Participatory Rural Appraisal

Guidebook

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College of Agriculture
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PART III. ORGANIZING A PRA

FOREWORD

The **Farming Systems and Soil Resources Institute (FSSRI)**, College of Agriculture, University of the Philippines Los Baños develops and promotes systems-oriented and participatory methodologies, strategies and technologies that will improve the productivity and sustainability of different farming systems under various agroecological environments. As part of our participatory approach to farming systems research and development, we practice Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) as a tool to understand the farm household and community, identify problems and needs, and design appropriate technologies or improvement options.

For its part, the **Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung gGmbH (InWEnt - Capacity Building International, Germany)** promotes participatory methods for poverty reduction in Southeast Asia through human resource development, advanced training and dialogue. It recognizes the important role of PRA as a critical first step in identifying and guiding development programs with people as active partners.

We produce this PRA Guidebook for the use of community development workers, facilitators, people's organizations, field researchers and other stakeholders in participatory and sustainable development.

We envision this guidebook to enhance the application of participatory methods in development work. However, we do not impose it as a "recipe" for strict compliance. Users of this guidebook are encouraged to innovate, modify and adjust to suit particular conditions in their areas of concern. PRA after all is a continuous learning process.

FLORENTINO C. MONSALUD
Director
FSSRI

LÜDER H. CAMMANN
Senior Project Manager
InWEnt

PREFACE

Current available literature on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) fall under two main categories. Those that are heavy textbook reading expound on the concepts and theories. Others deal mainly with the tools posing the misconception that PRA is just the use of funny play tools. This guidebook attempts to combine concepts and tools needed by beginners in conducting PRA with a "heart in the right place". PART 1 guides the PRA learner on some basic concepts that serve as the foundation in understanding PRA with the heart and the mind. PART 2 presents some of the more popularly used PRA tools, and guides the PRA learner on the whats, hows, and whys of such tools. PART 3 proposes some steps to consider when organizing a PRA. In the pages, bumble bees flutter every now and then to provide food-for-thought and additional reminders for self-reflection.

Most PRA references were written based on experiences from India, Africa and Latin America. Very few are written on the Southeast Asian experiences. We do appreciate multi-cultural, multi-regional exchange. But for beginners, it would be a lot easier to learn and introduce PRA if it was presented in a setting closer to home.

In writing this guidebook, I combined the experiences in conducting PRA as part of our research, training, and extension activities at FSSRI and elsewhere. I even looked back and reflected on lessons that we learned during our Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) days.

We take into fore the lessons learned in doing actual PRA, mostly in the Philippine hillylands, as part of the participatory action research and technology development we conducted in these areas. In regular training programs of FSSRI, InWEnt, IAF (Institute of Agroforestry, UPLB) or in our Agriculture 111 (Introduction to Farming Systems) classes, a field work highlights the integration of PRA. Our interaction with farmers and communities in Chiang Mai, Thailand; South Sulawesi, Indonesia; Hanoi, Vietnam; Mymensingh, Bangladesh; Phnom Penh and Kompong Speu, Cambodia, some towns in southern Germany and of course our many farming communities in the Philippines, have enriched our understanding of how PRA should and should not be conducted.

This guidebook is written for local people, communities and organizations in the government or non-government sectors involved in implementing and promoting participatory methods in rural development work. Fellow PRA trainers and facilitators may use it to complement plenary and group activities during training. Teachers and students of sustainable agriculture, farming systems, agricultural

systems and agroforestry may use it to supplement classroom discussions and field practicum.

The training manuals and seminar proceedings of the former German Foundation for International Development (1995 to 2001), the workbook of Selener et al (1991) and the trainer's guide of Pretty et al (1995) have inspired me.

Several working drafts of this guidebook were pre-tested by extensionists and action researchers attending PRA training courses for selected Regional Integrated Agricultural Research Centers (RIARCs), Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR), Department of Agriculture. Comments from participants and trainers have been considered here. The drafts have also been pre- tested with students of Agriculture 111 at the University of the Philippines Los Baños. Their comments have likewise been integrated.

Many people contributed to the production of this guidebook. I am grateful to Director Florentino C. Monsalud for "forcing" and reinforcing me to come up with this material; to the support staff for their many and various forms of assistance; to the Technical Reviewers' Committee members: Dr. Edna A. Aguilar, Dr. Mary Jean G. Bulatao, Ms. Jocelyn D. Labios and Dr. Gina V. Pangga for their comments and suggestions; to Dr. Edna Luisa A. Matienzo for language editing; to Ms. Leah Arboleda and Jyasmin Calub for copy editing and to Mr. Bernie Remoquillo for some of the drawings.

We sincerely thank the critical review by Mr. Benedicto Bayawa, Secretary General of the Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA) and Mr. Lüder Cammann, InWEnt Senior Project Manager.

We appreciate much the funds provided by InWEnt to cover printing costs.

This guidebook emphasizes an on-going learning process. It is a resource intended to be fluid rather than prescriptive. The tools and suggestions presented here should be modified by development workers and the community in order to suit local conditions. We at FSSRI encourage fellow PRA practitioners to share with us their own experiences. Any feedback on this guidebook is most welcome.

By writing this guidebook I do not claim to be an expert on PRA. In fact until now, I cannot say I have fully learned PRA. Rather, I am continuing to learn it. Shall we then learn it together?

BLESILDA M. CALUB

PART I. Basic Concepts of PRA

PART II. PRA Tools

PART III. Organizing a PRA

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!'

Lao Tse

INTRODUCTION

"If development is to bear fruit, it must be done in partnership with farmers, otherwise, we wither into irrelevance"

- Dioscoro L. Umali
National Scientist

Participatory development stresses the importance of people's participation as a key element towards relevant and sustainable programs. It is a people's oriented approach which elicits a community's ability to solve their own problems rather than outsiders imposing solutions on them. Stakeholders are actively involved in identifying and analyzing problems, in defining and refining strategies to make these suit their own goals, needs, priorities and conditions. Participatory development highlights feedback channels where people's reactions, opinions and modifications are documented, analyzed and acted on.

As a first step, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is one of the more effective methods for initiating participatory development. PRA helps us understand "why people do what they do", including the "how", "what" and "so what". Conventional methods of gathering information are not sufficient to capture local people's needs, aspirations and resources. On the other hand, PRA combines interactive methods that seek to understand biophysical resources intertwined with socio-cultural and economic factors that affect community realities. PRA integrates appraisal and planning in the same continuous participatory process.

However, PRA cannot be simply "added on" as a supplementary instrument to make existing development programs appear participatory. These require fundamental changes in attitudes and methodologies both within the organizations and individual actors. For participation to be more than just a nice word, the direction of change has to be made towards sharing, learning and doing things in partnership with the people.

WHAT IS PARTICIPATION?

▪ Joint Dialogue

Participation is a process of joint dialogue, sharing and analyzing situations to attain consensus towards action and change (Chambers, 1992).

▪ Active Process

Participation is an active process by which beneficiaries or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish (Oakley, 1991).

▪ People Involvement

Participation includes people involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programs, their sharing in the benefits of development programs, and involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs (Oakley, 1991).

▪ People Empowerment

Participation involves transferring of power to the rural people enabling them to negotiate with development delivery systems, and deciding and acting on what is essential to their development.

Participation also includes TEAM WORK and taking on RESPONSIBILITIES.

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION?

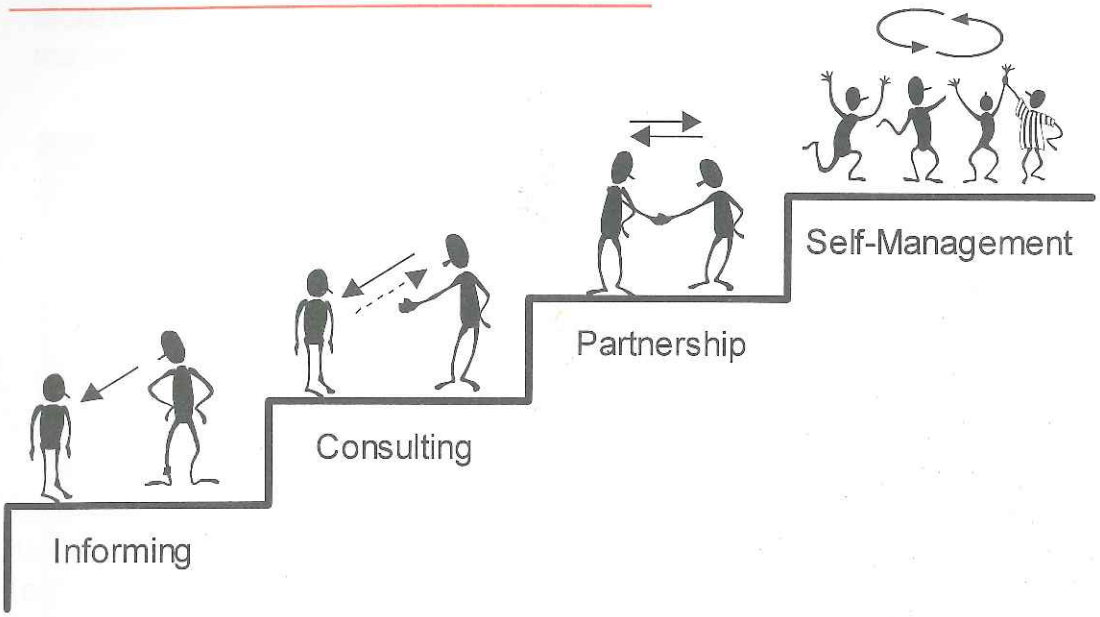


Table 1. Four general levels of participation.

Informing	Outsiders merely let people know about projects to be undertaken.
Consulting	Villagers are given the opportunity to express their concerns and suggestions
Partnership	Exchange and sharing of benefits as well as responsibilities to achieve a common goal. Outsiders and villagers are partners.
Self-management	People take initiative and collective action for their own development

Source: DSE, 2001

Let's check at what level of participation we are now. What can we do to reach the top-most level, SELF-MANAGEMENT?

WHAT IS PRA?

▪ Interactive Process Towards Empowerment

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a combination of interactive methods that enhance rural and agricultural communities' ability to analyze and understand their situation in a holistic manner and be empowered to plan and act for their betterment (Chambers, 1992; FSSRI, 1999).

▪ From People's Local Knowledge to Action Plans

PRA is a community-oriented mutual learning process which aims to achieve common goals. It makes use of a variety of visualization tools to facilitate information exchange. Knowledge of local people is valued as equally important as scientific expertise. Local people's knowledge serves as the starting point for drafting plans of action.

Photo by: BM Calub

An elder "holding the stick" while explaining to fellow villagers and to PRA team members. (Pila, Laguna, Philippines)

A Learning Process

More than just "tools and techniques," PRA is a learning process both for the people in the community and for the development workers.

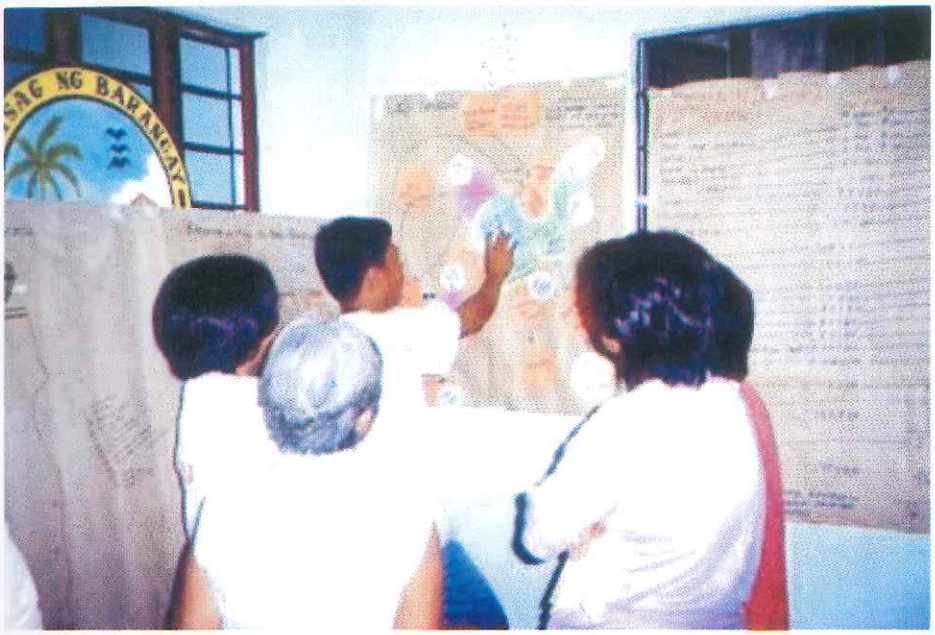


Photo by: RL Limosinero

Village officials analyzing a Venn diagram they prepared.
(Pila, Laguna, Philippines)

An Evolving Concept

PRA continues to be refined as more experiences and lessons from the field are learned and combined with methodological innovations. While it started to be used as a method for initial situation analysis, PRA has now grown to include community action planning and even participatory monitoring and evaluation.

"The beginning of knowledge is to realize how little we really know..."

EVOLUTION OF PRA

In the context of sustainable development, methodologies and outsider attitudes have evolved to promote greater participation by people. In the 1960s and 70s, long academic surveys were most common. Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) in the 1980s was an initial attempt to improve data gathering. The 1990s began with more participatory interactive approaches and methods for appraisal and learning.

Table 2. Evolution of assessment methods in development work.

PERIOD	METHOD/PROCESS	CHARACTERISTICS
1960s-1970s	Formal Survey	▪ long questionnaires ▪ structured interview ▪ takes too long to conduct (large number of respondents) ▪ difficult to process voluminous data ▪ extractive ▪ exploitative
Early 1980s	Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)	▪ guide list ▪ semi-structured interview ▪ key informants as participants ▪ rapid ▪ still extractive ▪ analysis (using tools) is made by outsiders
Early 1990s	Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)	▪ participatory ▪ not as rapid as RRA ▪ interactive ▪ use of visualization tools ▪ joint dialogue and analysis among insiders and outsiders ▪ greater insider involvement ▪ outsiders act as facilitators or initiators
Late 1990s to early 2000s	Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), Participatory Rural Appraisal and Planning (PRAP), Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA), Participatory Technology Development (PTD), Participatory Extension Methods (PEM), Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E)	▪ participation is internalized and institutionalized ▪ integration of more participatory methods in all project stages and activities ▪ leads to people empowerment

Source: Chambers 1992; DSE 1995

RRA or PRA: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

While PRA essentially evolved from RRA, there are basic differences between them. The fundamental difference between RRA and PRA is not in the "tools and techniques". They differ according to the roles of outsiders as well as in the control over the whole process and outcome of the work.

Table 3. Basic differences between RRA and PRA.

	RRA	PRA
Developed in	Late 1970s to 1980s	Late 1980s to 1990s
Key resource	Local people's knowledge	Local people's capabilities
Main innovation	Change in methods	Change in behavior and attitudes
Mode	Extractive	Facilitating
Tools	Verbal	Visual
Outsiders' role	Investigator	Initiator, facilitator
Insiders' role	Respondent	Presentor and analyst
Ideal objective	Learning by outsiders from insiders	Empowerment of local people

Source: DSE 1995

The difficulty lies not in NEW ideas, but in escaping from OLD ones.
- Keynes, JM

KEY PRINCIPLES OF PRA

ABC (Attitude and Behavioral Change)

Listening, observing, guiding … not interrupting, not dominating, not lecturing. It is using PRA tools with sensitivity for the community and their situation.

Learning in and with the community

Understanding rural life "through the eyes of the people".

Optimal ignorance

Approaching people with an open mind; putting aside personal biases and prejudices.

Appropriate imprecision

Being comfortable with what is approximately right rather than trying to be too precise.

Embracing error

Being self-critical. Acknowledging mistakes and learning from them.

Letting THEM do it

Encouraging people to do the task. Facilitators only initiate and guide the process.

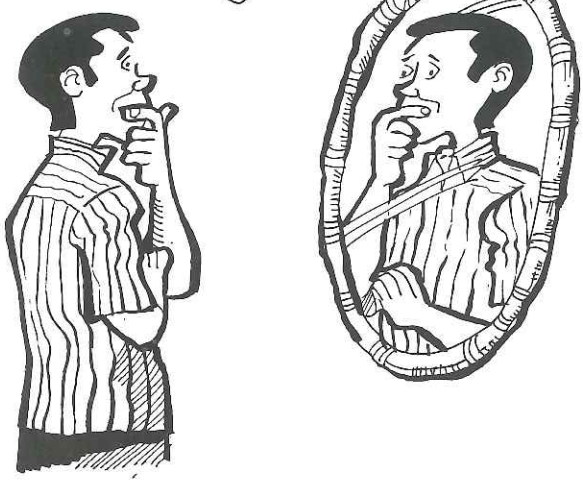
Photo by: BM Calub

Villagers prepare a Venn Diagram while facilitator observes.
(Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi, Indonesia)

Why should I do it?
So what if I learn it?
So what if I don't learn it?

Am I willing to learn it with an open mind?

Am I willing to unlearn conventional ways of doing things..... so I can start learning new approaches?



PRA is not just learning as many tools as you can... It is more of looking into your inner self and changing some attitudes...

BASIC METHODS OF PRA

Direct observation

Capture observable practices and processes in the natural surroundings. Take part in some of the people's activities. The aim is to gain a better understanding of the conditions under which the people live and operate. It can also be used to cross-check information given during dialogues using PRA tools.

Visual sharing

Use symbols, cards, seeds, drawings to facilitate communication.

Semi-structured dialogue

Use guide questions for casual and relaxed discussions.

Focus group dialogues

Purposely seek to interact with "less heard" sectors of the community...women's groups, youth, poor, landless, informal groups... and NOT just with the influential men of the village.

Triangulation or cross checking

Check the reliability of information from at least three different sources using different methods.

Planning and preparing before PRA

As a team, plan on possible processes, topics and methods to be used during field work. Agree on roles and responsibilities of each team member.

Learning as you go

Constantly review and analyze findings before deciding how to continue. This establishes better understanding among team members and helps focus succeeding activities.

Follow through

Conduct follow-up visits and activities with villagers. These strengthens rapport between the community and the PRA team. Real life situations are better understood and revealed with subsequent visits.

"Yes, Sir, we are all here. Plant breeder, soil scientist, livestock specialist, information technology expert – only him over there I don't know."

WHY PRA?

- PRA facilitates dialogue and exchange of information between the community and development workers.
- PRA helps in better understanding the cultural and social value systems of a community.
- PRA promotes shared analysis of the community's situation, their needs, priorities and constraints.
- PRA encourages active participation of a community in identifying, monitoring and evaluating alternative options to address problems.
- PRA builds the community's capability in preparing action plans relevant to their needs and existing resources.
- PRA strengthens partnership between the community and development institutions.

WHERE PRA MAY BE CONSIDERED?

- A community where development work wants to be initiated but possible activities or areas of study have yet to be decided.
- An on-going project where a re-orientation phase is needed.
- A project that wants to expand activities to new sites.

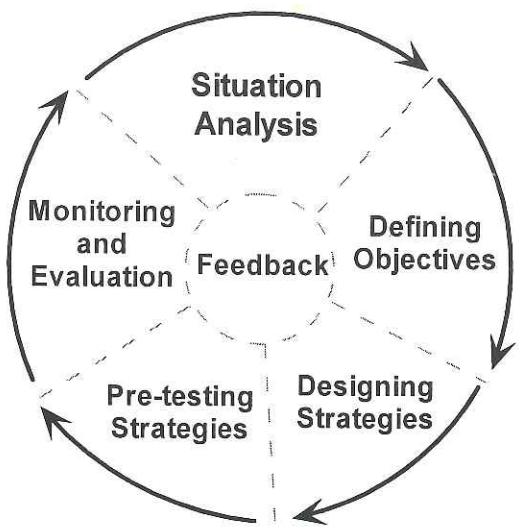
The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes but in having new eyes.
- Marcel Proust

PRA IN PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

Participatory planning is a process where involved groups choose carefully the best means to achieve their goals. They decide WHAT, HOW, WHEN and WHO is to do the work. PRA facilitates participatory planning which includes:

- **Situation analysis**. Identifying and understanding people's reality, aspirations and limitations from their point of view.
- **Defining objectives**. People's desired outcome of the project is expressed in specific and measurable terms.
- **Designing strategies**. Alternative options and possible solutions are proposed, studied jointly and prioritized by the people and development workers.
- **Implementation**. Involved groups decide specific activities to be undertaken by stakeholders over a given period.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**. Criteria and indicators for assessing the progress, efficiency, effectiveness and possible impacts of the planned activities are chosen.
- **Feedback**. Re-viewing and re-analyzing the plan at each stage. Making adjustments as needed.

THE PLANNING CYCLE



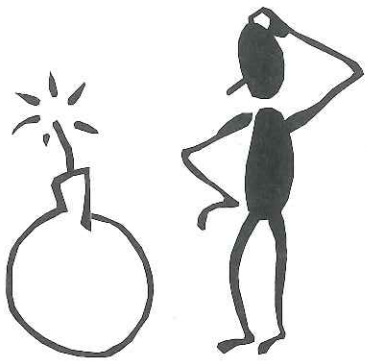
PRA ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

Advantages	Limitations
Development workers "wake up" to a new reality. ▪ PRA allows a systematic first-hand understanding of the real conditions and constraints faced by communities. Development plans are made based on these rather than on imaginary assumptions.	▪ The excited PRA worker may do the planning FOR the community instead of WITH the community.
Community actively participates in the analysis. ▪ Through dialogues and use of visual materials, problems and possible solutions are identified and analyzed.	▪ Some of the information obtained can be superficial, exaggerated or laden with self-interests.
Community defines and prioritizes their projects. ▪ PRA encourages active participation of the community in identifying and prioritizing projects relevant to their needs.	▪ The needs of the "less heard" sectors of the community (widows, children, landless, aged, ethnic and religious groups) may not always be adequately given attention.
Promotes grass-roots development. ▪ Community members identify projects based on people's needs, capabilities and resources.	▪ Identifying problems and solutions does not necessarily guarantee actions and results. PRA does not offer miracle solutions.
Strengthens collaboration between the community and external institutions. ▪ PRA helps external institutions to establish rapport with the community and clarify their roles and objectives. This allows higher level of trust and understanding in joint activities.	▪ False expectations are raised in the community. The community may think "there's money coming in" after PRA.
Systematizes "first hand" local knowledge. ▪ The use of visualization tools and dialoguing techniques promotes systematic surfacing of indigenous knowledge from collective memory and oral traditions of the community. ▪ Underlying causes and reasons for doing things are elaborated.	▪ The wealth of local knowledge maybe "stolen" by outsiders for their own or their organization's advantage. ▪ Because no hard statistical data is produced; some "scientists" regard PRA results as unreliable.

Adapted from: Selener et al 1999; SDC 1997

DANGERS OF PRA

- Doing PRA because it is "fashionable" to do so.
- Doing PRA to "legitimize" top-down development projects.
- Seeing only part of a situation or problem and not getting the full picture.
- Generalizing based on too little information and too few informants, therefore shallow PRA.
- Desiring for statistics and quantitative data.



- Going too quickly may lead to superficiality.
- Overlooking the invisible.....poorest, least educated, women, and children
- Imposing "OUR" ideas, categories and values .... without realizing it.
- Raising expectations in the community where PRA is being carried out.
- Flexibility of PRA may be abused. Individuals may do a few PRA tools and call it PRA.
- Deadline pressures create a rush to involve "PRA experts", rush to get the PRA done and rush to write the report.

Adapted from: Pretty et al 1985; DSE 1995; Shönhuth and Kievelitz 1994; SDC 1997.

PART I. Basic Concepts of PRA

PART II. PRA Tools

PART III. Organizing a PRA

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.

Antoine de Saint Exupery

DECIDING WHICH TOOLS TO USE

In contrast to questionnaire surveys or formal interviews, PRA makes use of SEMI-STRUCTURED DIALOGUES and informal but guided group discussions. This interaction is enhanced by VISUALIZATION and DIAGRAMMING tools. Symbols, models, cut-outs, drawings, stones, seeds, sticks, leaves — all these help in engaging insiders and outsiders to a lively exchange and joint analysis of information.

Given the wide array of PRA tools available, deciding which tool to use becomes a challenge for PRA beginners. The choice of tools depends on particular issues and the communication culture in the locality. Use the tools conscientiously. Many fall into the trap of using as many tools as they can and producing as many charts as possible. Mere production of PRA charts is NOT the aim of PRA. Remember that the tools are intended to stimulate both the dialogue and critical thinking among villagers.

Consider these tips when deciding which tools to use:

- Clarify first the objective of the PRA.
- Know what information needs to be obtained.
- Match the appropriate tool or combination of tools that will generate the information needed. Information from one tool should reinforce and countercheck information from other tools.
- Plan a logical sequencing of the tools.

The challenge is building the *CAPABILITY of people for SELF ANALYSIS rather than mere DATA EXTRACTION by outsiders.*

SEQUENCING OF TOOLS

There are two main types of PRA depending on its focus and the depth of analysis required. An exploratory PRA focuses on information aimed to have an initial understanding of the community and to find broad directions of development work. On the other hand, a topical PRA is confined to particular concerns for example natural resource conservation, health, agriculture or livelihood. For each of these types of PRA, a specific sequence and set of tools is needed. While PRAs differ as to sequencing of tools, some general patterns can be considered.

Table 4. Possible sequence of tools for an exploratory PRA.

	Objectives	Suggested PRA Tools
Initial phase	▪ To get an overview of the general biophysical and social conditions in the locality ▪ To understand the community's past experiences	▪ Village walk ▪ Base map ▪ Social map ▪ Village transect ▪ Time line
Second phase	▪ To gain more specific information on people's livelihood systems ▪ To have a deeper understanding of activities in the community	▪ Seasonal calendar ▪ Farming systems flow diagram ▪ Venn diagram ▪ Trend analysis ▪ Problem cause diagram ▪ Problem ranking
Third phase	▪ To identify development priorities of villagers	▪ Possible solution ranking
Final phase	▪ To evaluate jointly and formulate action plans	▪ SWOT analysis ▪ TOWS matrix ▪ Action plan matrix

POINTERS WHEN USING THE TOOLS

- Introduce the tools carefully, initiate the procedure, then step back to allow "space" for the villagers to take over.
- Use people's own units of measure (sacks of paddy, cans of seeds, baskets of fruits, etc.). You can convert later to metric units by measuring actual samples.
- Use people's local terms or names for things. No need for scientific or English names (You can add it in pencil later).
- Use locally available materials.
- Allow the people do it.
- Be patient.
- Be humble.
- Let the people reflect on the method and content after each tool.
- End each tool politely before proceeding to the next.
- Respect the people's original outputs, consult them for any revisions that need to be done.

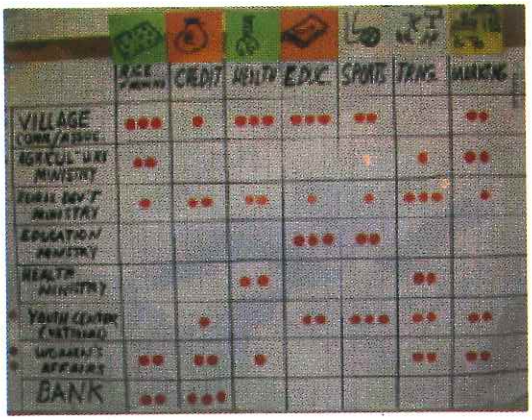
Photo by: BM Calub

Preference ranking among Lahu women. Note facilitator (on right hand corner) steps aside and let's them do it.
(Chiang Mai, Thailand)

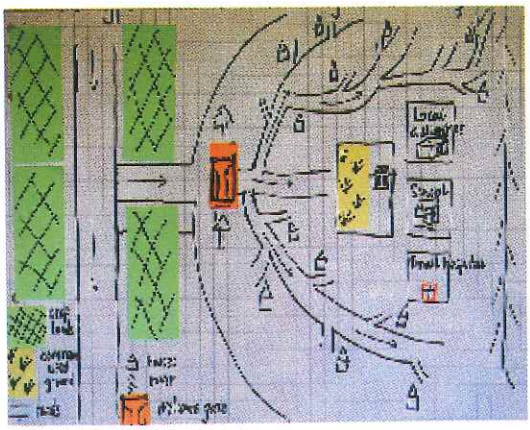
SOME PRA TOOLS

Many PRA tools have evolved through time. This guidebook discusses in detail only some of the more commonly used tools. Appendix 1 lists other tools used in PRA. The list is still growing.

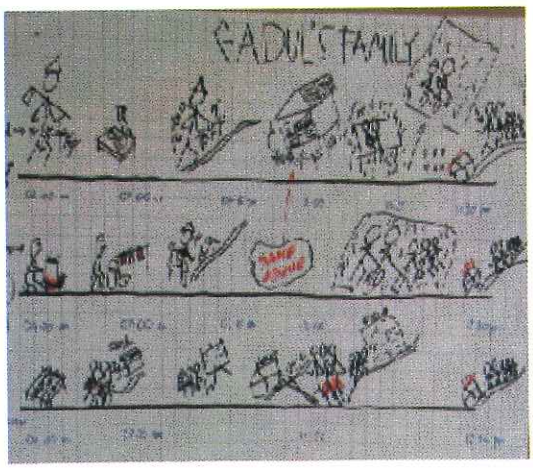
There are no rigid standards regarding the use of PRA tools. In fact PRA practitioners are encouraged to experiment with, modify or adapt tools to fit local situations. They can innovate additional tools as needed. The diversity of tools contributes to the strength of PRA.



Service matrix



Village map



Daily activity profile

Photos from: DSE 2002

Villagers in action:

Photo by: BM Calub

Women preparing seasonal calendar on income sources.
(Chiang Mai, Thailand)

Photo by: BM Calub

Villagers identify tree leaves to assess the status of their forest resources.
(Kampung Thom, Cambodia)

Photos from: DSE 2002

VILLAGE WALK

What is it?

A walk or series of walks across the landscape which involves observing directly and getting a systematic first-hand impression on the visible bio-physical, socio-cultural and economic conditions in the community.

Photo from: FSSRI

Village walk along rice fields..... (Calauan, Laguna, Philippines)

Photo by: L Cammann

..... and across streams. (Kampung Chnang, Cambodia)

Suggested steps:

1. Form a small group of knowledgeable local people interested to walk around and show their village.

2. The walk should not be confined only to major roads. As much as possible, walk at an angle away from the main road. Walk to areas representative of the terrain and major land uses.

3. Try to reach an elevated area where the team can have a good view of the landscape.

4. Observe, ask and listen. Take notes. Take photos after asking permission. Apparent biophysical conditions may consist of topography, soil, water bodies, vegetation and land use patterns. Socio-cultural characteristics include meeting places, religious structures, school and health facilities. Observable economic characteristics include road conditions and road networks, market or trading posts, local products, types of houses, availability of electricity, water supply, communication and transportation facilities.

5. Make short stops along the way. Invite the villagers joining the walk to sketch the areas you have passed through.

6. Dialogue also with those who you come across along the way. They can confirm or explain some of your observations.

7. Return to "base" and initiate preparation of village maps or other relevant thematic maps (for example social and enterprise maps, or natural resource, land use, slope or soil maps).

Uses of information obtained:

- Gives an overview of the general conditions in a community.
- Serves as preliminary activity for preparing the various maps and transects.
- Helps cross-check information obtained using other tools.

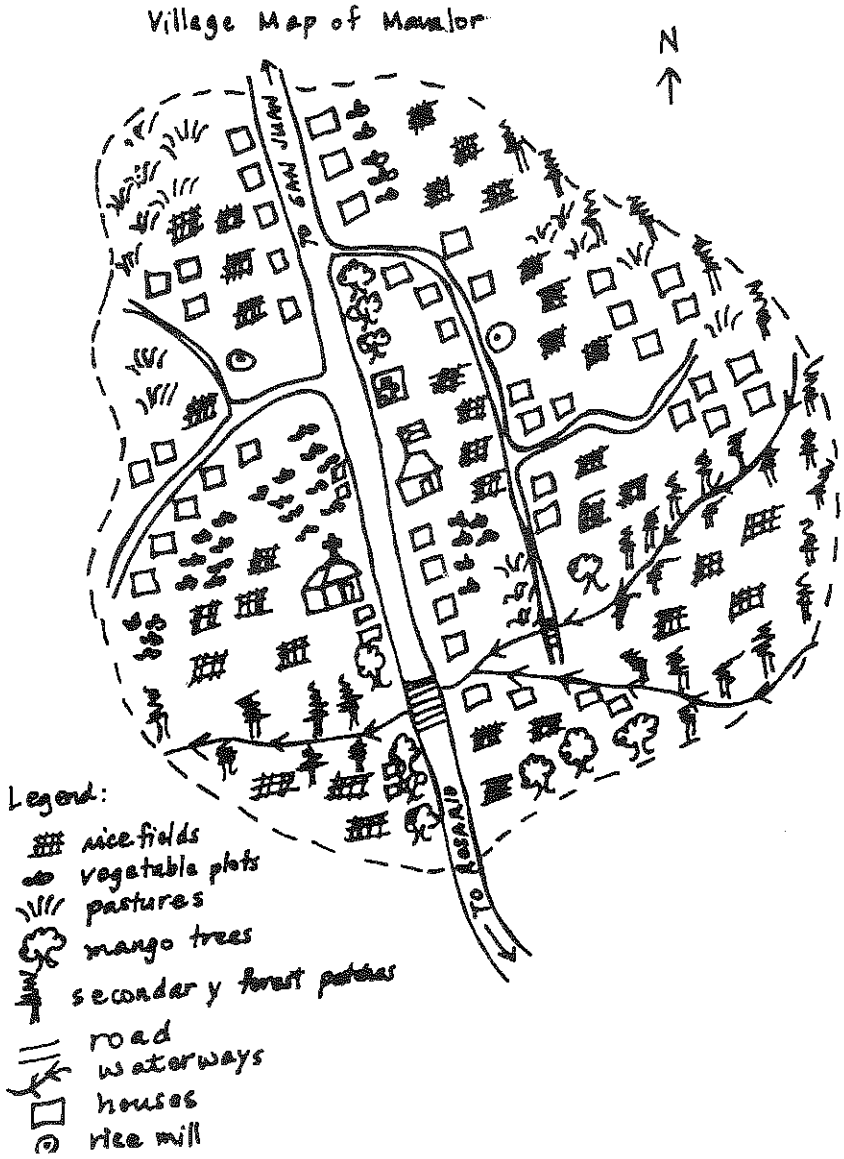
Photo by: L. Cammann

VILLAGE MAP

What is it?

A basic drawing that identifies community boundaries and major bio-physical land use patterns, landmarks and infrastructure within the community.

Example:



Suggested steps:

1. The facilitator asks villagers to draw on paper or on the ground, the major physical landmarks such as main roads, pathways and water resources in the community. Villagers can also indicate general directions (North, South, East, West).

2. General land use patterns like agricultural areas, pastures, forests, and human settlements are indicated.

3. Other prominent village structures such as village meeting halls, community school, health or religious centers, trading posts or rice mills are added.

4. Community boundaries are marked on the drawings and names of neighboring villages are written.

Uses of the information obtained:

- Allows an initial appraisal of general conditions and infrastructure in the area.
- Serves as a planning tool for initiating projects in the area.
- Provides baseline information for monitoring and evaluating progress later.
- Serves as reference for constructing other maps such as social, land use or enterprise map.

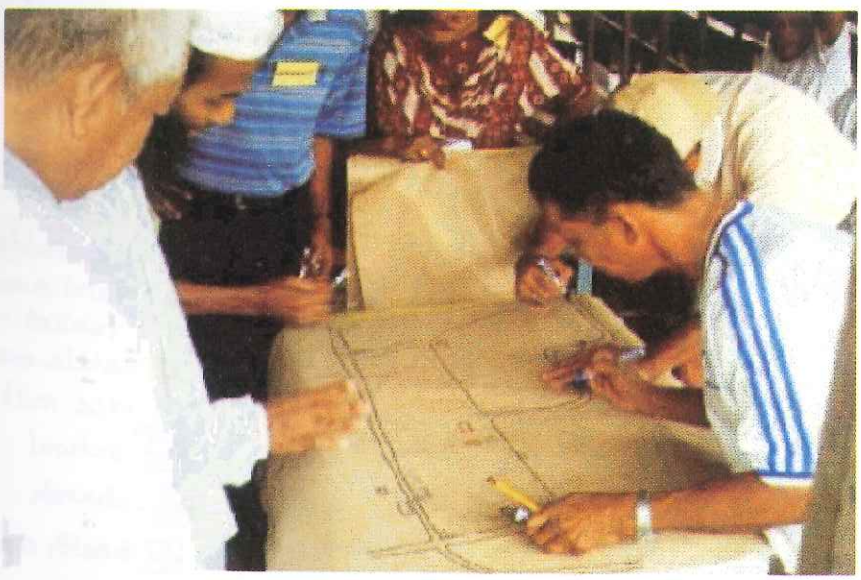


Photo by: BM Calub

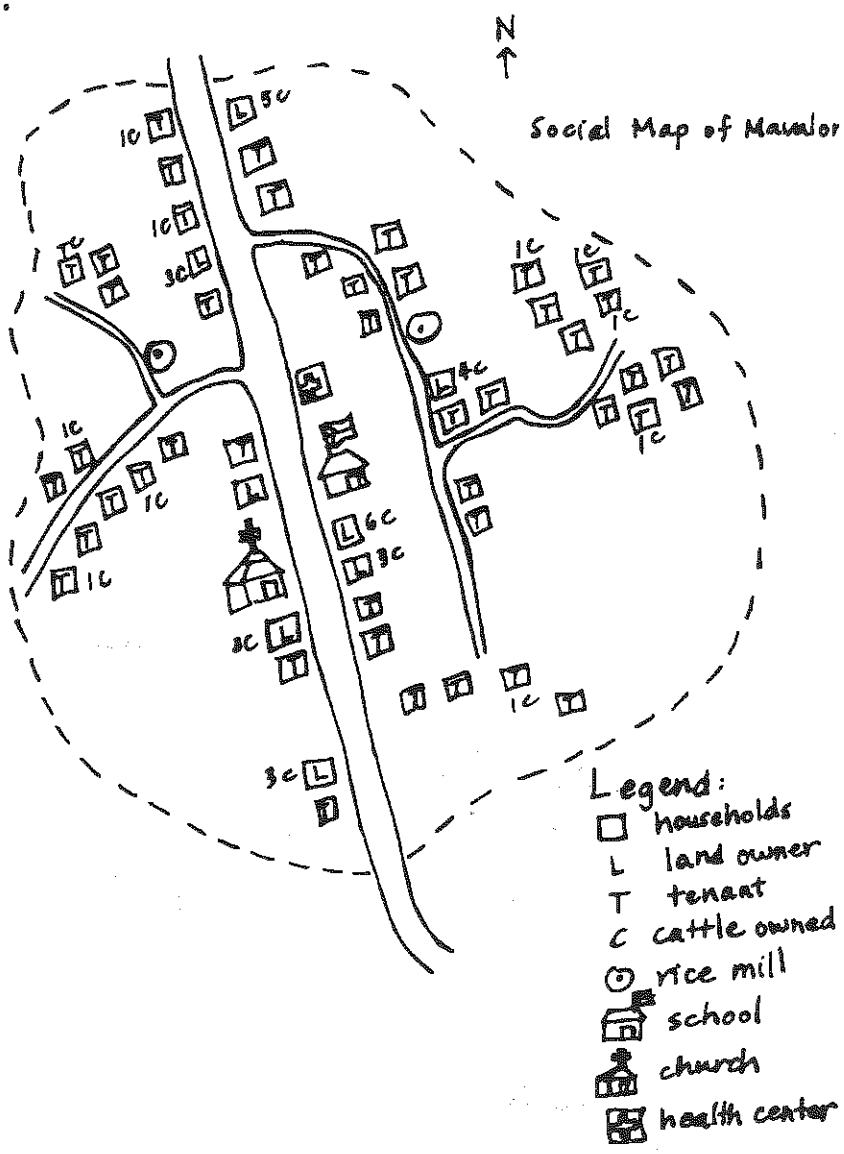
Local people preparing a village map. (Pila, Laguna, Philippines)

SOCIAL MAP

What is it?

A drawing indicating the spatial distribution of households in the community. Marks on specific houses are used to indicate social status and well-being of different community members.

Example:



Suggested steps:

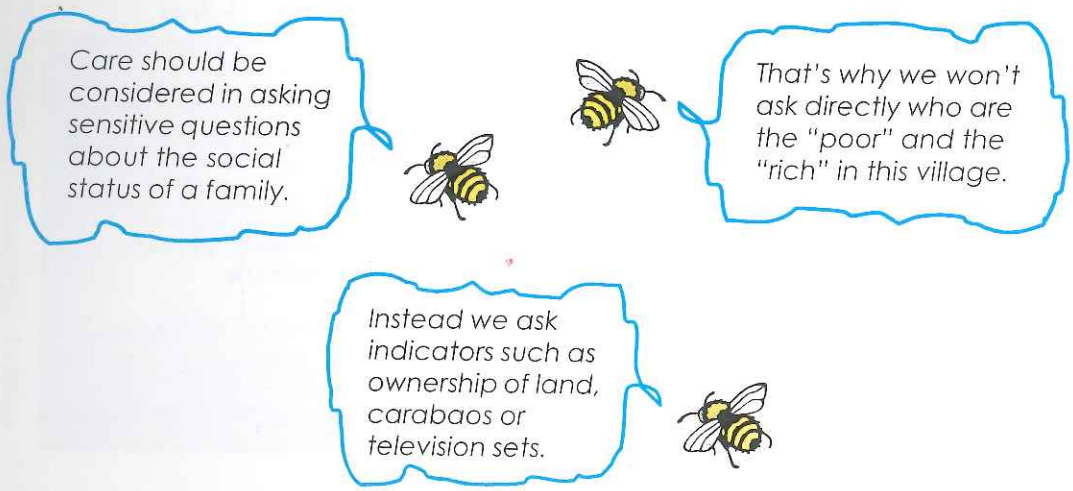
1. The village map drawn earlier is overlaid with plastic sheet. On the plastic sheet, villagers' houses are drawn.

2. Villagers identify indicators that can be used to show the economic status or well-being of a household. For example, they may be asked to indicate which houses are made of concrete cement. This may indicate the household is better-off. Those made of light construction materials like bamboo or grasses may indicate the household has limited means. Other indicators which may be used are size and ownership of land, number and kinds of large animals, vehicles or household appliances owned. Male or female-headed households maybe identified and the number of family members indicated.

3. By using symbols for each indicator, the economic status or well-being of the different households are marked on the map.

Uses of information obtained:

- Gives a general idea of the socio-economic situation or well-being status of the community.
- Through the use of indicators, helps identify who are the poorest and the better-off in the community.
- Helps locate where these poorest people are situated in the community.
- Focuses development efforts to the poorer or "less heard" sectors of the community.

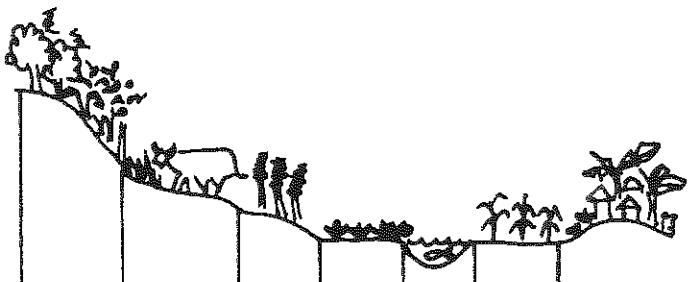


VILLAGE TRANSECT

What is it?

A diagram which provides a cross-sectional view of the distribution and boundaries of major resource units. For each resource unit, the crops grown, animals, soil characteristics, topography and other information are indicated.

Example:



Topography	Steep slopes	Rolling hills	Undulating	Flat	Sub-merged	Flat	Undulating
Land use	Forest	Pasture	Bushes	Crop lands	Pond	Crop lands	Residential
Annual crops	—	—	—	rice, beans	—	corn	vegetables
Perennials	mahogany narra, others	napier, cogon	guaves ipil-ipil	—	—	—	banana, papaya, citrus
Animals	—	cattle, goats	—	—	fish	—	pigs, chicken
Problems		grass fires, soil erosion	psyllids	golden snail		acidic soil	swine waste disposal
Opportunities	Plant also indigenous forest trees	Integrate forage legumes	Also plant Gliricidia	raise ducks to eat snails		use organic fertilizer	explore biogas

Suggested steps:

1. The village transect is best drawn after the village walk.

2. The facilitator orients the villagers with the general direction (North to South; East to West) of the transect line with the help of the village map.

3. The facilitator guides the construction of the village transect by initially drawing the matrix. Along the column, indicate some parameters like topography, land use, crops grown, animals raised, problems and opportunities. Along the rows, different resource units along the transect line may be drawn. It would help to recall the resource units observed during the village walk.

4. Villagers fill-in the matrix. They are also encouraged to provide additional parameters which they want included in the village transect.

Uses of information obtained:

- Gives a cross-sectional picture of the major biophysical resource units in the community.
- Helps focus development activities in response to needs of particular resource units.

Photo by: EA Ruiz

Photo by: JNM Garcia

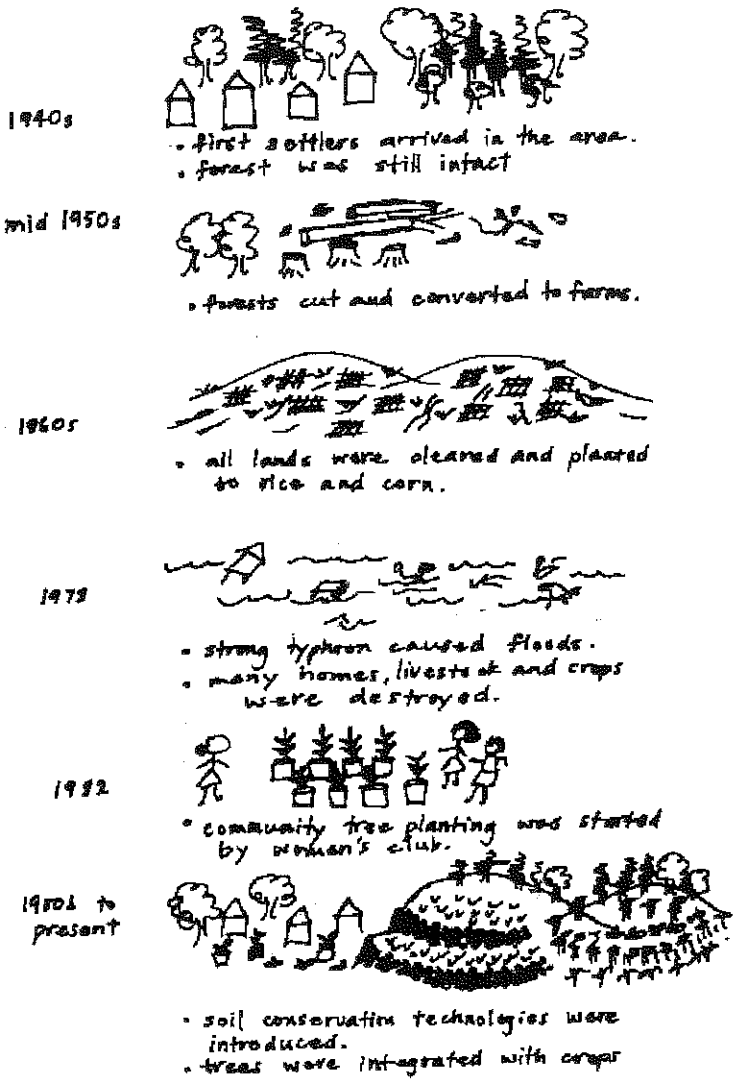
The village transect is particularly useful in areas with undulating topography. (Ned, South Cotabato, Philippines)

TIME LINE

What is it?

A chronological description of important events which occurred in the community's past and how such has influenced its development.

Example:



Suggested steps:

1. The time line is best done with the elderly as main resource persons.
2. The facilitator helps the villagers recall key historical events, the years or periods they occurred and the impacts on the community.
3. The information is recorded or drawn on a large sheet of paper or ground.

Uses of information obtained:

- Reveals important events in the community's history.
- Helps review what happened in the past to understand better the present situation of the people or condition of resources in the community.
- Guides future development activities such that "bitter" past events are avoided or good practices in the past are revived.

Photo by: BM Calub

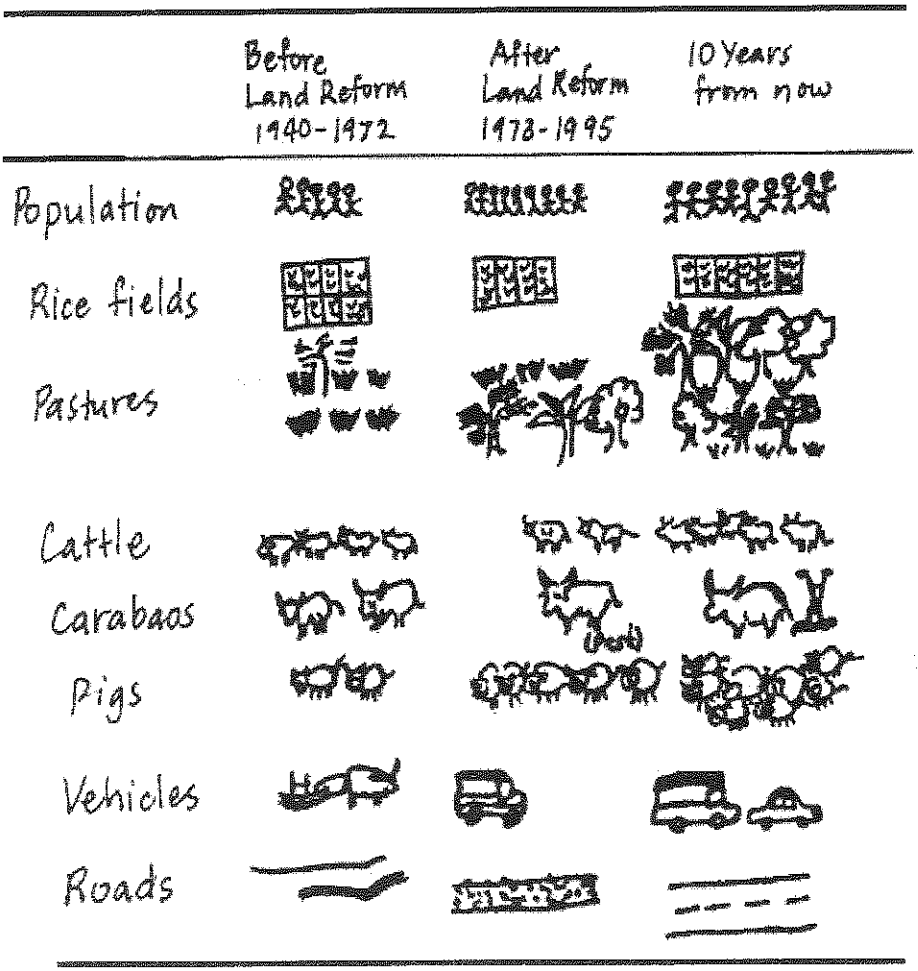
An elder prepares a time line while younger folks look on.
(Kampung Thom, Cambodia)

TREND ANALYSIS

What is it?

A visual documentation of the past, present and future directions or patterns of changes in the community's life. It examines the implications and causes of such changes.

Example:



Source: San Isidro farmers, Rosario, Batangas

Suggested steps:

1. Guided by the facilitator, major time frames such as past, present and future are used as reference points.

2. Particular topics of interest are then analyzed as to changes and trends that occurred in the past, present and future. Topics of interest may include changes in human population, forest cover, condition of water bodies, soil fertility, rainfall, crop and animal production, pest occurrence and others.

3. The diagrams may be simple covering only one topic of interest. It may also be done using a combination of several topics of interest.

4. The future may be further classified as to:

- **"What will likely happen in the future?"**
  (This may not be what is desired but will most likely happen if the present trends continue.)

- **"What is your desired future?"**
  (This is what you want to happen in the future.)

Uses of information obtained:

- Helps project what is likely to happen in the future in view of what happened in the past and what is happening at present.

- Guides development activities to respond to what the community foresees will be their future.

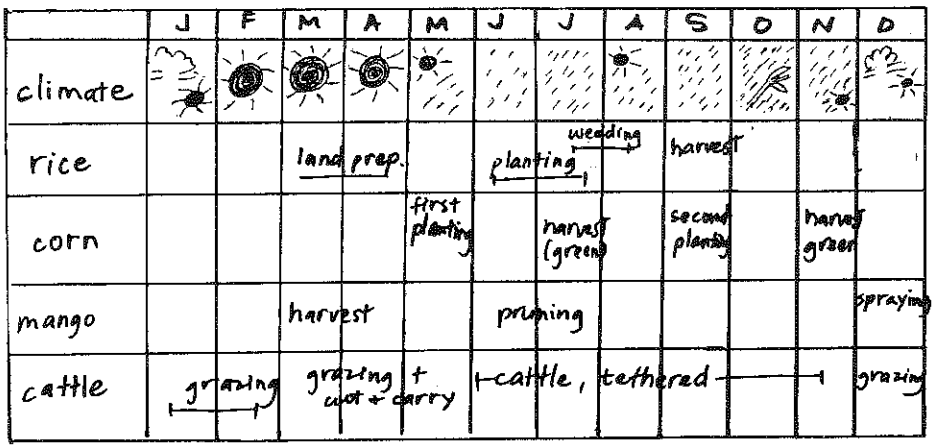
- Serves as basis for courses of action that may need to be taken in order to attain the desired future state.

SEASONAL CALENDAR

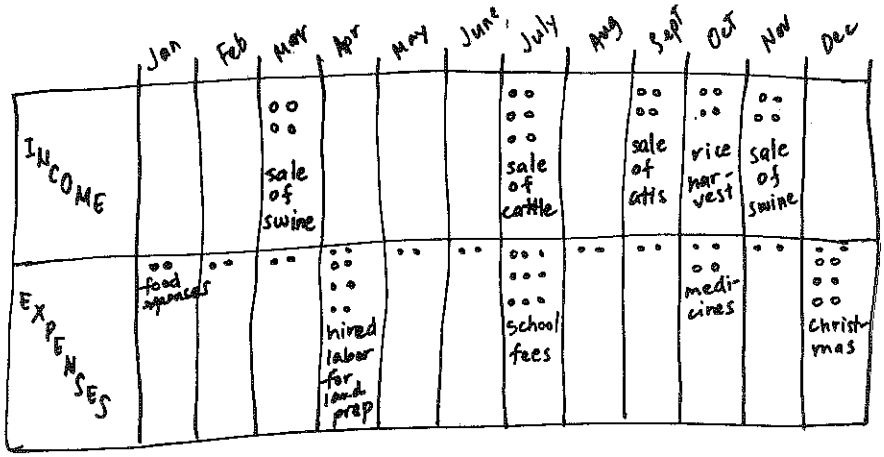
What is it?

An illustration of schedules of various household activities, events, farming variables or climatic conditions over a particular time frame, usually one year.

Example:



Seasonal Calendar for climate and farming activities



Seasonal calendar for income + expenses (Aling Kulasa's household)

Suggested steps:

1. Villagers are asked to write the months of the year along the horizontal axis (top or bottom).

2. Specific topics or activities are listed on the left hand side.

3. Villagers fill in the monthly or seasonal activities in the farm, in the community or household. This may include planting, weeding, harvesting of crops; breeding, parturition and weaning of animals; seasonality of rainfall and drought; seasonal needs or availability of labor; monthly income and expenses and others.

Uses of information obtained:

- Tells when the villagers are busy with certain farm or livelihood activities.
- Tells when villagers have free time.
- Helps schedule and plan particular development activities according to the

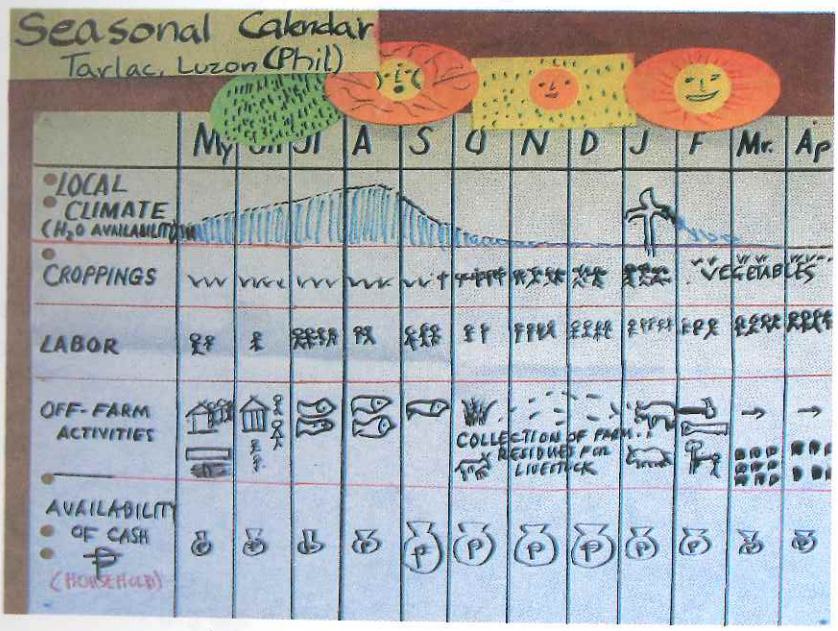


Photo from: DSE 2002

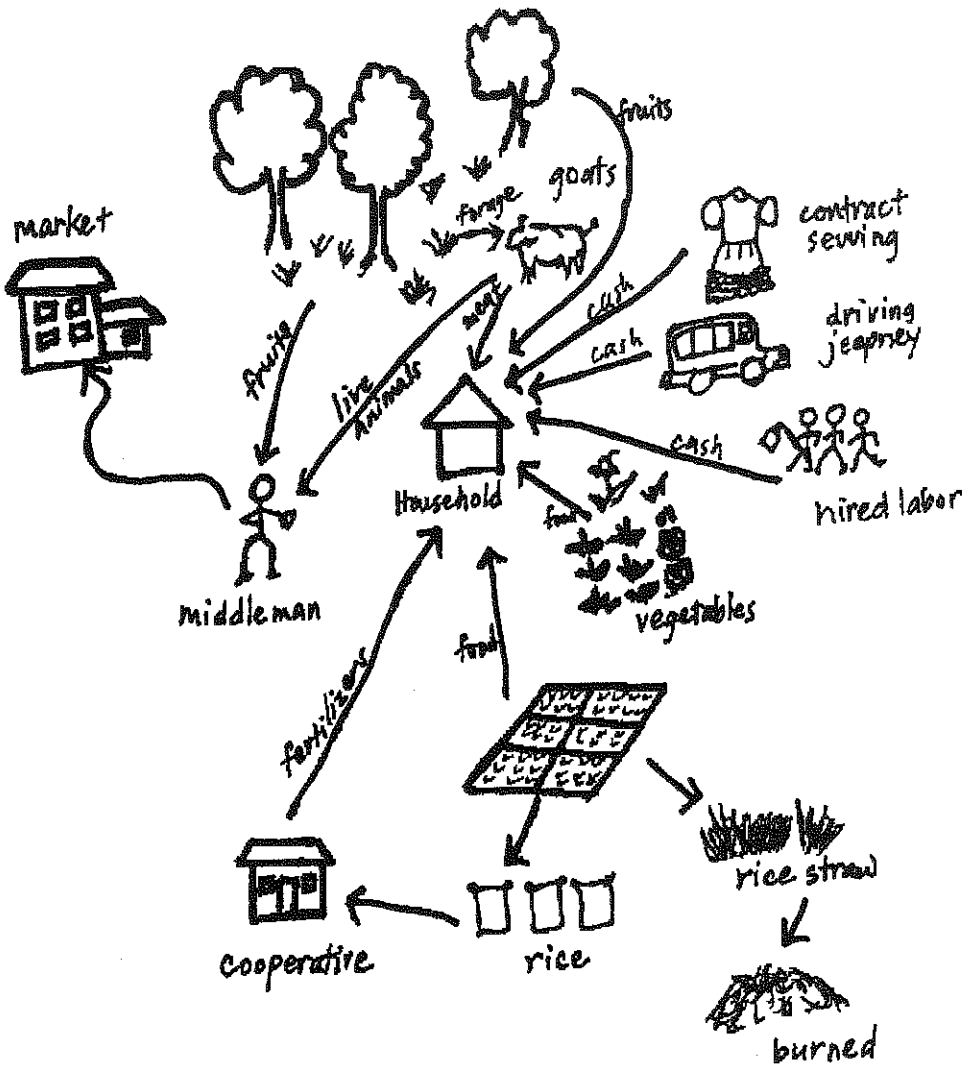
Another sample of a seasonal calendar.

RESOURCE FLOW DIAGRAM

What is it?

A sketch of the components or elements of the household's livelihood system. Lines and arrows indicate the interrelationships of those elements.

Example:



Suggested steps:

1. Villagers are asked to enumerate the various components of the livelihood system. This may include on-farm, non-farm or off-farm activities. They write or draw the components in sheets of paper; one component per sheet.

2. The drawings are laid on an open area (table or floor). Villagers are asked to arrange the different components.

3. Lines and arrows are drawn between components to show input and output flows. They may also indicate interrelationships of the various components.

4. The particular product (i.e., food, forage, cash) flowing from one component to another maybe written on the lines.

Uses of information obtained:

- Gives a general view of the components of the whole household, livelihood or agricultural system.

- Tells the input and output flows or interrelationships of the different components within and outside the household.

- Basis when planning to change one or several components of the livelihood system.

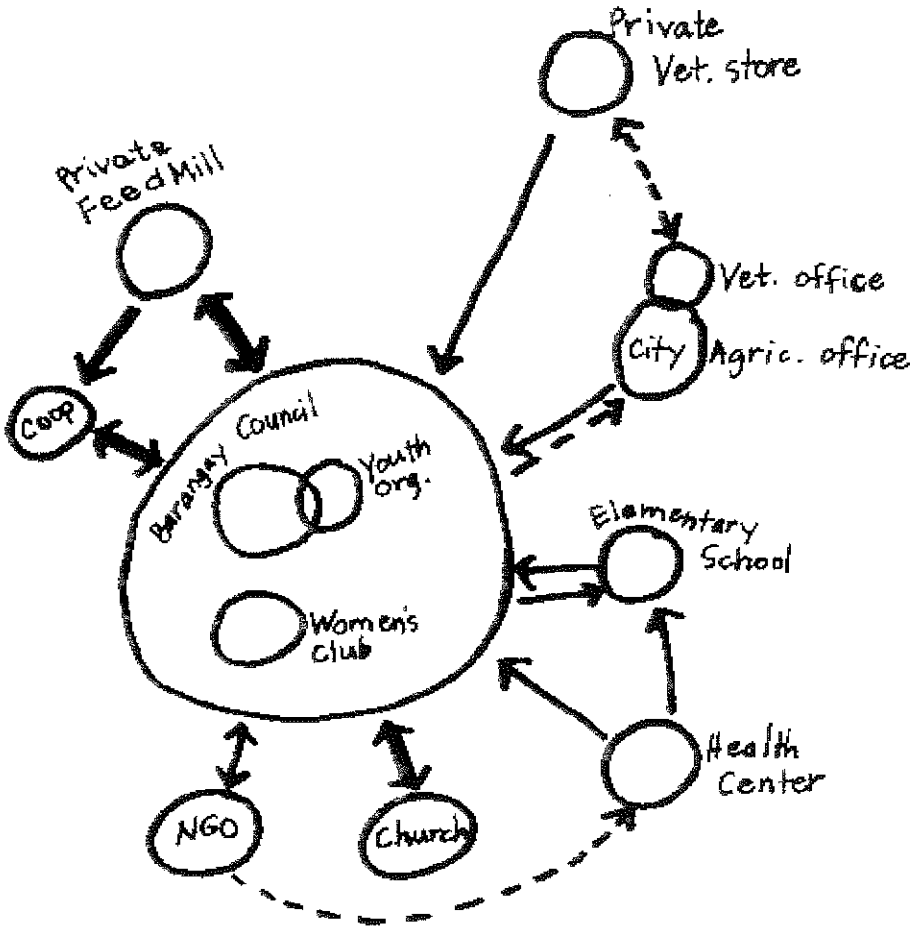
- Helps predict possible behavior of the livelihood or agricultural system as a response to alternative components or technologies introduced.

INSTITUTIONAL DIAGRAM

What is it?

A sketch (sometimes referred to as Venn Diagram) indicating the institutions, organizations or people. Lines and arrows show the relationships, services and interaction with the community or individual households. The size of the lines, directions of arrows or size of circles may indicate the degree or intensity of the relationships.

Example:



Suggested steps:

1. Villagers identify the different organizations, agencies, institutions or individuals that provide services or inputs to the community.

2. Names of the agencies are written on pieces of paper; one agency per sheet.

3. Circles may be additionally drawn on the pieces of paper to indicate the influence of an institution as perceived by villagers.

4. On a broad area (table, floor or brown paper) the community is drawn in the center. The pieces of paper from step 2 are arranged around the community.

5. The distance of the organizations from the community circle may indicate the extent by which the villagers feel an organization works for their interest. The closer to the community circle the greater is the perceived role of that organization to the community.

6. Lines (solid or dotted lines) may also be used to represent degree of relationships between the community and the organization. Arrows can indicate direction (one-way/two-way) of services provided or benefits derived.

Uses of information obtained:

- Shows the organizations, agencies, institutions or individuals working with the community.
- Describes the kind and extent of relationships that exist between the community and the organizations.
- Allows development workers to explore coordination, linkages and networks with existing organizations in the area.
- Maybe used to identify other organizations not yet operating in the area but are perceived to be needed.

PROBLEM RANKING

What is it?

A matrix that identifies, compares and prioritizes main problems of villagers. It serves as basis for focusing recommendations, alternative options or possible solutions.

Example:

Problems	Score	Rank
Poor soil	13	2nd
Low yields	15	1st
Many crop pests	9	4th
Lack of good seeds	6	5th
Cannot afford fertilizers	10	3rd

Suggested steps:

1. Problems are listed on pieces of paper, one problem per sheet. Similar problems may be grouped together.
2. Each participant is given 3-4 markers (stones, seeds, pebbles, shells, or other available items). Usually the number of markers should be half the number of items to be ranked. The participant places each of his/her marker on the first 3 or 4 problems he thinks are the most important. He or she actually "casts a vote."
3. The "votes" per problem are counted and the score indicated.
4. Problems are then ranked according to the most important (with the highest score) down to the least important (with the lowest score).

Note: Priority problems of the poorest can be different from better-off villagers.

Uses of information obtained:

- Identifies the most important problems in the community.
- Focuses the discussion and analysis to the most important problems as felt by the community.
- Serves as basis for identifying alternative options or possible solutions to the problems.

Photo from: FADO-VECO

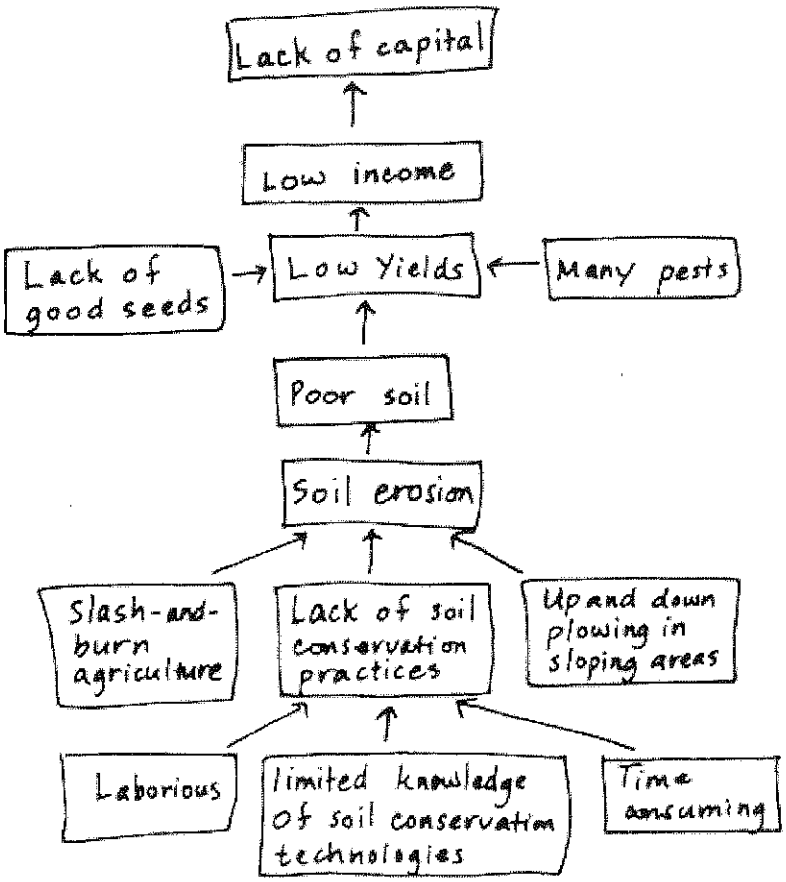
Ranking and scoring among villagers. (Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi, Indonesia)

PROBLEM CAUSE DIAGRAM

What is it?

A diagram which traces and diagnoses the root causes of certain problems in the community or household.

Example:



blems

Suggested steps:

1. Villagers write the priority problem on a piece of paper. (The priority problem can be identified using the Problem Ranking Tool described earlier).

2. People brainstorm to identify three or four main causes of the central problem. These are written on sheets of paper (one main cause per sheet) and arranged around the central problem.

3. The group goes one step further and identifies secondary causes that contribute to the main problem. These are again written on sheets of paper (one cause per sheet) and arranged around each of the main problems.

4. Depending on how deep the group wants to trace root causes of problems, they can further analyze to third or fourth levels of analysis.

Uses of information obtained:

- Identifies the root causes of important problems in the community.
- Gives an overview of the interrelationship of the different problems at various levels.
- Enriches the analysis of problems by tracing root causes.
- Serves as basis for identifying possible solutions to the tertiary, secondary or main problems with the end goal of addressing the priority problem.

When rocks block your way and mountains make your going difficult, Remember... A rock can be a stepping stone while a mountain gives a perfect view of those below.

- Anonymous

POSSIBLE SOLUTION RANKING

What is it?

A matrix that identifies, compares and prioritizes the best possible solutions to overcome identified priority problems.

Example:

Priority problem being addressed:
Low yields due to poor soil

Possible Solutions	Score	Rank
Improve soil fertility by using organic fertilizers	8	3rd
Prevent soil erosion by using conservation techniques	10	2nd
Make compost so we don't have to buy commercial fertilizers	6	4th
Plant multi-purpose trees like Leucaena as hedgerows	13	1st

Suggested steps:

1. Possible solutions to specific causes of problems are listed on pieces of paper, one possible solution per sheet.

2. Each participant is given 3-4 markers (stones, seeds, pebbles, shells, or other available items). Usually the number of markers should be half the number of items to be ranked. The participant places each of his/her markers on the first 3 or 4 possible solutions she/he thinks are the most important. She/He actually "casts a vote."

3. The "votes" per possible solution are counted and the score indicated.

4. Possible solutions are then ranked according to the "best bet" or "most feasible" (with highest score) down to the least possible solution (with lowest score).

   Note: Underlying causes of the main problem should be studied carefully (refer to Problem Cause Diagram). Possible solutions should also address these underlying causes rather than impulsively focusing on the simplistic solution of the main problem.

Uses of information obtained:

- Identifies the best possible solutions that may address the priority problems in the community.

- Focuses the discussion and analysis on the best possible solution as felt by the community.

- Serves as basis for preparing action plans so that the most possible solutions can be realized.

SWOT ANALYSIS

What is it?

An acronym that stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It describes and evaluates internal strengths and weaknesses within the community or proposed solutions. It analyzes opportunities and threats external to the community but which may affect the implementation of the proposed solution.

Example:

SWOT for Possible Solution #1:
Plant Leucaena as hedgerows

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Leucaena hedgerows will serve as physical barriers to run-off and soil loss - Leucaena is a tree that can fix Nitrogen - Leucaena can be used as green manure • Leucaena leaves can be used also as fodder so we can raise cattle and goats, too.	- Leucaena will shade out other crops - Establishing and pruning hedgerows is laborious - We lack knowledge on how to establish and manage Leucaena hedgerows
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• Increased crop yields will provide extra harvests which we can sell - Good market demand and price for cattle and goats	- Leucaena is susceptible to the psyllid pest

Suggested steps:

1. The meaning of the terms "Strengths", "Weaknesses", "Opportunities" and "Threats" are clarified with villagers.

2. Write the categories "Strengths", "Weaknesses", "Opportunities" and "Threats" as separate headings on a large sheet of paper. (It would be good to write these in the local language.)

3. Villagers write their ideas or opinions per category on cards or sheets of paper. One idea per card. They then decide under which category they should place their cards.

4. Facilitators may ask villagers politely to explain the ideas on the cards and why villagers feel it should be placed under such specific category.

Note: SWOT can be done for each of the possible solutions identified earlier using the Possible Solution Ranking. SWOT may also be done focusing on specific aspects in the community (i.e., social, economic or natural resources).

Uses of information obtained:

- Identifies the STRENGTHS. How can the community build on these internal strengths so that the plans will succeed?

- Analyzes WEAKNESSES. What should the community do to overcome the internal weaknesses so that the plans will not be hampered? How can development workers respond?

- Determines OPPORTUNITIES. What favorable outside factors can the community take advantage of to favor success of the plans?

- Examines THREATS. What risks and hindrances should the community bear in mind? How can external organizations help reduce the negative impacts?

- Serves as basis for making the decision whether the identified possible solutions can: (a) be undertaken as planned; (b) be undertaken but with adjustments; or (c) not be undertaken at all.

T O W S MATRIX

What is it?

A matrix used for reflecting and planning courses of action based on the outcome of the SWOT analysis done earlier.

Example:

TOWS Matrix for establishing Leucaena hedgerows for soil conservation

	Opportunities (O) ▪ Increased crop yields will provide extra harvests that we can sell ▪ Good market demand and price for cattle and goats	**Threats (T)** ▪ Leucaena is susceptible to psyllid pest
Strengths (S) ▪ Leucaena hedgerows will serve as physical barriers to run-off and soil loss ▪ Leucaena is a perennial that can fix nitrogen ▪ Leucaena leaves can be used as green manure ▪ Leucaena leaves can also be used as fodder therefore we can also raise cattle and goats	*S-O* ▪ Design proper planting configuration to integrate Leucaena into existing crop production system ▪ Look for seed sources of Leucaena ▪ Use cattle manure as additional organic fertilizer to crops	*S-T* ▪ Select psyllid-tolerant species for planting ▪ Plant also other legume trees including indigenous species
Weaknesses (W) ▪ Leucaena will shade out other crops ▪ Establishing and pruning trees regularly is laborious ▪ We lack knowledge on how to establish and manage Leucaena hedgerows	*W-O* ▪ Confine Leucaena along borders to minimize shading of crops if it is pruned at longer intervals ▪ Plan a pruning scheme that will keep Leucaena at a low height ▪ Request information or training from local government unit or local college regarding proper pruning management of Leucaena	*W-T* ▪ Invite resource persons to train us on proper establishment and management of hedgerows ▪ Avoid pruning during the late dry season when Leucaena is most susceptible to psyllid attack

Suggested steps:

1. A matrix is prepared beforehand. Using the results of the SWOT analysis, the most important strengths and weaknesses are written on the left-hand side of the matrix while the opportunities and threats are placed as column headings.

2. Ask the guide questions for pairs of Strengths and Opportunities (S-O); Weaknesses and Opportunities (W-O); Strengths and Threats (S-T) and Weaknesses and Threats (W-T).

3. Facilitators guide villagers to identify and reflect on possible actions.

	Opportunities	**Threats**
Strengths	**S-O** guide question: How can we take advantage of strengths in order to exploit opportunities?	**S-T** guide question: How can we use strengths to counteract threats? How can we turn threats into opportunities?
Weaknesses	**W-O** guide question: How can we overcome weaknesses in order to take advantage of opportunities?	**W-T** guide question: How can we deal with weaknesses in order not to be overwhelmed by threats?

Uses of information obtained:

- Allows a more in-depth analysis of factors that will work in favor or against a planned activity.
- Guides villagers and development workers on aspects to consider before preparing an action plan.

ACTION PLAN MATRIX

What is it?

An outlined proposal indicating details of the plan and design of a project or activity.

Example:

Title of Activity: Training on establishment and management of Leucaena hedgerows for soil conservation.

Objective: To enhance capability of farmers in establishing and managing Leucaena hedgerows for soil conservation.

Problem being addressed: Farmers have limited knowledge on how to establish and manage Leucaena hedgerow for soil conservation.

Expected Results	Progress Indicators	Activities	Schedule of Activities	Inputs	Budget	Responsible person/agency
▪ Farmers are able to apply knowledge and skills in establishing and managing Leucaena hedgerows for soil conservation	▪ Within 3 months, 60 farmers are trained	▪ Coordinate training activities with the village head, community	▪ March (1 week)	▪ Local facilitator	₱200	▪ Facilitator ▪ Community ▪ Village officers
		▪ Conduct practical training and follow-up field visits	▪ April –May (period of slack labor in the farm)	▪ Resource person ▪ Pamphlets ▪ Training materials ▪ Leucaena seeds	₱800	▪ Farmers ▪ Village officers ▪ Local agriculture or forestry office
	▪ Within 2 years at least 40 farmers have established Leucaena hedgerows in their farms. Run-off is reduced and soil is conserved.	▪ Encourage formation of "exchange labor" groups so that farmers can help each other in establishing hedgerows	▪ June onwards (coincides with planting season)	▪ Local facilitator ▪ Group leaders	₱500	▪ Farmers ▪ Village officers
		▪ Hold annual forum for exchange of experiences and lessons learned	▪ March	▪ Village hall	₱500	▪ Local facilitator ▪ Farmers ▪ Community

Suggested steps:

1. It is important that the action plan matrix be done with community members who earlier participated in Problem identification and ranking, Problem cause analysis, Possible solution ranking, and SWOT analysis.

2. Prepare the matrix with the following headings per column.

3. Discuss with villagers how and what to write under each column using the following guideline.

Title of activity	Brief name of the activity or project.
Objective(s)	What is the purpose of the project?
Problem being addressed	What problems need to be solved?
Expected results	Concrete products or outputs brought about by the project.
Progress indicators	WHAT can be measured or observed to show the extent to which the objectives, activities and expected results are being fulfilled.
Activities	HOW will you do it? Actions required to achieve intended results.
Schedule of activities	WHEN and for HOW LONG will you do it?
Inputs	WHAT resources are needed?
Budget	Estimated expenses or expected income.
Responsible person or institution	WHO will do it?

Uses of information obtained:

- Guides the community and development workers in planning how, why and when a project is to be implemented.
- Clarifies who should do what specific activities in the plan.
- Serves as basis for monitoring progress and evaluating success of the project.
- Serves as basis for writing project proposals.

Photo by: I Suharto

Lady community leader thoroughly discusses the basis for their action plan. (West Timor, Indonesia)

Prioritizing community problems using ranking and scoring methods. (Rosario, Batangas, Philippines)

Photo by: DD Manalo

PRA team member looks on while villagers analyze causes of problems in the community. (La Carlota, Negros Occidental, Philippines)

Photo by: D delos Santos

Children are busy drawing "What I would like to be, when I grow up". Among these Lahu children, everybody dreams to work in the city. Nobody likes to stay farming in the village. What should then be the development programs for them? (Chiang Mai, Thailand)

Photo by: BM Calub

PART I. Basic Concepts of PRA

PART II. PRA Tools

PART III. Organizing a PRA

WHOSE JOB IS IT?

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.

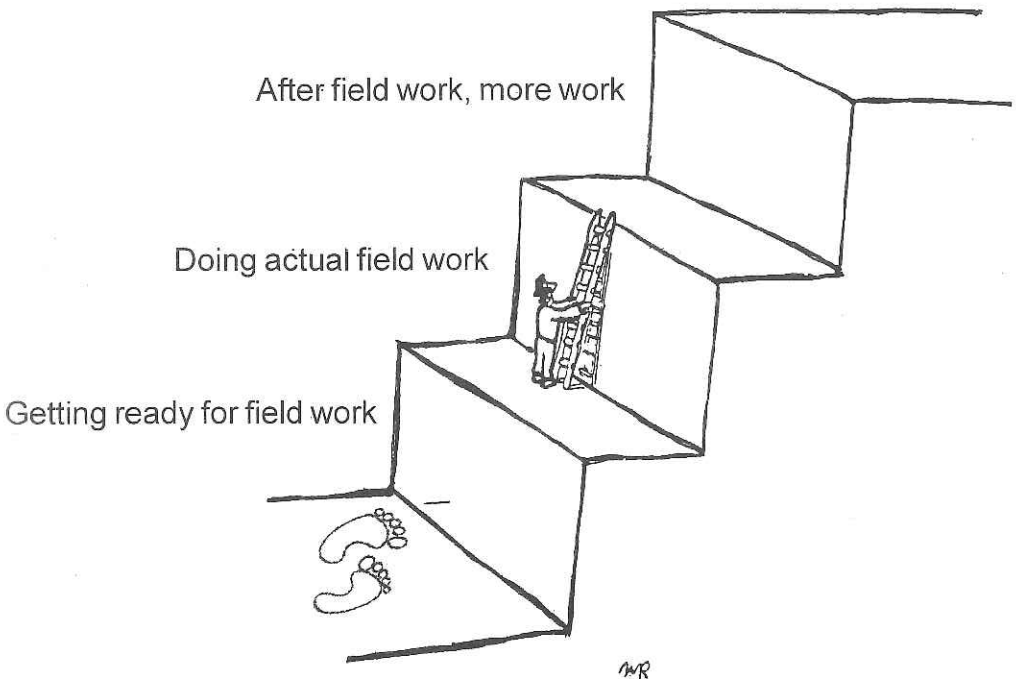
Everybody thought Anybody could do it
but Nobody realized that
Everybody wouldn't do it.
Thus, Everybody blamed Somebody
when Nobody did
what Anybody could have done.

LEARNING BY DOING

There is no PRA recipe. Each appraisal needs a specific approach depending on:

- the focus and depth of analysis
- host community
- PRA team composition

But to learn PRA, one needs to start from somewhere. The best approach is LEARNING BY DOING. This section presents a proposal for organizing actual PRA field work. BY NO MEANS is this intended to be THE "magic formula".



A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

- Confucius

A. GETTING READY FOR FIELD WORK

1. Selecting the site

- Implementing organization chooses priority areas.
- Donor agency decides target areas where PRA needs to be conducted.
- Community itself decides to do a PRA.

2. Defining objectives

- Set, clarify and prioritize the purpose of the PRA.
- Possible objectives of PRA:
  - ☐ To describe and analyze conditions in the community
  - ☐ To identify problems and potential solutions
  - ☐ To design or re-design possible projects and activities for implementation
  - ☐ To monitor or evaluate existing projects

Begin with the end in mind.

- Stephen Covey

3. Preliminary visit

- Ask permission from village leaders or other relevant units.
- Request for an appointment with villagers, at their convenience, please.
- Clarify the following:
  - ☐ objectives of the activity
  - ☐ methods to be employed
  - ☐ intended use of the outputs

Photo by: BM Calub

PRA team consults village leaders regarding appropriate time to conduct the field work. (Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi, Indonesia)

Take care not to raise false expectations!!!

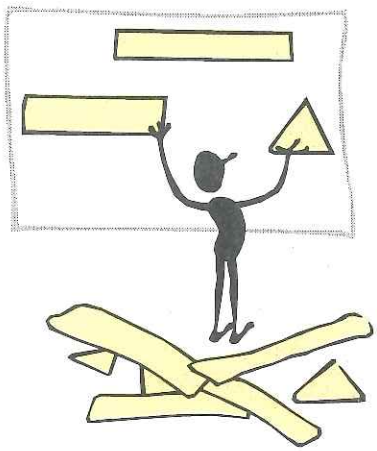
4. Organizing the PRA team

- Involve multi and interdisciplinary team members.
- Build teamwork.
- Agree on a "team contract". Who should do what; when, how?

COMPLEMENTATION rather than competition should prevail in interdisciplinary team work.

5. Secondary data gathering

- Provides initial information about the site.
- Helps the PRA team in formulating guide questions.

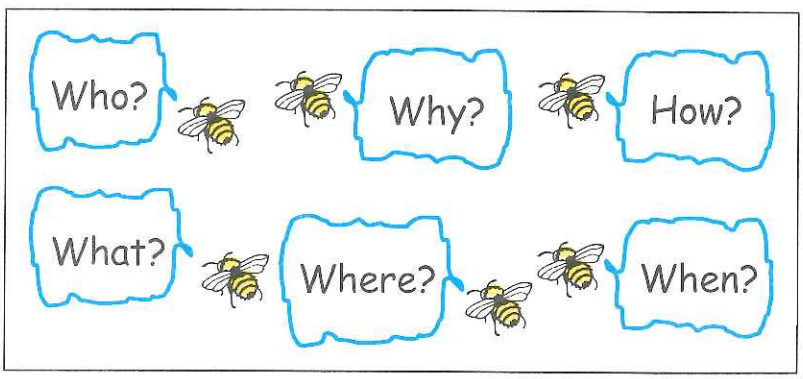


- Village profile
- Base maps
- Climate data
- Soil data
- Local organizations
- Technical data

6. Preparing guide questions

- List the topics or themes the PRA team wants to discuss with villagers.
- Refer to this list to guide discussions during actual field work.

The Six Helpers



7. Drafting a tentative field work plan

- The plan should be structured yet flexible. It is "tentative" to anticipate any needed adjustments while in the field.
- Develop a stepwise sequencing of activities and the tools to be used.
- Decide what materials to bring.

Photo by: BM Calub

Team members actively contribute to the tentative field work plan.
(Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi, Indonesia)

There are many ways of doing things. Only your imagination limits it.

B. DOING ACTUAL FIELD WORK

1. Establish rapport with the community

- Introduce all team members.
- Explain the objectives of this PRA.
- Describe briefly the visualization and participation requested from them.
- Define the intended use of the outputs.
- Clarify any false expectations.

Photo by: DP Narvacan

An initial village meeting orients the people regarding the activities to be undertaken. Early on, it is important to clarify the whats, whys and whos of the PRA. (Kampong Thom, Cambodia)

2. Subdivide groups of village participants

- Request villagers to assemble into smaller groups.
- The PRA team correspondingly splits into sub-teams.
- Simultaneous use of some tools is made easy when done with several small groups of people.

Photo by: BM Calub

This PRA sub-team facilitates preparation of a resource flow diagram with one household. (Hanoi, Vietnam)

Photo by: BM Calub

There is closer interaction within small groups of villagers. Here they discuss and contribute to the mobility map being prepared. (Kampong Thom, Cambodia)

3. Actual interaction with villagers

- Communication and facilitation skills of the PRA team is put to test.
- Relax, take your time.
- Be ready for the unexpected.

Photo by: BM Calub

(Kampong Thom, Cambodia)

Photo from: InWent/LWF 2002)

(Rattanakiri, Cambodia)

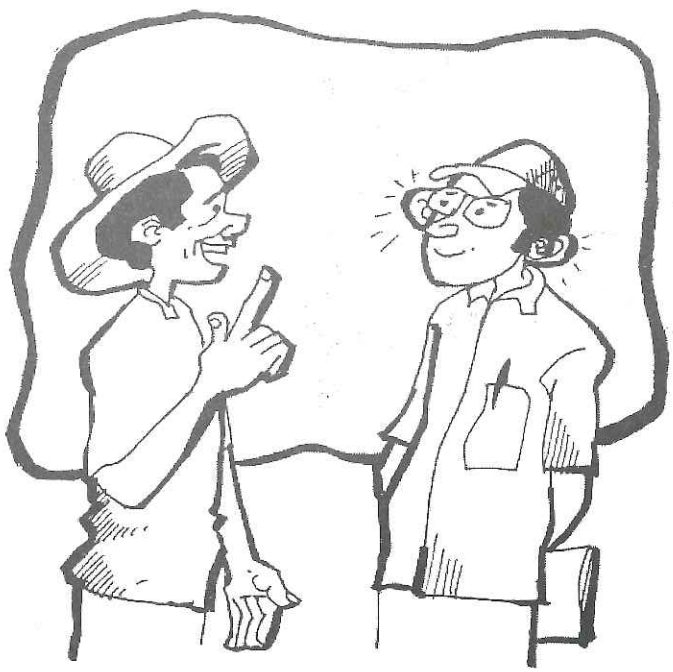
With proper coaching, younger folks often times are able and willing to facilitate the discussion with their fellow villagers. This results to a more relaxed atmosphere than if an outsider is facilitating.

Avoid all forms of premature interpreting, proposing, moralizing, threatening nor advising.

DOs in Dialogues

- ✓ Learn about the culture
- ✓ Initially discuss general information
- ✓ Introduce tools gradually, step by step
- ✓ Be informal but polite
- ✓ Let them do the talking
- ✓ Listen more (have patience)
- ✓ Be a good and keen observer (be sensitive)
- ✓ Respect their views and knowledge
- ✓ Use simple language
- ✓ Translator should translate only (avoid giving your own opinion or adding some info)
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions
- ✓ Record responses and observations fully
- ✓ Probe responses carefully
- ✓ Verify through triangulation
- ✓ Judge responses (politely separate facts, opinions, rumor)
- ✓ Leave with thanks (politely….you may give token gifts)

Source: DSE 1999; PLA Notes 1998



DON'Ts in Dialogues

- × Lecture
- × Neglect the values and culture of villagers
- × Ask lengthy questions
- × Ask compound questions
- × Ask negatively guided questions
- × Ask close-ended questions
- × Ask sensitive questions (e.g. family-related, religion, politics, status)
- × Repeat the same questions
- × Ask questions all at the same time
- × Interrupt the speaker
- × Create annoyance, irritation or confusion during discussion
- × Ignore the answers
- × Blame any one (person or organization)
- × Promise anything
- × Waste time
- × Leave without saying "thank you"

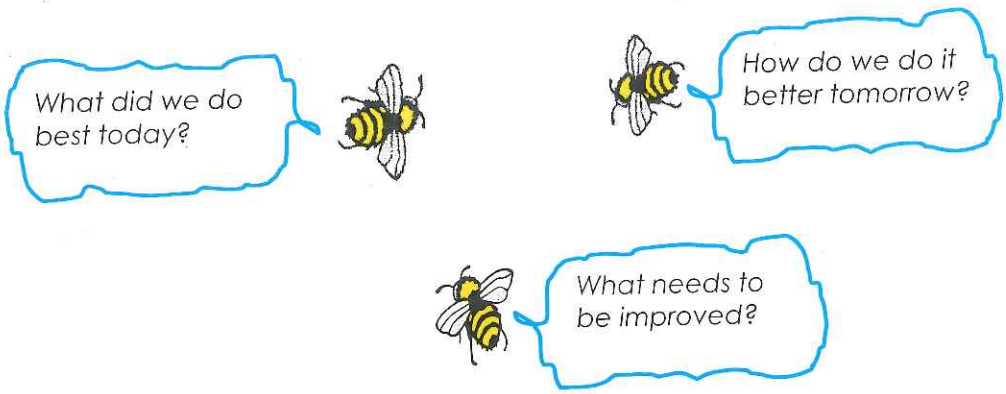
Source: DSE 1999; PLA Notes 1998

4. Daily evening review

- Review what happened during the day.
- Plan activities for the next day. Re-plan as needed.

Photo by: BM Calub

Open communication lines among team members facilitates a healthy assessment of the day's activities. (Antique, Philippines)



5. Community validation

- Display all PRA outputs and charts in a suitable large area.
- Invite other villagers to share, jointly analyze and validate information.
- Encourage villagers who produced the PRA charts to facilitate the presentation to their fellow villagers.
- PRA team members STAY IN THE BACKGROUND but take note of the dynamics of the village plenary.
- Invite local officials to listen to the villagers' presentation.
- Respect the villagers outputs. Any revisions should be made by them.

Photo by: BM Calub

Lahu woman presenting the PRA charts she made earlier with other housewives. Fellow villagers listen and validate the information.
(Chiang Mai, Thailand)

6. Leave with thanks

- In the end, the people should also have enjoyed the PRA activities.
- If you need to promise anything, be sure to fulfill them.

Photo by: L Cammann

After closely interacting with the people, saying goodbye becomes difficult sometimes. (Kampung Chnang, Cambodia)

1. *Rule number one:* *Be good to people.*
2. *Rule number two:* *Repeat rule number one.*
3. *Rule number three:* *Repeat rule number two.*

--- *R. Peresgrova*

C. AFTER FIELD WORK, MORE WORK

1. Information integration

- Assess the quality of information obtained. Separate facts, opinions, and rumors.
- Identify information gaps.
- Cross-check information among PRA tools, among resource persons and among team members.
- Unify data and information.

2. Report Writing

- Challenge the team members to write down PRA results the soonest possible time; while information is still fresh in the minds.
- PRA reports are good references for the team and for future activities in the village.
- Include photos of the people "in action" and their finished charts.
- In writing the report, maintain a systems orientation, holistic perspective and a sustainability vision.

SAMPLE OUTLINE OF A PRA REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION
   A. Objectives
   B. Methodology

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA
   A. Historical Sketch
   B. Biophysical Characteristics
      1. Location
      2. Climate
      3. Soil Characteristics
      4. Vegetation and Land Use

   C. Agricultural Activities
      1. Annual Crops and Cropping Patterns
      2. Perennial Crops
      3. Livestock Raising

   D. Socio-Cultural-Economic Characteristics
      1. Population and Household Size
      2. Agricultural Landholding and Tenure System
      3. Labor Profile (Who does what, when)
      4. Sources of and Estimated Income from Farming
      5. Non-Farm and Off-farm Sources of Income
      6. Village Organizations and Institutional Support

III. ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY
   A. Farm Components and Interactions
   B. Problem Cause Analysis
   C. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
   D. Sustainability Issues

IV. COMMUNITY VISIONS
   A. Socio-cultural-economic Aspects
   B. Institutional Aspects
   C. Biophysical Aspects

V. COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

3. Follow-up activities

- Conduct follow-up PRAs focusing on information gaps or other specific concerns.
- Refine details of the community action plan.
- Explore possible linkages needed to materialize action plans.
- Identify complementary activities to support the community action plan.
- Possible complementary activities:
  - ☐ Documentation of indigenous knowledge systems
  - ☐ Documentation of "success stories" or "best practices"
  - ☐ Technology promotion
  - ☐ Information dissemination
  - ☐ On-farm research
  - ☐ Basic research
  - ☐ Policy studies
  - ☐ Networking

4. Reflections

- Review the PRA tools used. Which worked well? Which needs to be modified? Can we innovate?
- Consider the behavior of team members with villagers and with other team members.
- Think about how to improve next time.

Photo from: InWent/LWF 2002

Sincere self-assessment by the PRA team is a first step towards improved performance next time. (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

Never regret a day in your life
Good days give you happiness
Bad days give you experience
Both are essential to life!
- Anonymous

Challenges to the PRA team:

Village walk... rain or shine. (Rosario, Batangas, Philippines)

Photo by: JNM Garcia

One team member facilitates while another jots down notes. (Kampong Thom, Cambodia)

Photo by: BM Calub

Team members step aside so a villager can correct information during the community validation. (Pila, Laguna, Philippines)

Photo by: MTS Medialdia

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APPENDIX

A growing list of tools used in PRA	
Tools for biophysical analysis	▪ Direct observation ▪ Transect walk ▪ Village walk ▪ Base map ▪ Village map ▪ Land use map ▪ Vegetation map ▪ Natural resource map ▪ Village transect
Tools for socio-economic analysis	▪ Social map ▪ Well-being map ▪ Enterprise map ▪ Mobility map ▪ Income and expenditure calendar ▪ Marketing matrix ▪ Livelihood gender matrix ▪ Food path analysis ▪ Gender clock
Tools for time analysis	▪ Time line or Community history ▪ Seasonal calendar ▪ Migration calendar ▪ Daily activity profile
Tools for ranking	▪ Pair wise ranking ▪ Preference ranking ▪ Well-being ranking ▪ Actor-Service matrix ranking ▪ Problem ranking ▪ Possible solution ranking
Tools for analysis of flows and interrelationships	▪ Farming systems flow diagram ▪ Bio resource flow diagram ▪ Venn diagram or Institutional diagram ▪ Stakeholder analysis ▪ Problem cause diagram ▪ Problem tree
Tools for visioning	▪ Trend analysis ▪ "Dream" map ▪ Future map
Tools for decision–making and planning	▪ Decision tree ▪ Force field analysis ▪ SWOT analysis ▪ TOWS matrix ▪ Feasibility matrix ▪ Action plan matrix

Your comments are most welcome.
Please send them to:

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