IRC
International Water and Sanitation Centre

DRAFT

Facilitating Community Discovery:

Getting to know about community management

Eveline Bolt
Peter Bury
Marc P. Lammerink

November 1998

Community Managers for Tomorrow

Document no. 4

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre
P.O. Box 93190
2509 AD The Hague
The Netherlands
phone: +31.70.3068930
fax: +31.70.3589964
e-mail: general@irc.nl
Web site: http://www.irc.nl/

In March 1999 IRC will move to Delft.
Our e-mail and web site addresses will remain unchanged.

PAN AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT
General Secretariat
(PAID-GS)

Cinara

Facilitating Community Discovery

Getting to know about community management

SER
SERVICIOS PARA EL DESARROLLO

WASEP

NETWAS

Table of Contents

Preface

This series of five documents, together entitled *Community Water Managers for Tomorrow: Partnerships for water management in rural communities*, has been developed by IRC in collaboration with teams from partner organizations in six countries. At the heart of these documents are the experiences of the local research teams at the community level, who have made enormous contributions to the adoption of this approach to community water supply.

Each of the five documents in this series has a different focus, but are all based on the same experience – a four-year participatory action research project to improve the management performance of rural communities of water supply systems in developing countries, called the PAR-Manage project.

The first two documents explain what happened during this four-year research project. Document 1, *Putting Community Management in Place: Four years of experience in improving water management,* describes the research process and presents the results and conclusions of the PAR-Manage project from the perspective of the support agencies and IRC. It explains how the participatory research was done, the tools that were used, what happened in the process, and what it demanded from the agencies and communities involved. More importantly, it documents the experiences of researchers in the communities themselves – their progress and setbacks, negotiations and discussions in community meetings, exchange visits and experiments.

Document 2, *Learning in the Field: How 22 communities improved their water management,* presents case studies of each of the 22 communities that have been involved in the project. These case studies permit a better understanding of the project from the perspective and focus of the men, women and children in these 22 communities. The case studies illustrate the main problems faced by rural communities, their efforts to improve the situation, and their achievements in terms of their improved ability to manage their water.

The next three documents contain what project team now call the Participatory Action Development approach to community water management – in short, the **PAD approach**. Document 3, *The Participatory Action Development Approach: Supporting Community Water Management,* is based on the process of action research that was developed and tested throughout the project, to arrive at an approach for supporting communities in managing their water supply systems. Around this approach, the teams developed methods and tools that are now available for wider use. Most of the material in this document is intended to help readers understand community management and the ideas behind the approach. Practitioners can adapt the approach to suit local circumstances, developing a critical awareness when putting the approach into practice.

Document 4, *Facilitating community discovery: Getting to know about water management,* gives a brief introduction to the PAD methodology, which consists of three phases – Diagnosing, Experimenting and Sustaining. The manual explores the Diagnosing phase of the PAD process in detail and describes the methods and tools that can be used during implementation. The document explores what factors need to be taken into account, the pitfalls to avoid, and the tools or set of tools that can be used in each step in the process.

Finally, document 5, *Experimenting with the Community: Identifying sustainable solutions,* again gives a brief introduction to the methodology, and then explores the Experimenting and Sustaining phases of the PAD process, together with the methods and tools that can be used.

These last three documents have been produced separately because they will be easier to use in the field than one large bulky volume. However, each part belongs together with the other parts. Documents 4 and 5 have been written mainly for practitioners, explaining how to put theory into practice. The main aim is to provide a set of tools that can be used by support workers to help communities to shape their own lives. These two documents therefore try to combine both reflection and action.

All of the methods and tools described here have been used effectively in the communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America over the past four years. However, they should not be seen as a blueprint for community management. The project team concluded halfway through the research project: 'Each situation, each culture, each place, each experience, and each community requires its own approach, although general principles can be applied'. Sensitivity to the needs of communities, and quick judgements on what would be most helpful at a particular time or during a particular process can only be developed through constant practice, complete openness to feedback from the villagers, critical reflective analysis, and years of experience.

In the near future these documents will be complemented with: (i) videos (one general video and six country-specific videos) on the experiences with the community management support approach; (ii) a manual, *Training for Trainers,* for the staff of support organizations who wish to use the approach in their field of action; and (iii) an Internet website to support all the initiatives to bring to life the PAD approach. In the project countries themselves, 'Information Focal Points' will also be established to provide background material to enhance the activities, and to enable exchanges of information at the national and regional levels.

Acknowledgements

These guides, manuals and videos have all grown out of the project. At this point, we would like to acknowledge our great gratitude to all those who have been involved in the experience. First and foremost, we have to thank the members of the communities that were so kind to let us work with them, make mistakes, have fun, learn together and sometimes support them in their tasks to improve their water management skills.

Next, we wish to thank the teams from the partner institutes that have worked for four years in this research. Not all of them were able to fulfil the four-year period – some members joined late; others to leave early; and one became seriously ill during the research and sadly passed away. We would specifically like to acknowledge the late Mr Anthony Nchari for his dedication, and to everyone else for their active, committed and productive work: Mr Amouye Nguettakan, Ms Pauline Poubom and Mr Andrew Tayong (Cameroon); Ms Cecilia Gómez, Mr Alfonso Rojas, Ms Ana Ariztizabál, Mr Mario Pérez and Mr Jairo Benavides (Colombia); Mr Fabián Gonón Ortiz and Mr Carlos Simón Perén, Mr Oscar Nimatuj, Ms Milagro Escobar and Mr Jaime Paçajoj Cifuentes (Guatemala); Mr Isaack Oenga, Ms Pauline Ikumi, Mr Stephen Ngingi (Kenya); Ms Hari Subba, Mr Rajan Thappa, Ms Renuka Rai, Ms Laxmi Paudyal, and Mr Raju Khadka (Nepal); and Ms Dilferoz, Mr Altaf Hussain, Mr Muhammad Saleem; Ms Nahida Aziz and Ms Sarah Halvorson (Pakistan).

We would also like to acknowledge with thanks the directors of the institutes in the six countries who allowed us to develop this all-encompassing approach together with their research teams. The directors are: Mr Gerardo Galvis (director, CINARA, Colombia); Mr Anthony Hagan (deputy secretary general until 1995); the late Mr Boadi and Mr Gbedo (former and current directors, PAID-WA, Cameroon); Hector Coyoy (director, ADP, Guatemala); Mr Fabian Gonon (director, SER, Guatemala); Mr Matthew Kariuki (director, NETWAS); Mr John Collett (project director, WSHHS) and Mr Karim Alibhoy (current director, WASEP, Pakistan); Mr Umesh Pandey (director, NEWAH, Nepal) and Mr Hans van Damme and Mr Jan Teun Visscher (former and current directors, IRC).

On earlier versions of these documents, we received valuable comments from the members of the International Advisory Group (IAG), which was established at the start of the research project. Before drafting the final document we expect to receive still more valuable, critical and supportive comments. The members of this IAG have shared with all of us their great experience on various occasions during the implementation of the research project. We are very grateful to their members: Mr Bunker Roy (Director of the Social Work and Research Centre, India); Mrs. Grazia Borrini Feyerabend (coordinator, Social Policy Service of the World Conservation Union, IUCN); Mr Orlando Fals Borda from Colombia; Mrs Teresa Kavita (women's programme coordinator, Catholic Diocese of Machakos, Kenya); and Mr John Thompson (Sustainable Agriculture Programme, International Institute for Environment and Development, IIED). The critical support by means of the mid-term evaluation conducted by Mr Bertus Haverkort of ETC Foundation should also be mentioned here.

The authors are also grateful to Sascha de Graaf for her sustained efforts to chase some of the contributors, to Lauren Houttuin for the design and layout, to Michel van der Leest for printing the documents, to Valerie Jones for the sustained editing activities, and to Esther de Lange, Dick de Jong and Ton Schouten for their help in preparing the manuscripts.

The staff of the International Water and Sanitation Centre are very grateful to the Netherlands Development Assistance (Neda; formerly DGIS) for their continued financial and critical support for the development of the Participatory Action Development Approach for Community Water Management. Within Neda, two individuals have been particularly supportive: Piet de Lange, senior expert research and development (DCO/OZ), and Willem Ankersmit, senior programme officer (SB).

These documents have also built on the experiences of a large number of researchers and trainers working in the water and rural development sector. Although they are not mentioned here by name, all of them have enabled us to develop this material.

This series of documents aims to help others to develop strategies to assist communities to improve the management of their own water supply systems. It is not intended to be used as a blueprint, but as an approach that will allow organizations and fieldworkers to make the necessary adjustments to provide effective support for community management. The contents of these documents can only be validated by practitioners creatively implementing the principles behind this approach at various levels, and by the policy makers involved in community management of rural water supplies.

Marc P. Lammerink
Eveline Bolt
Peter Bury

Acronyms and abbreviations

ADP	Agua del Pueblo
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
CINARA	Centro Interregional de Abastecimiento y Remocion de Agua
Bellringers	Local research team = LRG = LRT = PAR volunteers = CRT
CRT	Community research team = LRG = LRT = PAR volunteers = Bellringers
IRC	International Water and Sanitation Centre
LRG	Local research group = CRT = LRT = PAR volunteers = Bell-ringers
LRT	Local research team = LRG = CRT = PAR volunteers = Bell-ringers
NETWAS	Network for Water and Sanitation
NEWAH	Nepal Water for Health
PAD	Participatory Action Development
PAD team	Participatory Action Development team: group of community members facilitating diagnosis and experimentation to improve community management of rural water supplies
PAID	Pan-African Institute for Development
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PAR volunteers	Participatory Action Research volunteers = local research group = CRT = LRT = Bell-ringers
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSS	Problem-solving strategy
SARAR	Self-esteem, Associated Strength, Action planning, Resourcefulness
SER	Servicios para el Desarrollo
Support organization	External agency facilitating PAD in the community through a small team of selected staff members

Introduction

Between October 1994 and the end of 1998 research teams carried out Participatory Action Research on community management of water supplies in four rural communities in each of six countries. Within the overall objective to improve and enhance the capability of rural communities to manage their own water supply systems, the specific objectives were:

- to improve the current knowledge of community-managed rural water supply systems through the participatory assessment and analysis of the performance of selected communities in six developing countries;
- to analyze and identify the support requirements for successfully building capacity for community management of rural water supply systems;
- to develop and test approaches, methods and tools to enhance the capacity of rural communities to manage their own rural water supply systems in an efficient, sustainable, gender-conscious and cost-effective way; and
- to enhance the research and support capacities of the partner organizations in six developing countries.

During a planning workshop the members of the research teams discussed the objectives, philosophy and characteristics of Participatory Action Research (PAR) on community management of rural water supplies, and the major research steps. These steps were operationalized by discussing methods and tools and setting a time frame. All of the projects followed the general research pattern.

- Preparatory phase;
- Training and field preparation;
- Participatory field investigations;
- Joint development and field testing of problem-solving strategies, methods and tools;
- Evaluation, follow-up and sustaining the process.

Preparing for and carrying out Participatory Action Research provided experience with the PAD approach for community management of rural water supplies. Many tools and methods have been tested by communities as well as by various agencies. These experiences are described in a series of five documents, of which this is the fourth:

I Putting Community Management in Place: Four years of experience with improving water management in rural communities
II Learning in the Field: How 22 communities improved their water management
III The Participatory Action Development Approach: Supporting community water management
IV Facilitating Community Discovery: Getting to know about community management
V Experimenting with the Community: Identifying sustainable solutions

This document covers the *diagnosing* phase of PAD. It provides a brief theoretical background and describes a number of methods and tools that have been tested in the six participating countries. Accounts of the experiences of the country teams are presented in the boxes throughout this document.

As in the other documents in this series, the external agencies facilitating PAD in rural communities are referred to as support organizations. Field workers are referred to as support staff. This document is intended to assist support staff in the process of selecting a community, carrying out a diagnosis with community members, and helping their supervisors to provide better guidance.

Before addressing community selection and community diagnosis, this document looks briefly at crucial elements of the preparatory work needed at the level of the support agency before embarking on PAD. Users are invited to experiment with the tools presented in the Tools section at the end of this document, and to adapt them as and when necessary to suit local circumstances.

1 Diagnosing as part of Participatory Action Development

1.1 What is Participatory Action Development?

Participatory Action Development (PAD) is a methodology for improving community management of rural water supplies, in which all the actors involved contribute both to the creative thinking that goes into the undertaking, and to the action that is the subject of the development work (Lammerink, 1993). PAD aims to learn from the past and to find solutions to concrete problems and conflicts in the management of rural water supplies by communities. At the same time, PAD can help organizations to discover how they can best support communities in their efforts to improve the management of rural water supplies.

The methodology also aims to respond to the concrete needs of communities to improve their skills for managing public services, and thus operationalizing what is known as the 'demand responsive approach'. The key characteristics of this approach were developed during the Community Water Supply and Sanitation Conference in May 1998 (organized by the World Bank/UNDP World Bank Water and Sanitation Group (see box).

Key characteristics of the demand responsive approach

(a) *community members can make informed choices about: whether to participate in the project; technological and service level options based on their willingness to pay and on the principle that more expensive systems cost more; when and how their services are delivered; how funds are managed and accounted for; and how their services are operated and maintained;*

(b) *the government plays a facilitating role, sets clear national policies and strategies, encourages broad stakeholder consultations, and facilitates capacity building and learning; and*

(c) *an enabling environment is created for the participation of a wide range of providers of goods, services and technical assistance to communities, including the private sector and NGOs;*

(d) *an adequate flow of information is provided to the community, and procedures are adopted that will facilitate collective decisions within the community and between the community and other actors (social intermediation).*

Source: Community Water Supply and Sanitation Conference, World Bank/UNDP/World Bank Water and Sanitation Group, May 1998

PAD enables communities, together with the staff of the support organization, to participate throughout the development process, starting from the initial design of an intervention, through data gathering and analysis, to the presentation of the final results and discussion of the implications of their actions. Communities are actively engaged in the quest for information and ideas to guide their future actions.

It is not always possible or necessary to work closely with an entire community. Often a small group of people is selected to become the direct partners of staff of the support organization, and mechanisms are developed to provide feedback to the wider community when required. Members of the selected group are involved both as subjects and as local development workers, so that dialogue between development professionals from the support organization and the people at the grassroots level is a key feature of the process. PAD is a learning process for members of the community as well as for the staff of the support organization, in that it enables them to learn from experiences of social action.

PAD offers an effective and powerful strategy for carrying out the type of interdisciplinary work that is needed to assist communities to take the lead in their own development. It is a real demand responsive approach, resulting in improved community management of rural water supplies. It also allows for a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of community management, because through the methods and tools used, it takes a holistic view of management practices and problems. PAD can be rapidly adjusted to local conditions in different countries. In particular, by applying a short feedback mechanism it can stay close to reality. For more detailed background information on the origins of PAD, see the first document in this series, 'Participatory Acton Development: An approach to supporting community management in water'.

The PAD methodology places strong emphasis on participatory and gender-sensitive appraisal and needs assessment methods. It uses both qualitative and quantitative methods of collecting data on system performance and service, such as distribution, breakdown rates, costings, demographics, local organization, and the socio-economic characteristics of served and unserved households. In doing so, PAD builds on earlier appraisal methodologies such as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).

The origins of participatory appraisal

In view of the lack of financial resources, the large number of problems needing urgent solutions, and the relative slowness of conventional research methodologies, various rapid assessment methods have been devised. Opponents of rapid assessment have called these methods 'quick and dirty', while its proponents describe the more conventional approach as slow and clean. Of course, rapid assessments cannot be used to study everything, but the development of rapid research has given rise to new methodologies, many of which are participatory in nature. These included GRAAP (Groupe de recherche et d'appui pour l'auto-promotion paysanne), MARP (Methode Accelere de Recherche Participative), PALM (Participatory Analysis and Learning Methods) and PAR (Participatory Action Research). The methods applied may also be useful for long-term support programmes.

Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) was introduced in the late 1970s to provide quick information to identify and appraise rural development programmes (Lammerink et al.*, 1994). More recently, based on experiences in India, RRA has become increasingly participatory, leading to a new term – Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA). PRA describes a growing family of methods and tools that enable local people to share and enhance their knowledge, and to analyze local conditions as the basis for planning and action. PRA owes much to participatory action research, agro-ecosystems analysis, applied anthropology, field research on farming systems and RRA. Whereas in RRA information tends to be elicited from local people by outsiders, in PRA such information is shared and owned by the local people themselves. PRA has been used in various fields of development, including in water supply projects.*

PAD involves three major phases:

- *Diagnosing*: the staff prepare for the job, communities are selected, and problems and problem-solving strategies are identified;
- *Experimenting*: problem-solving strategies, methods and tools are tested and evaluated;
- *Sustaining the process*: the findings are shared and disseminated, and the work that needs to be done to sustain the development process is planned and coordinated.

These three phases are described in general terms in the first document in this series, and are elaborated in the second and third documents. This second document focuses on the diagnosing phase of PAD, and explains how the process can be sustained.

1.2 Steps in the diagnosing phase

As indicated above, the steps in the diagnosing phase include getting prepared, training the support team, selecting communities, and the community diagnosis of problems, resources and possible problem-solving strategies.

Getting prepared for PAD

The support organization first needs to prepare itself for the application of PAD. To identify what needs to be done to get prepared, the support organization needs to ask a number of questions, such as: Does PAD fit within the mandate of our organization? Is our organization sufficiently flexible to cope with support requirements that may vary in terms of the time required, the necessary resources and the intensity of support. Can we put together a multidisciplinary and gender-balanced support team that will allow us to address social as well as technical issues, and men as well as women? Do the staff have previous experience with PAD? Are they capable of facilitating development processes rather than merely implementing water and sanitation projects? Do the team members trust each other sufficiently to be able to collaborate and learn from each other? What do we know about community management experiences elsewhere in the country? The composition and the experiences of staff within the organization will determine the extent to which efforts are to be undertaken in order to 'get prepared' for PAD.

In choosing to apply a PAD approach, the organization will move away from merely implementing water supply and sanitation projects, to *facilitating* development processes. As a result of this change in focus, the organization's policy will probably have to be adapted so that its objectives no longer reflect practical goals such as the numbers of water systems and latrines that will be built. If the organization receives external support, the motivation behind this change in focus needs to be carefully explained in order to ensure the donor's continued support.

There is also likely to be some uncertainty in the level of support that each community will require. Some may require technical assistance, whereas others may need management capacity building or assistance in conflict resolution. In order to be able to cope with these uncertainties, flexibility has to be built into the organization, particularly to ensure that rapid planning and budget allocation procedures are in place.

During this part of the diagnosing phase the support organization forms an interdisciplinary male/female project team of two to three people, representing technical and social expertise, with team leader to guide the daily work. The team can prepare itself by collecting and reviewing existing information on community management of rural water supplies in that country, holding discussions with other support agencies on their approaches, and assessing common problems from the points of view of the community and of the support organization. Field visits to existing community-managed projects would also be useful. This part of the diagnosing phase will allow the support organization to gain an overview of experiences and results with community management in their own country, and provides an opportunity for them to familiarize themselves in the field on aspects to which they may have paid little attention, such as gender and the environment.

When preparing for PAD, the team of professionals also needs to develop an appropriate focus and establish the attitudes necessary for participatory work, which may require training and capacity building activities such as workshops on analysis and facilitation skills. Attention should also be paid to enhancing the skills that will support experimentation and documentation. Documentation skills should focus not only on documenting the outcomes of the support work, but should also pay due attention to recording details of the process that is followed. Such documentation can be used to improve the methodology adopted by the support organization, and to make the approach more sustainable.

An important element of the preparation is team building, since the team will have to put into practice the principles it promotes. Smooth teamwork and effective collaboration will not happen automatically, although they are essential for the learning process of everyone involved. Trust and dialogue are essential to teamwork and collaboration. Dialogue begins in small units and is based on members sharing their own perceptions of a problem, offering their opinions and ideas, and giving each other the opportunity to make recommendations or take decisions. Skills such as listening, observing, questioning and offering feedback are crucial if people are to start functioning as a team. If these skills are lacking, they will have to be developed.

The need for the team members to gain self-confidence is also often neglected; this is usually a matter of practice and requires a genuine belief in the importance of the contribution of each team member to improvements and transformation. From the outset, a team should put effort into team building, and allow the team members to gain self-confidence through exchanging feedback. Indeed, if the support team indeed believes that the participation of people, which also requires team work and building self-confidence, is essential for the transformation of society, their own way of working with each other and with community members must also be consistent with that belief. The management of the support organization can stimulate the process of gaining confidence and institutional learning by organizing regular meetings at which staff members can exchange information.

Training the support team

Planning and training workshops should be part of the preparatory phase (for details, see the *Training of Trainers* manual (IRC, 1999). During such workshops the project team of the support organization can exchange the preliminary findings from the country assessment, agree on an analytical framework, develop a common support approach, develop a methodology and criteria for the selection of project communities, and identify appropriate participatory and gender-specific methods and tools for carrying out the performance and situation assessments with community members. Learning to work with such participatory methods and tools for community diagnosis, and to use creatively a basket of tools should also be part of these workshops. Implementation plans, including indications of how gender aspects will be addressed, can be prepared and the team can draft material to brief the support organization on the approach and its implications.

The planning and training workshops can be facilitated by the staff of organizations who have experience with the PAD approach and who can offer training activities and facilities. Such organizations already exist in at least six countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa, and they are growing in number. The staff of the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC, which developed the PAD approach), have considerable experience in facilitating or co-facilitating planning workshops, and in providing follow-up support. IRC staff can act as facilitators, advisers and resource persons in a process of 'learning by doing', paying specific attention to guiding teams of support organizations.

A support organization may run into the situation in which a change in team composition is necessary, either because a team member leaves, or because the synergy among the team members in not up to the required level. Care has to be taken to ensure that each new team member is sufficiently briefed and trained to take over, and that team-building efforts are renewed.

From the outset, it is important to discuss ideas for sustaining the processes that will start in communities, and to explore outlets for disseminating the results and the process. Determining and building community capacities for carrying out diagnoses in the future are part of the process of ensuring sustainability.

Earlier experiences with PAD approach have revealed the usefulness of a national or regional body with a mandate to reflect on the activities in the field. Reflection and feedback are important because of the innovative aspects of the participatory support work. This national or regional body can be an existing sectoral coordinating agency or a newly formed national reference group. Information on the project's activities, progress and results can be shared during its implementation, thus contributing to the general development of effective community management in the country's rural water supply sector.

During the International Planning Workshop in the ***Netherlands*** *it was decided that each country team would establish a national reference group (NRG) to share information and experiences. The terms of reference of the NRG included: (i) to share knowledge, experience and findings; (ii) to assist in community selection and in review of workplans/ objectives/ procedures; (iii) to assist in dissemination of research findings and methodology; (iv) to assist in advocacy; and (v) to provide logistic support if required. The NRG was also meant to strengthen the links in each of the participating countries between non-governmental organizations, research organizations and (national) governments and to contribute to the further development of community-based approaches in the water sector at both policy and operational levels.*

The member agencies of such a project reference group should be supportive of and committed to PAD. In some cases, it may be more valuable to establish a national reference group after the support organization has experimented with PAD for some time and has gained confidence. When confronted with a new approach, however, some member agencies may at first be defensive of their own way of working, becoming inquisitors rather than advisers.

During the mid-term evaluation of the PAR it was found that NRGs were useful for several reasons:

- *their members provided valuable suggestions and feedback, helping to build confidence among the research teams;*
- *they were able to assist in the selection of research communities;*
- *they helped to give the project a broader scope and impact at the national level; and their members began to adopt the findings in their own implementation procedures.*

Selecting the communities

Part of the task of the planning and training workshop is to develop a methodology and a set of criteria for the selection of communities to work with. First, a choice needs to be made as to whether to select only the communities that have requested support, or also those with whom the support organization finds it important to work. Although it is preferable to work with communities that have asked for support, some more remote communities may be unaware that they are able to apply for support in development activities. Support organizations may choose to take the initiative in approaching the latter.

Some of the criteria for selecting communities with which to apply the PAD approach may be similar to those used for general community selection. These criteria include: whether the people express a need for improvement, the accessibility of the community, whether the people are willing to invest time and effort in a project applying the PAD approach, the level of equity and equality within the community, and the outcomes of previous management efforts in that community. In accordance with their own development philosophy, support organizations may also include criteria such as geographical location, socio-economic conditions, whether there are underprivileged groups within the community, and political stability.

*Two communities in **Nepal** provided additional selection criteria: (i) rivalries between political factions should not dominate public life, and (ii) whether the people have and will make time available for research activities. The community of Rangapur was heavily divided into two political factions, so that it was extremely difficult to reach consensus on any issue, including which problem to tackle first. In Yampaphat, community members were too busy growing vegetables for sale on the market and earning money, so that at first they had little inclination to spend time on research.*

In drawing up a list of potential communities, government agencies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the area may be approached for suggestions. These communities should then be informed, either through visits or some other means, about the possibility to apply for support. Having a list of potential communities, a matrix ranking exercise can be a useful tool for making a final selection of the communities to be approached (tool 23 explains how such a matrix can be used).

*In **Nepal**, the ranking of communities led to the following results:*

Sr. No	Criteria	Bhandara	Piple	Rangapur	Mahendra Nagar	Mathillo Gunadi	Yampapant	Bihabar	LeLe
1.	Community Participation During Implementation 4.	12	24	8	4	16	20	32	28
2	Heterogenous Community with Subsistence Level 2.	14	16	8	10	6	2	4	12
3.	Regular Maintenance. Timely Repair with regular Meeting turned into Actions my Maintenance Committee 3	9	18	21	6	12	15	24	3
4	Half day travel tme to Project site, Accessible by light Vehicle throughout the year 1	4	3	1	2	5	6	7	8
		39	61	38	22	39	43	67	51

It should be remembered that not only will the support organization be selecting communities to work with, but the communities will also be selecting the organization. Communities will use their own criteria, such as what the organization has to offer in terms of support. Great effort has to be made to explain to community members what the PAD approach is all about, and how it differs from other community management approaches. A community management approach often involves implementing a system, as well training a water committee in financial management and a caretaker in system repair. However, PAD looks at management as a process within a community, including identifying problems, experimenting with possible solutions, reflection, and selecting the most appropriate one. The community must be able to make a well-informed choice about whether to work with an organization applying the PAD approach, in order to avoid the community members as well as the staff of the support organization being disappointed at a later stage.

*In **Nepal** mass meetings were held to explain to the community the objectives of PAR and its approach. The discussions focused on a poster depicting the process of a chicken hatching from an egg. The poster prompted many questions. Everyone recognized the image and understood that the community itself had to make the system manageable and sustainable. Of course, the hen provides the warmth and protection for the egg to develop, but it is the chicken's responsibility to hatch and grow.*

It is important to establish a practical and clear base for the proposed collaboration as soon as possible. This can be a mutual contract, which describes the proposed process, the role of the participants, the potential outcomes and working procedures. After a draft contract is drawn up, a broad consensus among community members will have to be sought before it is agreed upon. In the case of a written contract, both the community and the support organization will have to sign.

*In **Kenya** visits were paid to the selected communities. With the permission of the management committee in each community, a baraza (general meeting) was called to obtain the consensus of the entire community. Naturally, not all community members attended the meetings, but representatives of the local administration, particularly the assistant chiefs, were involved.*

If a community has indicated an interest in taking part but is not selected, it should be informed of the reasons why, either in writing or during a visit.

Community diagnosis

Community diagnosis is a process in which information is collected with and about a community and its environment, using a variety of methods and tools (see Section 3.1 for details of the kind of information required). Part of the diagnosis involves the community, with the assistance of the support organization, analyzing the information to identify actions that can be taken to improve an existing problematic situation, and to determine what would be the best way to proceed, using available knowledge and resources. In the context of PAD, experiments will then be devised and implemented to try out various problem-solving strategies. The information collected by the community can also be used to monitor progress throughout implementation, and the results evaluated to identify the most effective strategies.

Depending on the context and the way in which it is carried out, the diagnosis process can improve communications between staff of the support organization and the community, as well as among community members. It will also lead to awareness about the mechanisms that affect – either positively or negatively – the sustainability of the communal water supply system. This awareness generates commitment to take action to improve the situation (for a description of the outputs of a participatory community diagnosis, see Chapter 4).

2 *The process of community diagnosis*

A community diagnosis seeks to gather information that will be used as the basis for planning and implementing development activities, and to prepare people for action. The assessment will include issues such as the roles of men and women in local management, the effects of gender on the efficiency and use of water supplies, environmental concerns such as water source protection and watershed management, and issues of cost recovery and community-based financial management. The outcomes of a community diagnosis provide insights into problems that have negative effects on the management of the water supply system, the local knowledge and resources available to improve the existing situation, and strategies to resolve these problems. Community diagnosis has a number of distinguishable elements:

- building and maintaining rapport;
- establishing a local PAD team;
- collecting general and factual information;
- determining the range of topics of interest for further exploration;

- screening indigenous knowledge and existing management practices for possible application in water supply management;
- collecting detailed information on identified topics: problems, potentials and available resources;
- prioritizing problems, identifying the root causes of problems and establishing selection criteria;
- identifying and selecting potential solutions and possible problem-solving strategies; and
- providing feedback to the community.

Although community diagnosis is often seen as a step in development that has a clear beginning and an end, experience has shown that it is a continuous process, and that it is also iterative: newly revealed facts trigger new questions that require further exploration. Once action to improve a problem situation has begun, the community will probably run into unexplored areas that require renewed or further investigation.

Chapter 3 discusses the various methods and tools that can be used to give substance to the different steps in a diagnosis, and illustrates the above elements of a community diagnosis. Chapter 3 also explains why the tools described in the tools section of this document should not be used as a recipe book. It describes the pitfalls and the facilitation skills that are needed to prevent a community diagnosis from becoming a mere mechanical exercise.

2.1 Participatory community diagnosis? Pragmatic and ethical issues

The question of whether a community diagnosis is to be carried out in a participatory way can be looked at from two perspectives: pragmatic and ethical. Pragmatic considerations include how much time is available for the diagnosis, the skills of the staff, how many communities are to be 'covered', as well as the type of information that is needed and how detailed and reliable that information needs to be. Ethical considerations include whether the community members want a diagnosis to be done, and if so, who will decide which areas should be explored, who will make the observations, who will conduct interviews and with whom, and who will determine how the information will be used.

The choices to be made with regard to these issues are prompted by the project's philosophy and approach. There are no general answers to the pragmatic questions, since the answers will be situation-specific. Neither are there answers to the ethical questions, since each project will have to develop its own ethics and take decisions accordingly. In this chapter we therefore explore the two ends of a scale, ranging from action development driven by support organizations, to Participatory Action Development, and the consequences of both of these approaches for a community diagnosis. A more detailed discussion of this issue can be found in Chapter 5 of the first document in this series, 'Participatory Action Development: An approach to supporting community management'.

2.2 The level of community participation

There is a wide range of possibilities to choose from when deciding on the level of community participation in the diagnosis. This is related to the approach adopted by the support organization, and the anticipated role of the community members therein. The role of the community members can vary from their being passive receivers of project activities decided by the staff of the organization, to being active designers of the project.

At one end of the scale, the staff of the organization take all the decisions about the direction of the development actions, so that community members are merely passive receivers. Community participation in the diagnosis phase of such a project is usually limited to the community members being asked to provide information. For example, in a project organizing a media campaign, people are asked to provide information that will allow the organization to develop appropriate messages using appropriate information channels. The organization decides on which information to collect, and where and how this will be done. It analyzes the information, and on this basis decides what actions will be taken or what messages will be developed. An action-oriented organization will at best take into account the existing skills and knowledge at the community level in order to minimize capital costs. The tools used to collect information will vary from survey forms to tools that stimulate discussion. Since the community members are not given any decision making power, their commitment may be low and the reliability of the information questionable.

At the other end of the scale, the community decides on the nature of the development actions to be taken, with the staff of the support organization facilitating processes that will lead to a decision being taken by the community members. A participatory diagnosis will be started, in which the community is encouraged to indicate the topics on which information is needed and where and how the information can be collected. To facilitate the process of generating information, participatory tools are used. The information is analyzed by the community members, who share their knowledge and draw their own conclusions, while the staff of the support organization continue to play a facilitating role. For the community, this process generates a feeling of 'ownership' of the information and of the development process, as well as a commitment to solving the problems identified. Development actions to be undertaken are also decided upon by the community.

Of course, many intermediate forms of project implementation approaches are possible, with varying degrees of community participation in the diagnosis.

2.3 What community diagnosis involves

Community diagnosis is an important phase in the PAD process. The community designs its own strategy to resolve a problem situation, using their knowledge of the situation, and the resources available. Many conventional methods of data collection, such as questionnaire surveys, are inappropriate in the context of PAD. The approach aims to build the people's capacity to identify and solve problems, so that maximum community participation in diagnosis is needed to increase their awareness of and self-confidence in their ability to improve the situation.

Participatory diagnosis helps to describe the situation in a community using participatory tools. These tools are innovative ways of finding out why certain problems occur, why some problems can be solved by the community without outside help using their own strengths, and why solving other problems will require outside assistance. The tools allow community members to reflect on the situation, leading to the formulation of joint conclusions. Community members are and feel themselves to be the 'owners' of the information and of the analysis, and responsible for solving the problems identified. To prevent frustration and loss of interest, and to encourage participation, the chosen methods and tools should be relatively simple, such as visual aids that are easily controlled by insiders, and should be quick and easy to use, aiming to determine only what is really needed. Intensive group sessions will help to enhance awareness and joint responsibility.

The feeling of ownership by community members is of crucial importance if the staff of a support organization are to facilitate processes of change and assist communities in developing and implementing strategies to solve their problems. If they feel themselves to be the owners of the information and of the process for decision taking, people are more likely to assume responsibility for implementing the activities deriving from the strategy. Participatory diagnosis thus fits well in a project that aims for sustainable development, like PAD. A diagnosis carried out in a participatory way often generates community action even during the process of identifying problems and potential solutions. Chapter 3 provides more information on how participation is operationalized during the various stages of community diagnosis.

Improving community management

If a project wishes to identify ways to encourage and enable a community to improve its management of the water supply system, a diagnosis helps the community (i) to assess existing management performance; (ii) to gain a preliminary understanding of the socio-cultural situation, including gender aspects, related to the management of the water supply system; and (iii) to assess physical conditions, water-related environmental issues and general sanitary conditions.

At a regional workshop in Cameroon, the PAR teams in ***Kenya*** *and* ***Cameroon*** *identified the following information requirements for fieldwork:*

- social structures: *communication systems, water sources, basic infrastructure;*
- water use patterns: *water uses, water management;*
- socio-economic situation: *organization and management of water resources, water resources, socio-economic activities, role of women in the production process; and* village governance;
- *existing organizations, management aspects, development activities.*

In the context of PAD, community diagnosis goes beyond simply collecting information on the management of the water supply system. It also helps the community to analyze the reasons for visible, often technical problems, by determining the underlying managerial causes, in order to identify possible solutions. Consensus has to be achieved on which problems should be given priority, and there has to be a commitment to implementing managerial solutions that go beyond trying to get technical problems solved by approaching an outside support organization for an extra standpost or a larger collection tank.

Indigenous knowledge, experiences with past experiments (also in fields other than water supplies), as well as ideas from outside the community should be explored, since they can be part of promising solutions. Indigenous knowledge can be described as useful knowledge that has existed in a community for a long time, transferred from one generation to the next, such as knowledge about the quality of a water source that can be measured from the vegetation growing nearby. Experiences with past experiments have shown that new/outside solutions are not necessarily the best, and that indigenous knowledge is more likely to yield solutions that are sustainable.

The outcome of a community diagnosis is not limited to insight in the above-mentioned fields, but also includes improved skills of communities and project teams to identify problems, to understand the underlying causes and effects, and to detect promising solutions. Increased awareness, self-confidence, trust and appreciation, and meaningful community participation are additional outcomes, which are just as important for action development as fact-finding.

Chapter 4 provides a number of examples of the outputs of a participatory community diagnosis.

3 Conducting a community diagnosis

This chapter elaborates on the elements of the community diagnosis process listed in Chapter 2, as well as the rapport building stage that precedes the actual diagnosis, but which is also indispensable. This chapter also examines the art of facilitating – the pitfalls and the skills required. A number of the tools that can be used are referred to throughout the text; detailed descriptions can be found in the Tools section of this document.

If action development capacity is to be built up in a community, the local PAD team should start to learn how to carry out a diagnosis and how to use the diagnosis tools. Once a rapport has been established between the staff of the support organization and the community, a local PAD team can be established. The support organization should allow its staff to practice. It is important that support staff schedule time for providing feedback to each other, but also to members of the PAD team. This can best be done by systematically reflecting on what has been done.

Reflection through different types of questions

Objective:	* What specific activity did you do yesterday?
	* Can you specify one thing that sticks out in your mind?
Reflective:	* What surprised you yesterday?
	* What was helpful when you practised using a tool (e.g. a transect)?
	* What hampered you when using the transect?
Interpretive:	* If you were to do a transect again, what would you do differently?
Decisional:	* How will you do the transect next time, and what will you do to make this possible?

The information collected needs to be analyzed at regular intervals in order to determine where more is needed. This can be done by going over notes and evaluating the experiences of the support staff and of the PAD team. At equally regular intervals, feedback on the diagnosis process and the outcomes should be given to the community.

3.1 Stages in a diagnosis

Building rapport

Before initiating a participatory community diagnosis it is essential to build rapport and to clarify the purpose of the diagnosis, and the context in which it is taking place, to all sectors of the community. Rapport building refers to a process in which confidence and trust is established between the staff of the support organization and the community members. Such rapport is necessary if the community members are to be committed to taking an active role in the diagnosis and to provide valid information. During the stage of rapport building the mutual expectations of the community and of the support organization have to be identified and harmonized where necessary, since these will form the foundation for drawing up a 'contract' between staff of the support organization and the community. Rapport building visits can also be used to initiate the process of setting the agenda for problem diagnosis.

Rapport can be established in a number of practical ways. Support staff should adjust their appearance, wearing simple clothes and using simple language, to try to minimize the gap between them and the community members. They should also try to use the local language particularly in greetings, and possibly also in discussions; to arrange a mutual introduction in a locally acceptable manner; to use locally accepted terms of address; to stress their intention to learn from the community and not to judge; and to ensure that any information the community provides is treated with respect.

It should always be remembered, however, that the desire for rapport building and the mutual respect that goes with it, should be adopted as a frame of mind, and not just as a trick to 'get things done'. Building rapport therefore means that support staff have respect for the local people and their lives in the community, which implies that they are prepared to listen and to be honest, but also prepared to act as villagers do, such as leaving the car outside the village and walking. Tools 2–5 describe methods of rapport building.

*The team in **Cameroon** identified three types of community visit for conducting the diagnosis: contact visits to create rapport and establish confidence; reconnaissance visits to collect information for a preliminary description of the local water scheme, the cultural background, and the social organization; and finally field diagnosis visits for digging deeper and cross-checking. During the process a lot of useful experiences can be gained.*

Maintaining rapport

Once established, rapport needs to be maintained throughout the period of diagnosis and action development. Support staff can do this by respecting local rules pertaining to privacy and not forcing people to discuss issues that they may consider to be private; by taking into account local patterns of spending time and not visiting at inconvenient hours; and by giving regular feedback to increase the people's awareness and understanding of the project.

At a later stage of the project, carefully established rapport can easily be destroyed if the people feel that unrealistic expectations have been raised. It is therefore important to continuously ensure that the scope of the project is clear. Support staff therefore have to make sure that the community members are aware of the fact that the project is a water supply and sanitation project, so that the scope of the work is limited. They may add, however, that the

PAD approach (of which the diagnosis is a first phase) and the methods and tools used in the field of water supply and sanitation can also be used in fields such as education, forestry and agriculture. Mutual expectations can be specified in a contract for future reference. Tool 6 can be used for clarifying expectations and in drawing up a contract.

Establishing a local PAD team

The field staff of the support organization do not usually work with the entire community, but with a small team of community members. Not all community members will be equally enthusiastic, and not all will have equal time and energy available. Even if this were the case, working with the entire community all the time would probably not be feasible, since it is very time-consuming. Provided proper mechanisms are established for feedback, there is also no need to work directly with the entire community. Once rapport has been established and confidence gained, a small team of community members can be put together to form a local PAD team, which will act as the counterpart of the support organization. This team will play an important role in the diagnosis and in subsequent phases of PAD, i.e. in the development, implementation and monitoring of experiments. The experiences gained by this team will be most useful for future development programmes, and will be the foundation for sustainable development in the long term.

The members of the team will not necessarily be the same throughout the PAD period. Depending on the skills required at certain points in time, the membership can change. Initially, the team members should be able to act as facilitators of discussions, whereas at a later stage the members may need to be able to read, write and/or travel. The initial members may not have all the skills required, so that some may need to be replaced or the team enlarged.

It is up to the community to select the members for the local PAD team, to ensure that they are accountable to the community. When assisting the community to select the team members, their roles and responsibilities, and hence the skills required, should be clearly understood before the selection process begins. An optimal gender and social balance of the group needs to be aimed for. If it is not possible to form a mixed group (as was the case in Pakistan), the establishment of two separate groups may need to be considered.

> *In **Guatemala**, the staff of the support organization sat together with members of the village committee to discuss and define criteria and procedures for selecting local community researchers. In **Colombia**, the criteria for selection were: (i) local community researchers must be literate, (ii) they should be able to make sufficient time available, (iii) they have to live in the community, (iv) the team must include male and female members, (v) they should be interested in learning more about community work techniques, and (vi) they should have clear leadership qualities. For the villagers of Ceylan, the most important qualifications were having appropriate training and clear leadership potential. They therefore chose a 16-year-old student who they felt already had the right qualities to become an effective community leader.*

Apart from skills and time, the team members are widely trusted and accepted by the rest of the community. In the case of the local water management committee, if one exists, it is crucial that the members trust the PAD team. The water management committee and the PAD team may include the same members. The third document in this series, called '*Experimenting witn the community: Identifying sustainable solutions*' describes how a PAD team can gradually be transformed into a water management committee. In this transformation process (more) water management committee members may be taken up, but the 'old' committee members may also decide to quit, feeling they do not have the right management skills according to PAD principles.

> *In **Kenya**, research assistants were selected who were called 'bell-ringers' to reflect their role as intermediaries between the water committee and the community at large. The bell-ringers were to keep an eye on the work of the water committee and to act as reminders, auditors and evaluators of its performance. In **Pakistan** and **Nepal**, the local teams were called community research teams and PAR volunteers, respectively. As well as working as intermediaries between the community and the team of the support organization, they also acted as facilitators and so were trained in the use of participatory tools, in particular for the diagnosis phase of the research project. Although the local research teams could also include members of the water committee, they did not replace the water committee.*

The establishment of a local PAD team may lead to a change in leadership within the community – such a process of change has to be dealt with carefully and respectfully. In some situations the challenge may be to open up 'charismatic' leaders to perform new functions, without destroying the respect they have gained, and without turning them into bureaucrats or technicians. The support staff must to be sensitive to the variety of symbolic ways in which power is demonstrated, and to avoid demagogic approaches. It is also extremely important to prevent the local PAD team from becoming a (new) elite, taking all the decisions and keeping information to itself. Regular community meetings for information sharing and to discuss decisions to be taken can help avoid the creation of a new elite.

Since the selection of team members requires an overview of the skills required, this will also provide an opportunity to start to identify the needs for capacity building. Tool 7 describes how members of a PAD team can be selected. Once a PAD team has been selected, it is worthwhile organizing a workshop to get the team acquainted with PAD concepts and methodology, and to elaborate mutual roles and responsibilities. This workshop may also discuss the need for regular consultations with the community and, if one exists, with the water management committee. Throughout the diagnosis process the PAD team members can be trained in the use of the diagnosis tools. The objectives of such training will depend on the current stage in the diagnosis.

> *In **Colombia**, the initial training for the community research teams lasted two days. After an initial stage using socio-dynamics to motivate and integrate the participants, several important concepts were defined by the group, including participation, community organization, gender, research and popular knowledge. To clarify the concept of participatory diagnosis, a role-play was staged to illustrate three types of medical diagnosis:*
>
> - *the authoritarian physician's diagnosis: the physician gives orders, does not examine the patient and after a few questions, writes a prescription;*
> - *the indifferent physician's diagnosis: the physician examines the patient, but is not*

the patient's opinion.

- *The interested physician's diagnosis: the examination is conducted by a communicative, receptive and kind physician who is interested in the patient's point of view and in his/her history and background. The physician writes a prescription in consultation with the patient, and only after knowing the results of the analyses requested.*

After the role-play, the analogy was made between the medical and community diagnosis. The participants also reflected on the objectives of the research project and of the participatory diagnosis. As a result of this diagnosis, topics for diagnosis were identified, and administrative aspects of the water supply system, watershed, sanitation and community participation were addressed.

*In **Kenya,** the bell-ringers received training with the following objectives:*

- *to develop the local capacity to undertake PAR;*
- *to become familiar with the basic tools;*
- *to plan what should be done over the next few months;*
- *to review possible solutions and strategies for implementation;*
- *to brainstorm on ways to involve all parties concerned;*
- *to define and set out rules and responsibilities of these parties.*

*During the last day of the initial training of local research teams in **Cameroon,** the participants drew up a contract in which they described their behaviour and attitudes towards the community members. They generated a list of attitudes that are needed when carrying out PAR, such as humility, attentiveness, supportiveness, commitment, respect for other people's opinions, and the ability to listen and learn rather than just to talk.*

At this stage, the staff of the support organization and members of the local PAD team can start to keep a personal diary to record the processes, results and lessons learned. Keeping such a diary can help when pulling together information and finding the missing bits and pieces. It will also help to reflect on the diagnosis activities for future improvement. Keeping a personal diary is described in tool 8.

Collecting general and factual information

During the first stage, the staff of the support organization can obtain general and factual information by reviewing available literature (e.g. reports on system implementation), by interviewing staff of other support organizations, by paying courtesy visits to concerned communities and, depending on whether the local PAD team is already established, by holding discussions with PAD team members. Together with a general assessment of community performance vis-à-vis water supply system management and a preliminary understanding of the local socio-cultural and physical conditions, this will allow further development of the diagnosis with the PAD team. At this stage there is no need for a long period of collecting detailed, in-depth information. It is more important to create curiosity and to 'get things going'. The necessary specific information on selected issues can be collected later.

Determining the range of topics for further exploration

Having factual and general information provides a good entry point to the larger community. Community meetings, interviews with key individuals, observation walks and community mapping, can be used to gather and discuss more specific information, and a first general picture of areas that merit further exploration will emerge. The PAD team members can start their activities as co-facilitators in a process of learning-by-doing. Tools 9–12 describe how to collect information that will provide insight into issues for further exploration.

Screening indigenous knowledge and existing management practices

Indigenous knowledge, since it is naturally existing knowledge at the community level, is worth examining. For example, indigenous knowledge related to local water supplies could be related to traditional sources of good quality water, to species of trees that are known for their capacity to retain water, or to plants that indicate that the water contains certain minerals. This is a valuable resource that can offer insight into why things are the way they are, and may also provide ideas about the potentials of individuals in a community to contribute to the quality of problem-solving strategies. Taking indigenous knowledge into account also creates a situation in which community members feel accepted, increasing their self-confidence and commitment. Support staff can best bring indigenous knowledge to the surface through in-depth discussions, particularly with older members of the community, or those with a special role in the community, such as midwives or traditional doctors. Walking around the village with such individuals often triggers questions that invite them to describe what they know.

Community management practices apply not only to the management of traditional water supply systems. Other community systems, such as agricultural irrigation, are purposely managed, and men and women also manage their household affairs. Management practices have developed in many areas, although may not be recognized as such, so that support staff need to learn how to discover what these are. An analysis of existing practices may help to identify problem-solving strategies for improving the management of a water supply system. Observation, combined with a healthy curiosity (as long as it is not seen as impertinence), will again offer scope for discussions about local management practices. In particular, an observation walk combined with a semi-structured interview can provide an insight into indigenous knowledge and local management practices.

*To gain an overview of how the water supply was being managed, the following guiding questions were used in **Pakistan**:*

1) *What is the history of your project and where are your traditional water sources?*
2) *What are the main physical components of your water system? (including the source, water-lifting devices, storage tanks, distribution systems, prime movers, pockets of the community that are not served, etc.).*
3) *What are the routine management functions in relation to your improved water supply?*
4) *Of these management functions, which are derived from the type of technology used, and which by the physical limitations of the system?*

Collecting detailed information on the identified topics

During the next stage of the diagnosis, more detailed information on the issues that seem to influence water management is brought together to identify problems related to the management of the water supply system, and the material and other resources available within the community. This stage involves gathering promising ideas from outside the community (management experience elsewhere and/or scientific institutes) as options for testing further. Tools that can be used to obtain more detailed information include focus group discussions, oral histories, transects, activity profiles, historical profiles, wealth ranking, Venn diagrams, seasonal calendars, study tours and exchange visits; see tools 10–24 in the tools section of this document.

Support staff should take care to ensure that the PAD team and community members focus not only on problems and problem situations, but also on opportunities and the resources available. If the latter are forgotten, people may easily get stuck, and think and act as if they are dependent on outside interventions to find solutions to their problems.

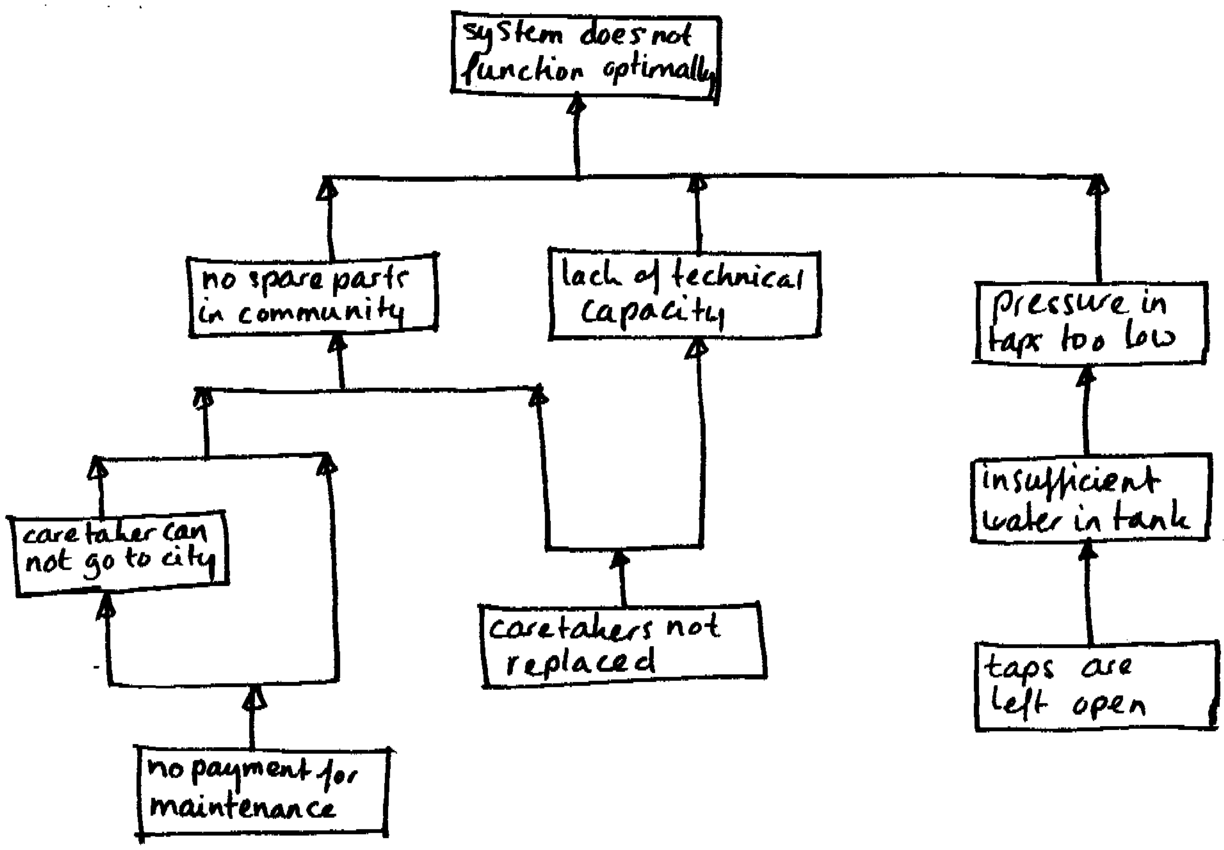
In ***Guatemala,*** *the community research teams are actively involved in the research at the community level. In two communities, Barrel and Belen, a second round of diagnosis was conducted. After obtaining the main information from large community meetings, the local research team decided to complete the data by organizing meetings on specific themes with water committees and key informants. Together, the research team and the community members drew village maps, system maps and Venn diagrams to gain a general overview of the community and its water supplies. This information was helpful in selecting additional tools for exploring in depth various technical, social and managerial issues. In a second round, the selected tools were used to verify the information obtained by other means, such as direct observation, transect walks and focus group discussions. In a third round, the information was analyzed and conclusions were drawn using tools such as cause-effect analysis and ranking.*

In the villages of La Sirena and Ceylan in ***Colombia****, local research teams were involved in the process of data collection. After preparing guidelines and checklists they collected information and sketched the history of each community and, together with the Colombian PAR team, looked at technical aspects of the local water supply and its management and administration. The analysis of the history of the locality, the water supply system and the communal organizations in order to understand better the situation was a powerful exercise. In La Sirena a lively discussion at a community meeting resulted in the retrieval of a variety of materials and maps. Eventually, these historical maps, paintings, oral histories and stories will be published for the benefit of the community. In some cases it was deemed necessary to dig deeper into certain aspects of the diagnosis in order to understand problems that arise, by visiting households and conducting individual interviews. In Ceylan, a painting represents the graphical history of the most important events in the past. Activities in both communities also helped to integrate the local research teams.*

Prioritizing problems: identifying their causes and establishing selection criteria

As part of this stage, the information is analyzed in depth to identify any causal relationships among the problems identified. For example, if the technical capacity to carry out repairs and/or system extensions is lacking, the underlying reason may be that there is no system of replacing experienced caretakers once they leave the village to work elsewhere, or when they pass away. If the water pressure at the taps is too low, the underlying cause may be that taps are being left open, leaving the reservoir tank with too little water to provide the necessary pressure. If spare parts are not in the village, this may be because (some) households are unwilling to pay for maintenance, or because it is difficult for the caretaker to get to the city to buy spare parts. All problems ultimately lead to the same result: people do not get sufficient water. If underlying managerial problems are not identified and dealt with, the technical problems will never be solved in a sustainable way.

From these few examples it can be seen that technical and managerial problems are often closely interrelated. Interrelationships among problems can be visualized by writing descriptions of the problems on cards, and arranging the cards to show cause–effect relationships. By drawing lines between them, a so-called 'problem tree' emerges. The following example illustrates such interrelations among problems.



From this tree it can be seen that solving problems at the root of the tree has a large impact on problems higher up the tree. It can also be seen that problems at the root of the tree are often related to management of the water supply – such as the exploitation of a maintenance fund or the arrangement of caretaker training – and that these managerial problems can lead to technical problems, such as breakdowns and a lack of spare parts. Few technical problems arise from conditions that are beyond the control of the community. Tools for analysis include 'Building a problem tree' (tool 25), and 'Analysing forces for action' (tool 26). They may first be used with PAD team members only, and later with groups of community members.

Once the problems have been analyzed, they can then be prioritized. To select the order in which problems are to be solved (first, second, third, etc.), criteria have to be identified. In order for the prioritization to be meaningful, these criteria are to be identified by the community members. An important criterion for selecting a problem is the impact that solving it is likely to have on other problems. Solving a root problem, often a managerial one, is likely to have a large impact on other problems. Other criteria include the number of people that will be positively affected when the problem is solved; the number of attempts that have already been made to solve the problem; the means available to solve the problem; and the time it is likely to take to solve the problem. Ranking exercises (tools 27 and 28) can be used to make the prioritization transparent and understandable to everyone. When these exercises are done with a small group of representatives, the outcomes can easily be presented to the whole community.

It is important to encourage the group doing the ranking exercise not to adopt criteria that will require outsiders, such as funds from the support organization, which may create dependency and may jeopardize the entire undertaking. It is also important to prevent certain influential individuals dominating the prioritization, in that they may select their own problems for solution rather than the problems that affect many people.

For the ***Nepali*** *team, one of the outcomes of a meeting with IRC staff and of a regional workshop was the realization that a deeper examination of the problems and potentials was needed. More analysis was carried out by looking for cause–effect relationships among all the problems listed during the diagnosis phase, and only then could there be a meaningful prioritization of the problems and a strategy developed. The approach used was not the same for all communities, since the selection of tools depended on the information that was still needed in each case. The team also discovered that each community has its own strategies for managing its affairs, e.g. community forestry, fundraising and labour exchange. As a start in drawing up an agenda for experimentation, the communities prioritized their problems by means of a pairwise ranking exercise.*

*In **Colombia**, during three working sessions organized with the community researchers the information collected during the diagnosis was analyzed and the problems were prioritized. At a training workshop the group reflected on the problems identified in the diagnosis, and later worked in smaller groups to analyze the problems further, in an attempt to identify the central problems. These central problems were then prioritized on the basis of the following criteria: importance, feasibility, degree of urgency and beneficiary groups. Marks were given by consensus.*

Major problems identified in Colombia

Community Priority	La Sirena	Ceylan	Campoalegre
1	*Sectors without sewerage*	*Conflict between supporting sectors*	*Lack of coordination of the state agencies and regulation of water sources*
2	*No independent administration, no regulation of users*	*Lack of coordination between the employees of the administrative body*	*Lack of administrative organization*
3	*Irrational use of water*	*Contamination by chemicals and excreta*	*No potable water treatment*
4	*Lack of sand in water treatment plant*	*Lack of valves*	*No sewerage*
5	*Excreta contamination of water sources*	*No waste water treatment*	*Unable to enforce by-law*

*In **Pakistan**, a variety of methods and tools were used in the diagnosis. In the first round, factual and general information were obtained from a review of the literature, interviews with staff of the support organization, and courtesy visits to the shortlisted communities. A checklist was used during discussions with men and women, in village walks and during interviews with key informants. The villagers then drew village maps, system maps and Venn diagrams. This process yielded a general understanding of the community and its water supply management issues, and helped to select additional tools for further exploration.*

In the second round, some of the selected tools were used to obtain in-depth information on different issues hindering management of water supply scheme and to cross-check the information gathered in the first round. These included group discussions and focus group discussions with village organizations (VOs), traditional organizations (TOs), women's organizations (WOs), non-beneficiaries of the improved water supply scheme, people living in different parts of the village and the poorest households. This round was supplemented with direct observations inside houses, transect walks and a wealth ranking. In the third round, the information was analyzed and the conclusions of the diagnosis phase were drawn in mass meetings, CRT workshops, group discussions, and by cause-effect analysis, preparing seasonal calendars and ranking of problems.

*In **Guatemala,** the problems were prioritized as follows:*

1) *There is lack of organization and communication between the support organization and the community.*
2) *Water quality is below an acceptable standard.*
3) *Regulation of the work of the water committee is inadequate and ineffective.*
4) *There is a technical problem in the water main.*

Identifying and selecting possible problem-solving strategies

The last stage in the diagnosis process involves identifying and selecting promising solutions and the available resources for each of the prioritized problems. Looking at how similar problems have been solved previously and/or elsewhere, and at the resources available, helps to trigger ideas about possible problem-solving strategies and to build the people's self-confidence. Tool 29 describes how exchange visits between communities can be useful not only for identifying problems, but also for community learning and identifying promising solutions.

From the results of the problem analysis, it can often be seen that many problems are interrelated. To solve a certain problem usually requires problems of different nature to be addressed first, and hence also problem-solving strategies of different nature need to be tried. Community members are to be encouraged to select a few for experimentation. The selection of problem-solving strategies for experimentation again involves listing and ranking selection criteria, which may include: the financial and other costs involved; the time needed to implement the strategy; and the need for and the availability of outside assistance. Solving problems also requires people to join forces and to make best use of each other's qualities. Tool 30 describes a game that can help people to realize the importance of having a common goal and joining forces. The third document in this series, 'Experimenting with the community: getting to know about solutions) describes various management and monitoring tools that have been developed and tested by communities in order to solve identified problems and to monitor the strategies adopted.

The following matrix shows which tools can be used for what purpose.

DAILY REPORT OF 23th MARCH

MORNING SESSION

☞ **To complete a matrix of tools which will be used in the project process cycle which was left incomplete during the previous day.**

☞ **To experience the importance of proper facilitation of a discussion**

ACTIVITIES:

1. **Brief overview of the previous days activities were presented by Dil Feroze.**
2. **Eveline explained the topics for the day.**
3. **Saleem continued facilitating the matrix.**

Phases	Diagnosis			Problem prioritization	Identification of solutions	Identification of strategies	Planning for action	Monitoring
PRA tools used/available								
	Get village profile	Problem identification	Identification of problem solving activities tried out					
Collected secondary data	✓	✓	✓					
Focus group discussion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Key informants	✓	✓	✓	For cross checking				
transact	✓	✓						✓
Mapping	✓	✓			✓			✓
Observation	✓	✓						✓
Historical calendar	✓	✓						✓
Ranking	✓							✓
Seasonal calendar	✓	✓					✓	✓
Venn diagram	✓						✓	
Individual interviews	✓	✓		For cross checking				
Role play					✓	✓	✓	
Pupet show		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Pie Chart	✓	✓		✓				✓

Many techniques employ diagrammatic and visual work. By creating and discussing a map, model or diagram, all of those present – whether insiders and outsiders, literate or not – can see, point to, discuss, modify and refine conceptual diagrams or representations, sharing in their creation and analysis.

Tools should be used in a flexible way, and sometimes the same tool can used in various situations. Still, it is useful to apply some tools in a particular order, since they build on each other. Tools for gathering global information should be used before those for gathering specific details of a given issue. Examples are given of how various tools can be used in sequence are given in the following.

- By drawing up a **seasonal calendar** before conducting a planning exercise can help community members and support staff to make a plan that is feasible in terms of the timing of activities.
- **Mapping** can provide general information on the location of water and sanitation facilities, and a subsequent **focus group discussion** can give more insight into how these sites were selected, whether community members were satisfied with the selection process and its outcome, and whether they would opt for a different way of selecting sites next time.
- Focus group discussions can also be used to verify that the information obtained during an **observation walk** is accurate.
- **Community meetings** are useful as a follow-up to a **ranking exercise,** which is often done with a small group of people. At a community meeting people can be informed and community-wide consensus on the selection made through the ranking exercise can be sought.

Giving feedback to the community

Much of the work in the context of PAD will be done by support staff in cooperation with the community PAD team. As also discussed in Section 1.2, it is impossible and also unnecessary to do each and every activity with the entire community. Many of the tools do not allow for working with large groups of people. However, it is crucial and obligatory that the PAD team keeps all other community members informed, involving the entire community in decision making at crucial moments during the PAD process, as well as during diagnosis. After all, community members are the owners of the information, they should determine the priorities for its use, as well as authorize and establish conditions for its publication and dissemination.

Mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure that the larger community receives feedback and participates fully in decision making. Without these mechanisms, there is a risk that the information obtained is either incomplete or even wrong. It is also possible that the majority of the community do not feel the need for changes in the management of the system, which may lead to a lack of general commitment. Feedback has to be provided in plain and understandable language, based on daily expressions and accessible to all, to make democratic discussions possible.

General remarks

Support staff and the PAD team should not look upon community members solely as sources of information. Community members should also be given the chance to reflect on the outcomes of the diagnosis, to join in decision making with regard to the selection of problems to be solved, and to participate in selecting and implementing the problem-solving strategies for experimentation.

Throughout the diagnosis, it has to be taken into account that short, frequent, interactive visits are often more useful than long sessions just once in a while. Short, frequent visits usually fit in better with the community's realities, and they also allow a stepwise understanding of PAD. However, visits should not always be too frequent. Communities need time for internal consultation, to capture ideas from those who do not attend meetings, to reflect on what was discussed during meetings with staff of the support organization, and to make up their own minds as to the next step. Usually communities are not allowed time, since support organizations may want to complete most of the work in one construction season. This can easily lead to ill-considered, wrong ventures.

The information collected during the diagnosis is used for planning and implementing experiments, for monitoring the process and the results of the experimentation, and for use in future development activities. Documenting and storing information therefore needs proper attention. Minutes of meetings can be kept and the outcomes of exercises, supplemented with explanations, can be recorded in brief reports. Ranking matrices and maps can be stored in a publicly accessible building. The personal diaries of PAD team members and staff of the support organization may contain information that may not be available in the more formal documents. In compiling such documentation, it is important to adhere to the sequence of the exercises and meetings. At the start of any meeting, the participants can be reminded of the previous one by referring to the relevant documents. Tool 7 describes the use of personal diaries. The third document in this series, called '*Experimenting in the field: Identifying sustainable solutions*' elaborates on the issue of storing and using information.

3.2 The art of facilitating

Facilitating of a diagnosis process is a challenging responsibility. In the PAD approach, the task of support staff is to get people prepared for action that is often assumed to be the responsibility of outsiders. This is particularly true in the case of the management of a water supply system implemented by an outside support organization. The facilitator also has to ensure that the diagnosis reflects the ideas and opinions of men and women of all social, religious and age groups in a community. The effectiveness of the tools depends not only on the availability and willingness of community members to participate and learn, but also on the capacity of the team of the support organization to grasp local concerns and to create an atmosphere that is conducive to mutual exchanges of experience. In addition, it has to be taken into account that each culture and each situation requires its own approach, and adapting a general approach to local circumstances calls for flexibility and creativity on the part of the facilitators, i.e. the staff of the support organization. Flexibility and creativity can only be built on a good understanding of the purpose of the work. Flexibility and creativity can only flourish in an environment where team members trust each other. A daily review of completed fieldwork – going over the notes and evaluating the methods used – can help to build trust, and mistakes and lessons learned can be openly discussed.

Experience has shown that all facilitators face a number of pitfalls that may lead to poor-quality diagnosis results. To avoid these pitfalls, and thus to ensure high-quality diagnosis, support staff require thorough training to develop and/or strengthen their facilitation skills. Team leaders should also keep a list of frequent mistakes and remind their colleagues to avoid them. Mistakes such as using a tool in the wrong way, can easily become normal practice if they are not immediately corrected.

Some of the pitfalls, and hints on how to avoid them, and the necessary facilitation skills are described in the following.

Pitfalls

1. ***The roadside bias.*** Support staff may be tempted to address themselves to people who live close to the road, since visiting households off the road requires extra effort and time. However, traders and/or the better off often live near the road. A lot of useful information and ideas can be missed if staff limit themselves to talking only to people who live near the road.

Hints: Support staff should plan to stay overnight in the community, to allow them to walk around at ease. If they plan to hold a focus group discussion or key informant interviews and do not have time to visit homes away from the road, then someone else must be found who is willing to hear the voices of those living 'off the road'. They could explain that time is limited and ask how to reach the people living 'off the road', perhaps suggesting that some of these people could gather at a public place near the road.

2. ***Raising unrealistic expectations.*** Starting a community diagnosis process without indicating the limitations of the project may easily lead to community people thinking that any problem identified can be solved, either through or with the help of the project. If such expectations can not be met, frustration is likely to arise, which will reduce the level of motivation, and the resultant anger is likely to be directed at the support staff.

Hints: This problem can be avoided by repeatedly clarifying the scope of the project at an early stage of cooperation between support staff and the community. This will help to avoid raising unrealistic expectations (see Section 3.1). The scope of the project, its objectives, the responsibilities of all the actors involved, and mutual expectations, can be laid down in a written contract. These agreements should be reconfirmed at regular intervals.

3. ***Getting involved in politics.*** If the support staff are working in a village where different political factions are active, they may find that this has an impact on the diagnosis activities. It can lead, for example, to continuous disagreements, never arriving at a consensus, resulting in stagnation and action planning being impossible. The support staff may even find themselves being pulled at from different sides and being asked to take a stand.

Hints: To prevent political differences among community members hampering the diagnosis process, support staff should voice their concerns in this respect as soon as they occur. They could ask community members to suggest ways to channel the differences so that they do not harm the diagnosis, or make best use of them to get better diagnosis results.

*In Rangapur, **Nepal**, political differences among members of a water committee led to tedious and unproductive meetings. Decisions were not taken and actions, for example related to putting in place a system for regular cleaning of the area around the standpost, were not carried out. At a general meeting, the community decided to dissolve the committee and to select a new, more neutral one.*

4. ***Just using a tool.*** Just using a tool doesn't mean that an event such as meeting will be a useful one. However, support staff and/or by group members may ask questions that trigger discussions and in-depth investigations. Having community members make a village map, for example, will not necessarily help them to realize their management potential or to utilize all available resources. Individual tools may also be meaningless if they are used before the people fully understand the context in which they are being used, or if they do not yet realize they are part of a diagnosis process.

Hints: When explaining the tools, it is important that they are put in the context of the entire diagnosis process. A clear link should be made between the outcomes of the tools used previously, and those at hand. It is the curiosity of support staff and of fellow villagers, expressed in the form of probing questions, that will give a tool its depth. Support staff should develop curiosity and ask questions not only about things that are new to them, but also about 'ordinary' matters. Participatory tools, supplemented with the selective use of questions, will encourage people to discuss complex issues before drawing conclusions. An open dialogue, good rapport and mutual sharing will help to ensure that the tools will be effective, thus helping to sustain and strengthen the participatory development process. If a support staff member already has basic information about a community and its water supply system, he or she may draw up a checklist of interesting issues that merit further exploration.

5. ***The 'easy talker' bias.*** In any community there is often one or more people, in many cases men, who are very active and willing to talk. These people may have a genuine interest in improving the situation in the entire village, but they are not necessarily well informed about the problems faced by those living further away. After a group discussion, support staff may feel that all the members of the community participated, but on a closer look they may find that only three talkative men voiced their opinions, dominating the discussion. They may also have failed to notice that some people had walked out of the meeting or had fallen asleep, and so must conclude that they may not have heard all the opinions representative of the entire community.

Hints: Knowing that a solution to a water system management problem will not be sustainable if it is not adhered to by all community members, support staff should try to make the 'easy talkers' understand that all members of the community need to be involved, either in person or through a representative. Support staff will have to make best use of their enthusiasm if they are to get all their fellow villagers involved. They could suggest that a talkative person acts as an adviser, thus hinting that he or she should talk only when asked for advice. Another option is to organize discussions in separate groups and/or to use different tools to collect information, such as by using tools that require people to express themselves through a drawing rather than verbally. These latter suggestions are also useful for situations in which it is felt that men are dominating the discussion at the expense of the women.

6. ***The 20–50-year-old male bias.*** When conducting a diagnosis related to water supply system management, it may seem logical to address healthy adults, preferably male and not too old. This is a pity. Children are often involved in carrying water and collecting firewood. They can often provide valuable information on, for example, when and how often taps and hand-pumps break down, alternative water sources, water source protection, and so on, and their information is usually reliable. Children are also often more frank and are not afraid to give socially undesirable answers. Older people can provide valuable information about how

water supply practices have changed over time and why certain sources are considered good or bad. In many societies, particularly in parts of Asia and northern Africa, it is easier to address men than women. Women may either be too busy to talk or attend a meeting or, if a male staff member is visiting, they can not be approached or even seen.

Hints: Support staff should find ways to address children, older people and also women, although the prior permission of a male family member may be necessary. Support staff should try to prevent such meetings becoming too formal, since this will restrict spontaneous reactions. They should also use the information with integrity and prevent the information received reaching people who may misuse it or use it against the informant. If women are not allowed to be addressed by a male, then a female staff member should be present.

7. ***Overlooking educational and cultural differences.*** Support staff should always remember that the levels of understanding of people and their cultural values are not the same everywhere. Each situation, and each culture, requires an appropriate approach.

Hints: Every situation requires flexibility and creativity on the part of the support staff. If a focus group discussion has been arranged, for example, they should always take with them materials such as large sheets of paper, small coloured cards, marker pens and masking tape, so that they can make quick visual representation of a discussion in case the participants find it difficult to follow what is being said. Such materials should be available in the community, in order to avoid the participants thinking that tools are nice, but alien, and therefore that they can not use them themselves at a later stage.

8. ***The temptation to 'work with a small group only'.*** Working with a small group of people who are interested in learning about the diagnosis process (a PAD team) provides community members with a forum to discuss their problems and suggestions related to the water supply. If the members are carefully selected, an intermediary group can help in building rapport between support staff from outside and the community. However, in its enthusiasm the small group may easily become too autonomous, forgetting about the need for the whole community to be involved.

Hints: The members of the PAD team, which is to collaborate closely with the support staff, should be carefully selected. They should be trusted by the community and adopt a 'facilitator attitude' (see Section 3.2). Thus PAD team members should be selected according clear criteria, and their roles and responsibilities clearly specified. Support staff will have to stimulate a two-way flow of information, and introduce continuous checks and balances to ensure that the right things are decided and done by the group. As noted earlier, a feedback mechanism also has to be developed.

9. ***The 'we don't have time' argument.*** Although projects applying the PAD approach believe that communities know best what to do if given the opportunity and time to give it thought, the support staff may still think the process is not fast enough. This may lead to quick and unwise decisions and in the end may consume more time, either because decisions have to be reviewed and negotiations have to start again, or because people who do not agree with a decision start hammering the process.

Hints: Communities should be allowed time both during and between meetings to discuss issues among themselves, to consult the PAD team without the staff of the support organization being around, and to arrive at a consensus about the issues at stake. Because of the long duration of a community diagnosis and the assurance of two-way communication, community members can refine and improve their conclusions by discussing them with fellow members and by incorporating information given by support staff. Reaching consensus may take some time, but it will be worthwhile since the decisions taken will be more sustainable.

*In **Pakistan,** engineers started construction for rehabilitation of the water supply system after discussions with a few key individuals in the village. Every time they came into the village to supervise construction, they found that construction had stopped due to quarrels among community members about the layout of the system. They realized that villagers had not had enough time to discuss the system layout among themselves.*

10. ***The 'one point of view only' risk.*** When visiting a community alone, support staff will probably assess a situation from their own professional point of view, and may overlook issues that fall beyond the scope of that view. Staff with a technical background are often (but perhaps not consciously) accorded higher status. For example, a technician (usually male) may automatically take the lead and is often addressed first by community leaders, thus reinforcing this pattern. Both of these mechanisms may lead to an incomplete assessment or to insufficient information for community members to make sound decisions.

Hints: Preferably, support staff should visit communities in teams in which various disciplines are represented. The team may agree in advance on the different roles of the members, and on who will take the lead during a visit. Such roles may change for a subsequent visit. If the PAD team members or community leaders address automatically to the technician, the technician could deliberately pass on the word to the other team members. This implies of course that the team members are sufficiently aware of each other's work in the community, and that they trust each other.

Skills required of a facilitator

Facilitating a community diagnosis is a challenging process, and good facilitation is an art. Each situation, each culture, each village, each experience requires its own answers from the support staff. Since the information that comes out of the process should be owned by the local people, the behaviour and the attitudes of the support staff are crucial. They should be relaxed and not rushed, show respect, willing to 'hand over the stick', and critically self-aware. This is easier said than done – all support staff require skills to put their behavioural intentions related to facilitation into practice. Some of these skills are listed below. The support staff are themselves in the best position to judge whether they already have, or whether they could strengthen the following skills and abilities:

To build relationships of trust and respect. It will be clear by now that a participatory diagnosis requires mutual trust and respect. Trust and respect have to be shown and deserved; they are two sides of the same coin. If support staff show trust and respect for the community members they will also receive them in return. Building such a relationship starts in simple ways, such as dressing according to local customs, eating local food, and using the appropriate forms of address. It also requires the capacity to remain independent, not to take sides, and to refrain from accepting gifts if these are given with the hidden implication that a favour is required in return.

To show curiosity when observing and talking to people. Some people are curious by nature, others are not or to a lesser extent. However, support staff can increase their curiosity by giving themselves the task of not taking anything they see or hear for granted, but to ask for explanations and background information. Initially, this may feel awkward and unnatural, but experience will show that it creates a good atmosphere. In response to such interest, people will feel respected. It will bring support staff, and probably also to the community members, a wealth of useful insights. After a while, being curious and asking questions will cease to feel awkward.

To facilitate a discussion The ability to facilitate a discussion has a number of elements. First, support staff should make an effort to use the local language, but if it is difficult to master, an interpreter will be needed. Not using the local language, but the national language, which is often spoken by only part of the community, will automatically exclude a large number of people from the diagnosis process, usually women, the elderly and the poor. As facilitators, support staff should pose open questions rather than closed or leading ones. Closed questions are those to which a simple answer, 'yes' or 'no', is required; for example, a question such as 'do women attend the meetings of the water committee?' will provide the facilitator with very limited information and will not show whether or not the respondent understood the question. A leading question such as ... On the other hand, an open question such as .... will allow people to think for themselves and the answer will clearly show whether the question was understood. It is not difficult to pose open questions. However, practice shows that it is tempting to ask closed or leading questions, either to obtain quick answers or to encourage people to say the 'right' thing.

To avoid the 'easy-talker' bias, field workers need to be able to stop talkative people without offending them, and to encourage less talkative people without embarrassing them – Section 3.2 gave some hints on to how to do this. Before visiting a community, role-plays with colleagues will definitely help field workers to find effective ways to deal with such unbalanced situations. Summarizing a discussion at regular intervals will help people to keep track of what has been said and to prepare for decision-making. Field workers should make sure that they are not taking the decisions for further action while summarizing; the participants should be allowed to draw their own conclusions from a discussion and to take the decisions, since this will increase their commitment. If they are also asked to summarize a discussion, this will have the added advantage of finding out whether they have understood the gist of what has been said.

To listen. The ability to listen is a prerequisite for facilitating any discussion. If the support staff do not listen carefully they will not be able to make an accurate summary, or they may fail to be aware of what is being said 'between the lines'. To listen carefully requires an open mind, with no preconceived ideas that prevent them hearing what people in the community are really saying. Facilitators should also not interrupt, or assume that they already know what people want to say, or being any reply with phrases such as 'what you say is not true'.

To adapt to unpredictable situations and turn constraints into opportunities. Fieldwork never goes exactly as planned. For example, a group of onlookers may gather during a planned private interview. Rather than send the curious away, thereby almost always guaranteeing that they will start to suspect something, the gathering could be turned into a group discussion.

To read non-verbal signs from the community. Non-verbal signs include: walking out of a meeting, sleeping during a meeting, nodding and head shaking, or taking a lot of effort to provide good food. In a general document like this it is not possible to mention all the positive or negative signs that are used in various social and cultural contexts. Sometimes walking out of a meeting indicates disapproval of what is being said, although, it may also show that other, more urgent work is calling. People falling asleep during a meeting may indicate that they are not at all interested in the proceedings, or that the meeting has been held at an inconvenient time. People talking among themselves during a meeting may indicate their interest in the topic, or that they are not interested and prefer to talk about something else. All support staff should try to find out the meaning of these signs by asking either the people involved – or anyone else they think will give truthful answers – what they mean.

To analyze findings. Support staff should schedule time every day to make notes, to summarize information (such as by drawing charts and diagrams), and to compare information from different sources. If some information appears to be contradictory, try to find out why – is it because the various sources talked from different perspectives, one as a woman, the other as a man, or one rich and the other poor? Analyses should be presented to key members of the community, to cross-check the findings and conclusions. They should be asked to be critical and to correct any inaccuracies.

To get close to the community. Being friendly and attentive is not enough to get close to a community. Support staff should try to be around in the evening, at night and in the early morning, to stay overnight, to eat with people and join in their tasks to create a sense of equality. Such demonstrations of interest will encourage people to open up and to make you part of their daily lives.

To evaluate personal performance. Being critically self-aware means to look at one's own performance openly and honestly. Only when doing so can support staff be able to detect performance gaps and determine how to improve performance. Asking colleagues or community members for feedback will help, and may even indicate specific points for observation.

4 The outputs of a participatory community diagnosis

As noted in Chapter 2, a community diagnosis within the Participatory Action Development approach not only focuses on the generation and collection of information, but it also has the clear, additional objective of preparing people for action by increasing their awareness and self-confidence. This means that a participatory community diagnosis has a number of outputs.

4.1 Information for planning and implementation

A participatory community diagnosis phase has various information outputs; a list of problems in order of priority, a list of possible solutions, and information on the resources that will be needed to bring about these solutions. In relation to the management of water supply systems, the most common problems are managerial or technical in nature. Technical problems are usually quickly and easily identified, and include a lack of technical capacity to carry out repairs and/or system extensions, low water pressure, source contamination, spare parts not available locally, and water pipes that burst in winter. Probing is usually needed to help people recognize and provide information about the underlying managerial problems. Section 3.1 described how to identify the interrelationships among problems.

The resources required can vary from an active community organization with management experience, or cohesion among the various community groups, to financial resources for maintenance or sand for the construction of a filter for turbid water. Information on the available resources will help to identify the most suitable problem-solving strategy. Information on the community's schedules, obtained by means of a seasonal calendar, for example, can help the members to develop feasible plans for experimentation with the selected strategies.

4.2 Awareness, self-confidence and preparedness for action

In contrast with conventional ways of information gathering, participatory community diagnosis produces outputs in addition to the information needed for planning improvements in water supply system management. The participatory nature of the diagnosis raises people's awareness of the managerial causes underlying the technical problems, which is a first step towards action. By going through the process of diagnosis, the community members may become aware of several additional problems with the water supply which they may not have realized in the past. If awareness raising includes making people aware of their potential and existing management abilities, their self-confidence will grow as well. Between visits, discussions can continue among the various groups in a community and within households. People may even start to take action during the diagnosis, since gaining insight into how problems are related, and how some can be solved, will make them eager to try out possible solutions.

*In Yanthooko, **Kenya**, the community realized that if they could serve the PAR visitors with chicken at a cost of 20,000 shillings, they would also be able to raise money to pay for their plot in the local town. The Nyakerato community organized a visit to the Department of Water and Energy to demand an explanation for the delayed implementation of a promised water scheme. As a result, management committee was restructured once the chairman realized it was not functioning as it should.*

*In **Cameroon**, the people of Nkouondja solved the immediate problem of leakages by analyzing the causes and consequences of the problem during the PAR discussions. Following a session analyzing the causes and consequences of their water problems, executive members of the committee organized transport and visited the Community Development Service to ask for new pipes so that they could carry out repairs to all the leakages in their water system. In subsequent meetings more women joined, although they are not very vocal yet.*

4.3 Improved communication and participation

One of the most important outputs of a participatory community diagnosis is the positive impact it has on communication within the community. It helps people to discover each other's feelings and ideas, and to recognize their value.

*In a traditional community in Gilgit, **Pakistan,** men have allowed women to attend their meetings and are looking for ways of including women further. In another community the chairperson of the village organization had dominated discussions and decision making in the past, but going through the PAR process at various meetings he became less dominant. In the village of Hasis the process helped to resolve a dispute over land and a water source. Through a local agreement of mutual understanding with a local landowner, the community has now obtained free land to construct a new water tank*

*In **Nepal,** the diagnosis process is addressing the issue of common water supplies. Two households that had not been on speaking terms for years are now communicating since one member of each household joined the community research team. In another community, people are now taking minutes of important village meetings.*

*Following a workshop in **Colombia** in which 13 community members evaluated the diagnosis process, the participants felt that they were able to listen to each other better. The community was also more aware of the value of water resources, and water losses have been reduced.*

Improved communication is a precondition for meaningful participation, including all sectors of society, in problem identification and decision taking for action development.

4.4 Ideas for future development: sustaining the process

Since the diagnosis results also provide insight into issues that are not specific to the water sector, e.g. in management mechanisms, they are likely to be used also for other future development activities. When the participatory diagnosis process as such is also discussed and diagnosis skills are learned, community members may go through a similar process when looking for sustainable solutions in other fields. PAD teams not only act as intermediaries between the project team and the communities at large, they are also trained in facilitating diagnosis activities. Systematic reflection on the methodology and the use of the tools will increase the learning effect.

Useful questions for systematic reflection

Objective:	*ask for a description of what happened*
Reflective:	*ask how the participants feel about what happened*
Interpretative:	*ask what lessons have been learned from the experience*
Decisional:	*ask what they would do differently next time, taking into account the lessons learned*

*Source: Little and de Geer **(1992)***

The PAD team should establish close contacts with the local water management committee, if one exists, to ensure that it learns management skills such as problem identification and prioritization, either by directly transferring skills, or by (some of) the members joining the committee. It is expected that the skills that have been developed will also help communities to solve problems in areas other than water supply.

5 Discussing the diagnosis results with the community

As noted above, the purpose of the diagnosis is to gather together the information that will be necessary for the formulation and implementation of development activities. The participatory nature of a diagnosis has the added value of ensuring that community members feel themselves to be the owners of the process and of the information, so that they will be eager to look for solutions to the problems they have identified. It is therefore essential that the results of the diagnosis are thoroughly discussed, and that broad consensus is reached on the problems to be addressed and possible solutions to be tried.

During the diagnosis process the outcomes of the various exercises are summarized by those involved, and are confirmed at various stages at community meetings. When discussing the results in larger community gatherings, different interpretations and/or disagreements may arise. The ease with which consensus is reached will depend largely on the degree of information sharing at in earlier stages (see Tool 9, 'Conducting a community meeting').

*In village meetings and exercises in **Pakistan,** the results were concluded by the participants at the end and reviewed at the next meeting. These results were further evaluated in a workshop for community research teams (CRTs). The results of the CRT workshops were regularly presented to the community in general meetings. Wherever possible, gatherings of men and women were organized. In the course of this process several additional issues related to the problems were discussed and adaptations made. The results of the diagnosis were discussed within the four research communities.*

*The research team in **Guatemala** held a three-day workshop to discuss the diagnosis reports with the two local teams. The workshop provided a forum for the teams to meet and work together. With all the information gathered at community level the local teams were supported to organize the data and shape out the diagnosis document. Women were allowed to bring their children and child-care facilities were provided. The outputs of the workshop were the draft documents, which were then typed and drawings were made. The final documents were presented to the communities and the authorities, who supported the work and agreed with the information. As a result of this presentation, the water committees have established their credibility, and the local research teams are strongly committed to continue with their work.*

6 Following up a community diagnosis

A community diagnosis provides everyone involved with insight into the resources available, the range of useful indigenous knowledge, and with a list of prioritized problems and possible strategies to solve them. The diagnosis is followed by the development of an 'agenda for change'. After selecting the most promising problem-solving strategies, action plans can be drawn up to start experimenting with these strategies. The plans for action will incorporate the diagnosis information on the available resources, the results of earlier attempts to solve similar problems, and the time available (on a daily and/or annual basis) to both men and women.

In Colombia the next step analyzed the route to be taken in order to change a problem situation into a desired situation, using the 'story with a gap' technique. On the basis of this information, the participants prioritized the main problems and drew up workplans for each one by identifying activities to be carried out and assigning responsibilities to individuals.

Monitoring the experimentation process and the results is an integral part of planning and implementation. Diagnosis information and the criteria used for selecting problem-solving strategies serve as a baseline for monitoring. More information and tools related to planning and monitoring can be found in the third document in this series, 'Experimenting with the community: getting to know about solutions'.

Support staff and their organizations are now assisting communities in the experimentation process, and in monitoring the process and the outcomes of the experimentation phase.

*In **Pakistan,** the PAR team and the research communities began the development and testing of problem-solving strategies. Initially, they used preference ranking as a tool for prioritizing problems, but it was found that when there are too many items to rank (more than 6), pairwise ranking is a better option. This was followed by the development of strategies for solving the major problems, which in their turn were also prioritized. For strategies that turned out to be the most preferred ones, workplans were developed in which the mutual responsibilities of the community and of the PAR team were elaborated. Subsequently indicators for monitoring the activities described in the workplan were identified.*

TOOLS SECTION

Introduction to the tools section

In this section tools can be found which are referred to in the previous chapters. The order in which they are described is as much as possible determined by the order in which they are referred to. This order makes sense in terms of logical sequencing of activities at the community level, but should not be considered as rigid. Many tools can be used at various stages of PAD.

Tools are to fulfil a number of criteria. They have to:

- be controllable by the PAD-team and the community members: users of the tool have to understand its procedure and be allowed to interfere in an exercise whenever they want;
- be quick to prevent frustration and loss of interest: exercises in which the tools are used should usually not last longer than 2 to 3 hours, otherwise people might start feeling uneasy and loose interest because they have lots of other things to do.
- aim at only getting to know what is really needed: in order not to make the diagnosis phase more tedious than necessary, one should resist the temptation to collect information just 'because it is interesting', but have oneself guided by the question 'will the information have an impact on the problem analysis and on the identification of possible solutions?'.
- use visual aids where possible to enable control and to stimulate participation, also by the illiterate;
- be informal and preferably take place on a publicly accessible area in the community.

Most of the tools are not completely new. They are adapted versions of earlier described PRA-, PAR- or SARA-tools. Some have been developed or adapted by the research teams involved in the Participatory Action Research this document derives from. The tools are described along a number of headings that are also used in other documents of this series. Where appropriate hints are given as to how to strengthen the use of the tool. Users should feel free to modify tools where appropriate.

The tools are described in a sequence considered to be logic in the context of a diagnosis. Tools meant to gather general information can be found before tools meant to go into detail. Tools analysing the information precede tools helping people to make a choice. However, as indicated earlier, one may have to go back and forth. Sometimes, although at the stage of making a choice, community members may find out that they lack pieces of information and information gathering tools will have to be used again.

On the other hand, using too many tools may be counter-productive and there may be no need to use all of them. Their use depend on the purpose of the diagnosis, i.e. helping the community to collect sufficient information from different angles to allow them to decide on the experiments to be carried out. Once the purpose is achieved, there may be no need to continue with additional tools.

When using a tool, be well prepared. Read through the description carefully, collect the required materials, invite the appropriate persons, i.e. persons having the required characteristics, experience and knowledge. Make sure the meeting place is accessible to all invitees.

List of Tools

TOOL 1 Do they want support and can it be given?

Community selection

Summary

Many implementing agencies approach the local administration of a community and through this body "force" the community to accept a water supply project. The selection of communities hardly ever involves general community members. Hence, commitment in terms of willingness to take up responsibility for the system (also after implementation) is usually not ensured. By its nature Participatory Action Development requires real commitment from the side of the support organisation as well as of the community. PAD is not just providing a water supply system and installing a water committee for system management. However, it looks at management as a process within a community of problem identification, experimentation with possible solutions, reflection and selection of the most appropriate one. Therefore, community selection requires communities to be well informed and showing of commitment towards learning more about management as a process rather than as only something practical.

Community selection is a coin having two sides: the community selects the support organisation with its specific (PAD) approach and the support organisation select the community.

Objective

- To identify communities interested to receive support for the implementation of Participatory Action Development

Procedure and materials needed

- Agree on criteria the support organisation wishes to apply when selecting communities for support;

hints

Alternative uses

Strong and weak points of the tool

TOOL 2 Who is Who?

Getting introduced

Summary

An important element of Participatory Action Development is rapport building. If people are expected to be open to support staff and to each other, time has to be invested in strengthening relationships and building mutual trust. Relationships exist between staff of the support organisation and members of a community and the local authority.

How relationships are strengthened and trust is built is very culture specific. However, support staff always needs to get properly introduced into a community, to discuss the purpose of its visits to the community and to sound out whether the local authority still has a positive idea about the support organisation and the project.

This tool describes what to do after an initial, informative visit.

Objective

- To raise enthusiasm, ensure collaboration and obtain useful information from local authorities.

Procedure and materials needed

- Contact a locally credible NGO and/or a community based organisation and ask to get introduced to the village leader or other local authorities.
- When meeting the local authority refer to previous contacts (if applicable) and explain the purpose of the visit and future activities in the context of PAD.
- Ask whether the community is still interested in the project and whether the previous meeting has given rise to new ideas and/or questions.
- If interest is still there, ask the local authority what would be the most appropriate way to proceed, whereby the formation of a local PAD-team is to be discussed.
- Propose to jointly take a stroll around the village and ask to be introduced to some community members.
- After the stroll, agree upon a timeline, a broad outline of activities and upon how the local authority will remain involved.

> ***hints***
> Asking the village leader to show you around is usually a good starter for more a informal discussion, whereby a first impression can be obtained about the community situation. Towards other community members it may also carry the message that the visitors are welcome. Be clear about the scope of collaboration between the support organisation and the community right from the beginning. This will prevent disappointments at a later stage.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 3 Breaking the ice with a spider web

Building rapport

Summary

Participatory Action Development requires a high level of openness and trust among community members and between community members and project staff. As a result of previous development activities in a particular community openness and trust may either be present and worthwhile to be reinforced. It may also be totally absent. In the latter case efforts will have to go into creating an atmosphere whereby people feel they can share ideas and positive and negative experiences. Such an atmosphere does not develop overnight, but creating some fun by the use of ice-breakers helps in getting started. In general ice breakers are not just meant to have fun. They often carry a message or help people to get to know each other better.

Objective

- To create an atmosphere in which people feel free to share nice things and things they feel a bit embarrassed about or which they do not like.

Procedure and materials needed

- Get people together and have them stand in a circle and explain that a small exercise will be done.
- Give one of the group members a knot of wool and ask him/her to throw it to someone else in the group while holding the loose end of the string, telling his/her name and a few details, such at main occupation, family circumstances.
- Ask the group members to do the same as soon as they get the ball.
- A spiderweb will develop and once it is completed a few words can be said about the rope connecting all together and that a similar connection is sought to be brought about by the PAD-activities.
- Once everybody has had his/her turn, have the ball thrown over quickly again, thus undoing the spiderweb.
- Now the person throwing mentions the name of the person s/he throws the ball to and the personal details.

> hints
> Make sure that participants are attentive right from the beginning of the presentations, since they won't know on forehand whom they will receive the knot from. In case of a group of people already knowing each other the facilitator may ask the members to add something funny while introducing someone.

Alternative uses

Should the group consist of people not knowing each other (for example during an exchange visit or an inter-communal training) the exercise can help participants to remember each others names. While developing the spiderweb they can ask for the name of the person whom they throw the ball to, while undoing the web the thrower will have to recall the name of the person s/he throws the ball to.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 4 The Fruit Salad

Building rapport

Summary

Same as for tool 3

Objective

Same as for tool 3

Procedure and materials needed

- Have all participants stand in a circle, place yourself in its centre and explain the game as follows: "the person standing at your right hand side is called 'your' pineapple. the person standing at your left hand side is called 'your' banana. Make sure you know the real names of these two neighbours. If I point at you an say 'pineapple!', you have to respond immediately by saying 'your' pineapple's real name. The same for 'banana!'. If I say 'fruit salad!' you will all have to change places and we will start the game again, until you all know most of each others names. If the person I point to takes too much time to respond or makes a mistake, s/he takes over my role as a facilitator".
- Play the game going through a number of rounds, whereby each round should take at least 3 to 4 times asking for a name before going to 'fruit salad'.

> **hints**
> This game is to be played rather quickly too retain attention. It is a useful game for getting familiar with each others names, but should not be the first presentation game.

Alternative uses

Strong and weak points of the tool

TOOL 5 The Postman

Building rapport

Summary

Same as for tool 3

Objective

Same as for tool 3, but also

- To allow people to get to know each other a bit better.

Procedure and materials needed

- Make a circle of as many chairs as there are participants.
- Have all participants take a seat and ask one of them to stand up. Take is seat and put it outside of the circle. This person is to start the game by being the postman.
- Explain the proceedings of the game by saying the following: "You are the postman and you have letters to deliver to for example 'everybody with a moustache' or to 'everybody who is a farmer'. All these persons will have to change chairs and you should try to capture one of the empty chairs. The person who can not find an empty chair will then become the postman".
- Have the game played for some time.

> ***hints***
> This game is best played with a group of people that are not all familiar to each other, for example during an exchange visit (see toolno. 27) or a training of members of local PAD-teams.

Alternative uses

Strong and weak points of the tool

TOOL 6 Understanding each others hopes and fears

Drawing up a contract

Summary

In any development effort, but in particular when applying PAD, there is a need for mutual understanding of hopes and fears or expectations. If the scope of the project is not properly explained and understood and the roles and responsibilities are not agreed upon, Participatory Action Development may easily lead to communities expecting all kinds of interventions related to a variety of problems they have. On the other hand, staff of support agencies may easily get frustrated if community members expect straight forward implementation of hardware and appear not to be interested in the capacity building aspects of PAD. Some hopes and fears can only be taken notice of and not actively be dealt with. However, many of them can be dealt with through further explanation of the project and/or planning extra activities. Drawing up an contract between the support organisation and the community will help formalise collaboration and enhance commitment towards it.

This tool is used after the project has been explained and community members have had time to discuss it among themselves. Also a certain level of "feeling at ease" is required if people are to voice their fears also.

Objective

- To be able to develop PAD in such a way that it fulfils a maximum amount of expectations and that it makes fears not come true.
- To prevent waste of time and energy as a result of unrealistic expectations.

Procedure and materials needed

- Recall what has been said about the scope of the project during earlier meetings.
- Ask all people to take a few minutes to jot down hopes and fears they have with regard to the project.
- Hand out six cards per person in two colours (each colour three cards) and markers and ask people to write their three major hopes on one colour and their three major fears on the other.
- Make sure people write only one hope or fear per card and that they write legibly, using key-words only.
- The facilitator has to make sure s/he write cards him/herself also.
- Gather the cards and stick them all neatly and separated by colour on flipcharts, using removable tape.
- Go through all the cards jointly, while clustering the cards addressing the same points.
- In case the text on a card is not clear, discuss with the group what the meaning could be and agree on a reformulation.
- Summarise by going through the clusters or ask one of the community members to do so.
- Ask for reactions to the outcome before reacting to it yourself.

- Reinforce hopes that are conducive to the project, take away fears that can realistically be taken away and invite people to think of ways to deal with those fears that can not be taken away.
- Draft a text for a formal contract between the support organisation and the community.

> ***hints***
> It is very important to mainly to take a look at people's hopes and fears and to avoid the pitfall of become defensive.
> In case of looking for the meaning of an unclear card don't force the author to make him/herself known to clarify the text. This may embarrass the author and destroy confidentiality.
> Should the group include people who can not write, the exercise may be adapted by asking people to list hopes and fears in small groups, which have at least one literate person. From their list these groups can select the 4 or 5 most important hopes and fears and have the literate person write them on cards. The remainder of the procedure is as described above.

Alternative uses

This tool can be used at the beginning of any collaboration or training event, since it is always useful to know about each others expectations and to be able to adapt events where possible to suit the needs and wishes of those concerned.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 7 Bees and Lions

Selecting members of the local PAD-team

Summary

The establishment of a working group or committee is often seen as a means bridge a distance between staff of a support organisation and the community at large or to manage water supplies. However, more often than not we find groups or committees that are not or poorly functioning. This is often due to the fact that its members are not selected along clear criteria, leading to the selection of people who do not necessarily have the right qualities for the job at hand, with poor management as a result.

Within PAD a small group of people, the PAD-team is selected to work with staff of the support organisation. Some of the skills that will be strengthened when going through the PAD-process, like problem identification and analysis, will also be useful for management of the water supply system. Due attention therefore needs to go to identification of required skills and selection of the members of the PAD-team.

Objective

- To make people realise the various tasks involved in being a PAD-team member.
- To ensure the selection of team members having the right skills to fulfil these tasks.

Procedure and materials needed

- Meet with a cross-section of the community and explain the purpose of the meeting.
- Refer to previous meetings in which PAD was explained and ask someone to recall the main PAD-activities and list them on a flipchart while discussing .
- Discuss the role of a PAD-team in these activities.
- Then divide the group in 5 small groups and give each of the groups a picture of an animal (bee, lion or tiger, dog, bird, ...).
- Ask the groups to list the characteristics of each of the animal depicted in their picture and have the groups present the outcome of their discussion and write them down on a flipchart.
- Have the entire group discuss which of the characteristics it likes and tickmark those.
- Have the group indicate which of the characteristics are needed to carry out the PAD-activities listed earlier and add any missing characteristic.
- Continue the discussion by asking which characteristics can be found in women and/or men.
- Conclude the meeting by saying that the characteristics listed may help the community to select its members for the PAD-team
- Preparatory to the meeting an artist may be asked to visualise a variety of tasks of a PAD-team. Instead of writing the tasks on a flipchart the drawings may be put up.

> ***hints***
> In a community having illiterate people, often women, the use of drawings helps getting all involved in the discussion.

*In **Kenya**, having participated in community exchange visits became one of the selection criteria when people had to be selected for training. At the end of the training seminar participants were asked to select two persons to act as bell-ringers. They were to play a watch-dogs role in their community and become a linkage between the committee and the community.*

Alternative uses

*The visits made the leaders and the community at large realise that they were not performing their duties adequately mainly due to lack of clearly defined roles and guidelines. It was thus found necessary to organise a community training workshop to strengthen their capacities. Moreover, communication skills were given priority in order to ensure dissemination among and within the community (**Kenya**).*

Strong and weak points of the tool

TOOL 8 Writing PAD-history

The use of personal diaries

Summary

Writing about the PAD-process is considered to be useful not only for the facilitator, but also for PAD-team members in the community. It serves two purposes. On the one hand it helps recall what has been said and done, also in case of replacement of a team-member. On the other hand re-reading what has been written earlier and adding on to it helps analysing the ongoing process and stimulates learning from it. Keeping a diary is a nice way to encourage people to write.

Objective

- To keep record of what has been done over time in the context of PAD.
- To create an instrument for analysis and learning.

Procedure and materials needed

hints

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 9 They all need to know

Conducting a community meeting

Summary

For any development intervention staff of the support agency and village leaders or water committees have to prevent that the community at large looks upon it as something that only concerns an elite. At every stage transparency has to be ensured. Community meetings can help build rapport, gain confidence, cross-check and complement information and look for general consensus and commitment. They can be organised at various the stages of PAD, preferably by people from within the community.

Should one want to go beyond a mere exchange of information community meetings can be extended to become short community workshops.

Objective

Depending on the moment they are organised:

- To ensure that information obtained is validated and supplemented.
- To create commitment with the community at large.
- To create a moment of experiential learning.

Procedure and materials needed

- Arrange for a time and venue appropriate for all people in the community.
- Assist the committee member in the development of an agenda.
- Help select a chairperson for the meeting who announces the agenda and gives the floor to either committee or community members.
- Ask a committee member to present what has been done and the question to be put forward to the community for consensus.
- Ensure that time is allowed for community members to pose questions for clarification and that serious attention is given to those questions.
- Should the meeting have a broader purpose, explain and carry out the exercise.
- Should consensus be reached about an issue, ensure that voting proceedings are clear to all and that everybody clearly understands the options that can be voted for.
- Wind up a meeting by asking a community member to summarise the discussion and the decisions taken.

*When organising workshops the team in **Colombia** ensured the following structure:*

- *Participants' recognition and integration; the workshop begins with something dynamic as an opening.*
- *Participants' recovery and perception on the topic to be approached; using various techniques such as painting, narration and social drama, participants recover what was done before and express their perception about the topic at stake.*
- *Discussion, stressing local knowledge and enriched with knowledge and contributions from staff of the support organisation.*

* *Re-elaboration of an enriched version of the topic approached and moulded in reports, maps, diagrams and other means.*
* *Evaluation on process and outcome of the workshop and on commitments made.*

hints
It may be useful to have minutes taken. This not only allows those who could not attend to catch up, it also creates the possibility to look back at decisions once taken and the arguments used in favour and against certain options.

In ***Kenya*** *a community meeting was used to do the so-called "rope-exercise. Through this exercise the project team wanted to make people realise that starting a project can be difficult because people have different interests and want the project to move in different directions. It also showed that all people are not equal, that all have different capabilities and talents and that pooling these will give the best result. The exercise was particularly important because it was done a the time the community was to find solutions for identified problems.*

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

In ***Kenya*** *people are used to directive meetings, where they are supposed to listen to what is told to them. The chairman of the water committee now understands that questions posed by community members is a product of interest and not to be seen as disturbance.*

TOOL 10 Getting to know existing/indigenous knowledge

Semi-structured interviewing of key-persons

Summary

Like the previous tool, this one can also be used for different purposes. On the one hand certain members of a community may be particularly knowledgeable about a certain topic of interest for PAD. On the other hand people who have a high status, but who may have little to contribute in terms of project ideas, will have to be talked to separately. They may otherwise feel left out and start obstructing the process.

It is best to semi-structure an interview, meaning to say that a few key-questions are kept in mind, leaving the interviewer/support staff flexible enough to go further into side-tracks, while at the same time preventing the interview to float in every possible direction. The disadvantage of a completely structured interview is that it only addresses issues from the perspective of support staff and does not necessarily bring out aspects that are important for the key-person. Aspects important for the key-person may fall out of the frame of reference of the interviewer, who usually has a different social background and an often urban bias.

Objective

- To make best use of available knowledge in a community.
- To prevent that certain people feel left out and start obstructing.

Procedure and materials needed

- Determine the issue about which more information is to be collected.
- Develop a checklist carrying a few major questions only.
- Get together with the interviewee(s) and look for a quiet place.
- Explain why s/he or they were asked for an interview and make clear that answers may go beyond the questions asked and that many questions will be formulated in the course of the interview, depending on what pops up.
- Carry out the interview and make notes for future reference.
- Do not hesitate to skip questions that after all seem to be irrelevant at the moment of the interview.
- Wrap up the interview by thanking the interviewees and by asking whether they may be approached again when the need arises.

> ***hints***
> Questions arise from various sources: the responses of the interviewee(s), from observation, from the background and experience of the interviewer.
>
> One should also prevent to ask leading questions, pushing the respondent in a certain direction. Open questions are more useful and may provide extra information.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

Sometimes people may tend to give socially desirable answers and triangulation will be needed.

Three basic types of questions can be distinguished:
* *descriptive questions (formulated with what, when, where, by whom)*
* *analytical questions (formulated with why and how)*
* *evaluative questions*

Asking questions in a certain order may help getting a clear picture. However, in reality a pre-defined order may not work as a result of a discussion going into an unexpected direction.

Always as interviewees about their own behaviour and knowledge, not of others.

Interviews should usually not last more than 20 minutes, since experience has shown that interviewees tend to become less interested for various reasons. Should more questions have to be asked it may be better to come back a second time.

Sometimes individual interviews are more useful than interviews in small groups. There is more freedom of discussion and this may help reveal conflicts within a community.

Interviewees may also be knowledgeable people from outside the community.

TOOL 11 Seeing is also learning

Observation walk

Summary

One way to get to know a community is to take a walk, preferably with community members, to be curious and to pose questions about what you see. Showing an honest interest in people's living environment also helps to build rapport. Probing questions could concentrate on what, when, who, where, why and how related to what is being observed. Observation walks can have a very open character, but may also be guided by a number of key-indicators laid down in a checklist. These observation points may be listed as an outcome of discussions held previous to the walk. The list can be drawn up with the members of the PAD-team.

It has to be made sure that all sections of a community are visited and that the various community groups (men, women, children, rich and poor) are represented in the group going for the walk.

Objective

- To get a better understanding about the living environment of people, their water and sanitation practices, the problems occurring and the available resources.
- To create a starting point for a discussion to help people realise the resources they have available.
- To build rapport.

Procedure and materials needed

- Tell people you would like to get to know their village a bit better by taking a walk. Ask whom would like to accompany you and tell them that you would be happy if they would also indicate what is interesting to take a look at.
- Be curious and ask additional information about anything you observe using what, when, why, where, who and how-question. However, refrain from giving judgements about what you see.
- Allow time for small interviews along the road and for people not in the observation group, to ask questions about the observation walk and to voice their opinion.
- After the walk, take time to reflect on what was observed and what people consider good and/or bad.
- Document the information and discuss its further use.

> ***hints***
> Make sure that false expectations are not raised. People will probably show you anything they find interesting and needing improvement. Take note, but don't raise expectations in terms of promises you can not realise. You can of course say that you are willing to take a closer look at certain problems with them and help them find a solution.
> In a very heterogeneous community where you feel a dominant group claims all your attention, you may miss out on important information from less dominant groups. You may therefore decide to split up in smaller groups.
> Be sensitive to what people may not want to show, but do not "force" them in a direction they do not want to go. Wait till more trust and rapport have been built.
> Do not only use eyes for observation, but also ears, nose and taste.

Alternative uses

An observation walk is usually done at the start of a diagnosis process, since it gives an overall picture of a community and will provide ideas for further exploration. Throughout the diagnosis additional walk can be made for more in-depth information gathering, whereby key-persons may be invited.

Strong/weak points of the tool

A strong point is that an observation walk, if carried out by a (small) group of people, raises the curiosity of other members of the community. They will ask questions to the passers-by to find out what is going on.

An observation walk brings members face to face with the realities of the community water system and stimulates people to empathise with the problems of those living in other sections of the village.

Another strong point is that through an observation walk problems are situated in a context.

The village walk in Nyen and Mbemi in ***Cameroon,*** *in which village water committee members as well as officials from in- and outside the villages took part, was an excellent tool to get more acquainted with the community members, the different areas, and problems and potentialities in different zones of the two neighbouring villages. During the village walk in Nyen the group was directed through all the quarters of the village while noting the important features. While walking the members of the group discussed among themselves and occasionally stopped at a household to talk with the people of the compound. The walk gave a good overview of the water situation, and also the uses of the palm and raffia trees, which are the main sources of income for the villagers. The processing of the palm and raffia demand a sizeable amount of the communities' water. The three-hour walk in the villages which depended on the water scheme aroused much interest among the population and the officials and it facilitated a good understanding with the villagers.*

In Nkoundja in ***Kenya*** *the village walk was effective in making community members aware of the extent of neglect and abuse of their water resources. Lots of leaking valves and dysfunctional sections of the system were observed during the walk in two days. Even chemical cans were encountered around the catchment area. After initial hesitation during the participatory mapping members were able to process and present their findings in a pictorial form. This generated a lot of interest and many community members asked for more paper to copy their personal map of the village to keep in their homes. It exposed them to details and problems of members in their quaters.*

Knowing that they or their community is (going to be) observed, people may start behaving differently from normal. Be aware about this. Common sense, experience and triangulation will help to find out whether what can be seen is daily life reality or a polished reality.

TOOL 12 What do we find in the community

Community mapping

Summary

Map-making is a very powerful and effective tool to help people explain the community situation, to help identify problems and resources they have available. Having a group of people work on a map together stimulates discussion. Having men and women/ rich and poor make maps in separate groups will bring to the fore what these various groups consider to be important to put on the map and reflects their frame of reference. A shared analysis of the maps with those who produced them created consensus and provides an excellent opportunity for further discussion. Again, if support staff is curious and asks questions, a map can be explored to its fullest extent. If various maps have been made by different groups of people, a proper exchange about the results has to be ensured and possible discrepancies have to be incorporated in the discussion.

Although maps can be made using flipcharts and markers, a more exiting way of having them made is asking community members to use all kinds of material they can find in and around the house, like maize grain or maize flower, apricot nuts, leaves and branches. The use of local materials also increases the replicability of the use of this tool.

*In three of our communities in **Nepal** people had never drawn a map, they drew things they had never seen before. Mapping also brought out involvement of women. An added advantage in one community was that the mapping exercise brought out discrepancies with an earlier claim from the same community.*

Objective

- To gather information about a community.
- To help community members realise the resources they have available.
- To help community members realise that different groups in their community may have different perceptions.

Procedure and materials needed

- Tell people that you would like to get more insight in their community and that you would like to obtain this by asking them to draw a map of their village, indicating houses, roads, farm land, water sources and the like.
- Explain that you would like all to have an input in drawing the map. Maps may also be made in homogeneous sub-groups. Results are likely to differ and this offers a useful starting point for discussion.
- Explain the use of the materials, either local or brought along from the office.
- Give people ample time and opportunity to draw the map they want; prevent too much guiding from your side.
- Discuss the results by asking the group(s) to explain what they have drawn. In case of more drawings, highlight the similarities and the differences. Also ask why they think differences occur.
- Wind up by asking how the information from the map can be used in the near future.
- If the map was made on the ground, using local materials, transcribe it on a piece of paper for future reference.
- Leave the map in the community and make a copy for use in the office.

hints
One of the requirements of drawing a map is to create informality within the group and to give minimum instruction to the participants for drawing a map. This helps the participants to use their own sense how to draw a map for presenting information. Allowing them to locate their own house on the map usually increases people's interest in making the map a good one. In addition to the community map, household sketches can also be made. See tool no. 14.

*In **Kenya** the community mapping was used for different purposes. In one of the communities it was used to obtain commitment. At another instance it was used during an exchange visit (see tool no. 16). Members of the visiting community drew a map of the host community to show the unserved pockets in their midsts and to compare it with their own situation.*

Alternative uses

A mapping exercise can aslo be given a narrower focus than the general mapping exercise, for example by specipically mapping the water supply system. Given this focus it may be carried out by those knowledgeable about the water supply system. Having a map drawn usually provides more unambiguous information than a discussion. By having community members identify routes of the pipelines and location of taps, it can be used for identification of bottlenecks and as a planning tool for improvement of the water supply scheme or planning of a new one.

*Mapping is one of the techniques useful to encourage participation of villagers in producing and analyzing information. In **Pakistan** mapping of the water supply was used in the 4 selected villages to get the factual information and the number of mohallahs, communal buildings, length of pipe installed, number of taps, households, water reservoirs and water source. This helped to stimulate discussions among the participants on interesting issues related to water supply scheme and also contributed to increase the confidence of the villagers in drawing maps. Maps were drawn by groups of community leaders and key-informants. They draw maps on the ground (See annex) using sand, stones, pieces of paper, and wooden sticks. In some cases villagers used larger sheets of paper and color markers. The exercise of drawing a map and discussing interesting issues took about one and a half to two and a half hours. Using local material for mapping encourage illiterates to take active part in it. Difficulty of drawing a map in an open place on the ground during rain or heavy wind may be considered a weak point of the tool.*

*In **Cameroon** a community group carried out a transect on their own. This helped the group to get a better understanding of the entire water supply system even though they were not involved in its construction. Going along the pipeline the group noted all points where pipelines were exposed and where pipes were missing or damaged.*

Strong/weak points of the tool

Strong point of the tool is that is helps buidling self esteem and confidence and thus the interest and participation of members.

*In **Cameroon** mapping was used and it was found to be very helpful for the project team as as well as for the communities. The community members felt proud and satisfied that they could succeed in drawing a map of their village, and it captivated their interest. They appreciated this chance and the support and time the team gave them to experience the challenge.*

TOOL 13 Who do we find in the community

Wealth Ranking

Summary

Wealth ranking is used as a tool to get a view on the differences in standards of living as perceived by the community members or the PAD-team members themselves. This information is important when decisions have to be made about issues that involve a (financial) input from the various households.

Each society or even the various groups within this society have different criteria to define wealth. Whereas, as part of the exercise, a list of criteria can be drawn up on which consensus is achieved, more interesting information is obtained if individuals are asked to rank the households according to their own criteria. The criteria used should be discussed while taking a look at the outcome of the ranking.

Objective

- To gather information about the wealth of the various households in a community before decision-making is at stake.

Procedure and materials needed

- Ask the PAD-team to compile a list of all households in the community and have those households numbered in sequence.
- Have the households and their numbers put on cards.
- Ask a small group of community members to participate in the exercise. The group needs to consist of people living in the different areas of the community.
- Have this groups make drawings of a rich person, a poor person and of someone in between on A-4 size paper and ask them to describe the characteristics of each of the categories. Have the group first give a description of the rich person, then of the poor and then of the in-between.
- Continue till some 6 or 7 characteristics have been listed for each category. Probing will help to understand the rationale behind the characteristics mentioned.
- Ask the group to place the cards carrying the household names and numbers under the three categories.
- Record the characteristics as well as the results in a large sheet of paper for future reference.
- Explain how the results of the exercise can help in future, for example for focus group discussions about the ability to pay for maintenance or about people's mobility.

> **hints**
> Before using this tool the facilitator has to find out whether community members are likely to know each other well enough to do the ranking. In areas with a rapid turnover of people this may not be the case.
> Different groups in a community may have different criteria and it is advisable to have separate wealth rankings for each group. The key-informants for the ranking should be from these groups.
> The tool becomes difficult, if not impossible to manage when more than 100 households are involved.

One has to be cautious about the fact that information can easily be distorted by the interviewed person if s/he feels that her answers have a direct impact on possible project support.

Alternative uses

If it seems to be too sensitive to mention the names of the household that are rich or poor, the first two steps may be skipped. Preparatory to the exercise the PAD-team should then collect a pile of 100 small stones, seeds or berries. Under point 6 the group can then be asked to divide the number of stones, seeds or berries and divide them under the three categories, expressing their % estimate of the households being rich, poor or in-between.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 14 Household sketches

Summary

Most decisions, also those related to the use of water (re)sources are made at the household level. Thus, what families decide about management of water resources affects the collective decisions and options of the entire community, for example about how payments for water are done. Household sketches offer the opportunity to sit quietly with members of a certain household to discuss water management issues and related decisions. Combining semi-structured interviewing with household mapping helps triangulate information obtained through tools such as community mapping and wealth ranking. At the same time more detailed information can be obtained about choices people make with relation to water management, about problems that may occur and how people cope with these problems. The differences among households can be striking.

Objective

- To get an overview of water management issues and related decision making at the household level.
- To identify problems related to these water issues.

Procedure and materials needed

- Identify a sample of households, ensuring that the different groups within the community are represented.
- Ask the people around who is most knowledgeable about the use of water resources.
- Sit together with, propably, her and prepare a sketch of the compound following her instructions. She may also make the sketch herself.
- Provoke her instructions by asking questions about issues such as water storage and water use.
- Use the sketch to subsequently discuss them and for identification of problems and/or opportunities.

> **hints**
> Stimulate other members of the houshold to be around when the sketch is made. This may lead to lively discussions. However, make sure that the person asked to make the sketch remains in charge.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 15 Who decided?

Pocket voting[1]

Summary

In the context of PAD it is useful to get some insight in decision-making patterns, within the community as well as within households. This exercise describes patterns related to the implementation of the water supply system before PAD started, but it may be adapted to suit any other (development) activity in the community. Decision making patters may vary for different groups in a community. People may also have different perceptions about who took the decisions in a particular situation. Hence, the exercise should be done with different focus groups; men and women, rich and poor.

Objective

- To get insight in decision-making patterns and in the possibly different perceptions community groups may have.

Procedure and materials needed

- Ask the community group to mention people or groups of people that somehow involved in the implementation of the water supply project, whereby involvement means being informed, being asked for opinions or being allowed to make choices.
- Ask someone from the group or a local artist to make drawings of these (groups of) people on half A-4 size pieces of paper.
- Stretch a large piece of cloth between two poles or trees and pin these drawings in a horizontal row at the top of the cloth.
- Pin drawings of key opportunities and decision moments (prepared in advance) in a vertical row left of the horizontal row. Check with the group whether these key opportunities and decision moments suit their situation or whether some need to be deleted or added.
- Pin open enveloppes in each of the cells of the matrix that came into being by pinning the drawings.
- Provide each person with a number of voting slips which is equal to the number of people or groups of people depicted on the horizintal row.
- Take the group to the other side of the voting cloth and ask all group members one by one to go to the front side to cast their votes by indicating for each of the key opportunities and decision moments who in involved.
- As soon as everybody casted his/her vote, ask someone to count the slips in each of the enveloppes.
- Register the outcome on the outside of the enveloppe and discuss the voting results.
- Transcribe the results on a piece of paper for future reference.

[1] Adapted from: PLA initiative; community level assessment.

hints
People or groups of people to be depicted in the matrix could include a rich men's group, a rich women's group, a poor men's group, a poor women's group, mixed groups, a male local leader, a female local leader, a religious leader, staff of a support agency, government staff.
Types of key opportunities or decision moments may include selection of the community to be served with water supply, receiving information about choices to be made, being asked to provide information, selection of the source, choice of technology, selection of places for standposts or handpumps, decision on who will provide labour, decision on financial contributions. The type of technology involved determines what will actually be depicted in the drawing.
In Arabic countries the vertical row may have to be placed at the right hand side of the horizontal row.

Alternative uses

This type of voting exercises and be done for infomation gathering on all kind of subjects, such as which water sources are used for which purpose, where do different community groups go for defecation. Toolnumbers 25 and 26 describe similar exercises for ranking of priority problems.

Should it not be needed to have secret balloting the exercise may also be simplified by sticking the drawings on a piece of wall paper. Each person can then be asked to indicate their opinion by using a marker to tick mark on the paper.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 16 Are people satisfied?

The ladder[2]

Summary

Getting insight in how people value a level of service helps understand people's willingness to contribute or to get involved. If, for example the water supply system in a community does not meet the demand at all, people may not be willing to pay for its maintenance. If a support agency does not provide the service as agreed upon, people may loose confidence and not be willing to get involved with staff of the support agency. This tool provides a way to assess people's satisfaction with service levels provided. The local PAD-team may help prepare for the exercise, which can be done with a mixed group of community members, but also seperately with specific groups, such as rich and poor peolple.

Objective

- To assess the extent to which people are satisfied with the service level and to what extent they think the benefits outweigh the costs.

Procedure and materials needed

- Prepare a set of small drawings, depicting all kinds of potential benefits of a water supply system, such as small distance from house to standpost, clean children, easy watering of cattle. Also make sure to have some blank cards available.
- Ask the group of community members to take a look at the drawings and describe what they depict.
- Ask them to select those drawings depicting benefits they currently receive from the water supply system and to put the remaining cards aside. Should a particular benefit be felt that is not represented among the drawings, ask someone to make an additional card.
- Have the community members to rate the degree to which, as a group, they are getting a particular benefit. They can do this by giving each benefit a score of between one to five beans or seeds as marks.
- Have the drawings put in an order
- The community members to take a close look at their marking and to discuss for each of them whether which are worth their current contribution in terms of time, efforts, payment or whatever else they use to keep the service level as it is. If their are items for which they feel they contribute more than they are getting back in terms of benefits, seeds or beans can be removed. If there are benefits for which they are willing to even contribute more than they do now, they can add beans or seeds.
- Discuss the outcome of this activity.

> **hints**
> Check your conclusions through in-depth discussions, since an outsiders interpretetion may be completely wrong.

[2] Adpated from: PLA initiative; community level assessment

Alternative uses

This tool can also be used to assess to what extent the level of support of an agency meets the demands of the community members. The drawings may then depict issues such as technical support, the link to outside agencies and facilitator of meetings.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 17 Getting in-depth information and lots of good ideas

Focus Group discussion

Summary

General meetings can be useful for sharing information and arriving at consensus for issues pertaining to the entire community. However, often information shared during general community meetings is not sufficient for decision-making and more detailed information may be needed. Getting together a group of 6-12 people knowledgeable about the topic at stake or having a particular interest in it is useful in those cases. In depth knowledge can be shared and critical questions asked.

Objective

- To create conditions for in-depth sharing of knowledge and insights for better decision-making.

Procedure and materials needed

- Decide on the topic for discussion on the basis of previous activities.
- Identify, in a consultative process with ordinary community members, persons who are knowledgeable about the topic, or who could have a specific interest in it.
- Decide with this group on a time and a place for the meeting.
- Draw up a check list for the discussion.
- Once you meet make sure you adhere to general discussion techniques, like giving all a chance to speak, summarise what people say, refrain from judging answers etc.

> ***hints***
> You will have to make sure that those invited for the Focus Group Discussion feel at ease with each other and that they have a similar level of readiness or capacity to talk. Should this not be the case you may opt for having separate discussions with the more silent people, because being silent does not automatically mean not having anything to say. Some triangulation of information may be needed. This can be done by comparing what different focus groups have said about the topic or by observation. Second or third meetings with the same group of people can be useful to get a deeper understanding. Narrow down the focus of the discussion, dig deeper and cross-check by probing.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 18 Popular sayings

Summary

In all societies popular saying can be found that deal with water. It is fun to ask a group of people, representing a cross-section of the community, to come up with as many examples of such popular sayings as they can. Each of them can be discussed by exploring its meaning and its applicability for the situations people find themselves in. Doing this people will provide a lot of information on issues such as community behaviour, the performance of a water committee, water related problems, the importance of water for cultural of religious purposes.

Objective

- To get a view on the importance of water in a certain cultural setting.
- To discuss water related issues in an informal way.

Procedure and materials needed

- Explain the procedure of the exercise.
- Carry out a brainstorm and ask the group to mention as many popular sayings related to water and sanitation as possible. Jot them down on a piece of paper.
- Once no new examples pop up, write all the sayings on cards. Where possible divide the sayings in two sentences and write each sentence on a different card.
- Hand out the cards to the people participating in the exercise and ask them, if applicable, to look for the person having the matching sentence.
- Ask the couples to explain the meaning of the saying and ask it to indicate and explain whether what is expressed in the saying as applicable to their community.
- Make some notes during the presentations and summarise the most important points.
- Check the validity of the summary and discuss the importance of this information for the diagnosis.

hints

Examples of popular sayings from ***Guatemala***

- *When the river makes noise, it is sure to carry rocks.*
- *To drown in a glass of water.*
- *If you take the jar to the fountain too often, eventually it will break.*
- *It is welcome as the rain in May.*
- *If the water is not to be drunk, let it flow.*
- *Not all waters are safe for drinking.*
- *Everyone wants water for its own mill and drought for someone else's.*
- *A mill without water can not work.*
- *Do not say bad things about the fountain from which you have taken water.*

- *Like fish in water.*
- *No one takes a bath in the same water twice.*
- *It felt like a jar of cold water.*
- *Never say "I will not drink from this water".*
- *Water refreshes those who are hot and is like fire to those who are cold.*
- *Lord behold me from clear waters and I will protect myself from turbid waters.*

Alternative uses

At the beginning of (community) meetings some people may be asked to role play a saying. This will help enliven the meeting and at the same time stimulate discussion.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 19 People's memory, a hidden source

Oral histories

Summary

In many societies oral tradition is very strong and knowledge and information are often passed on orally rather than in writing. This implies that people, in particular the elder ones, often have a lot of knowledge and historical information in their heads, which can not be found elsewhere. This is useful knowledge and information and it is worthwile to take time to sit with people and to listen to what they want to share. Probing often helps people to dig deeper into their memories and to get more details. An added advantage of listening to what people have to say is that it increases their self-esteem because what they know is being valued.

It is useful to have a few community members or, if already in place, the local PAD-team, join the session, provided they are prepared to listen. They should not interfere in what the elder people say and may only ask probing questions.

Objective

- To help people build on local knowledge for sustainable solutions.
- To learn from the past and prevent mistakes made earlier.

Procedure and materials needed

- Ask and look around for names of elder people who have been living in the community for a long time and who might be willing to share their knowledge and ideas. Ensure names of men and women.
- Contact these people and explain why their knowledge and ideas are worthwhile to be listened at and documented. Ask them whether they are willing to spare some time and if so, agree on a time and place to meet.
- If available, read historical documents. This will help formulating questions for probing.
- Get together for the session, explain the purpose again and ask two people from the audience to make notes of what will be said. Ask the others to listen carefully and probe where felt useful.
- Once you have the impression that the invitees feel at ease, ask them to bring back to their memories the time when they were a child and to describe what the community looked like at that time.
- Have their story build upon these memories, listen and probe. After having described a general picture, they may be asked to describe the water supply situation the way it was in their childhood and how it changed over time.
- Ensure that notes are taken, that the invitees are not interrupted and carefully listened at.
- Thank the invitees for their valuable inputs and explain how they will help present day development activities.

hints
Do not start of questioning immediately. Take time to make the invitees feel at ease by asking about issues such as their health, their family, their crops.

Take into account that written documents give the official story. People may have different perceptions on what happened in the past. Do not go into a discussion about what is the right or wrong information!
It may be very useful to visualise main elements of the stories through simple drawings and putting them in a chronological order.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 20 Cross-cutting the community

Transect

Summary

A transect is a cross-section or straight cut through a community to capture the greatest diversity of land-use and eco-systems. Doing a transect is a way to ensure that spatial differences in the community are explored to the full and is often used in projects related to forestry and agriculture. In a project dealing with water supply system management it can help identify technically difficult areas, differences in service levels among community areas along the transect route. It may also provide information about levels of sanitation in the various parts of the community covered through the transect.

Objective

- To gather information about geographical conditions and levels of water supply service and sanitation.
- To refine the understanding of the areas and the interactions between the physical environment and human activities.
- To bring community members together in an assessment of problems and available resources in the community.

Procedure and materials needed

- Get together with the people involved in the transect, most probably the PAD-team members and some general community members.
- Explain the purpose of the exercise, also in relation to pervious exercises like community and system mapping.
- List categories of information that are considered useful if more is to be know about problems and potentials related to water resources in the community.
- Review the community map and identify the area for the transect and develop the route the group will take where it will see the largest variety in terms of landmarks, types of land use, water resources and water use.
- Choose a logical starting point for the transect, which might be the highest point in the study area or the community boundary and divide tasks related to note taking and drawing.
- Start walking, observe and take time for informal, open-ended interviews with people living in the area. Focus on critical issues like water availability and environmental sanitation. Allow people to add whatever they feel is important to mention at that very moment.
- At the end of the exercise, compile the field notes and use them to construct a transect chart.

> ***hints***
> A transact should go beyond the boundaries if a community, since water sources and other users of these water sources can very well be outside the community.
> Information obtained through the informal interviews should also be used during a later stage of the diagnosis to help identify problems and opportunities.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 21 Discovering social structures

Venn-diagramming

Summary

People often do not realise how many formal and informal institutions exist in and surrounding their community, the result either being that overlap exists, causing waste of resources or that ignorance causes under utilisation of existing resources. Visualisation of institutions, their importance and their inter-relation can be used as a starter to discuss roles and responsibilities of the various institutions. Venn diagrams use touching or overlapping circles of various sizes to indicate the degree of contact or overlap in terms of decision making . Each circle represents an individual or institution and the size of the circle indicates importance. Overlap occurs if one institution or individual asks or tells another to do something or if they have to cooperate in some way.

Objective

- To help community members get a view on the institutions in and surrounding their community, their relationships and their decision-making.
- To make people realise the resources they may access for improving their situation.

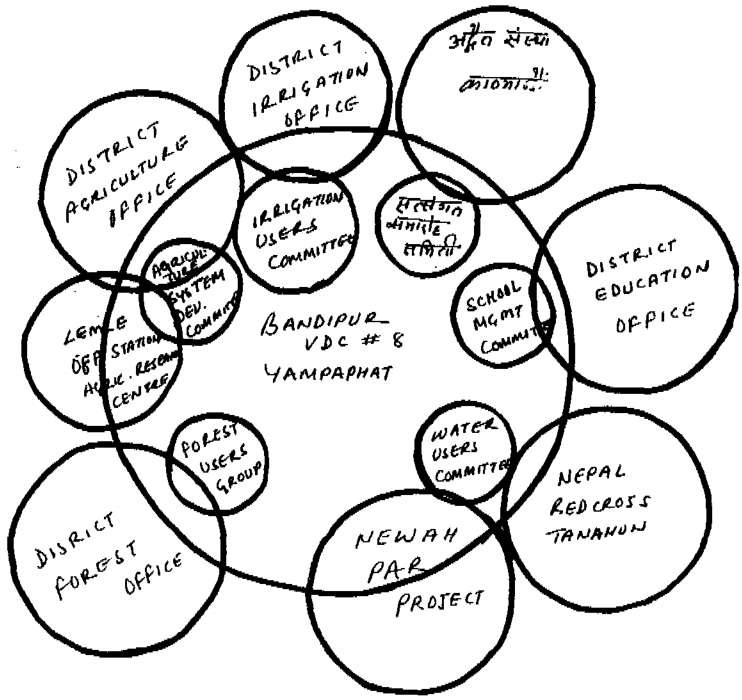
Procedure and materials needed

- Ask the group to mention any formal and informal groups/institutions in and around their community.
- Ask people to identify degree of contact overlap between them in terms of decision-making.
- Paper circles of different seizes and labelled with the name of the person or institution may be used.
- Ask people to arrange the circles in such a way the degree of contact overlap in terms of decision-making becomes clear. Overlap occurs if one institution asks or tells another to do something or if they have to cooperate in some way.
- Once everybody is satisfied about the way they are arranged these can be glued or stapled.
- The Venn diagram may also first be drawn in pencil and, using eraser (gum?) to adjust the size or arrangement of circles until the representation is accurate. When people are satisfied, the pencil drawing can be done again with a marker for easy reading.

> ***hints***
> It will be interesting to find out whether for example men and women indicate different institutions. In order to find out men and women may be asked to make separate Venn-diagrams and to have them react to each others'.
> In most communities one finds groups of people having less knowledge about and therefore less access to institutions within and around the community. It is particularly important to get these groups involved. However, the facilitator should be sensitive to power structures and handle those carefully.
> The exercise can be supplemented by making Strengths/Weaknesses analyses of the institutions identified. This may also reveal why some are known to all and other to only a limited number of people.

The arrangements of the circles is as follows:		
Separate circles	-	*no contact*
Touching circles	-	*information passes between the institutions*
Small overlap	-	*some cooperation in decision making*
Large overlap	-	*considerable cooperation in decision making.*

Discuss the outcome of the exercise by asking participants to explain their drawing and by asking what they learned from it for the future.



*Showing **the partners intervening in the water supply, the Venn-diagram helped the team in Cameroon** many time to get loose end together. It also reinforced the idea of self-reliance and participants were exited to realise the extend of power the could exercise in decisions and how much responsibility rests in their hands. At the closing session in Nkoundja most leaders were present, which allowed for conflict resolution between the two communities using the water system.*

*In a village in **Cameroon** the following information resulted from a Venn-diagram:*
The Water Maintenance Committee recommends rules and tariffs. Nevertheless, enforcement has to first get the approval of the Village Administration. The Village Development Association's main function is to co-ordinate all development activities within the community, including water supply projects, under the umbrella of the Village Administration. It solicits assistance from community members and support from external organisations. It manages its money allocated to the water project autonomously.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

*In one of the communities in **Nepal** a Venn-diagram was made to map out institutions present in and around the village. A remark made by one of the community members after the exercise: "We never realised that we have so many institutions around our village".*

TOOL 22 There is a best time for everything

Seasonal calendar

Summary

Seasonal calendars can be developed for any issue on which seasonal variations might have an impact, such as people's time spending on agricultural activities, accessibility of a community, the discharge of a water source, prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases. This type of information helps making realistic plans. It is no use planning a series of meetings during harvest season or planning construction activities during the rainy season.

Seasonal calendars are created on the basis of interviews and group discussions. Visualisation, by using sticks of various lengths or seeds helps getting a clear picture. Using the tool with men and women separately, also helps identify gender differences.

Objective

- To gain insight in people's time spending and in seasonal variation in weather conditions for realistic planning of PAD-activities.

Procedure and materials needed

- Explain the purpose of the exercise and ask the community members about the time cycle they would like to use. This could be from the time crops are planted till the time soils is prepared for the next planting season, or the government fiscal year.
- Draw the time cycle on the ground or on a piece of paper and ask people to indicate their way of sub-dividing it in shorter periods.
- After having visualised the cycle ask people to indicate how much work is being done during each of the time periods by placing the sticks of various lengths or by the number of seeds allocated to the periods. The facilitator may help by asking questions like "What period do you do most work in?, What is the next most labour-intensive period? What work do you do during these periods?". It should be tried to get as specific indications as possible.
- In case the cycle was drawn on the ground, transcribe it on a piece of paper for future reference. It could look as follows:
- Compare what is being indicated now to what has been said/observed during earlier visits.
- Discuss any discrepancies and allow people to make changes if reality seems to be different from what is on the ground or on paper.
- Discuss the outcome and relate it to the PAD-activities mentioned in an earlier meeting.
- Plan activities where appropriate.
- If the calendar has been made on the ground, transcribe it to paper for future reference.

> ***hints***
> A similar exercise can also be done when information is needed about people's financial capacity throughout the year, by asking people to visualise when large expenditures are done and income is earned. When planning experiments that require financial inputs this information has to be taken into account. Before starting it has to be clarified whether the exercise concerns the total household income, or the income of the men or the women. It has to be taken into account that women and men may not know each others earnings. When using this tool with groups of men and women or rich and poor separately, make sure time is allocated for a discussion about the differences.

Asking the right questions at the right moments will help you obtain additional information about issues such as productive activities and festivals.

Alternative uses

Information may also be visualised in a matrix, rather than a bar-chart. The information obtained through this tool can be expanded by asking people to also indicate other events having an impact on time-availability like festivities and seasonal migration. For this purpose a matrix can be drawn up (see Mayan calendar below).

The Maya calendar of Barrel Chiquito

Months **Activity**	**ene**	**feb**	**mar**	**abr**	**may**	**jun**	**jul**	**ago**	**sep**	**oct**	**nov**	**dic**
Coffee harvest by entire family												
Sowing coffee by men												
Sowing beans												
Fertilisers and cleaning coffee												
Migration of men to *fincas*												
Town festivity												
Pacaya and avocado harvest												

Strong/weak points of the tool

Tool 23 Who does what?

Activity profile

Summary

Information about certain activities, such water management at the household level, is best collected from those who are most involved in these activities. Making an activity profile with people from various groups in a community will provide this insight. These profiles can be made with people individually, but it may be more interesting to do it within small groups. Care has to be taken that the differences in time spending, indicated by the people participating in the exercise, are discussed. These differences should also appear in the visual overview to be made as part of the exercise. Information obtained through activity profiles also helps to make realistic plans in the context of PAD.

Objective

- To gather information that helps to ensure that the right persons are addressed when starting talks for identification of problems and potential solutions.
- To ensure that planning is done in such a way that key-persons can participate.

Procedure and materials needed

- Explain the purpose of the exercise.
- Form small, homogeneous groups and ask those groups to list down all kind of activities they do on an average day.
- Ask them to write or depict these activities on separate cards and to paste them on a piece of wallpaper or newsprint in the most logic order.
- Indicate behind each of the activities how often they are performed during the day.
- Ask the groups to present the result of their work and allow discussion about it.
- While discussing the results, ask whether there are major seasonal variations in activity patterns and note these down.
- Ask what the possible implications are of these activity patterns in view of further community support.

> ***hints***
> Given the often existing labour division between men and women, activity profiles are to be made with both sexes separately. Children also have different roles in society. They may have tasks in agricultural production and household chores, including water supply provision for the household and possibly in water supply management. Making activity profiles with them recognises their roles.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 24 Learning from the past

Historical Profile

Summary

Making up a historical profile helps understand what people consider to be major events and changes that took place in the past with regard to natural resources, population changes and changes in leadership. Understanding people's perception about the past also helps understanding people's current decisions; having lived through certain experiences people may or may not want to do similar things or they may want to take decisions differently from in the past. A discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of the various changes and the impact they had on the community is very important. The exercise also offers the opportunity to start a discussion about 'experimentation with various problem solving strategies' by taking a look at how people dealt with changing situations in the past. The historical profile may be limited to the water supply situation, but could also be more general. Probing could then provide extra insight in water related events.

Objective

- To get insight in the type of changes that took place over time and their impact in people's present behaviour.
- To get insight in what people consider important events in their environment.
- To discuss the meaning and usefulness of experimentation.

Procedure and materials needed

- Get together with a group of elder men and women. Younger people may be invited to attend the session.
- Ask why it may be important to take a look at the past.
- Ask the group to dig into their memory and to tell others about important events that took place.
- Draw a timeline on a piece of newsprint and note down in key words what is being indicated. One of the younger people present may be asked to take on this task in order to increase their involvement in the discussion.
- Discuss for each of the events whether it prompted people to change behaviour or adapt their usual way of doing. Also discuss whether the solutions they applied to deal with the changed situation brought about by the events, were the right ones or whether they had to try out different solutions. Stimulate the younger people to be curious and pose their questions also.
- Discuss the use of the historical profile for the present situation.

hints

Alternative uses

Making a historical profile can also be used as an icebreaker.

A historical profile can also be made with relation to a specific topic, for example the water supply system. This will provide in-depth information on issues such as how the water supply system came about and on the activities undertaken for capacity building.

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 25 Building a problem tree

Looking for cause-effect relations

Summary

Looking for problem solving strategies that provide sustainable solutions requires a thorough analysis of the problems identified and their inter-relations. Experience has shown that solving root-causes have wider and more sustainable impact on a problem situation. This tool helps a community to find its way to the root-causes in a systematic way. Through its visualisation it allows many people to participate and to give their input in the discussion. It offers scope for a discussion among people about their perceptions about how certain problems came into being and how they could be solved. The problem tree resulting from the exercise also helps people realise that managerial problems are often at the root of technical problems and that solving technical problems through technical activities only is a short term solution.

Objective

- To help people gain insight in the relation among problems in order to facilitate selection of the most appropriate problem to be solved.
- To create a forum for discussion about people's perceptions on causal relationships among problems.

Procedure and materials needed

- Explain the purpose of the exercise.
- Ask people to take a look at and think about all the diagnosis activities carried out in the context of PAD and to list problems related to the management of the water supply system that were identified over time.
- Have all problems written separately and clearly on cards and display them on a wall in such a way that they are visible for all people present.
- Put up a large sheet of wall paper, pick out one of the problems and place it with a piece of tape in the middle of the wall paper.
- Ask the participants to identify direct causes to the selected problem from among the list of problems and to indicate their inter relation.
- Then ask participants to identify direct effects of the selected problem and look for their inter relations also. Place them at the appropriate place on the wall paper.
- Repeat steps 5 and 6 for the remaining cards, whereby cross-linkages are also looked for.
- Visualise the inter relations further by drawing arrows between the cards.
- Discuss the outcome by taking a look at the nature of the problems at the bottom of the tree and of those higher up.

hints
Listing the problems may be done earlier, based on what was learned during previous visits. An artist can be asked to make drawings of the problems on cards. Using cards with pictures rather than cards with written text will enable illiterate people to also take part in the

exercise. Before starting the actual cause-effect analysis it as to be checked whether the pictures are understood in the same way by all participating.

People should be allowed to come up with additional problems if they feel that the list is incomplete.

The group participating in the exercise should not be bigger that around 10 people, otherwise managing the discussion will become difficult.
The exercise will at least take two hours. The more problems there are, the longer the time needed.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

The exercise increases the level of understanding and ownership of the problems.

*In **Nepal** it was realised that a strong point of this tool is that causes of (visible) problems become clear and that those causes have to be removed if sustainable solutions are to be found.*

The facilitator should be able to accept relationships indicated by the people, even though s/he does not agree. Probing will probably help understand people's logic.

TOOL 26 Analysing forces for action

SWOT-analysis

Summary

SWOT means Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. An analysis of those four elements in a given situation gives a good view on development prospects. It helps find out where to focus on to make best use of the strengths and opportunities and which weaknesses and threats to deal with. Information obtained through a number of tools describes earlier will help doing a SWOT-analysis.

Objective

- To help people analyse a situation in a systematic way in order for them to make a plan that is likely to bring about the desired results.

Procedure and materials needed

- Divide a piece of newsprint in 4 equally seized parts by drawing two straight lines.
- Write on top of each of the parts either of the elements Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities or Threats.
- Identify with community members the topic for which the analysis it to be made, for example the functioning of the water management committee, and write this in the middle of the newsprint, preferably using a different colour.
- Deal with each of the elements one by one by asking people to mention as many Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities or Threats as they can with relation to the topic.
- Discuss how the Weaknesses and Threats a can be avoided or dealt with by making use of the Strengths and the Opportunities.
- Make these ideas as concrete as possible and formulate them as activities.
- Find out what external assistance is needed to deal with the Weaknesses and Threats that are not yet covered and formulate activities to be undertaken to get this external assistance.

> ***hints***
> Once people have gone through a diagnosis, some of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities or Threats may start sounding familiar. This exercise may be a first steps towards planning for improvement of the situation.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 27 We can not do it all

Matrix ranking of preferences

Summary

Ranking is a tool that can be used to stimulate discussion whenever choices have to be made, be it about deciding who is most in need of assistance, about what type of water supply services is most preferred or about the way the operation and maintenance fund is to be raised.

Using Ranking as a means to make choices helps to make the decision making process transparent, to get clarity on existing perceptions about advantages and disadvantages of various options, to identify key-constraints and opportunities and to discuss selection criteria. The way a ranking exercise is done can range from very simple to more complex. This tool describes preference ranking, whereas the next tool describes pair-wise ranking.

Objective

- To stimulate discussion about various options to choose from.
- To help community members make a well-considered choice.

Procedure and materials needed

- Determine with community members what needs to be sorted out and to list the various options to be selected from.
- Have the group take a closer look at the various options and list the advantages and disadvantages as a basis for the development of criteria.
- Have the group develop a list of criteria they consider important when selecting an option.
- Ask the group to turn all negative criteria (for example, expensive or difficult to repair) into positive ones (so: cheap and easy to repair).
- Should the facilitator have additional criteria s/he may add them to the list if agreed upon by the group.
- Draw up a matrix by putting the options to be selected from on the horizontal and the selection criteria on the vertical axe. Ensure that the wording used is understandable by all.
- Ask people participating in the ranking exercise to score either individually or as a group, whereby, in relation to a certain criterion, the best option gets the highest score (which is the number of options to be selected from), the second best the second highest etc.

Questions facilitating the scoring
Should the number of options be 6, the following questions can be asked:

- *"Which is best?"*
- *"Which is second best?"*
- *"Which is worst?"*
- *"Which is second worst?"*
- *"Of the two remaining, which is better?"*

- Add up the scores and have the group draw a preliminary conclusion.
- Discuss the conclusion and find out whether the outcome is acceptable to all participants. Ensure that the decision making process as such is also reflected upon.
- Explain the use of this exercise in the context of the diagnosis.

*In **Cameroon** the following criteria were identified when prioritising solutions to improve management: creates awareness on the importance of potable water, is cheaper because it requires more labour than finance, can be learned from, easy to implement, duration to get the solution implemented.*

hints
This tools is among the most active and lively ones. However, it is rather complicated. Given its complexity it works best if each step is explained and completed before the next step is started.
Matrix ranking can be used if the number of options does not exceed 5 or 6.
The necessity of transforming negative criteria into positive ones may not always be understood. Learning from the exercise will be increased if people are asked to reflect on what would happen if they would not do this. The answer should indicate that scoring would not be consistent, since they would in some cases give a high score to a positive criterion and a high score to a negative criterion in others.
The discussion on the scoring criteria to be applied is extremely important. Differences of opinion, for example among rich and poor or among men and women, are a good opportunity discover that people may have different norms and values. Differences of opinion should therefore not be denied and they do not necessarily have to be solved. It may be more important that they are accepted. This allows them to be dealt with.
It is probably useful to give a certain weight to each of the criteria, since they are most likely not all equally important. In that case the outcome for each of the scores has to be multiplied by the weight-figure.
The conclusion from the exercise may be challenged by asking "if you could only choose one option, which one would you choose?" The answer to this question may be different from the outcome of the scoring exercise and this may then give rise to new criteria.
Making drawings of the options and the criteria to be put up in the matrix will stimulate the participation of illiterate people.
In case of a sensitive issue individual scoring can also be done anonymously. Instead of asking people to jot down their score they may drop their ballots in closed boxes or in envelopes, while others do not look.

Alternative uses

Should the group feel that not all criteria are equally important a weighing element may be brought in. This means that the most important criterion get the highest number, the second most important the second highest etc. The scores given are then to be multiplied by the number allocated to the criterion.

Strong/weak points of the tool

*In **Pakistan** the aim of a ranking exercise was to arrange problems in order. This helps to understand the problems and to solve them in a logical way. The requirement for this exercise is that the facilitator has to prepare flip-charts for ranking by listing problems, and adding pictures and illustrations beforehand. The facilitator should be flexible in a way that to allows the participants to use their own measurements and ways of counting. The amount of time needed is depends on the length of the list of problems for ranking and number of participants. It is not necessary for all participants to sit there during the exercise but it is important to be present when announcing results of the exercise. In Hasis during the ranking exercise a community meeting was going on in an orchard. The project team sat at a distance and pairs of villagers from the meeting came turn by turn to do the ranking and after ranking went back to join their meeting. This took about three hours and both the ranking and village meeting went on together side by side. The same technique was used in Hoto in the summer pasture of the village where people were busy cutting grass. Pairs of villagers were coming to do the ranking exercise and after that they were joining their families for cutting grass.*

Both preference and pair-wise ranking were evaluated for prioritisation of problems and concluded that the preference ranking is not suitable to prioritise many items at the same time suppose 15 to 20 problems. But through pair-wise ranking it is possible to prioritise 15 items at the same time.

TOOL 28 When options are too many

Pairwise ranking

Summary

Pairwise ranking can have the same purpose as preference ranking, but is often used in case the number of options to be selected from is too large for preference ranking.

Also for pairwise ranking it is extremely important that selection criteria are thoroughly discussed, since such a discussion will enhance mutual understanding of each others' behaviour.

Objective

- To collect information about what people do or about what they prefer.
- or
- To help people select the best option for their situation.

Procedure and materials needed

- Determine with community members what needs to be sorted out and to list the various options to be selected from.
- Have the group take a closer look at the various options and list the advantages and disadvantages as a basis for the development of criteria.
- Have the group develop a list of criteria they consider important when selecting an option.
- Ask the group to turn all negative criteria (for example, expensive or difficult to repair) into positive ones (so: cheap and easy to repair).
- Should the facilitator have additional criteria s/he may add them to the list if agreed upon by the group.
- Draw up a matrix with all the options on both the horizontal and the vertical axe, putting them in the same order.
- Ask people to score, as a group or individually, by comparing two different options at a time (one from the horizontal and one from the vertical axe), asking the question 'which one do you prefer' or 'which is a bigger problem', until all of the possible combinations have been gone through.
- Add the scores and have participants draw their conclusions.
- Discuss the conclusions and find out whether the outcome is acceptable to all.

> **hints**
> Same applies as mentioned under tool 23
> Throughout the exercise new criteria may come up and this requires a re-assessment of scores already made.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

TOOL 29 Neighbours may have good idea

Organising an exchange visit

Summary

An exchange visit is a powerful tool. It consists of facilitating small groups of community members to pay a visit to a community that has dealt with similar problems. An exchange visit provides community members the opportunity to take a structured look at issues important to them in another community and look at how the other community solved problems they also have. They can get a broader view on problems and possible ways to solve those problems through suggestions from members of the host community. At the same time they may give useful feed-back to members of the host community.

Objective

- To exchange and share ideas and experiences related to the management issues.
- To provide community members the opportunity to move away from their own scenarios and reflect on their problems as mirrored through others.

Procedure and materials needed

- Ask people of communities concerned to consider the idea of visiting their "counterparts" in another community. Communities may not necessarily be willing to visit or to be visited and one has to actively look for consent;
- Plan date, purpose and agenda and proceedings of the visits will all concerned communities;
- Allow people to select their own representatives for taking part in the exchange and facilitate the selection process. Ensure that people are selected according to clear criteria and that they are generally acceptable;
- Arrange for a pre-meeting with the people selected and agree on the focus of the visit, to prepare a checklist having points for discussion and observation and to agree on do's and don'ts;
- At the time of the visit, ensure that the host community gets time to describe the water project, the historical background, ESA interventions, management systems, constraints and successes;
- Ensure that visitors are given the chance to introduce themselves, ask questions, seek clarifications and comment on what they have seen;
- One may also change roles by asking visitors to outline the problems they saw in the host community and to ask them to propose solutions;
- Wind up by asking both the host and the visiting community what they learned from the other party and what type of advice they would like to give to or receive from each other.

hints
Depending on the seize of the community and the distance to be covered to reach there, the visit may take some 4 days.
Special arrangement may have to be made if women are to take part in the exchange visit, in particular with regard to staying overnight.

Alternative uses

Having participated in an exchange visit can become a criterion for becoming a committee member.

*In **Kenya** quite some effort went into organising exchange visits whereby members of the research communities visit each other. The objectives of these exchange visits were formulated as follows:*
to obtain a common understanding of and perspective on problems;

- *to expose management committee members to other management models used by other communities;*
- *to motivate the communities to undertake steps to improve their own management systems;*
- *to exchange views, experiences and discuss alternatives;*
- *tools used during the exchange visits include: village walk, group discussion, baraza (community meeting), observation and village mapping. Information thus obtained was analysed using the guiding questions.*

During the visits, village walks were conducted by the hosts which automatically created rapports as evidenced by women talking and discussing with their counterparts on general socio-economic aspects. Likewise, men discussed on general development. topography and opportunities and challenges of their water systems.

Strong/weak points of the tool

Being selected with consensus and having been given an agenda by the community, people participating in a visit get a burden and an obligation to account to others.

Discussions can be enhanced by drawing village maps, whereby both the host and the visiting community members draw their village. Water supply systems and sanitary issues can then be compared and discussed.

*In **Kenya** community members from Machakos expressed astonishment by the enormous amount of water available in Nyakerato. This made the people from Nyakerato realise they were indifferent about their poor management system.*

The tool is particularly useful in the process of problem identification and to some extent prioritisation. It can lead to enhanced confidence in the communities and increased enthusiasm towards addressing management problems. It also increases communication within and among communities.

*In **Nepal** women did not want to stay overnight after they discovered that there was not a single toilet in the community they visited.*

TOOL 30 The rope exercise

Understanding the need to join forces

Summary

People may easily have themselves frustrated by the idea that the situation they find themselves in can not be altered. The rope exercise is meant to have community members experience the frustration of people trying to fulfil their own objectives with their own limited means. It will also make participants realise that establishing a common objective and pooling resources by making best use of each others qualities, is a meaningful way to cope with development problems.

Objectives

- To have people experience what happens if we all have our personal goals to be achieved.
- To have people experience what is means no to be able to fully participate.
- To have people experience the power of establishing a common goal and pooling resources.

Procedure and materials needed

- Divide the group in 4 groups of 4 people, the remainder of the group will act as advisor or observer.
- Have one of the members of each of the small groups blind-folded, have one his/her hands tied and one his/her feet tied. The fourth person remains 'normal'.
- Have the groups each stand on the corner of a square, some 3 meters apart.
- Tie a rope loosely around this square.
- Put one of the following items in front of each of the groups, some two meters away: a bottle of water, some (takjes) representing a bunch of fire wood, a piece of fruit representing food and some coins representing money.
- Meanwhile explain out loud what it is that you put in front of them and that all groups are to get hold of the item in front of them.
- Assign each group an advisor from among the 'left-over' group.
- Have the groups start to fulfil their task.
- Play the game in three rounds of 5 minutes. During the first round talking is not allowed. During the second round members of the small groups may discuss about the strategy to follow. During the third and last round the advisor may be consulted.
- Once all groups have their item, stop the game, remove the rope and get everybody 'back to normal'.
- Ask the people that were blind-folded or had their hands or feet tied, how they felt.
- Ask the others how they felt during the game.
- Finally ask the advisors and observers how what they observed.
- Discuss what can be learned from this game by asking the people to draw their conclusions.

hints
Support staff should really try to prevent to become moralistic by telling the group what they should or should not do. It is up to the group to decide what it will learn from it and how they will have this influence their daily life.

Alternative uses

Strong/weak points of the tool

*During a CRT-workshop in **Pakistan** the following lessons learned were listed:*

- *All groups in a community should decide collectively about the most urgent needs to be addressed.*
- *A situation of pulling and pushing is a waste of energy. If such a situation exists only powerful people will get benefits, whereas the poor will not get anything.*
- *If a few people will get benefits through the use of force, feelings of revenge will be created among the less powerful community members.*
- *Those people getting benefits through force will feel proud, which is not good for community development.*
- *During the game viewers were laughing about the situation within the rope. If a similar situation occurs in Pakora, surrounding villages will laugh about the people of Pakora.*
- *If the groups within the rope were aware about the prioritisation of needs, the whole situation of pushing and pulling, wasting a lot of energy, would not have happened.*

Bibliography

Bolt, E. ed. (1994) *Together for Water and Sanitation: Tools to apply a gender approach, the Asian experience.* IRC, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Chambers, R. (1983) *Rural Development: Putting the last first.* Longmans, London, UK

Community Water Supply and Sanitation Conference, World Bank/UNDP/World Bank Water and Sanitation Group, May 1998.

IRC (1999) *Training of Trainers* manual. IRC, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Lammerink, M.P. (1993) *Participatory Action Research with Small Rice Farmers, Brickmakers and Fisher Folk: Experiences from Latin America and the Netherlands.* Gradus Hendrik Foundation, The Hague, The Netherlands

Lammerink, M.P. and Wolffers, I. (1994) *Some Selected Examples of Participatory Research.* DGIS, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Little and de Geer (1992) *Basic conversation method.* Ede, The Netherlands (unpublished document)

Schonhuth, M. and Kievelitz, U. (1994) *Participatory Learning Approaches: An introductory guide.* GTZ, Frankfurt a/Main, Germany.

Srinivasan, L. (1990) *Tools for Community Participation. A Manual for training trainers in participatory techniques.* UNDP/PROWESS, New York, USA.