principles of participation

into action. Participatory methods are very powerful for stimulating a dialogue, for generating new ideas, for agreeing on joint activities and for reflecting on the outcome.

What is special about participatory methods?

Participatory methods only come alive from the moment villagers use them to express their views, objectives and concerns. Participatory methods only show all their power once they are adapted by the villagers to local conditions.



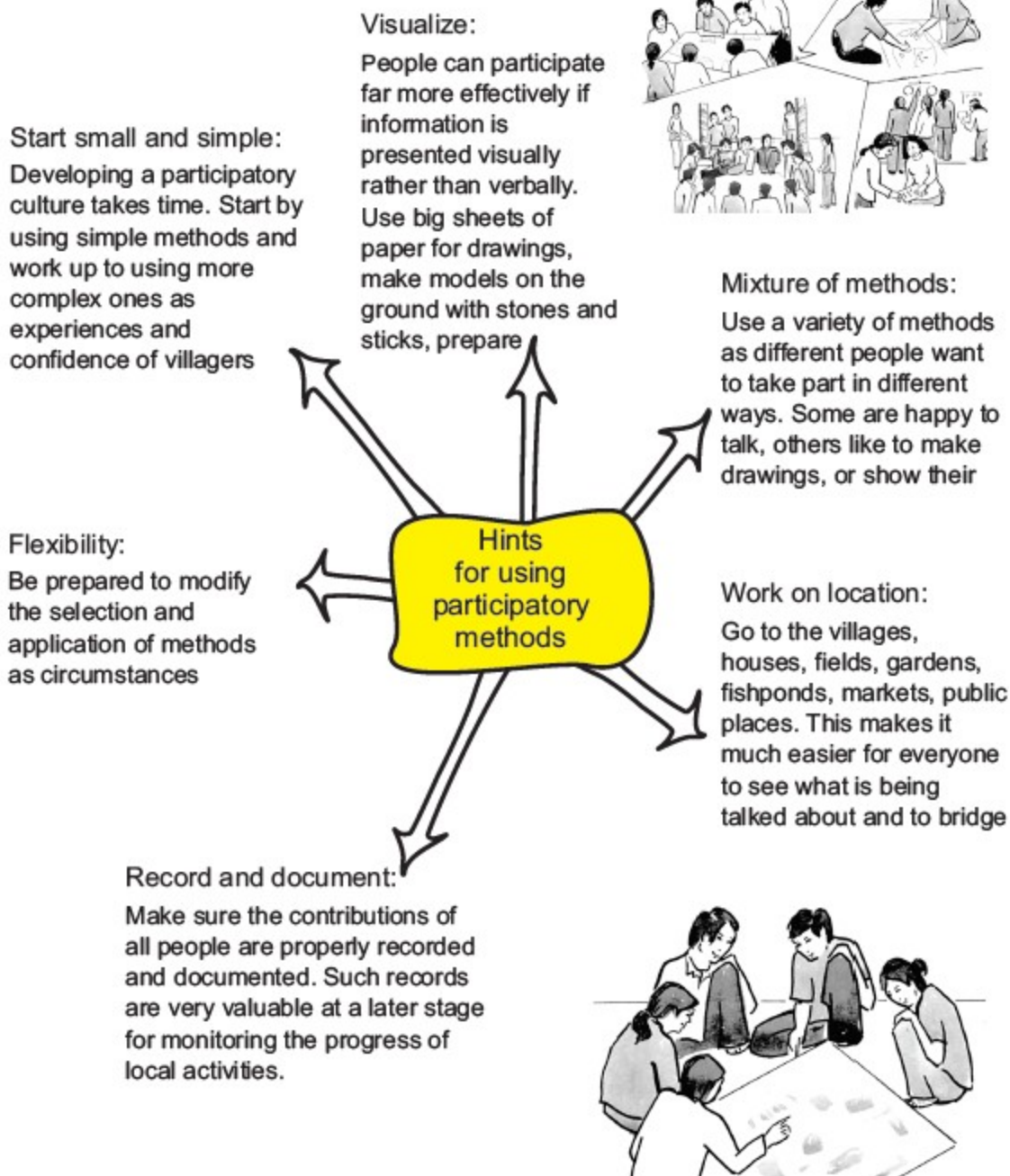
The type of method we select indicates how much trust we have in other people:

If we feel that

- (1) outsiders know best - villagers are ignorant: we use methods such as lectures and distribution of leaflets, etc.
- (2) villagers know something - but outsiders know better: we apply methods like questionnaires for extracting information and for academic research.
- (3) villagers are experts on rural life - outsiders are partners in their development: we introduce methods for stimulating the exchange of ideas and for joint planning.
- (4) villagers can do it! - outsiders may assist them occasionally: we promote methods for self-facilitation, self-management and self-evaluation.



Methods for PLA



Participatory methods are only as good as the people who apply them !

Advantages of PLA



Use of visual techniques

Community members find it easier to participate when they use visual techniques (maps, diagrams, matrices, etc.) for gathering, analyzing, and presenting



Sustainability

Since projects resulting from PLA are based on priorities and solutions identified and analyzed by community groups, they tend to be more sustainable than those formulated exclusively by people from the

Integration of interest groups

PLA encourages the participation of diverse groups, especially women, children, and the elderly people. It includes the views, cultural values, tradition, and objectives of everyone concerned.



Community empowerment

The process of initiating, conducting and evaluating PLA provides individuals and groups within the community with new experiences. It enables community members to deal with problems, to look for solutions, to manage the implementation of action plans, and to monitor and evaluate



Advantages of PLA



Limitations of PLA

False expectations

False expectations can be raised in the community, especially regarding financial support. Community members generally think that "after PLA comes the Money!".

Participatory Learning and Action does not offer "miracle solutions" from an external organization or international donor...



Reliability of the information

The relative speed of the PLA process can limit the quality and degree of trust established between the community and development workers. In particular, gender relations, power relations, and dominant local political forces can be "hidden" due to lack of time for in-depth research on

Lack of experience

The lack of experience and commitment in participatory work can have a negative impact on the quality of PLA. The mechanical application of tools and techniques will not provide the expected

Four people were named Everybody,
Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody.
They had an important job to be done,
Everybody was asked to do it.

Everybody was sure Somebody would
do it.
Anybody could have done it,
but Nobody did it.
Somebody got angry.
Because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought Anybody could do it.
But Nobody realised that
Everybody wouldn't do it.
Thus, Everybody blamed Somebody
when Nobody did



Principles of facilitation

PLA is generally facilitated by:

The facilitator can be a village leader, a community development worker, or a member of a governmental or non-governmental organization.

Build local capacity:

A facilitator takes every opportunity to build up local knowledge and skills in order to ensure that villagers themselves are able to manage their own development.



Encourage partnership:

Create partnership and build up networks wherever possible. Link yourself with the various interest groups involved at village level and with all the potential supporting organizations from the

Learn from others:

There is no need to re-invent the wheel. One of the best sources of learning is other facilitators who can look back many years of existing experiences. Get in touch with them, visit them and see

Hints for
facilitating learning
and action...

Be honest:

Be open and straightforward about the nature and purpose of your activity. If there is only a very small chance of positive improvement as a

Respect local knowledge:

All people, whether literate or not, rich or poor, children, women or men, have a remarkable understanding of their surroundings. They are capable of

The role of a facilitator

What is the role of a facilitator?

The facilitator accompanies villagers in their efforts to analyze their situations and to plan concrete actions for themselves. She or he introduces tools and techniques for enhancing communication among villagers, for exchanging ideas and for

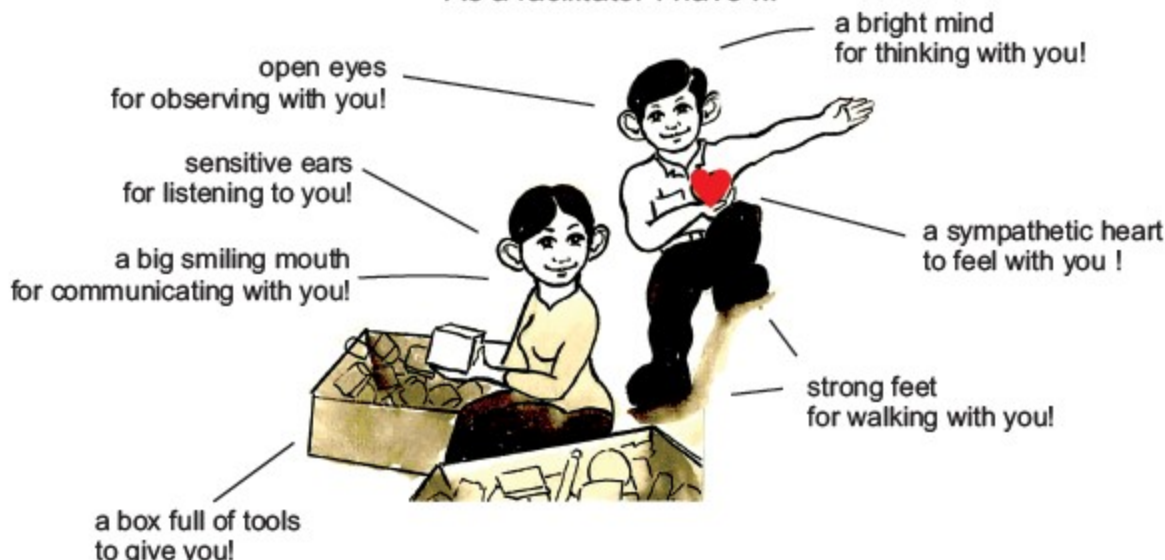


What are the attitudes of a facilitator?

- Create an atmosphere of friendliness, openness, and mutual support.
- Always show a respectful attitude as one of "equal to equal".
- Keep an open mind to observe, to ask questions, to listen and to learn.
- Respect the ideas, comments, decisions made by other people.
- Involve different groups such as women, men, youth, children, elderly, ethnic and religious minorities.

Photo below:
Keeping herself in the background this lady-facilitator supports a group of workshop participants fulfilling their group work task.

As a facilitator I have ...



Methods for working in the field

Dialoguing:

(Semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews, individual life stories, etc.)

Emphasis is on face-to-face interaction to capture individual viewpoints, cross-checking information, and personal experiences.

Field walk:

(Observation, transect walk, etc.)

Walking in a group with or without a definite route, stopping to chat and discuss issues as they arise.

(Wates, 42)

Field workshops:

(Village meetings, focus group discussions, well-being ranking, gender workshops, etc.)

Field workshops are a way for local communities to discuss needs and proposals, to identify problem areas, come up with recommendations, and draw up plans of action.

Diagrams:

(Calendar, matrix, time-line, institutional diagram, etc.)

Diagrams and charts are highly effective visual ways to collect, discuss and display information at all stages of the planning process, assessing the impact of development activities on the villagers.

Modelling:

(Model of a village, a watershed, a building, etc.)

Models are one of the most effective tools for getting people involved in planning and design. They are particularly useful for generating interest and for presenting ideas.

Models can be made from a wide variety of materials. Models are often adaptable so that alternative proposals or options can be easily shown by moving parts around.

Mapping:

(Natural resource maps, land use maps, village maps, social maps, village or farm transects, etc.)

Mapping is an effective non-verbal way of finding out how people view their area (I see what you mean!). It is a good way to gather and present site-specific data, understand differences in perception of women, men, young and old, and stimulate debates as a basis for joint planning.

Mapping can be done with pen and paper, lines in the



Semi-structured interview

What is it?

A semi-structured interview is a combination of both: it is a free, relaxed conversation and a structured consultation at the same time. Before conducting a semi-structured interview a list of open-ended questions or a checklist is prepared for guiding the conversations. During the interview itself, there is always flexibility to deal with additional questions and topics as they may arise as a result of new insights gained.

Objectives

- To gain an in-depth understanding of specific topics of interest such as management of natural resources, income generation, role of the Women's Union, etc.
- To bring to the light and document the experiences, ideas and proposals of individual persons and particular groups in the village such as minorities, landless families, etc.
- To cross-check and enrich the information obtained through other visual methods such as mapping,

A semi-structured interview is widely used for face-to-face interactions with individuals, key informants or small groups. A semi-structured interview is not a stand alone activity, it is generally applied in combination with other methods such as direct observations, diagramming, ranking,



How to do it?

- Use the "6 helpers": Who? - What? - Why? - When? - Where? - How?
- Use open-ended questions.
- Remember to probe responses: "Suppose...", "But why...?", "Please tell me more about it!", "Anything else...?"
- Ask the people's opinions.
- Cross-check and complement the information obtained with other methods.



The "six" helpers

Guiding questions

- What's your opinion about? (open question)
- How could you get such a beautiful house? (simulating question)
- What are the things you would like to

Focus group discussion

What is it?

A small group of people who discuss an issue of mutual interest is usually called a focus group. The discussion is guided by a list of key questions. The participants of a focus group usually share a common characteristic such as landlessness, lack of

Supporting organizations apply this method frequently for identifying development needs, for project planning as well as for evaluating the impact of changes on special village groups.



Objectives

- To share experiences and opinions on a topic of common concern such as land use, public services, etc.
- To discuss proposals and activities for improving the situation.
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of development activities through the eyes of specific interest groups.

Guiding questions

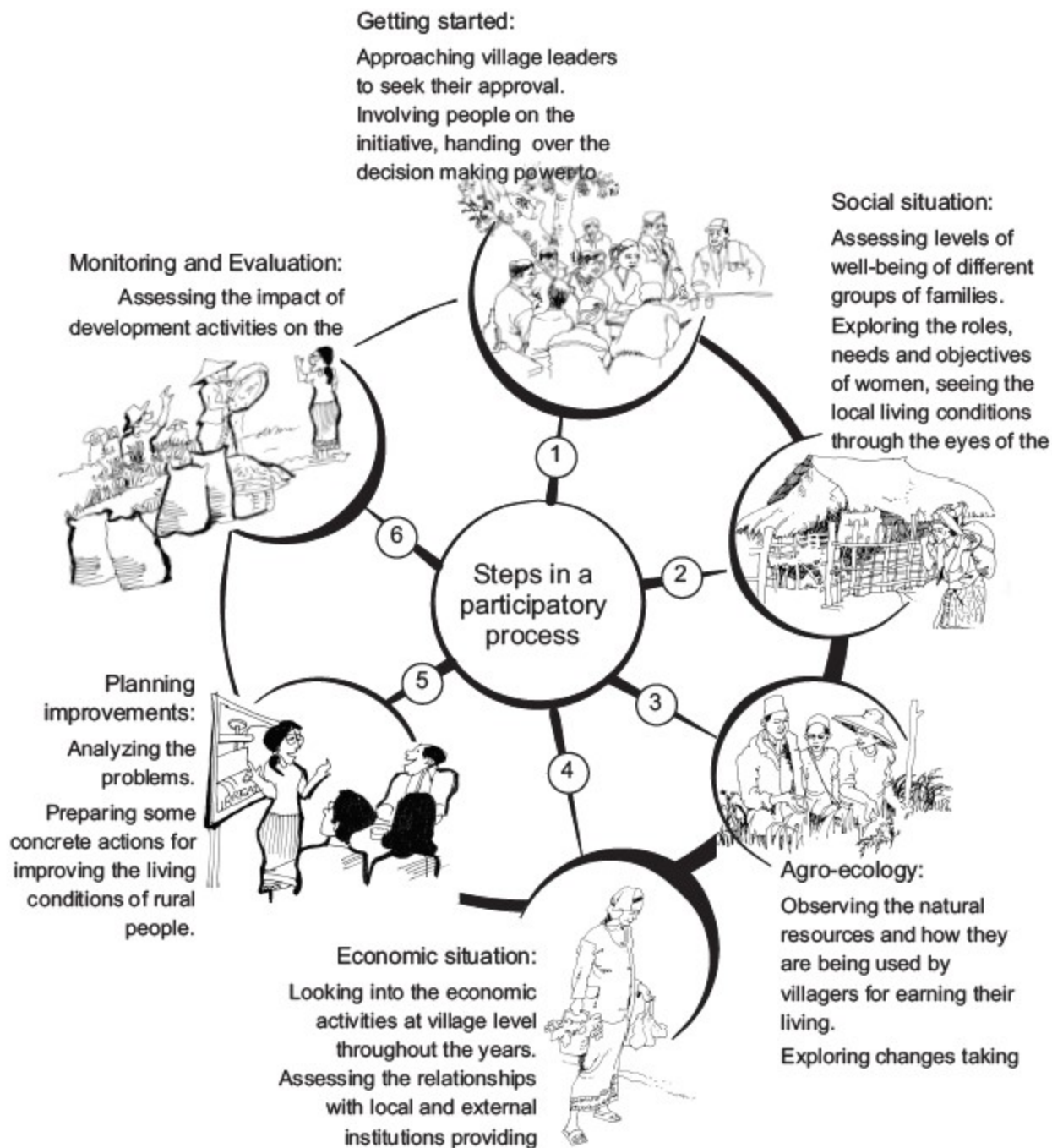
- What are the aspirations, needs, objectives or development potentials of the group?
- What are the specific characteristics of the problem or limitations the group faces?
- What are the possible causes of this problem?
- What can be done and what are the

How to do it?

- Invite not more than 10 people who share a particular interest in the topic.
- Form groups with common characteristics such as people with same ethnic background, landless workers, women's group, community leaders, etc.
- Inform them about objective, procedure and use of the outcome of the discussion.
- Draw out the voice of everyone involved through questions in a guided



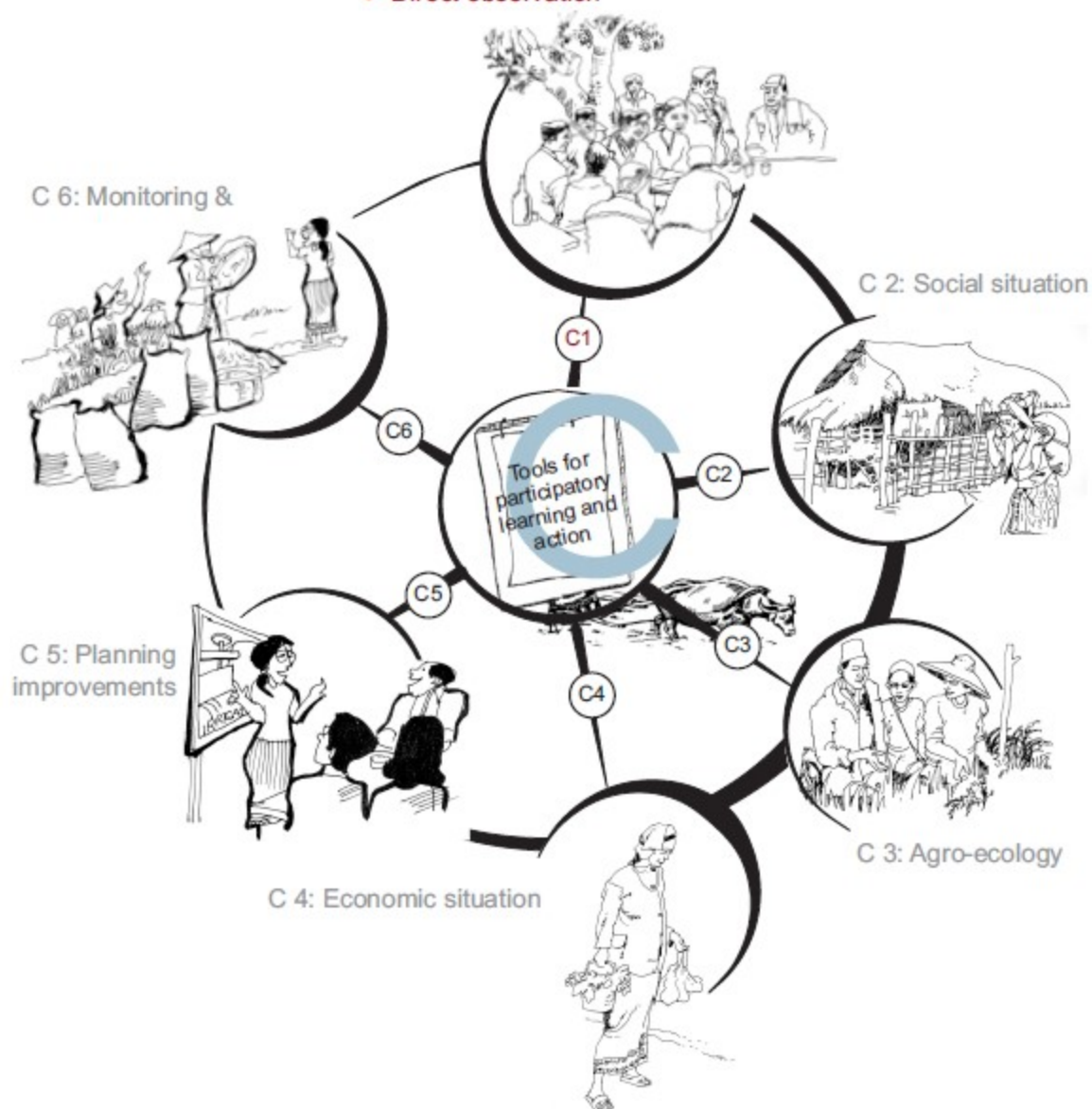
Steps in a participatory process



Participatory Learning and Action

C 1: Getting started

- Initial contact with the community
- Secondary information
- Village briefing
- Village profile
- Village map
- Direct observation



Initial contact with the community

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

The initial contact between representatives from the village and development workers from the outside helps to get familiar with each other and to explore the options for cooperation at the start of a development process. It is a very vital step for building the foundations for future trust.



Objectives

- To establish an initial contact between outsiders (development workers, supporting organizations) and representatives from the village.
- To assess jointly the options for a possible partnership.
- To arrive at a common understanding of the expectations, responsibilities and limitations each side is facing.



How to do it?

- Introduce the external organization wishing to link with the community.
- Invite villagers to present their situations, objectives, activities, and limitations.
- Bring to light what each side is expecting from the other side.
- Make clear which expectations can be met and which can not.
- Seek an initial agreement among all persons, groups and organizations concerned
- Define a tentative schedule of future activities.
- Name the people in charge of

Guiding questions

- What are the appropriate procedure, place, timing, contact people, protocol for initiating a first encounter with the villagers?
- What are the characteristics, development potentials, official and hidden objectives of the external organizations on the one hand and of the village on the other?
- What are the expectations of the

Secondary information

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

Secondary information refers to all published and unpublished materials such as maps, reports, statistical data, photos, and newspaper articles. A systematic review of these materials has to be done before starting up any work in a village.



Objectives

- To obtain an idea of the main characteristics of the village prior to going into the field.
- To base any new activity on experiences documented in reports,

How to do it?

- Inquire at local authorities, ministries, statistical offices, research stations and university libraries about the available information on the village.
- Contact supporting organizations, projects, village committees and community-based organizations in the area to obtain reports.
- Share the background information

Guiding questions

- What are the available sources of information on the community?
- Where can we get access to the sources of background information?
- How best can the background information be summarized and presented in the form of diagrams or



Village briefing

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

Briefing workshops are simple and easy to organize meetings held to inform villagers about new activities. The village meeting is useful at the start of a project or action planning event and can act as a public



How to do it?

- Discuss with village leaders the idea of organizing a village briefing workshop.
- Invite potential users of the project to attend the briefing workshop.
- Introduce the organizers, their role and the purpose of the workshop.
- Ask villagers to come up with their experiences, objectives and ideas to initiate activities at village level.
- Use pen and paper to keep records of the contributions made by villagers.
- Discuss the proposals made and come up with some recommendations.

Objectives

- To introduce people to the project.
- To get people involved and motivated.
- To identify experiences and gain

Guiding questions

- Ask people to brainstorm on three questions:



Process planner

Aims

- What do we want to achieve?
- What are the main problems we are facing?
- What has to be done?
- What are the areas of interest?

Process

- When should activities take place?
- Who are the key people to involve?
- What methods do we favour?
- What expertise do we need?

Organization

- Which organization or person should lead the process?
- Who else should help?
- What are the resources needed? (Time, money, materials, etc.)
- Other ideas and proposals?

(Customise and leave space for additional responses!)

Village profile

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

A village profile is a picture of the people, history, environment, characteristics, and resources of a village. The profile is built up with the active involvement of village members. It offers a sound basis for starting the community planning processes.

Objectives

- To obtain an impression of the community from a birds eye view.
- To characterize the context in which development activities are proposed.
- To get a better understanding of the living conditions, key problems, and potentials of the community.



How to do it?

- Invite people to collect general information on their village.
- Combine different visual and oral methods, group work and interviews for collecting information.
- Sketch the core information on a big sheet of paper.
- Illustrate the central information with graphs, pictures, etc.

Guiding questions

- How can local people be best involved in building up their village profile?
- What are the methods for collecting, processing and presenting the information?
- How best can the village profile be presented and used for planning











Village profile

Tools for participatory learning and action



Example

Thông tin chung về cộng đồng

Tên cộng đồng	Xã Công Chính - Huyện Nông Cống - Tỉnh Thanh Hóa
Diện tích	1014 ha
Dân số	4217 Nữ  51%
Dân tộc	Kinh
Tôn giáo	Thiên chúa giáo 
Ngành nghề sản xuất	Trồng lúa, ngô - Chăn nuôi bò, lợn dệt cói, thêu ren,  đi làm thuê 
Tỉ lệ hộ nghèo	31% 
Cách thức trao đổi thông tin	Loa truyền thanh, bảng tin, thư viện - bưu điện xã   
Công việc chung của cộng đồng	Làm đường, xây kênh mương... sửa trường học  

Village map

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

A village map is a drawing which visualizes the boundaries, roads, buildings, natural resources and other physical characteristics of an area. The map is created by the

Objectives

- To look at the village through the eyes of the local people.
- To identify the physical living conditions in the area.
- To serve as reference for future

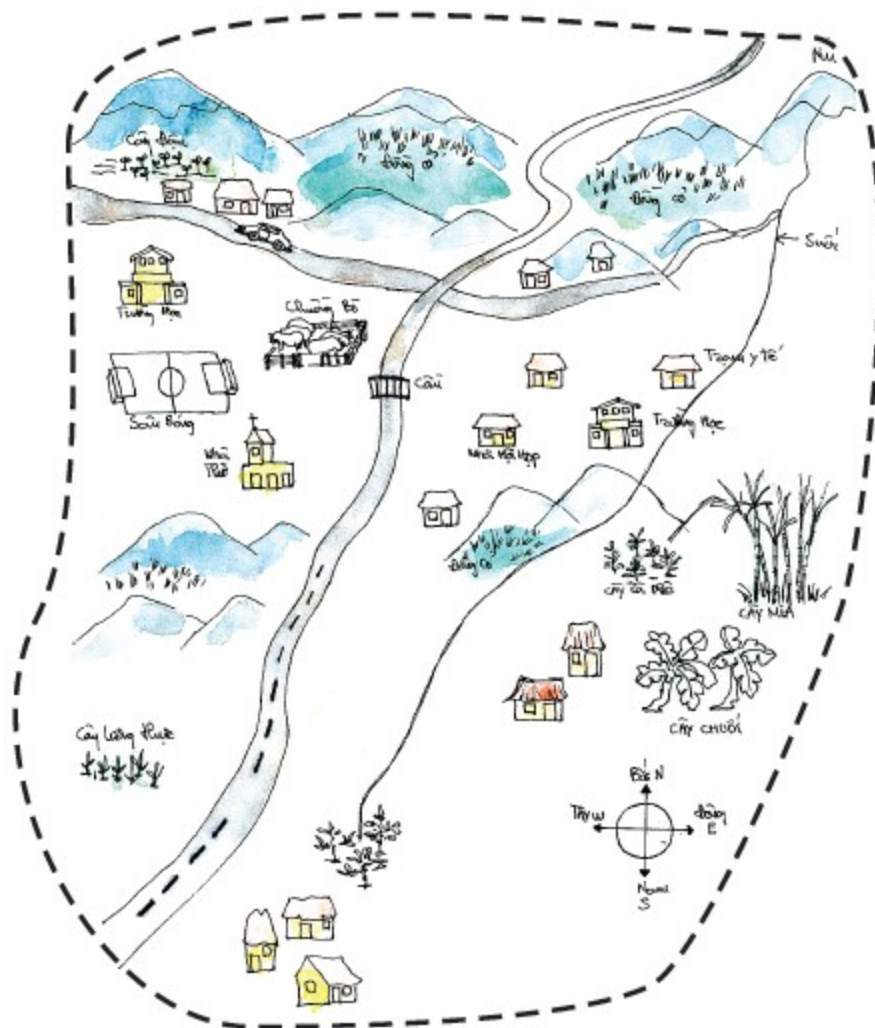


How to do it?

- Use pen and paper, lines in the sand, chalk on the floor, or other locally available materials at hand for creating a map.
- Visualize the boundaries, infrastructure such as roads, irrigation system, buildings, and natural resources (rivers, mountains, fields, etc.).
- Indicate social aspects of village life such as residential areas, schools, health centres, markets, etc.
- Ask different groups of villagers such as women, men, children, and migrants to draw their particular map.
- Analyze jointly the map in order to understand different viewpoints of different groups about their village.
- Discuss what should be changed and how it can be done.

Village map

Tools for participatory learning and action



Guiding questions



- What are the physical characteristics of the area, community, village, neighbourhood, etc.?
- What are places of interest for the daily life of villagers?
- What are the viewpoints of women and men, land owners and landless people, young and old, traditional families and migrants?
- What do people like, what do they dislike about their village?

Direct observation

Tools for participatory learning and action



What is it?

Direct observation provides a first hand impression on the main observable characteristics of a village such as landscape, farming systems, social meeting places, infrastructure, etc. A village trip for direct observation is used to familiarise everyone with the physical environment and

How to do it?

- Prepare a checklist to make sure that none of the important local features are overlooked.
- Form a small group of key people from the village and some outsiders.
- Walk around the fields, markets, public places and look for key indicators such



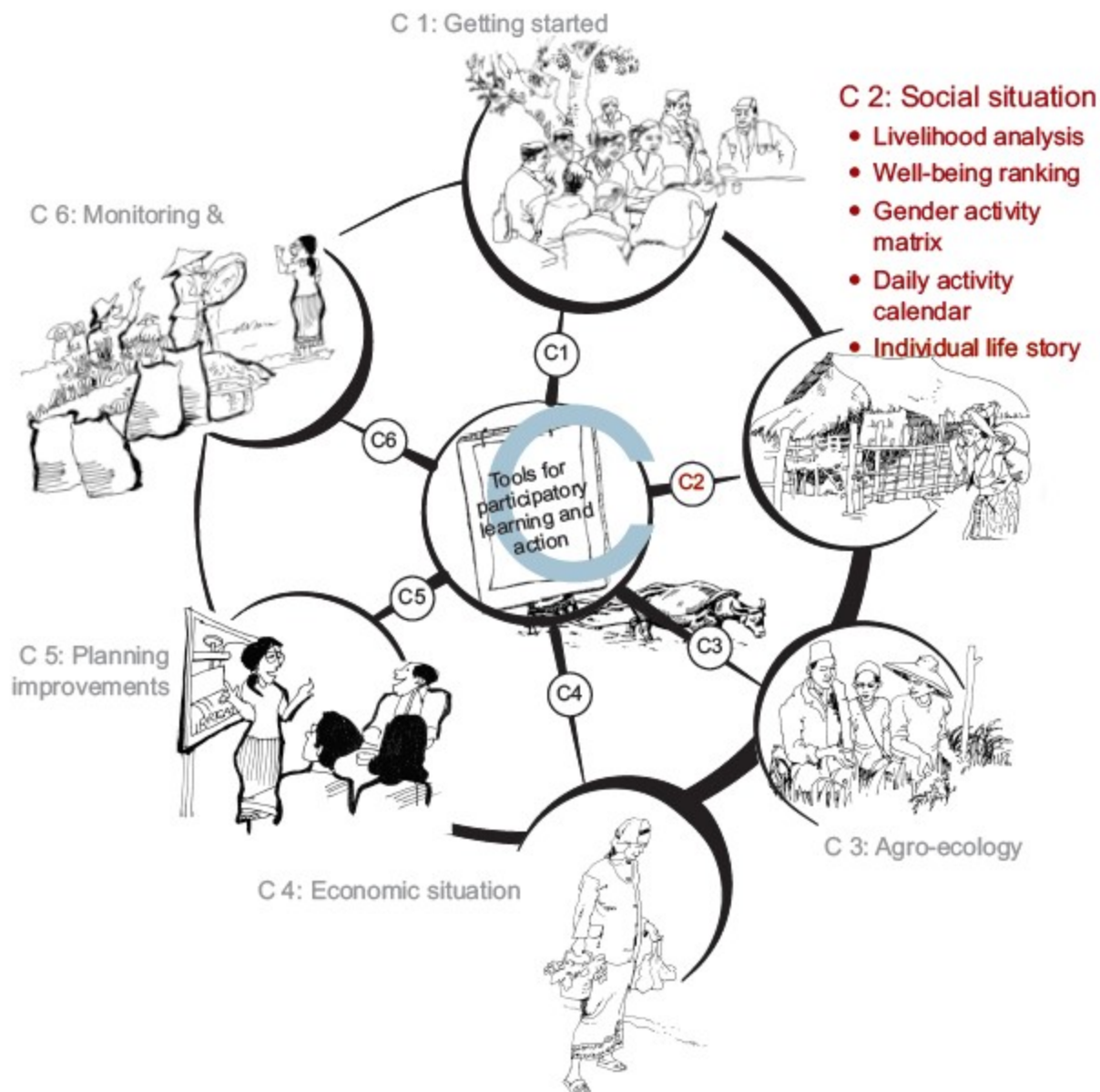
Objectives

- To obtain some preliminary indicators for well-being in the village.
 - To look at what people do, how they interact with each other.
 - To cross-check findings derived by other methods such as village mapping or semi-structured interviews.
-
- Observe what people do, women and men, young and old, etc.
 - Take some notes, prepare drawings, take photos of the places visited.
 - Compile the materials into a form useful to the next stage of activity.

Guiding questions

- What does the natural environment of the community look like: geographical characteristics, forest, agricultural land, rivers, lakes, soil erosion, and other land marks?
- What does the economic situation look like: infrastructure, market, type of houses, etc.?
- What does the social environment look
- What does the institutional environment look like: availability of public buildings such as schools, health posts, extension offices, etc.?
- What about the living conditions of people: houses of local families, made out of wood or concrete, type of roof, fences, maintenance, etc.?

Participatory Learning and Action



Livelihood analysis

What is it?

The livelihood analysis is very helpful to learn about the life and survival strategies of rural people. It provides information on the main activities, sources of income, main expenditure and decision-making behaviour. It assists to understand the coping strategies of households with different levels of income and with different socio-economic

Objectives

- To identify the main income generating activities.
- To identify the period of shortage and surplus of income.
- To learn about survival strategies of villagers.



How to do it?

- The information is best organized in an annual calendar indicating when participation in a form of livelihood is most common, and how family income varies month to month.
- The diagrams should describe only a few variables at a time, for example, types of livelihood and income.
- One or two matrices can be used, depending on the level of detail

Guiding questions

- Which are the most common types of livelihood in the community?
- What does the main source of the main income come from?
- What are the main expenditures?

Example A household of Cong Binh Commune, Nong Cong district, Thanh Hoa province, November 2003

Nguồn thu	Lệ lương lao động	Vật tư phải mua	Sản lượng hàng năm	Cách thức tiêu thụ	Tiền thu được trong năm	Kho khăn/ Trễ ngại
Trồng lúa	Bố + Mẹ	- Giống - Phân bón - Thuốc trừ sâu	1200 Kg	Bán cho người thu mua	2,400,000 đồng	- Giá vật tư tăng - Giá gạo thấp
Trồng ngô	Bố + Mẹ	- Giống - Phân bón - Thuốc trừ sâu	500 Kg	Bán cho người thu mua	600,000	- Giá vật tư cao - Chuột phá hoại
Rau các loại	Bố + Mẹ + Con gái	- Giống - Phân bón		Bán tại chợ xã	2,000,000	- Sâu bệnh - Chuột phá hoại
Nuôi 1 con bò	Mẹ + Con gái + Con trai	- Thức ăn - Thuốc phòng bệnh - Con giống		Bán cho lò mổ	3,000,000	- Giá thức ăn cao
Nuôi 4 con lợn	Mẹ + Con gái	- Con giống - Thức ăn - Phòng bệnh	400 Kg	Bán cho lò mổ	6,000,000	
Nuôi 40 con gà	Mẹ + Con gái + Con trai	- Con giống - Phòng bệnh	80 Kg	Bán tại chợ xã	1,600,000	- Dễ bị dịch bệnh

Well-being ranking

Tools for participatory learning and action



What is it?

Well-being ranking is a very important and widely used method for learning about poverty at the grassroots and for targeting development activities. Firstly, a well-being ranking exercise characterizes the overall living conditions at the household level. Then, all the village households are ranked and grouped according to their level of well-being: the rich, the medium, the poor and

The strength of a well-being ranking is that it starts with the villager's intimate knowledge of each other. It allows a look at household's poverty through the eyes of the villagers themselves. The standard of living of each household is ranked in relation to the standard of other households in the village. This can be a very sensitive issue. That is why this

Objectives

- To understand what poverty means to the individual village households.
- To use the criteria of the villagers for assessing the extent of poverty.
- To look at different faces of poverty: lack of material resources, social exclusion, distorted gender roles, insufficient income sources.
- To identify the different levels of well-being of different social groups.
- To design development activities in accordance with the needs of each





How to do it?

- Invite a group of well-respected villagers to draw a social map with roads, including all houses, public places, farmland, etc.
- Ask the group to identify and discuss criteria and indicators for poverty at household level (economic, social, institutional, individual aspects).
- Let the group assess the poverty of each household using the criteria and indicators they just defined for their village (access to land, number of
- Place on the social map a specific symbol next to each household to characterize the type and extent of well-being or poverty.
- Include a legend on the social map to explain the symbols used.
- Rank the level of poverty of each household in comparison with the other households in the village.
- Form 3 to 5 different groups of households: rich - medium - poor, etc.
- Prepare a report on the results.

Well-being ranking

Tools for participatory learning and action

Example

				
	rich	average	poor	very poor
Shelter	Stilt house with good timber 120 m ² , roofing tiles	Stilt house with average timber 100 m ² , roofing palm leaves	Stilt house with bad timber 80 m ² , roofing palm leaves	Stilt house with bad timber < 80 m ² , roofing palm leaves
Cultivating area (1sao = 360m ²)	Rice field: 5 sao Forest: 2 ha Vegetable: 2 sao	Rice field: 5 sao Forest: 2 ha Vegetable: 2 sao	Rice field: 4 sao Forest: 2 ha Vegetable: 1.5 sao	Rice field: 3 sao Forest: 1 ha Vegetable: 1 sao
Domestic animal	2 buffaloes 4 pigs 25 chickens	2 buffaloes 3 pigs 20 chickens	1 buffaloes 2 pigs 15 chickens	0 buffaloes 1 pigs 10 chickens
Properties	motorbikes, TV, ploughing machine, rubbing machine	motorbikes, TV, ploughing machine	bikes, TV	bikes, radio
Others	1-2 children, Production knowledge, Business knowledge	2-3 children, Production knowledge	2-4 children, Lack of production and business knowledge	3-6 children, Lack of production and business knowledge

Guiding questions

- What are the criteria of people for saying a family is rich or poor ?
- What are the material characteristics of poverty (land, tools, houses, etc.)?
- What are the social characteristics (exclusion, minorities, widows, etc.)?
- What are the institutional aspects (group membership, access to
- What are other causes of poverty (seasonal stress, food shortage, natural calamities, illness, political unrest, etc.)?
- What are the individual characteristics (self-esteem, level of education, family support, dignity, etc.)?
- What prevents people from finding

What is it?

A gender activity matrix provides a visual impression of the different activities, rights and obligations of women and men at family or village level. The exercise allows a look at rural life separately through the eyes of women and through the eyes of men.



The term "Gender" refers to the different roles of men and women in family and social life. These roles are usually determined by cultural norms, social values and political decisions in a society. Aspects of gender analysis have to be integrated into all phases of a participatory learning process because women are usually much stronger





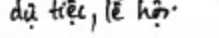
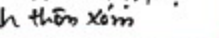
Objectives

- To have a close look at the different aspirations, responsibilities, rights, needs and activities of women and men at household and village level.
- To reflect on the different roles and relationships of women and men.
- To become aware of the impact that any change in the economic, social and political field may have on women and children as well.
- To discuss activities for overcoming the imbalances between men and



Example

Xã Công Chính: Ma trận phân công công việc theo giới

Vai trò	Phụ nữ ♀	Nam giới ♂	Nhận xét
Lao động sản xuất	Cấy lúa, gặt hái, chăn nuôi 	Cấy lúa, gặt hái, làm thợ 	Thời gian lao động của nam và nữ như nhau
Việc nhà / Tái sản xuất	Nội trợ, vệ sinh, chăm sóc con cái, xem tivi 	Đọc báo, xem tivi, dạy con học 	Phụ nữ được nghỉ ngơi ít hơn nam giới
Việc chung trong cộng đồng	Vệ sinh thôn xóm, thăm hỏi người ốm, dự tiệc, lễ hội 	Đi họp, đi dự tiệc, tổ chức lễ hội; vệ sinh thôn xóm 	Nam nữ đều tham gia các việc chung của cộng đồng

Ý kiến đề xuất:

- Cần quan tâm cho phụ nữ được nghỉ ngơi nhiều hơn
- Tạo điều kiện cho phụ nữ tham gia công tác xã hội.

How to do it?

- Invite a group of women and a separate group of men to create a matrix which illustrates their daily, monthly or yearly activities.
- Use graphics, pictures, symbols and local materials for recording the different activities of women and men throughout a given period of time.
- Compare the activity matrix of women with that of men.
- Discuss options for coming to a more equal share of responsibilities

Guiding questions

- What are the various farming, household and social activities undertaken by women and men throughout a day, a month, a year?
- What are the responsibilities, rights and needs of men on the one hand, and of women on the other hand in the family, and in the village?
- What are the social activities of men and women in the village, such as attending meetings, communal work, self-help groups?
- What are the options for improving gender - specific conditions for women and men concerning income generation

Daily activity calendar

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

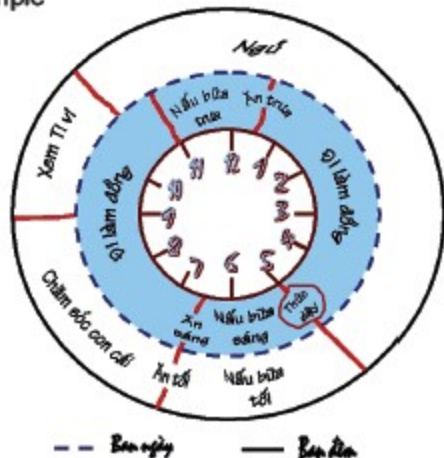
A daily activity calendar is a record of the typical activities of a person or a family. The calendar indicates the type and time dedicated to each activity during a normal working day.

A record of the daily activities helps to understand how much time a person spends on activities for direct survival such as farming, housework, off-farm work and

Objectives

- To gain a sound understanding of the daily routine of people living in poverty.
- To compare the daily activities of different groups in a village: the better-off, women-headed households, landless people.
- To explore how much time is available

Example



How to do it?

- Invite men, women, young, old, better-off and poorer people to complete separately a daily activity calendar.
- Document the activities on the ground or on a big sheet of paper.
- Find out about the first, the second, the third, and the other activities during a normal working day (be aware of seasonal changes).
- Compare the daily activity profile of different members of the same family as well as of the richer and poorer families within the same village.



Guiding questions

- When do you usually get up?
- What does a normal working day look like?
- Which activity do you consider to be the most important one for you and your family? Why?
- Which activity is the least important one? Why?
- How much time is available for social obligations, development work?

Individual life story

What is it?

An individual person or a poor family recalls important events which had a strong impact on their life. These events or phases in the life of a person include usually childhood, education, marriage, work experience, migration, political unrest, etc.

The individual life story helps to understand why poor people are poor, what has been their individual way into poverty, what are their hopes and disappointments, and their survival strategies. The individual life story adds a human face to poverty analysis

How to do it?

- Establish an atmosphere of openness, trust and rapport.
- Explain the interest you have in the individual life of a person.
- Keep some questions in mind to guide the interaction.

Guiding questions

- Childhood: Who are your parents ? Where have you grown up?
- Education: What about school? Did you have a chance to go to school?
- Work: What are your working experiences ? At what age did you start?
- Income generation: How do you earn your living?
- Family life: What about your own family, wife, husband, children?
- Special events: Are there any special events in your life which affected you strongly such as migration, political unrest, floods, etc.?
- Aspirations: What are your dreams ?

Objectives

- To learn about poverty through the words of the poor themselves.
- To be aware of the dreams, aspirations, feelings and sufferings of the poor.
- To gain an understanding of the individual determinants of poverty.
- To find out about the individual



Example

- Na was born in 1930 in Binh Thuan province.
- She was the seventh out of eight children.
- Her father was a farmer, her mother took care of the children and worked 1 ha of rice land.
- Na went to primary school for 3 years, then she left to give her mother a hand.
- She was married to a local trader at the age of 17.
- She gave birth to 6 children.
- Na started dress-making with a small credit from the village savings club.

Village time line

Tools for participatory learning and action

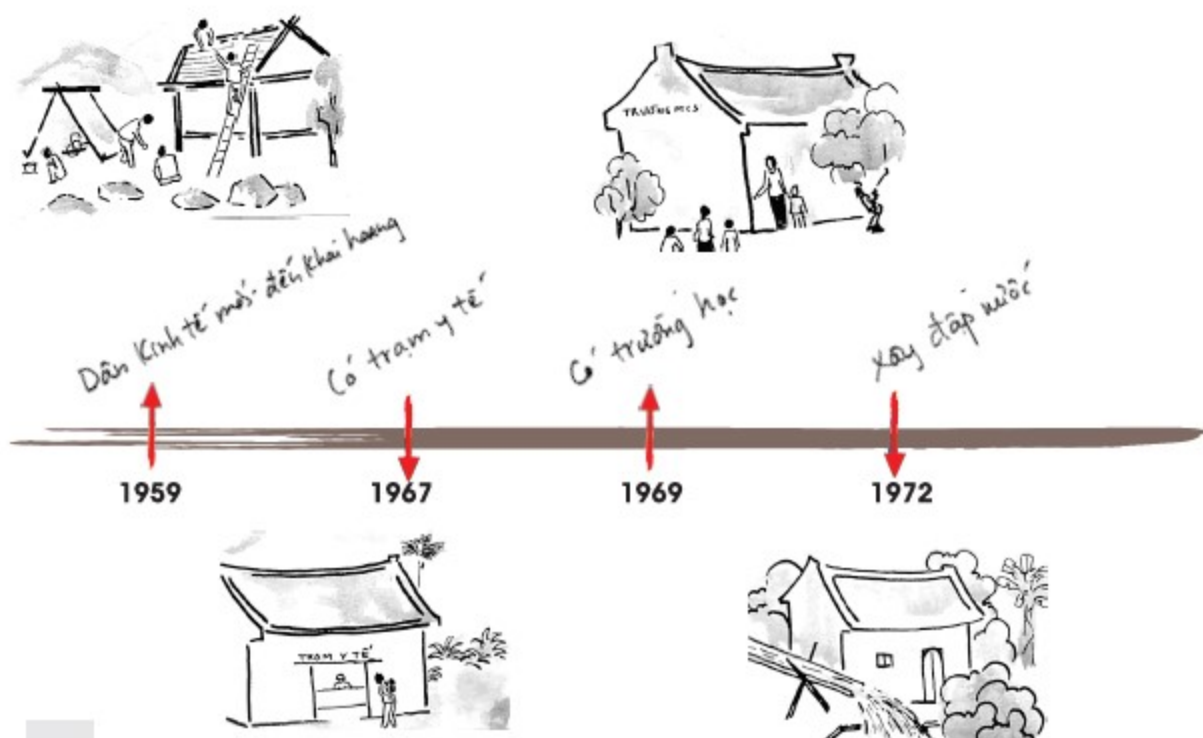


What is it?

A time line is a chronological description of important events in the history of a village. Events which had a strong impact on the way of life in a village might be the construction of roads and bridges, building of a school, access to public health

Objectives

- To obtain some background information on the history of the village.
- To identify those events which had a strong impact on the living conditions.
- To discover some trends with regards



Village time line

Tools for participatory learning and action



How to do it?

- Record the historical events, their date, and their impacts on the village on a large sheet of paper.
- Use drawings and graphic symbols to illustrate important events.
- Follow these steps:
 - Year or period the event took place
 - Description of the event
 - Impact on the village life

Guiding questions

- What have been the most striking events in the past?
- How did those events influence the village life?
- What have been positive experiences, what have been negative ones?



Xây chợ

1979

Khởi sản phẩm

1986

Có điện

1996

Có báo điện văn hóa xã

1998

Áp dụng giống lúa năng suất cao

2000



If you wish to build a ship

Don't start

Assembling the wood

Cutting the boards and

Distributing the work

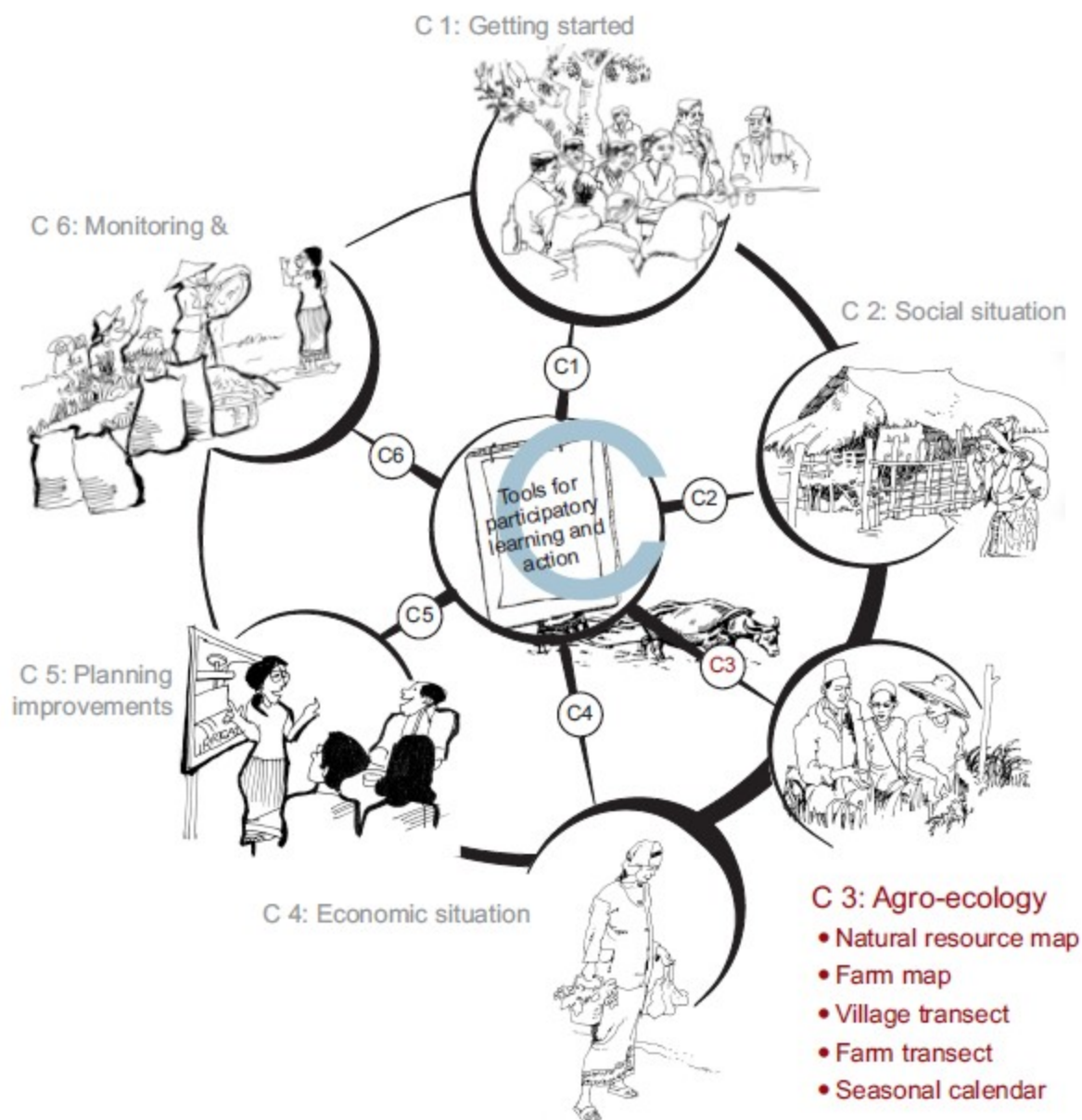
BUT

Wake in your men

The longing

For the wide open seas.

Participatory Learning and Action



Natural resource map

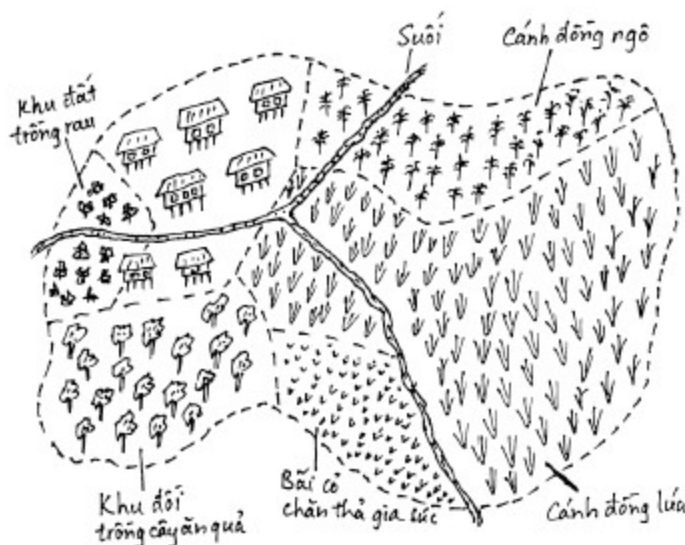
What is it?

A natural resource map is a visual presentation of the biological resources such as mountains, forests, rivers, and arable land. It may as well include the village roads, houses, public buildings and

Objectives

- To perform a visual inventory of the existing natural resources and biodiversity within a defined area.
- To identify the areas for agricultural and non-agricultural land use.
- To assist villagers in land use planning and resource management.

Example



How to do it?

- Invite knowledgeable people from the village to draw a map.
- Use a sheet of paper or other locally available materials.
- Place emphasis on the existing natural resources.
- Analyze the main problem in the use of natural resources.
- Identify the options for sustainable land use practices.
- Discuss the requirements for putting it into action.

Guiding questions

- Where are the existing natural resources located in your area?
- What are the problems villagers are facing in using the resources?
- What are the potentials for increasing land use?
- What are the options for managing the natural resources on a sustainable

Farm map



Objectives

- To gain an understanding of the main characteristics of the farming system in the area.
- To document the patterns of farm use like crop cultivation and animal raising.
- To identify potentials and constraints for improving farm productivity.

What is it?

A farm map visualizes the main elements of a farm such as buildings, location of land, access to water, crops, and trees.

How to do it?

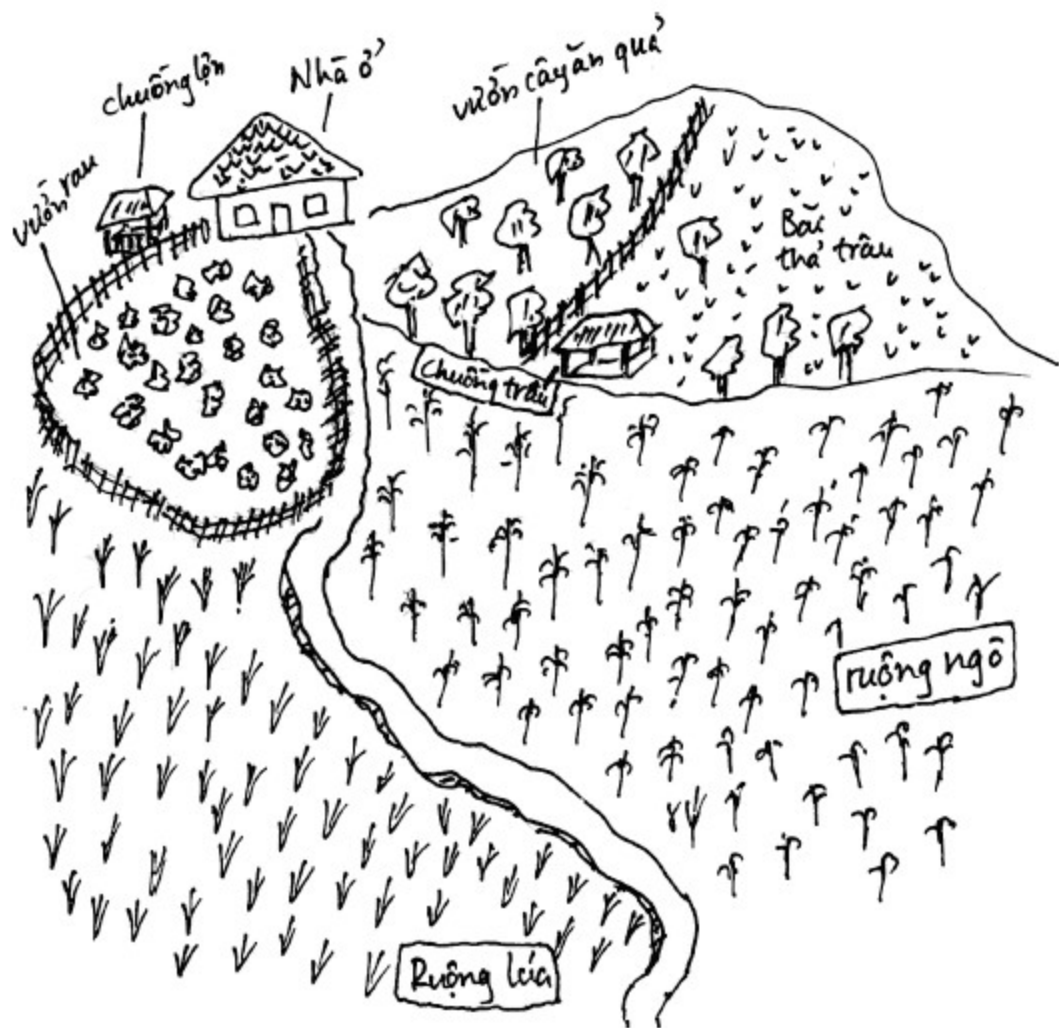
- Use a big sheet of paper or the ground with some local materials.
- Ask members of the family to sketch the farm and its boundaries.
- Visualize the area for the main crops, animals, trees, buildings, paths, infrastructure, and water sources.
- Discuss the potentials and limitations for improving farm productivity.



Guiding questions

- What are the main characteristics of the farm?
- What kind of crops does it grow and where is it done?
- What kind of animals does it raise and where are the animal kept?
- What are the other farm components and where are they located?

Example



Village transect

Tools for participatory learning and action



What is it?

A transect provides a cross-sectional view of a location. A transect map describes the landscape, location of natural resources and main land use. A village transect map is very helpful to visualize the topography, soil characteristics, crops grown, animals kept and houses built in the area. The transect map further allows us to identify land use problems and development constraints, as well as potentials for income generating activities in the location.

Objectives

- To gain an overview of the biophysical characteristics of a village such as hilly land, watershed areas, forestry, arable land use, local infrastructure, etc.
- To characterize the ecological diversity and different patterns of land use, for example agricultural production, animal rearing, woodland, fish ponds.
- To identify opportunities and limitations for sustainable land use, for

How to do it?

- Take a walk with knowledgeable people through a section of the village.
- Observe jointly the natural and physical characteristics of each section.
- Discuss on the spot the potential areas for improving land use or for starting up other local income generating activities.
- Take note during the transect walk.
- Draw a transect map with pen and





	Rừng bậc thang	Vườn nhà	Đất trồng	Những rẫy	Rừng trồng
Điều kiện tự nhiên	Đất màu vàng xám, hơi chua	Đất dầy, màu đen, pha cát sỏi xám, hơi chua dốc 25°.	Đất vàng nhạt, xám, bạc màu chua, độ dốc eo	Đất pha cát sỏi, xám chua độ dốc eo	
Cây trồng	Đặc canh lúa 1 vụ, năng suất 2 tạ/ha. Ngô \approx 3 tạ/ha	Đào, hồng, mận bưởi, vải, chuối ...	Bồ hoàng, nhiều cỏ dại, cây bụi ...	Phụ thuộc vào tự nhiên: ngô, sắn, đậu ...	Chất lượng kém, phụ thuộc vào thiên nhiên
Khó khăn	Không chủ động nước tưới, thiếu giống tốt, ít bán phân.	Thiếu đất giống kỹ thuật kém		Thiếu giống tốt, phân bón, xói mòn mạnh	
Mong muốn	tăng năng suất	Có vườn lồng và đầu tư	Phủ xanh bằng cây thực ăn gia súc	Trồng cây cải tạo đất chống xói mòn	

Guiding questions

- Where do farmers grow cereals, raise animals, build their houses, etc.?
- What are the constraints and potentials for improving land use in this area?
- What is needed to take full advantage



Farm transect

Tools for participatory learning and action



What is it?

A farm transect is a cross-sectional view of a farm. It covers a smaller scale of analysis than a village transect. The different forms of land use, soil erosion, the state of the environment, social and economic resources of the farm are identified,

Objectives

- To record the physical and natural characteristics of a farm.
- To characterize the different patterns of land use, for example crop areas, animal rearing, woodland or fish ponds within a farm.
- To identify the opportunities and limitations for land use, for increasing farm production or for planning alternative non-farm income activities.

Sử dụng đất	rừng trồng	đất vườn	nhà ở	chương trại gia súc	đất canh tác
Cây trồng	tre, nứa	cây ăn quả (vải, quýt)	—	—	ngô lạc
Vật nuôi	—	—	—	trâu lợn	—
Khó khăn	khó quản lý	đất dốc, bạc màu, xói lở	thiếu nước sinh hoạt	dễ bị bệnh vào mùa đông	thiếu nước tưới
Tiềm năng/giải pháp	chia thành các lô	trồng cây lâu năm, bảo vệ đất	dẫn nước từ khe suối trên núi về	lâm chương trại hợp vệ sinh	cải tạo đất, dùng phân gia súc, trồng cây chịu hạn

Farm transect



How to do it?

- Walk with the farmer and other people through a typical section of the farm land.
- Take note of the interesting aspects observed during the transect walk.
- Pay special attention to the observations made by the farmer.
- After the transect walk, invite the farmer and other members of his household to prepare a transect on a sheet of paper or on the ground.
- Discuss especially the opportunities and limitations for sustainable land

Guiding questions

- What part of the land is used for which crops or animals?
- What are the characteristics of the soil, soil fertility, soil erosion?
- What kinds of crops or trees are grown?
- What kinds of animals are kept?
- What are the opportunities and limitations for increasing farm production?
- What are the alternatives for using the farm?

Seasonal calendar

What is it?

A seasonal calendar illustrates the agricultural production cycle throughout the year. It includes natural changes in climate and rainfall, incidence of crop disease, and economic activities such as labour requirements, input supply, and marketing. A seasonal calendar can reveal certain patterns or bottlenecks such as periods of heavy workload, especially for women,

Objectives

- To identify the difficult times and the times when the villagers have plenty.
- To understand the impact of seasonality on the living conditions, on food security, and on the economic situation of different families in the village.
- To determine the appropriate time for supplying food, farm inputs, technical advice, financial, marketing and



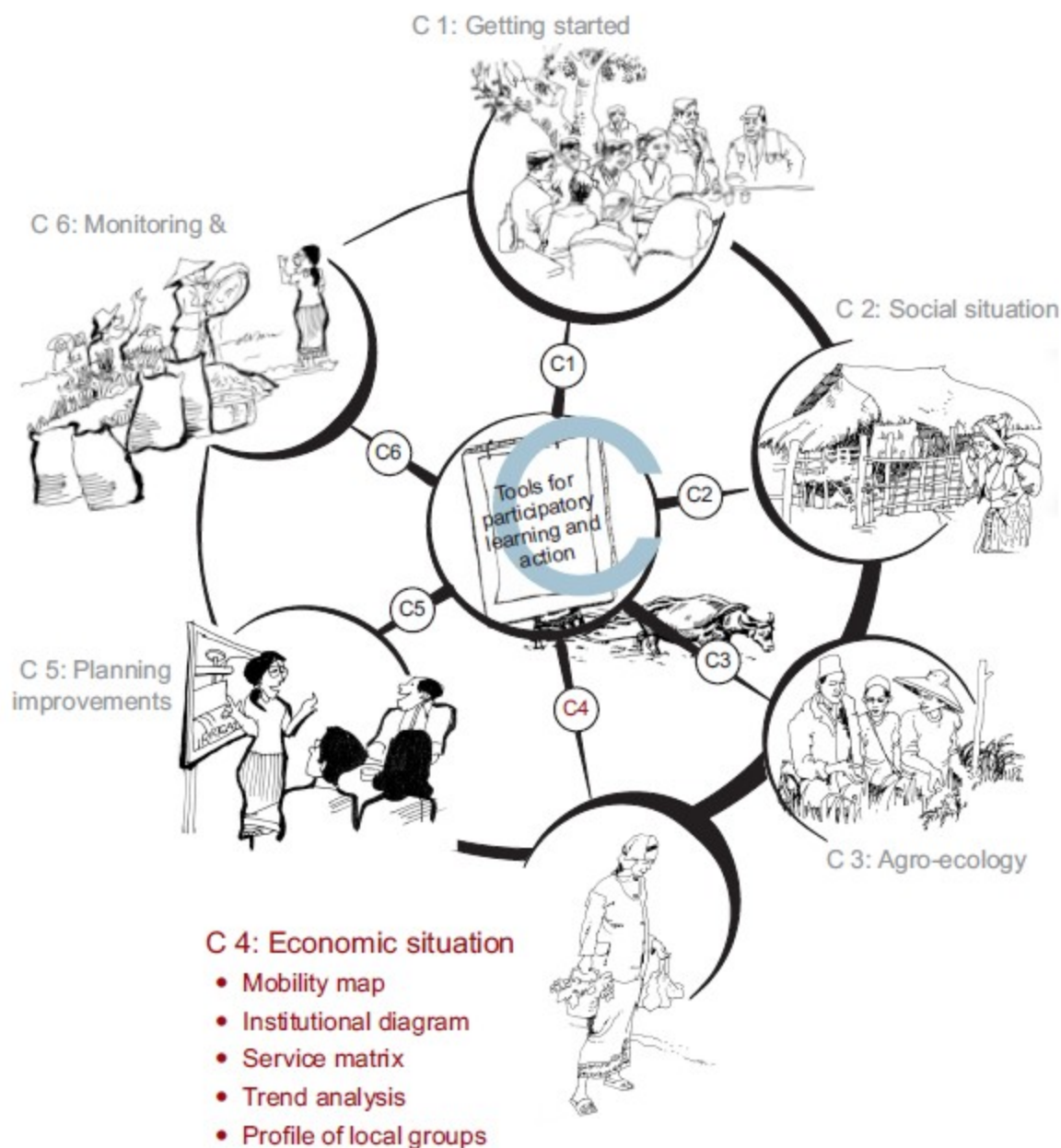
How to do it?

- Ask individual people, a group of farmers, including women, to illustrate the months of the agricultural year along the horizontal axis.
- List the agricultural, social and economic activities on the vertical axis such as ploughing, planting, buying, selling, communal work and obligations.
- Include other aspects like rainfall patterns, need for input supply, selling of products, food shortage, incidence of

Guiding questions

- When does the agricultural or the rainy season start?
- What are the agricultural activities such as ploughing, planting, and what are the related economic activities such as inputs supply, and marketing?
- What are the critical days, weeks or months of a year regarding shortage of labour, credit for buying inputs, lack of food, outbreak of malaria, etc.?
- What can be done to reduce the burden of difficult times of the year?

Participatory Learning and Action



Mobility map

What is it?

A mobility map is a record of the movement of different individuals and groups to and from the village. It reveals the frequency of contact villagers have with the outside world for earning an additional income, for buying and selling products, for visiting relatives, for education and other activities.



Objectives

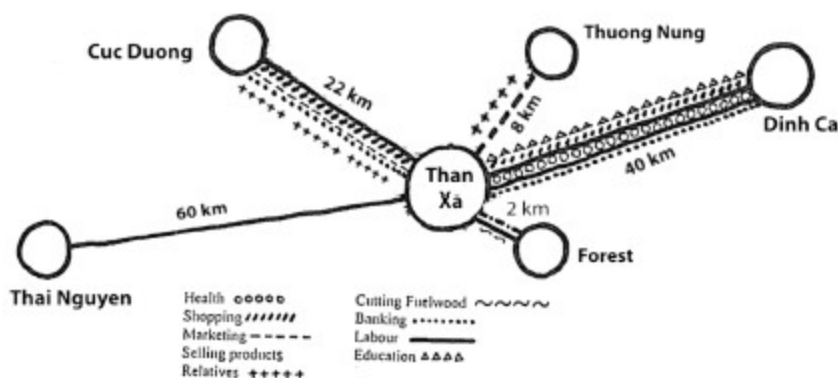
- To describe the frequency of movements out of and into the village.
- To identify the reasons for the mobility.
- To get an idea on the groups of villagers with the highest and lowest mobility.
- To analyze the impact of the mobility

How to do it?

- Invite individuals or a group of people to talk about their own mobility.
- Identify places such as sub-districts, districts, or provincial towns, or even neighbouring countries where people go.
- Visualize the mobility for a certain period on a paper or on the ground.
- Use different symbols or lines for different types and frequencies of mobility.
- Try to find out the reason for the movements such as earning some money, for marketing, for visiting relatives, for studying.
- Try to get an idea on how the mobility has changed over time.

Guiding questions

- Do you travel to other places outside this village?
- How often do you travel to other places?
- How far away are those places from this community?
- What is the reason for travelling to those places?



Institutional diagram

Tools for participatory learning and action



Objectives

- To list the institutions which play a role in the village.
- To explore the kind of relationships between villagers and institutions.
- To assess the importance of the institutions to the living conditions of an individual family, the village or the community as a whole.

How to do it?

- Invite a group of people to share their views on the relationship with local as well as with external institutions.
- Take a big sheet of paper or use the ground for drawing a diagram.
- Place the village or household of the respondents in the very centre by using a circle.
- Illustrate the local or external institutions such as cooperatives, market places, traders, etc., by drawing additional circles.
- Use small and big circles as an indicator of importance and indicate the contribution of institutions to the village or household by closeness of the circles to the centre.

What is it?

An institutional diagram (Venn diagram) shows the relationships between groups, institutions and individuals. The diagram helps to identify the institutions which play a role in the village. In the first step, the diagram provides an overview of the institutions which are located inside or outside the village. In the second step, the type and intensity of interactions between the villagers and the institutions are depicted. The institutional diagram, or often called Venn diagram, reflects the perceptions of the villagers about the



Guiding questions

- Which groups, organizations or agencies interact with the community, the village or with individual households?
- What about the kind of relationship, the type of services, the frequency of interactions, the importance of the institutions to the villagers' daily life?
- What are the weak, and what are the strong aspects of those institutions?
- How can the impact of those institutions on the living conditions of

Service matrix

Tools for participatory learning and action



What is it?

The matrix helps to find out to what degree the supply of rural services matches the demand. On the one hand, the demand of rural households for specific services such as health, extension advice, input supply are listed. On the other hand the providers of services such as extension office, cooperatives, local traders are assessed according to their importance to rural

How to do it?

- Invite a group of people to list the type of services they require such as farm input supply, extension advice, financing, marketing, health, etc.
- Identify the different service providers such as public institutions, private traders, local consultants, and external supporting organizations.
- Prepare a matrix by listing along the top, the types of service and on the left-hand column the service providers.
- The different service providers are ranked from one (bad) to five

Objectives

- To identify the demand of rural households for specific services.
- To explore to what extent the supply of services meets the demand.
- To assess the importance of the service providers from the viewpoints

Hoạt động	Trung tâm Khuyến nông	Shinhquon địa phương	Câu lạc bộ Lâm viên	Ngân hàng Nông nghiệp
Trồng cây lương thực	+++	+	0	0
Chăn nuôi	+++	+	0	0
Nuôi cá	++	+	0	0
Trồng cây ăn quả	+	+	+++	0
Tín dụng	0	0	0	+++
Tổng	9	4	3	3

Guiding questions

- What kind of services are mostly required by the village households?
- Who are the organizations or people providing the services?
- How satisfied are you with the kind of service provided?
- What can be done to improve the service delivery?

Trend analysis

Tools for participatory learning and action



What is it?

A trend analysis compares changes of one or several issues over time. Such issues may include land use patterns, level of income, role of women, education, and new technology. The trend analysis is helpful to identify past, present and future changes, to explain the causes and to look into future directions of those changes.



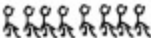






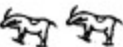



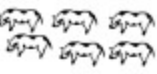





Objectives

- To think about what is likely to happen in the future based on what happened in the past.
- To stimulate a discussion about the direction and extent of positive and negative changes in the life of villagers.
- To prepare actions that may need to be taken in order to attain the desired

Trend analysis

Example

	Trước đổi mới 1975 - 1986	Từ đổi mới đến nay 1986 - 2003	10 năm sau
Dân số			
Đất canh tác			
Rừng			
Trâu bò			
Lợn			
Máy móc nông nghiệp			

How to do it?

- Invite villagers to discuss changes which occurred 10 years, or 1 year ago.
- Ask them to prepare a drawing to illustrate those changes over time.
- Try to concentrate the attention on one or a maximum of three aspects such as increase in population, forest cover, soil fertility, income level, etc.
- Analyze particular topics of interest as to changes and trends that occurred in the past, present and future.

Guiding questions

- How did you feel about the past some 30, 10 or 5 years ago?
- What will likely happen in the future?
- What is your desired future?

Profile of local groups

What is it?

The profile reveals some key information on a community-based group. This information can be very helpful for exploring the role of a specific local group in initiating development activities at the



Objectives

- To obtain a first impression on the main characteristics of a local group such as a women's club, water users' group, cooperative, etc.
- To learn about the history, legal status, membership, objectives and operations of the group.
- To get a first impression of the role the group can play in any local development activity.

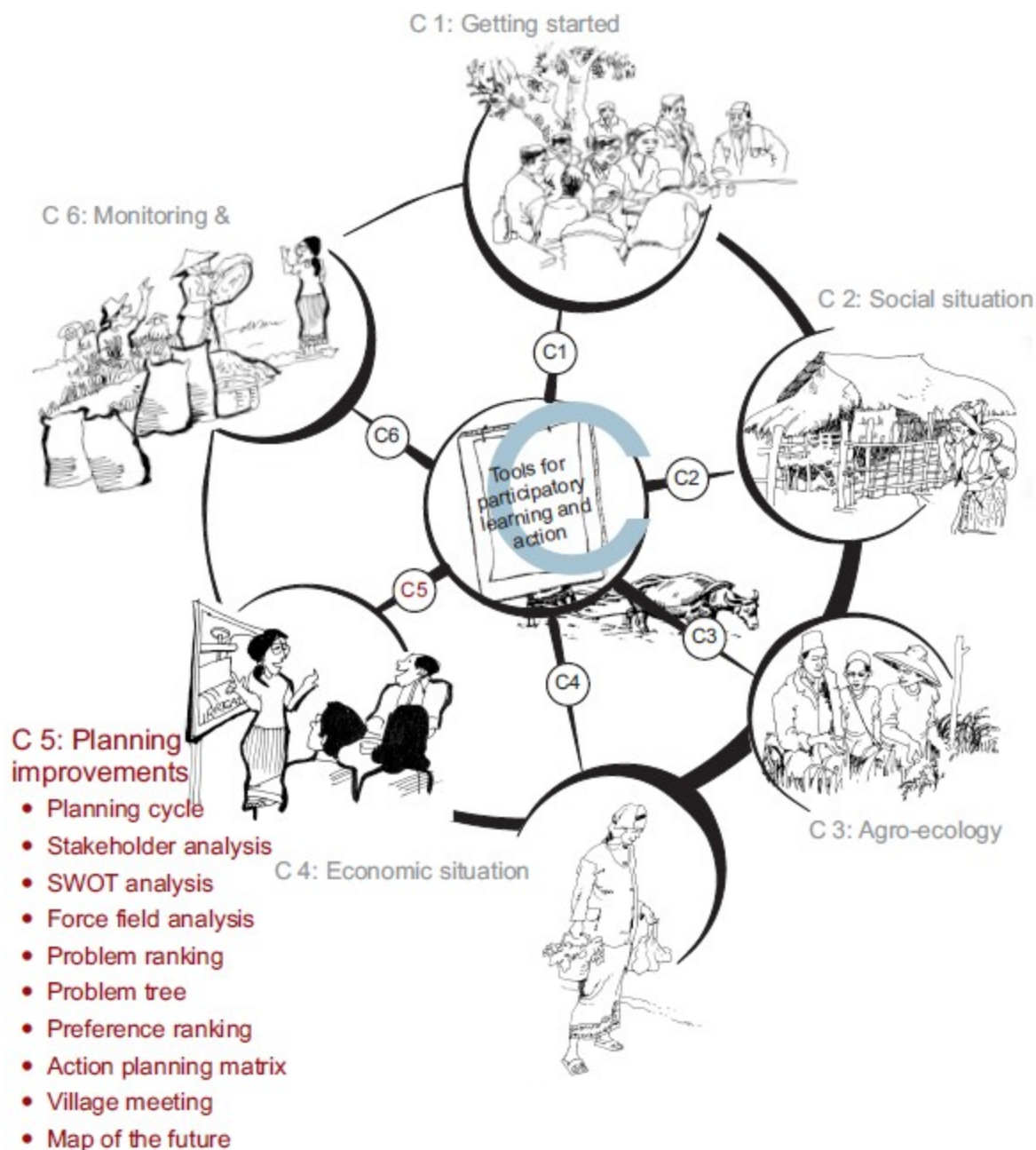
How to do it?

- Invite representatives or group members to share information.
- Visualize and structure the key information with pen and paper.
- Focus the discussion on the role the group plays in providing services to the members, households, villagers, and rural clients.
- Look into the strong and weak points, success stories and failures.
- Try to get the point of view of different members of the group.
- Contact different people in the village for cross-checking the information.

Guiding questions

- History: When was the group founded? Who initiated the group? Are there any major changes in its history?
- Legal status: What kind of legal status does it have?
- Strategy: What is the vision of the group? What does it want to achieve? What about the leadership? What about the involvement of the members in decision making?
- Operations: What are the main activities of the group? What kind of service or product does it provide to the members or to the clients? What is demanded most?
- Management: How many members or staff does the group have? What are their qualifications? What about the motivation of the members?
- Resources: What are the material resources, buildings, etc.? What about financing its operations? Where does the money come from?
- External relations: Who are the clients of the group? What about relationships with other groups, external institutions, etc.?
- Other aspects: What are the major potentials of the group? What are the main problems the group is facing? What else is of interest about

Participatory Learning and Action



Planning cycle

What is it?

A sequence of activities is worked through to achieve concrete improvements at household or village level.

Wates 78

Stage 1: Situation analysis

Problem	Why?	To whom?	How?	Impact?
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Stage 2: Defining objectives

Objectives	First priority
_____	_____

Stage 3: Designing strategies

Statement of Objective: _____

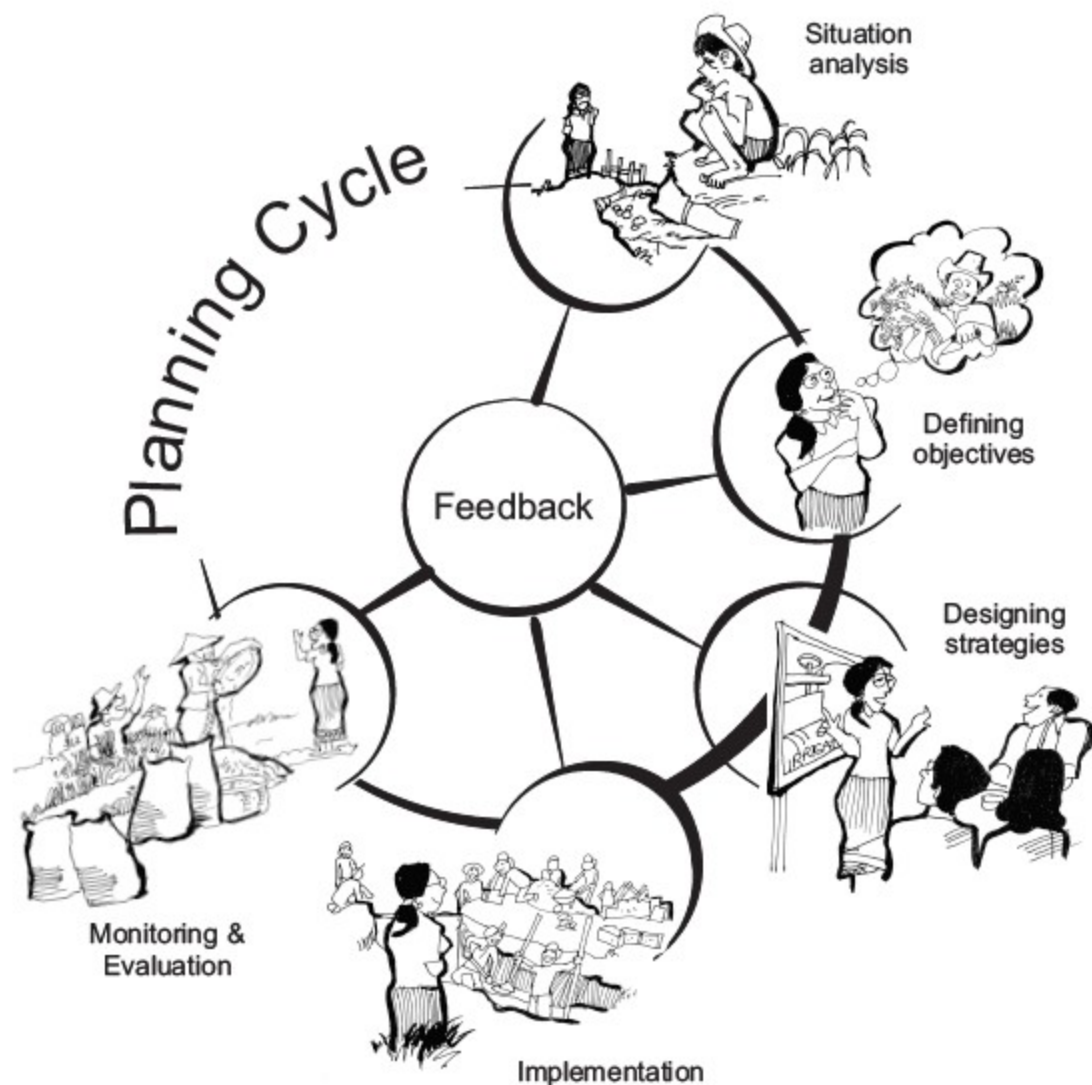
Options	Costs	Time	People	Risks	Priority (1-5)
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Stage 4: Implementation

Tasks	What?	By whom?	When?	With whom?	Priority (1-5)
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Stage 5: Monitoring and evaluation

Action taken	Progress made	Lessons learned	Next step	By
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



Stakeholder analysis

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

The term "stakeholder" refers to all individual people, groups and organizations who have a strong interest in a proposed development initiative. The stakeholder analysis is very important to identify in detail who exactly is affected by the initiative and how. This information is very relevant. It provides the basis for involving the stakeholders in the design,

Objectives

- To identify all people and organizations who have an interest in the proposed activity.
- To learn about the opinions and interests of the stakeholders, and how they might be affected by the development initiative.



No.	Stakeholder	Contributions
1	-	-
2	-	-

How to do it?

- Invite knowledgeable villagers to list all people, groups, internal and external organizations which may have an interest in the initiative.
- Make sure not to overlook the "voiceless" people such as ethnic minorities, women, children, youth, etc.
- Find out about their characteristics, interests, importance and objectives.
- Prepare a matrix to describe the role of the different stakeholders.
- Document the attributes of the stakeholders by using qualitative description or a quantitative ranking from 1 (positive) to 5 (negative).
- Discuss the matrix and the results

Guiding questions

- Who are the organizations, groups, families and individuals possibly affected by the development initiative?
- Who are the "primary stakeholders" directly affected such as poor people, marginalized groups, women's club, etc.
- Who are the "secondary stakeholders" who can contribute to the initiative such as government organizations, NGOs, private sector, etc.
- What are the specific characteristics, interests, objectives of each stakeholder?

SWOT-Analysis

What is it?

The SWOT matrix is widely used for planning purposes. SWOT stands for:

S	=	Strengths,
W	=	Weaknesses,
O	=	Opportunities, and
T	=	Threats.

The SWOT method helps to identify the strong and weak internal aspects of an activity or of an organization. It covers as well the external opportunities and threats. The application of the SWOT matrix encourages the collection of ideas of everyone concerned.

Guiding questions

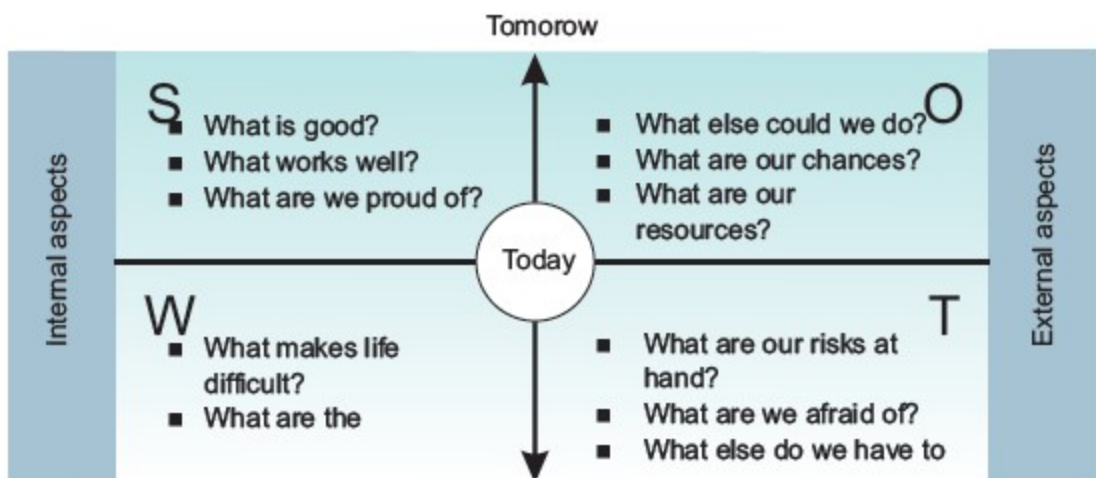
- Strengths: How can people build on their internal strengths to succeed with their plans?
- Weaknesses: What can be done to overcome their internal weaknesses?
- Opportunities: How can people take advantage of the external opportunities?
- Threats: What can people do to reduce the external risks they are

Objectives

- To generate ideas on the possible solutions and constraints of a specific planning proposal.
- To consider and discuss the suggestions of all people involved.
- To encourage ideas on how to overcome weaknesses and how to build on strengths of a proposal.

How to do it?

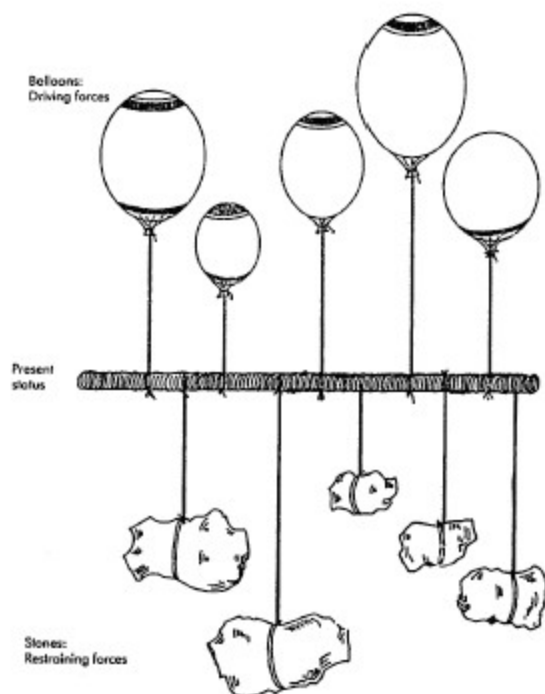
- Prepare a matrix with four squares on a paper or on the ground.
- Write in each of the four squares the word Strengths, then Weaknesses, then Opportunities, and finally Threats (in local language or using symbols).
- Brainstorm with villagers on their ideas for each square and document their contributions.
- Review the finished SWOT matrix and discuss in the group the different contributions in detail.
- Discuss the options for overcoming Weaknesses and Threats and for using the full potentials of Strengths and Opportunities.



Force field analysis

What is it?

The force field analysis is a useful method for generating information about the forces which facilitate the implementation and the forces which work against a proposed activity. The insights gained from the force field analysis are very important to assess the chances for implementing the initiative



Guiding questions

- What are the objectives of the proposed activity?
- Who will support us in implementing the proposal?
- Who will be against the development initiative?
- What can we do to reduce the



Objectives

- To look at positive and negative forces which may affect a development initiative.
- To analyze in detail the forces which support the initiative and the forces which hinder it.
- To become aware of the actions to be

How to do it?

- Recall the goal of a project and look at the reason for implementing it.
- Ask villagers to think about the forces, factors, people or groups which might work in favour of or which might work against it.
- Document the forces that are helpful in attaining the development goal.
- Describe the forces that hinder the attainment of the goal.
- Discuss the actions to be taken to make the strong forces even stronger.
- Consider options for reducing the

What is it?

The method of problem ranking is very valuable for identifying, comparing and prioritizing the problems which an individual household or a whole village is facing. The results of the ranking exercise may lead to better decisions for taking actions.



Objectives

- To identify the main problems people are facing.
- To compare the different problems with each other.
- To prioritize the list of problems according to the importance to the people.
- To initiate a discussion on how to

XẾP HẠNG KHÓ KHĂN

VẤN ĐỀ	Lan	Hòa	Vi	Hải	Liên	Sơn	Du	Tổng điểm	Thứ tự
Năng suất lúa thấp	○○○	○○	○○	○○	○○○	○○	○○	23	3
Trạm y tế xuống cấp	○○	○	○○	○○	○○	○○○	○○	19	5
Thiếu nước sản xuất	○○○	○○	○○	○○	○○	○○○	○○	28	2
Chưa có điện	○○○	○○	○○	○○	○○	○○○	○○	32	1
Trường học dột nát	○○	○○	○○	○○	○○○	○○	○○	23	3
Đường xá tối	○	○○	○○	○○	○	○○	○○○	18	6

Cho điểm từ 1 (ít quan tâm) đến 5 (quan tâm nhất)

How to do it?

- Invite villagers to identify the main problems they are facing (concerning farming, marketing, health, public services, etc.)
- Discuss how best to document the problems by using a matrix, or taking a separate sheet of paper for each problem, or making drawings and symbols for each problem (especially when there are illiterate people in the group).
- Hand out "voting materials" such as seeds, stones, pebbles, etc. (The number of "votes" should be half of the number of problems listed).
- Invite the people to place their "votes" next to the problems they feel are the most important to them.
- Rank the problems according to the number of "votes" they obtained.
- Initiate a discussion on what can be done about those problems.

Preference ranking

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

In a preference ranking exercise different options are compared with each other. The options are placed in an order according to the people's perspective on the issue. A matrix for ranking the preference helps to find out what comes first and what comes



Xếp hạng ưu tiên
chọn các giống lúa

Các loại giống: Giống lúa địa phương
Tập giao
Lúa lai

Tiêu chí: Năng suất, khả năng chống chịu bệnh,
mùi vị gạo, giá thành sản phẩm

Cách cho điểm: từ 1-5 tương ứng với từ kém → tốt

	Địa phương	Tập giao	Lúa lai
Năng suất	0	00	000
Khả năng chịu bệnh	00	00	00
Mùi vị gạo	00	00	000
Giá thành sản phẩm	0	00	000
Tổng điểm	9	11	15

Objectives

- To prepare a list of what people like best, and what people like the least.
- To identify the criteria local people use for giving priority to an option.
- To illustrate why different groups of people (young versus old, women versus men, rich versus poor) have different criteria for making decisions.
- To apply these criteria for identifying the preferences of local people for type of land use, crop varieties, income sources, social activities, etc.

How to do it?

- Prepare a matrix on a particular issue (quality of rice for example), possible options (different varieties), and the criteria for giving preference to a specific variety (according to taste, price, etc.).
- Write the options (different varieties of rice) on the horizontal axis, and the criteria of the people (taste, price, production costs) on the vertical axis.
- Ask villagers to express their preferences by placing little stones or seeds next to their preference from 1 point (poor) to 5 points (excellent).
- Discuss with the people the reasons



Problem tree

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

The problem tree is a useful method for identifying the key problem and its causes and effects. A symbolic tree is drawn with the trunk representing the problem, the roots representing causes and branches representing the effects. The problem tree provides an orientation of which problem has to be tackled first, and which ones



This is a diagram which provides the analysis of causes and effects of a problem. It helps diagnose the root causes of problems in the community that can be used for identifying possible solutions.



Objectives

- To identify the key problem people are facing.
- To discover the causes and effects of the key problem.
- To identify the priorities for taking

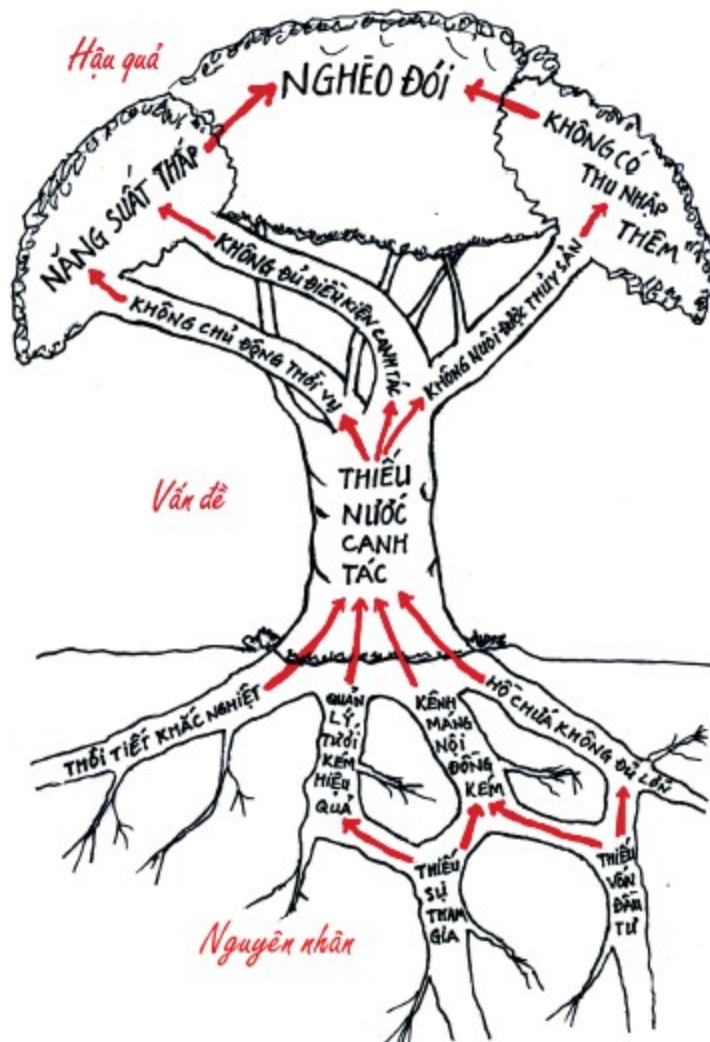
Guiding questions

- What are the problems people are facing in the village?
- Which problem is the core or key problem?
- What are the causes of this key problem?

Problem tree

Tools for participatory learning and action

Example



How to do it?

- Try to identify the key problem (this could be the same problem which received the highest number of votes in the problem ranking exercise).
- Write down the key problem in the centre of a paper as the trunk of a tree.
- Identify the causes of the key
- Identify the effects of the key problem and visualize it as the branches.
- Try to go deeper into the analysis of the causes and effects and illustrate them as sub-roots and sub-branches.
- Link the different levels of analysis with lines and arrows.
- Discuss with the group the options for overcoming the key problem.

What is it?

The action planning matrix is of great help to put all the loose ends together. It is based on the previous activities such as situation analysis, problem ranking and SWOT analysis. For preparing a planning matrix, villagers make a list of their objectives, problems or needs, resources, contributions and responsibilities for implementing jointly some concrete

Objectives

- To agree upon the objectives of some concrete improvement at village level.
- To describe the specific activities, resources, responsibilities and time frame for the project implementation.
- To discuss options for managing and monitoring the project



How to do it?

- Invite all people who have participated in previous activities at village level.
- Recall the results of the problem ranking exercise and the agreement reached on the objectives.
- Prepare a matrix on a big sheet of paper indicating the objectives (What?), justification (Why?), activities (How?), financial and human resources (What?), responsibilities (Who?) and time frame (When?) of the action to be considered.
- Ask villagers for suggestions to fill in the different columns of the matrix.
- Assure that there is support from all villagers and that everyone is committed to implement the plan.
- Reach an agreement on monitoring the implementation and evaluating the outcome of the project.
- Be prepared for taking additional actions if there are changes to be made during the implementation.

Action planning matrix

Tools for participatory learning and action

Example

Tóm tắt kế hoạch dự án phát triển cộng đồng
của nông dân xã Thăng Thọ, huyện Nông Cống, tỉnh Thanh Hóa

Tên dự án	Tăng thu nhập cho người nghèo thông qua việc sản xuất giống lúa mới tại xã Thăng Thọ, huyện Nông Cống, tỉnh Thanh Hóa.
Mục đích	Tăng thu nhập, góp phần xóa đói giảm nghèo cho người dân xã Thăng Thọ.
Mục tiêu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cung cấp giống lúa chất lượng cao cho sản xuất nông nghiệp tại xã Thăng Thọ. - Tăng thu nhập cho người lao động
Chỉ số	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tỷ lệ hộ nông dân xã Thăng Thọ áp dụng giống lúa mới sau khi kết thúc dự án - Mức tăng năng suất lúa trung bình sau khi kết thúc dự án
Cơ quan chủ dự án	Hội Nông dân xã Thăng Thọ
Các tổ chức hỗ trợ	UBND xã, HTX nông nghiệp, HLHPN xã, MTTQ xã, Đoàn TN xã
Thời gian thực hiện	5 năm (2004 - 2009)
Đối tượng hưởng lợi	Các hộ nông dân trong xã
Các hoạt động	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quy hoạch vùng sản xuất (10 ha) - Xây dựng kênh mương (bê tông) - Đào tạo cán bộ kỹ thuật - Xây dựng nhà kho, sân phơi và các thiết bị - Thành lập ban quản lý, bộ phận trông coi sản phẩm - Sản xuất 10 ha giống lúa năng suất cao - Thông tin quảng cáo, tiêu thụ sản phẩm
Kinh phí dự trù	420 triệu đồng <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-left: 10px;"> Nội lực: 264 triệu đồng Yêu cầu hỗ trợ: 156 triệu đồng </div>

Guiding questions

- What is the objective of the action or project?
- What are the human and financial resources needed?
- Who will be in charge of the different activities?
- When will we implement which activity?
- How are we going to monitor the

Village meeting

What is it?

A meeting is a coming together of people for a specific purpose. A village meeting provides a forum to present information, discuss opinions and agree upon actions to be taken by the village as a whole.



Objectives

- To discuss topics of common interest to the villagers.
- To determine the main problems and possible solutions according to the priorities of the village members.
- To bring out the views of everybody involved.
- To deal with conflicts at the village level.
- To reach an agreement on an issue of

How to do it?

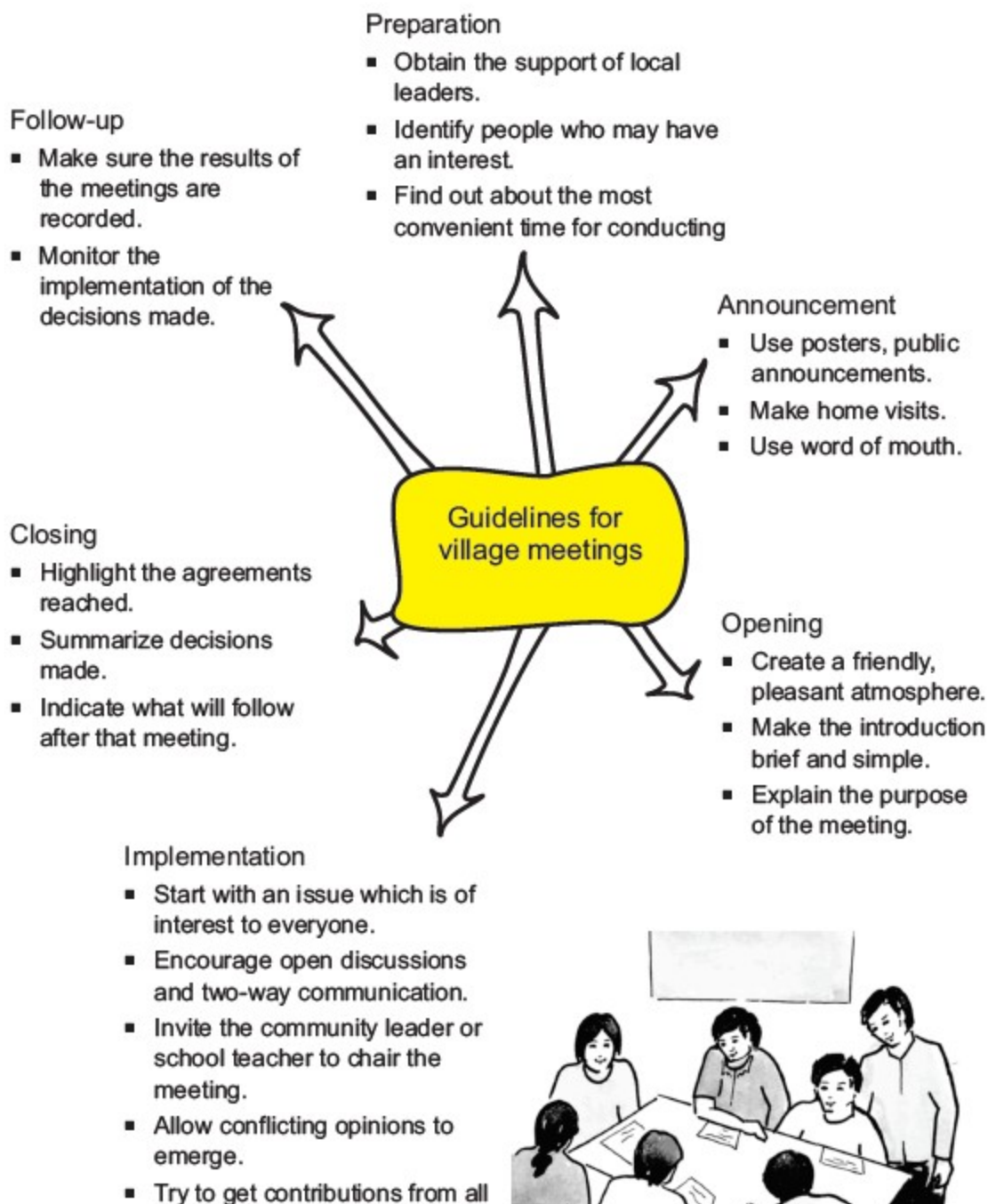
- Make sure the meeting is prepared with key people from the village.
- Introduce the objectives, topics and procedure of the meeting.
- Ensure that everyone can agree on the proposed agenda.
- Hand over the facilitation of the meeting to the village leader or to a well-respected person.

Guiding questions

- What are the burning issues to be discussed?
- Who are the people interested in it (the stakeholders)?
- Are men and women equally considered?
- Who will chair the meeting?
- Who will document the decisions?
- Who will be responsible for the follow-

Village meeting

Tools for participatory learning and action



Map of the future

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

Creating a map of the future stimulates people to visualize their long-term vision. The visualization of a vision or of a dream can open people's mind. This look into the future can become the start of development initiatives. This method offers an alternative to the conventional problem-solving approach which focuses on problems only. The narrow focus on problems often restricts people's creativity and they slip into standard ways of solving

Problems	Now	Future (after 10 years)
Houses		
Land		
Forest		

Guiding questions

- How does the future look like you want it to look in 10 years from now?
- What are the major changes as compared to the present situation?
- What can you do to realize your dream?
- What assistance will you be needing

Objectives

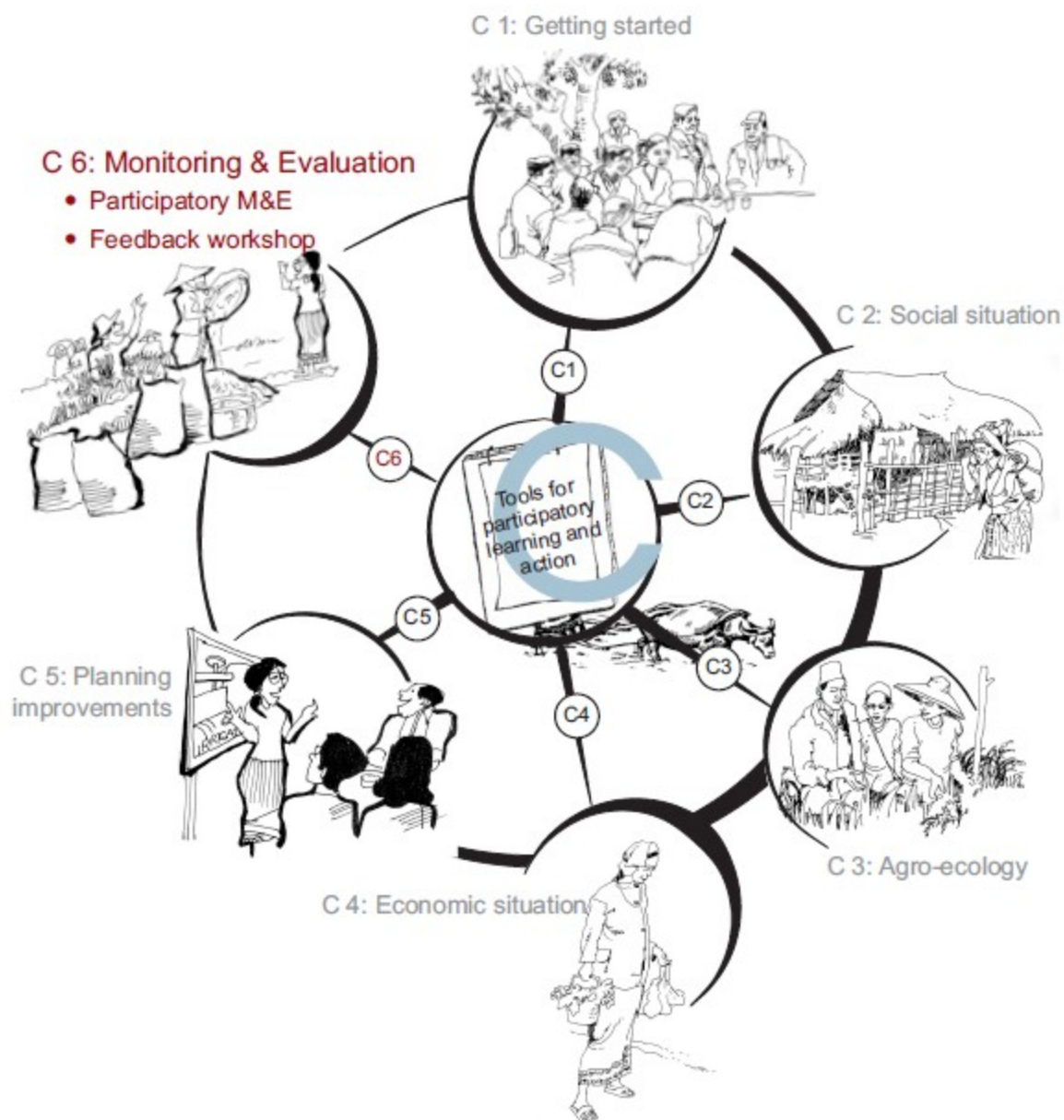
- To start development work with the visions and long-term aspirations.
- To generate creative ideas and innovations for shaping the future.
- To motivate people to design their future according to their dreams.

How to do it?

- Invite individuals or groups to imagine the future they are dreaming of and to visualize with pen and paper.
- Present the drawings to other group members and reflect on it together.
- Highlight the changes people want to experience in the future.
- Discuss the options at hand to put the dreams into reality.
- Look into the obstacles for realizing the dreams.



Participatory Learning and Action



Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Tools for participatory learning and action

What is it?

The idea of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) is to facilitate an open and critically reflective communication process on development initiatives.

Monitoring is the regular and systematic collection, analysis and distribution of information about the project activities. Evaluation in general means a series of periodical "breaks" to analyze the monitored information.

PM&E makes use of a wide range of methods for gathering, analyzing, storing and presenting information.



How to do it?

- Design and adapt the methodology.
- Collect and analyze data.
- Include those people most directly affected.
- Agree with everyone concerned about what will be monitored, how, and when.
- Share findings.

Objectives

- To learn from experience, from success and from failure, and for doing better in the future.
- To improve the efficiency, effectiveness and the outcome of development projects.
- To help people learn from experience and improve their awareness and understanding of factors which affect their situation.



Methods for PM&E

A wide range of methods have been developed to carry out PM&E. They all seek to compare the situation before and after a particular project. They include home-made questionnaires and scientific measurement techniques. Most of them are adapted for use by local people.

The methods include maps, diagrams, diaries, matrix scoring, photographs, and all the other methods of PLA which allow to

Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Tools for participatory learning and action



Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Tools for participatory learning and action

The key questions for PM&E

1. **Relevance** - Was/Is the project a good idea given the situation needing improvement? Does it deal with target group priorities? Why or why not?
2. **Effectiveness** - Have the planned purpose and component objectives, outputs and activities been achieved? Why or why not? Is the intervention logic correct? Why or why not?
3. **Efficiency** - Were inputs (resources and time) used in the best possible way to achieve outcomes? Why or why not? What could we do differently to improve implementation, thereby maximizing impact, at an acceptable and sustainable cost?
4. **Impact** - To what extent has the project contributed towards its long-term goal? Why or why not? What unanticipated positive or negative consequences did the project have? Why did they arise? To what extent has the project contributed towards poverty reduction (or other long-term goal)? Why or why not? What unanticipated positive or negative consequences did the project have? Why did they arise?
5. **Sustainability** - Will there be continued positive impacts as a result of the project



Indicators used in PM&E?

Indicators are criteria which measure information or events. They are signals which indicate if the project is achieving milestones, objectives and goal.

A good indicator should be (a **SMART** indicator):

- **S**pecific - to avoid different interpretations
 - **M**easurable - to monitor and evaluate progress (preferable numerically)
 - **A**ppropriate - to the problems, goal
 - **R**ealistic - achievable, yet challenging and meaningful
 - **T**imebound - with a specific time for achieving
- Specified target group to which the indicator will be applied;
 - Specific unit(s) of measurement to be used for the indicator;
 - Specific time-frame over which it will be monitored;
 - Reference to a baseline/benchmark for comparison;
 - Defined qualities;
 - Specific location in which indicator will

To be useful, an indicator must be clear. This makes it possible to measure. But what is needed to make an indicator clear?

A clear indicator includes the following elements:

Feedback workshop

What is it?

Feedback sessions are a useful way of monitoring progress and maintaining the commitment of everyone involved in sustaining interest and enthusiasm.

A village meeting provides an important public forum for presenting proposals, discussing options and agreeing upon action to be taken.

Be aware that marginalized people, women, the very poor, may not attend or

Objectives

- To review jointly the progress made.
- To discuss options for improving the outcome of the initiative.
- To reach an agreement on future actions and responsibilities.



Guideline for a feedback workshop

- **Documentation:**
The process is structured by charts on large sheets of paper which are completed and kept as a record.
- **Materials:**
Background material is produced evaluating the outcome of initiatives and reviewing progress.
- **Frequency:**
The workshops are repeated every month or year or so to monitor progress and plan the next stage.
- **Participants:**
All those involved in previous activities are invited back to a session.
- **Agenda:**
A program is designed to review progress, evaluate earlier initiatives and determine the next step.
- **Reporting:**
A report of the feedback session is written up and circulated.



Guiding questions:

- Was it a useful thing to do?
- What did we achieve?
- How could we have done better?
- What happens next?

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Fieldbook on Participatory Learning and Action

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