Empowering Communities

PARTICIPATORY TECHNIQUES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 1: TRAINER'S MANUAL

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List of Acronyms

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

Definitions of Terms

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Course Overview

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

PLA is a process enabling community members to...

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Course Objectives

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

✔Understand the history and foundations of participatory learning and action (PLA) approaches

✔Identify and implement the different steps of the participatory programme development (PPD) process

✔Practice the behaviours and attitudes which are necessary for the successful implementation of PLA

✔Facilitate the use of various PLA techniques

Session Outline

Following is a suggested outline of sessions to be conducted during the course in addition to the field practise. Two weeks is the recommended length for the course, to allow sufficient time for field practise. The actual length can be adjusted according to the participants' needs and the schedule of the sponsoring agency. The amount of time allotted for each session and the days on which the sessions take place have been left unspecified to allow for maximum flexibility.

SESSION 1: Course Overview and Icebreaker
SESSION 2: Introduction to Participatory Programme Development
SESSION 3: The Participatory Programme Development Process
SESSION 4: Behaviour and Attitudes of the PLA Facilitator
SESSION 5: Encouraging Communication
SESSION 6: Team Building
SESSION 7: PLA Preparation
SESSION 8: Introduction to PLA Tools and Semi-Structured Interviews
SESSION 9: Mapping
SESSION 10: Transect Walks and Observation
SESSION 11: Time Lines and Sequencing
SESSION 12: Diagramming
SESSION 13: Card Sorting
SESSION 14: Ranking, Scoring, and Matrices
SESSION 15: Community Action Plan Creation and Follow-Up
SESSION 16: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
SESSION 17: Field Work Preparation
SESSION 18: Presentations and Closure

Preparing and Conducting the Course

A. Number of Participants

This training is ideally designed for approximately 18-25 participants, who are divided into participatory learning and action (PLA) teams of five to six members each for the field work. It is essential to keep the number of participants in each team small, so that each team member has the opportunity to participate fully.

B. Training Needs Assessment

It is important for the trainers to contact each participant before the course in order to conduct a thorough needs assessment. The initial contact can be made by mailing or faxing a questionnaire, and then following up with a phone call if possible. The needs assessment should cover the following:

✔*Description of current job duties, and whether participant is currently using PLA*
✔*Degree of past experience with PLA, if any*
✔*Any particular concepts or techniques that the participant would like to learn*
✔*Languages spoken (for the field practise)*

C. Training Site

The “classroom” training site should be as close as possible to the community where the field work will be conducted. At the training site, there should be an outdoor area where participants can practise PLA techniques on the ground.

D. Identifying Field Sites

This course is designed so that participants have three to five days to either conduct or observe PLA in the field, depending on the schedules of the sponsoring agency and the community. This will not be enough time for the participants to complete the whole participatory programme development process, which can take many months or even years. The sponsoring agency will be responsible for continuing to work with the community after the training is completed.

To find field sites for the PLA workshop, the trainers should identify existing community development agencies (referred to in this manual as "sponsoring agencies") that are currently conducting PLA activities or would like to use PLA in the future. Although these agencies would ideally be working in the health field, it is also possible to collaborate with agencies working in other related sectors (e.g., water and sanitation, gender, education). These agencies can provide a venue for the field experience, by letting the participants either conduct or observe PLA exercises. If they agree to host the course participants, the agencies must agree to continue the PLA process after the training is over.

PLA workshops have traditionally been conducted in rural areas, but they can also be conducted in urban and peri-urban areas, especially in neighbourhoods that have some sense of community, such as ethnic enclaves (see discussion of adaptation for urban areas at the end of this section). The facilitators should identify three small villages or neighbourhoods or one large village or neighbourhood where all three participant sub-groups can work simultaneously without overlapping in their efforts.

Once the sponsoring agency has identified a community to host the participants, the trainers need to visit the community with a representative of the sponsoring agency. During this visit, they need to meet with community leaders in order to explain the purpose of the PLA workshop and to ask for their support. The leaders can identify two or three community members to serve as a link between the participants and the rest of the community. These **community link persons** become part of the PLA team and help to facilitate PLA activities. They also work with community leaders to recruit a "core group" of community members who are willing to work with the participants throughout the entire PLA field experience.

It is essential that the trainers clearly explain to the community that the PLA work will be taking place in the context of a training and that the participants will not be able to provide any financial resources or technical assistance. The emphasis will be placed on encouraging the community to help itself. If the community requests further financial or technical assistance after it develops a community action plan, the sponsoring agency will assume responsibility for conducting the follow-up.

During this initial visit to the community, the trainers need to inquire about the work schedules of community members and when would be the most convenient meeting times for different groups (e.g., men, women, youth). It is important that these preferences be respected fully so that the participants impose on the community as little as possible.

E. *Preparing for Field work*

Upon arriving in the community to prepare for the field work, the trainers should ask the community to select one or two local artists to work with the group (young people often serve well in this capacity). During the preparation phase and also during the PLA workshop, the artist can produce various visual materials necessary for the PLA exercises.

If the participants conduct the PLA themselves (as opposed to observing), they divide themselves into teams of five to six people each (this self-selection of teams is done in Session 6). These teams will work in different villages or neighbourhoods, so that their efforts do not overlap. If the participants are simply observing PLA activities, the trainers will have to work with the sponsoring agency to determine how to divide the participants so that they are as unobtrusive to the community as possible.

F. *Daily Debriefings*

At the end of every day, the course trainers, participants, and community link persons spend several hours debriefing on the field experience. Each team discusses the day's activities, summarizes the information generated by community members, decides what information is still lacking, and formulates a strategy for the following day.

The information which has been collected needs to be summarized in an orderly fashion. One way is for each team to fill out an **activity report form** for each activity that they have conducted during the day. The forms, which can be prepared ahead of time by the trainers, summarize key information from each PLA activity and ensure that each team is recording the same types of information. An example of an activity report form, which trainers can adapt to their needs, appears in the Annex.

In addition to filling out summary forms for each activity, it is helpful for the participants to fill in a **daily summary matrix** of all the activities conducted during the day. This matrix can be drawn on flip chart paper, so that it is big enough to be read when posted on the wall. By the end of the field experience, the accumulated matrices provide participants with a clear, visual picture of all that they have accomplished. An example of a daily summary matrix appears in the Annex.

G. Training Evaluation

Three components are built into the training evaluation:

1) **Introductory case study:** During Session 1, participants are asked to read a brief case study and to answer questions in order to assess their knowledge of participatory programme development. They are given the case study back at the end of the course to make any changes based on what they have learned.

2) **Daily evaluation:** Time should be scheduled at the end of every day for the evaluation of the day's activities. ***This evaluation time can be part of the daily debriefings, when participants gather to summarize the information that was collected and strategize for the following day.*** Allotting this time enables everyone in the group to comment on the training and allows the trainers to modify the sessions according to the participants' needs and learning speeds. Trainers should let participants know that **it is very possible, and even desirable, that the agenda of the workshop will change over time**. What has been anticipated at the outset is not always what occurs, so it is necessary to be flexible throughout the workshop.

   The daily evaluation can be done orally or by using a written questionnaire, which can be filled out anonymously. If done orally, the trainers must be careful not to become defensive if the participants make criticisms, although they can ask questions if comments are unclear. Typical questions for an evaluation include:

   ➙What did you learn today that is most relevant to your work?
   ➙What did you like most, and why?
   ➙What should we do differently next time (or tomorrow)?
   ➙What do you think the group did not like?
   ➙What other comments do you have?

   If the <u>daily</u> evaluation is in a written form, the trainers can ask for two volunteer participants to help them read through the evaluations every day. These volunteers can present a summary of the results the following morning.

3) Finally, participants are asked to complete a **final evaluation**, in which they are asked their opinion of the course content and whether the course has accomplished its stated objectives. A sample final evaluation form appears in the Annex.

H. *Final Presentations*

At the end of the course, each of the three PLA teams is asked to give a presentation of its field experience. The presentations can be brief and informal, and the exact format can be decided by the trainers. The presentations should, at a minimum, include the following elements:

➜Summary of activities conducted by the team
➜Summary of findings
➜Reflections on what they found most challenging about the field work
➜Reflections on what they enjoyed most about the field work
➜What they would do differently during their next field experience

I. *Suggested Materials and Equipment*

The following materials and equipment are required for the activities suggested in the training sessions:

✔Participant handbooks (see below)
✔Flip charts
✔Markers
✔Tape
✔Paper and pens or pencils
✔Index cards or VIPP cards
✔VCR and monitor
✔Small rocks, seeds or beans
✔Training videos (see next page)
✔Chalk (different colours, if possible)

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOKS: The participant handbooks contain key points for each of the sessions so that participants do not have to take notes. They also contain case studies, a list of PLA resources and a section for taking notes during their field experience.

VIDEOS: Following is a list of suggested videos for use in this course. The trainers can substitute other videos as they feel appropriate.

- *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender and Environment* (International Institute for Environment and Development -- IIED)
- *Putting the Last First* (Institute for Development Studies -- IDS)
- *Who Holds the Stick? PRA Attitudes and Behaviour* (IDS)
- *Groundwork: Participatory Research in Girls' Education* (The World Bank, Economic Development Institute – EDI)
- *SAGA: Participation in Practise* (Kenya Rural Domestic Water Supply and Sanitation Programme -- RDWSSP)

J. *How to use this manual*

This session is designed to expose participants to the different elements of Participatory Programme Development (PPD) in the same order in which the elements would be carried out in a real community. The manual moves from theory into the practice of specific PLA techniques in the training centre, and then into a discussion of how projects would be implemented. The field practice provides them with a chance to use their new skills in the context of a real community development project.

Each session is broken down into four components:

- Objectives
- Materials needed
- Activities
- Trainer's notes

At the beginning of the Trainer's Notes, the CONTEXT of each session is presented. It is very important to give this context to the participants so that they understand how the sessions and skills that they are learning fit together.

Urban Adaptations of PLA

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

Different Definition of "Community"

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

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

Scheduling

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

"Ground Work"

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

SESSION 1
Course Overview and Icebreaker

Objectives

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

✔*...appreciate the variety of work done by their fellow participants*

✔*...have a better understanding of the way they currently develop programmes*

✔*...understand the course objectives and agenda*

✔*...reconcile their personal expectations with the course objectives*

Materials ✎

Participant handbooks
Agenda
Introductory case studies
Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Welcome, Introduction and Icebreaker

Welcome participants to the course, introduce the trainers, and give a brief overview of participatory programme development (PPD). For an icebreaker, allow the participants five minutes to find an object in the training room that symbolizes their work in some way (encourage them to be creative). Ask each participant to introduce themselves and explain the symbol that they chose. Briefly summarize some of the similarities in the symbols that emerged.

#2 Introductory Case Study

Distribute the introductory case study to participants. Ask them to write their birth date, which will be used instead of their name to identify them on the form, so they can remain anonymous. Explain that they will be given their answers back at the end of the course.

#3 Review of Workshop Agenda, Objectives, and Logistics

Distribute participant handbooks and ask the participants to turn to the page listing the course objectives. Ask for a volunteer to read the objectives out loud, and encourage discussion to see if participants have other objectives to add. Distribute the workshop agenda and discuss any logistical issues.

#4 Participant Expectations and Group Norms

Ask participants to divide into groups of three people. Ask them to discuss within their groups their expectations for the workshop. Reunite the groups and ask for a sample of responses. Address any differences between the participants' expectations and the course objectives. Also ask participants to develop a list of group norms and post the norms in a visible place.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Welcome, Introduction and Icebreaker

Welcome and Introduction

The first part of this session is very important because it sets the tone for the entire course. Be sure to emphasize the participatory nature of the course, and reassure participants that they are going to have fun and learn a lot through their experiences.

Briefly introduce Participatory Program Development (PPD) as the process of working together with communities to help them identify their own problems, come up with solutions, develop action plans and implement them. Explain that the participants will be gaining new participatory skills through “hands-on” classroom practice and field practice. They will also learn about the theory and history of PPD and Participatory Learning and Action. While course focuses mainly on PPD in the context of health programmes, it can be applied to any sector.

Icebreaker

The goal of this exercise is to get participants to think creatively about the kind of work that they do and the skills that they are required to use on a daily basis. Participants can find a wide variety of objects to represent their work, either literally or figuratively. Participants may even choose an object which is outside of the training room but cannot physically be brought inside (e.g., a water spigot). Encourage them to be creative!

#2 Introductory Case Study

A sample of an introductory case study appears in the Annex, and it can be adapted according to the trainer's needs. This case study is designed to assess participants' knowledge of participatory learning & action principles and techniques. To remain anonymous, participants can use their birth date instead of their names to identify their forms.

Explain to the participants that the case study is not a test, but simply an exercise to introduce them to the concepts that they will learn in the course. Explain that their responses will be redistributed to them at the end of the course, and that they will be given the opportunity to change their answers. These changes will help the trainers to evaluate the participants' grasp of the course content.

#3 Review of Workshop Agenda, Objectives, and Logistics

<u>Agenda</u>

There is no fixed agenda for this training course, because the exact agenda needs to be created by the trainers after arranging the field experience with the sponsoring agency. The trainers will also have to decide how much time to spend on each session after reviewing the results of their training needs assessment. The amount of experience that participants have had with PLA will determine how much time needs to be devoted to each topic.

<u>Workshop Objectives</u>

Before the session, clearly write the workshop objectives on flip chart paper. If possible, leave the objectives posted for the entire course. Explain to the participants that you, the trainer, are accountable to them for making sure that all of the objectives are accomplished, and invite them to suggest additional objectives.

<u>Logistics</u>

It is hard for participants to concentrate on the content of a training course if they are worried about logistical matters. Therefore, it is beneficial to address these issues right away. Topics to cover include per diems, meals, accommodations, changing money (for international participants), where to buy food and other necessities, transportation around the city, where to obtain medical help and how to confirm plane tickets, among other topics.

#4 Participant Expectations and Group Norms

Participant Expectations

If a thorough needs assessment has been conducted prior to the training, the participants' expectations should not differ drastically from the course objectives. Although the trainers can make *minor* adjustments to the schedule and activities to meet the participants' needs, no *major* changes should need to be made at this point. The trainers should make sure that they correct any misperceptions about the course before proceeding.

Group Norms

Ask participants to create a list of norms that they would like everyone to follow in order to make the training as enjoyable and productive as possible. It is important that these norms come from the participants, so that they will be willing to adhere to them. Examples include not smoking in the classroom, speaking one at a time, being on time for the sessions and respecting others' opinions.

SESSION 2
Introduction to Participatory Programme Development

Objectives
By the end of this session, participants will...

✔*...Reach a consensus on the meaning of "participation"*

✔*...Be able to define Participatory Programme Development (PPD) and the word "community"*

✔*...Understand the basic concepts of PPD*

✔*...Understand the history and foundations of participatory learning and action*

Materials ✎
Introductory video
Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Visualizing Participation
Ask participants to divide into groups of three to five people. Invite each group to draw a picture of their idea of "participation" using flip chart paper and markers. When all the groups have finished, have each group present its picture and decide where their idea of participation would fall on the *participatory continuum*.

#2 Participatory Programme Development: Definition and Key Players
Ask participants to brainstorm about the definition of participatory programme development (PPD), based on what they learned in the first activity. Write suggestions on a flip chart and also refer participants to the definition in their handbooks. Have participants reach a consensus on a definition that they would like to use during this course.

Explain the difference between focussed and unfocussed PPD, and ask participants to brainstorm about the advantages and disadvantages of each. Next, tell participants that there are two key players in PPD: the community and the PLA Team. Ask participants to brainstorm about the definition of "community" and help them to reach a consensus. Describe the composition of the PLA Team, and ask participants if there is anyone whom they would add or remove from the team.

#3 Introductory Video
Show participants a brief video to provide an introduction to the basic concepts of PPD. (e.g., The beginning section of *Who Holds the Stick? PRA Attitudes and Behaviour*)

#4 History and Foundations of Participatory Learning and Action

Briefly present the history and foundations of participatory learning and action (PLA) and draw “The Foundations of PLA” (triangle) on a flip chart. Ask participants to divide into 3 groups, and assign one foundation to each group. Based on what they saw in the video, have each group brainstorm about what goes into each foundation. Bring the groups back together to share their results.

TRAINER’S NOTES

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

#1 Visualizing Participation

Drawing their idea of participation encourages participants to be creative and to reflect on what “participation” really means to them. It is important that the exercise be used to develop a consensus on the definition of participation to be used during the course. It may be helpful to leave the participants’ drawings posted for the duration of the course as a reminder that they should try to encourage the full participation of all community members during the PLA process.

The Participatory Continuum[1]

Participation can take many forms within development programmes, and some types of participation are more “participatory” than others. A participatory continuum is shown on the following page, laying out different forms of participation, from the least

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

participatory to the most participatory. Have participants refer to the continuum in their handbooks and decide which type of participation best matches their drawing.

When participants are finished, tell them that the goal of PPD is to enable communities to engage in *collective action*, which is the most participatory form of participation.

THE PARTICIPATORY CONTINUUM

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

#2 Participatory Programme Development: Definition and Key Players

Definition of Participatory Programme Development

Participatory programme development (PPD) is the process of working in partnership with communities to develop feasible, desirable, and sustainable programmes.

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

Focussed or Unfocussed PPD?

PPD can be either focussed on a specific sector or issue, or it can be "open", meaning that the community is free to implement projects addressing any issue that it chooses. Many sponsoring agencies (SAs) are not able to do open PPD, however, because they receive money from donors to do work on specific issues. Although this situation may not be ideal, because it limits the community's freedom to decide which issues to address, it is important to recognize this reality and work within it.

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

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

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

Definition of “Community”

Before learning the principles and techniques of PPD, it is essential for the participants and trainers to have a common definition of the word “community”, since the community participation is the heart of PPD. *Webster’s II New Riverside Dictionary* gives two definitions for the word “community”:

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

and

A class or group with common interests

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

Facilitating PLA with these “non-traditional” types of communities can pose special challenges, because the people may come together in one place only for a few hours each day (or even less frequently). Therefore, the scheduling of PLA activities may be more complex in urban areas than in rural areas. *Refer to the introduction of this training manual for other issues that need to be considered when adapting PLA to urban areas.*

The PLA Team

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

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

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

Each team member has a well-defined role[2]. One person takes on the role of team leader, and the others act as both facilitators and note takers. The PLA team often divides up into pairs or groups of three in order to work with different community groups simultaneously.

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

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

- The **note takers/recorders** are responsible for observing and recording the PLA activities. This includes both written notes and hand-drawn copies of maps and diagrams that community members create on the ground. In addition to writing down key remarks that are made during activities, the note taker also records who is talking and describes the group dynamics. The note taker should be observant, a good listener and familiar with the local language. The note taker should also be able to summarize information and present it in a clear, concise format.

- The **facilitators** conduct the PLA activities with the community members. They ensure that all members of the community are given the chance to participate, and they keep the different groups on task. They must have excellent interpersonal skills and a good sense of humour, and be flexible and patient.

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

- Approximately two **community link persons** are identified by the PLA team to assist with the PLA workshop. These link persons serve as liaisons between the community and the team. In addition to helping with logistical arrangements, they

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[2] Schubert et al. 1994b. p. 19-24.

help to facilitate the PLA activities. They should be people who are respected, dynamic and willing to learn from their fellow community members. They should also have schedules permitting them to attend the entire PLA workshop.

#3 Introductory Video

Any video that gives a brief overview of the PPD process can be shown. One example is the beginning section (first 8 minutes) of *Who Holds the Stick? PRA Attitudes & Behaviour*.

#4 History and Foundations of Participatory Learning and Action

History of PLA

Participatory learning and action (PLA) is based on the assumption that community members are the best "experts" about their own health and social situations. The role of PLA facilitators is to help community members tap their own knowledge and resources and use them effectively. According to Robert Chambers of the Institute of Development Studies, PLA has its roots in a variety of participatory methodology approaches[3]:

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

The principal pioneers of these techniques include...

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

The PLA process and techniques taught in this course are most heavily based on **rapid rural appraisal (RRA)** and **participatory rural appraisal (PRA)**. RRA emerged in the late 1970s in the agriculture and environment sectors as a reaction against "rural development tourism"--whereby urban-based development officials were taken on specially arranged tours of rural

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[3] Chambers, R. 1992. p. 2.

areas and given a very biased view of "successful" development projects. RRA was used to gather information more quickly and with a higher level of community involvement than was the case in large, quantitative surveys. RRA was a largely *extractive* process, however. After the information was collected, it was taken out of the community and brought back to the development agencies to be analysed by "experts."

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

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

The term participatory rural appraisal was coined in Kenya when the National Environment Secretariat and Clark University (Massachusetts, USA) worked with a community in Machakos District to develop a village resource management plan. At the same time, several NGOs in India were beginning to conduct PRA. Since the early 1980s, the use of PRA has extended to countries in all regions of the world, mainly through the work of NGOs[4]. Although it was originally used in rural villages, PRA has begun to be conducted in urban areas as well.

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

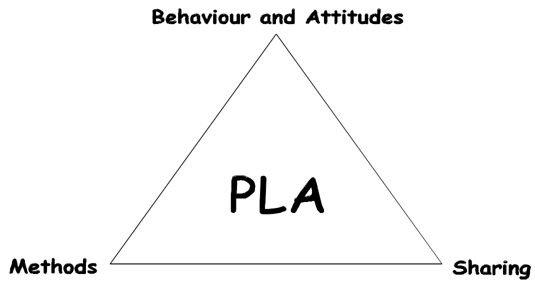
Although originally conceived for use in agriculture, environment and natural resources sectors, the use of PLA has expanded into other sectors, including health, gender, education, and violence prevention.

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

The Foundations of Participatory Learning & Action

[4] Chambers, R. 1992. p. 11.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the community level, free sharing of information ensures that communities truly own the knowledge that is generated and that the outside facilitators gain a complete picture of the communities. On a global level, NGOs and other organisations working with PLA learn from each other's successes and challenges by sharing their experiences[5].

[5] Chambers, R. 1994. p. 3.

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- Sorting and ranking
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[5] Chambers, R. 1994. p. 3.

SESSION 3
The Participatory Programme Development Process (PPD)

Objectives

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

✔*...Be able to describe the order and content of the different PPD stages*

✔*...Apply their knowledge of the PPD stages to a case study*

✔*...Understand the PPD process in the context of an actual project*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers
Index or VIPP cards
PPD process video

ACTIVITIES

#1 Ordering the PPD Process

Ask participants to divide into groups of three to four people. Distribute a set of index or VIPP cards with the different stages of the PPD process to each group. Ask the groups to put the cards in the order they think the PPD process would be conducted, from start to finish. Have each group tape its cards to a piece of flip chart paper and present the results. Have the group as a whole come to a consensus on the order of the PPD stages.

#2 Description of the PPD Stages

Give each group one or two cards with different PPD stages and ask members of the groups to read about their assigned stages in their handbooks. Have each group give a brief presentation of what is involved in its stage(s).

#3 Case Study: *Natural Resources Management in Kenya*

Ask participants to remain in the same small groups and to refer to the case study in their handbooks. Have the groups read the case study and discuss which PPD stages were illustrated and which ones were missing.

#4 PPD Process Video

Show a video, such as *SAGA: Participation in Practice* or *Groundwork: Participatory Research in Girls' Education*, to illustrate the different stages of the PPD process.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Ordering the PPD Process

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

The PPD process usually consists of the following stages:

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

Write each of these steps on index cards (as many sets as there are small groups of participants). Ask the groups to put the steps in order and post them on the wall or flip charts. Help the group to reach a consensus on the order of the stages.

#2 Description of the PPD Stages

Have participants refer to this section in their handbooks. Ask them to identify any PPD stages that were not mentioned in the case study. Following is a detailed description of the different stages[6]:

1. Community selection and logistical preparations

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

   What kind of community would benefit the most from a PLA workshop? PLA is likely to be successful in communities with the following characteristics[7]:

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

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

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[6] Adapted from: 1) Schubert et al. 1994a. p. 22, and 2) Kabutha et al. 1993. p. 179-84.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

During this data collection phase, the community members may be divided in order to allow the full participation of everyone (e.g., young women, elderly women, young men, village leaders, etc.).

The team generally spends half the day working with the community and the other half working together to organize the information collected and plan for the next day.

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

6. The PLA workshop: ranking of problems and solutions
The PLA presents the different community groups with a summary of the main problems and the solutions that were identified. The PLA team then facilitates sorting and ranking exercises with community members to help them prioritize the problems. Once the most important problems have been identified, the sorting and ranking process is repeated for the possible solutions. The PLA team helps the community members reach a consensus about which solutions to implement and which indicators to use to measure the progress of each solution.

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

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

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

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

9. Workshop follow-up and implementation of the CAP

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

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

10. Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E)

The APC and the SA decide how often they want to conduct monitoring activities and when would be an appropriate time to conduct a mid-term and a final evaluation. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a continuous process which is overseen by the APC. The indicators to be measured are determined during the creation of the CAP. In addition to the programmatic indicators to be measured, other questions that can be addressed include:

- Who has participated in the new activities?
- What benefits have these participants seen from the activities?
- How effective and appropriate have the activities been for achieving the desired goals?
- Why have some activities been more successful than others?

#3 Case Study: *Natural Resources Management in Kenya*

Have participants refer to the case study *Natural Resources Management in Kenya*[8] in their handbooks (see next page). Although this case study is not taken from the health sector, it provides a good illustration of the different PPD stages. Ask each group to identify and write down the different activities that were conducted during each PPD stage. Some PPD stages are not illustrated in the case study, however, such as *formation of a PLA team* and *evaluation*. Therefore, tell the participants that there may be some information gaps.

[8] Adapted from Kabutha, C. et al. 1993. Participatory Rural Appraisal: A Case Study from Kenya. Kumar, K., ed. *Rapid Appraisal Methods.* Washington, DC: The World Bank.

CASE STUDY: The Participatory Programme Development Process

In the late 1980s, a combined team of officers from Kenya's National Environment Secretariat (NES) and Clark University (Massachusetts, USA), with assistance from technical officers from Kangundo Division, Machakos District, conducted a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) workshop in Mbusyani Sublocation.

The NES team that carried out the pilot PRA workshop consisted of a social scientist with extensive agricultural experience (the team leader), a biologist, another social scientist, an environmental information specialist, and a village health worker and nutritionist. The team worked closely with extension officers for technical assistance, particularly in regard to water resources and conservation. The team also drew heavily on the energy and assistance of local leaders in Mbusyani, including formal leaders such as the assistant chief, as well as informal leaders, such as heads of women's groups.

The Mbusyani community invited the NES and Clark University to conduct a PRA workshop in their sublocation, because it had been very impressed with a community-based natural resources project that had been implemented in a neighbouring sublocation. Therefore, the NES went to Mbusyani because the local leaders had requested it.

The PRA site, Mbusyani, was a sublocation consisting of eight villages in Kenya's semi-arid zone, located ninety kilometres east of Nairobi in Kakuyuni Location, Kangundo Division, Machakos District. The terrain was hilly and the climate dry. The population in 1990 was estimated to be 8,000. The residents of Mbusyani were Akamba, a group of agro-pastoralists who had lived in Machakos since the seventeenth century.

Due to increasing pressures on the land in neighbouring regions, many people had moved into Mbusyani in the years preceding the PRA workshop, occupying land that had previously been used for rotational grazing. Most of the people derived their livelihoods from subsistence agriculture and cash remittances, although a small group of farmers sold coffee as their primary source of income.

The extension of farming and the subsequent constriction of grazing lands were two forces that had led to accelerated resource degradation, including loss of ground cover, soil erosion, and reduced water availability in the region in general, and in Mbusyani in particular. These forces, coupled with erosive soils, steep hill slopes, and torrential seasonal rainfall had created a situation in which the community's natural resources were vulnerable. There were many dimensions to this predicament, including health problems such as bilharzia, food storage needs, access to reliable water sources, high rates of soil loss, and declining water supplies.

The NES made a preliminary visit in late May, and spent a half day meeting with leaders. After extended discussions among NES and Mbusyani leaders, all agreed to go ahead with a PRA workshop. Members of the village leadership understood what *would be expected of them, especially in terms of organizing groups of leaders and residents for discussions with the PRA team. The NES pledged that it would assist in gathering data and organizing the data into a format from which village groups could rank priorities, as well as help to prepare a village resource management plan.*

It was stressed that responsibility for implementation of the plan would be placed primarily with community leaders, with assistance coming from technical extension officers, the NES, and donor or NGO groups that might be identified.

In addition to collecting routine secondary information, the team gathered four types of primary data: <u>spatial data,</u> <u>time-related information</u>, <u>data on institutions and social structure</u>, and <u>technical information</u>. All these data turned out to be important in carrying out the PRA workshop and in eventually formulating the resources management plan. The activities that were conducted in order to collect these data included:

- *Village sketch map*
- *Village transect*
- *Farm sketch (a drawing of farm layout and use)*
- *Village time line from 1836 to the present*
- *Trend lines for land productivity and rainfall*
- *Seasonal calendar*
- *Semi-structured interviews*
- *Venn diagrams of village institutions*

The total time for the PRA team and community group for the data-gathering exercise was six days.

Once the data were collected, the PRA team spent a day meeting by themselves to organize the information. They made large charts and tables of trend lines, institutional arrangements, the transect, and so on, and then compiled a list of all the problems mentioned in any of the data-collection exercises.

The team then split up into pairs. Each took a particular problem (e.g., water) and in each instance summarized the problem, in some cases by subdividing by ecological zone; matched potential solutions to each problem; and listed the solutions for each problem on large pieces of paper, big enough to be seen in a large meeting.

The next day, villagers met to rank their problems. The meeting was held in a primary school classroom near the sublocation's market. Data gathered in the preceding exercises were displayed in the form of charts and graphs on the walls, including the trend lines, transect, sketch map, and others. The charts containing the lists of problems and solutions were placed at the front of the room.

The NES team leader chaired the meeting. Participants included the six team members from NES; nine technical officers representing soil, water, forestry, agriculture, village health care, community development, and livestock; a number of village elders and community leaders; the assistant chief for the sublocation; and leaders from eight women's groups.

The villagers ranked the problems by voting. The outcome in Mbusyani was an ordering of problems that villagers and technical officers agreed were the most severe and in greatest need of attention. The task was essentially completed by lunch time. While there were several high-priority problems that were mentioned a few times, the overwhelming and most frequently cited problem was water.

In the afternoon, the same group reassembled and discussed possible solutions; in this case, to the water problem. The PRA team had previously listed recommended solutions, ranging from boreholes to rehabilitating rock springs. The NES/PRA team leader chaired the meeting.

An Options Assessment Chart was used to organize and systematize the ranking. The team leader used the criteria of stability, equity, productivity, sustainability, and feasibility to help the group place weighted values on each possible solution and eventually to arrive at a unanimously agreed-upon set of actions, which included developing a new well, rehabilitating two small reservoirs and water catchments, terracing a badly eroded hill slope, and continuing with efforts of reforestation. Technical officers played an important role in this discussion so that solutions would be feasible in technical, economic, ecological, and social terms. There was some initial difficulty using the Options Assessment Chart, mostly because the terms (e.g., sustainability) did not translate well into Kikamba, the local language. However, the team worked closely with the village leaders and eventually a ranking emerged.

According to the original schedule, the group was to reassemble the following morning and create a village resource management plan. However, several leaders and especially the water engineer felt there was insufficient technical information to develop a comprehensive plan. The water engineer returned the following week and, joined by the entire PRA team and the Mbusyani Resource Management Committee, visited all potential water points in the sublocation in order to gather more information about the technical feasibility of the proposed solutions.

Two weeks later, the entire sublocation committee again assembled and, using data that the water engineer's survey had developed, organized a comprehensive water and natural resources management plan for Mbusyani. The plan indicated what tasks were to be carried out, what materials were needed to do the work, who would do it, and what--if any--external assistance was needed.

There was considerable commitment from all parties involved in the action plan, and the activities were implemented, although not always on schedule. The assistant chief was the prime mover, with major cooperation and support from many different constituencies in the sublocation.

SESSION 4
Behaviour & Attitudes of the PLA Facilitator

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will

✔*...Be able to describe the behaviours and attitudes which are beneficial in PLA*

✔*...Apply their knowledge of behaviour and attitudes to a video scenario*

✔*....Understand the differences in perception between "insiders" and "outsiders" in PLA*

Materials ✎

IDS video
Tape
Index or VIPP cards

ACTIVITIES

#1 Behaviour and Attitudes Video and Cards

Show a clip from the IDS video *Who Holds the Stick? PRA Attitudes and Behaviour*. Afterwards, ask participants to divide into pairs. Distribute at least one behaviour and attitudes (B&A) card to each pair, and ask them to discuss how the concept written on their card was illustrated in the video. Bring the participants back together to share their results. Ask if there are any other behaviours and attitudes which are essential for facilitating PLA.

#2 Johari's Window

Post a drawing of Johari's Window on the wall, and post index cards with the words OPEN, BLIND, HIDDEN and UNKNOWN next to the illustration. Give a brief explanation of the four boxes, but don't say which label goes with which box. Ask a volunteer to come up and match the labels with the boxes. Ask participants how this illustrates the relationship of outside development workers and communities.

Divide participants into pairs. Ask each pair to fill in the boxes with dialogue, and invite one or two pairs to role-play one of their dialogues. After the role-playing, ask participants to reflect on how the new B&A they have learned would help them "keep the window open" when working with communities.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Behaviour and Attitudes Video and Cards

B&A Videos

Two suggested videos are *Who Holds the Stick? PRA Attitudes and Behaviour* and *Putting the Last First* from IDS. The videos give an overall picture of the B&A that are necessary to successfully interact with communities in a culturally sensitive and respectful way. Some of the B&A presented may be contrary to how the participants have traditionally interacted with community members (e.g., treating community members as "experts"). It is important to emphasize that the PLA process requires a role reversal: The PLA facilitators are visiting the community to learn from the participants, not to teach them.

B&A Cards

On index cards or VIPP cards, write the following concepts and their definitions[9]. Distribute one index card to each participant. If there are not enough cards, the participants can divide into pairs and share. If there are too many, they can take more than one.

[9] Adapted from Chambers, R. 1992. p. 14-15, and Institute for Development Studies. 1997.

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

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

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

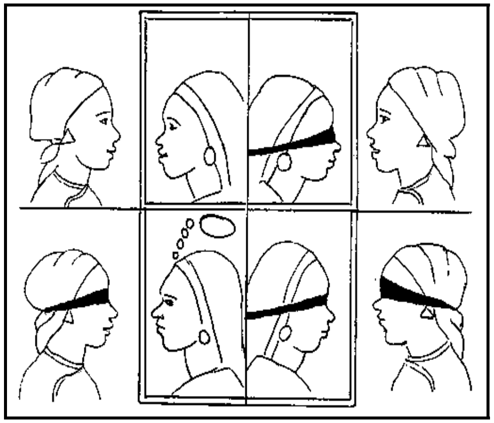
Handing Over the Stick
Letting the local people do the investigation, analysis and presentation themselves. The facilitator starts the process and then steps back and lets the local people take charge.

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

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

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

#2 Johari's Window



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

Give the participants the following explanations for the windows[10]:

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

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

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

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

[10] Adapted from Srinivasan, L. 1993. p. 166.

SESSION 5
Encouraging Communication

Objectives

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

✔*...Understand ways that PLA facilitators can hinder or promote communication*

✔*...Apply their knowledge of communication to a video scenario*

✔*...Demonstrate active listening skills*

✔*...Demonstrate other types of non-verbal communication*

Materials ✎

IIED video
Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Video Scenarios

Show the clip “Thinking About Communication” from the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender and Environment*. Have the group answer the video’s questions about how communication was encouraged or hindered in each of the scenarios. Discuss how each of the following can affect the participation of community members during PLA: *seating arrangement, facilitator’s dress, and interpersonal communication (both verbal and non-verbal).*

#2 Active Listening

Ask participants to break into pairs--one will be the “listener” and the other will be the “speaker”. Ask the speaker to talk for three minutes about something good that happened to them recently. The listeners should remain silent, but show that they are listening. Have the partners switch roles and repeat the exercise. Bring participants back together and ask them to list the different ways that they knew their partner was listening to them.

#3 Conveying Emotions

Ask for a volunteer to think of an emotion and act it out before the rest of the group without speaking. Have the others try to guess the emotion. Next, ask for other volunteers to repeat the exercise. Write each of the emotions on a flip chart. Ask participants which emotions (when expressed by a facilitator) would encourage community members to participate in PLA and which would discourage participation.

#4 Different Types of Questions

Ask participants to explain the difference between an open-ended question and a closed-ended question and how each type might be useful for facilitating the PLA process. Have participants divide into pairs, and ask each pair to think of one open-ended question and one closed-ended question and write them on VIPP cards. Draw a page with two columns labelled “open” and “closed” on a flip chart, and ask for five pairs to stick their both of their questions in the appropriate columns. When all have finished, ask if any of the closed-ended questions could be reworded as open-ended questions.

TRAINER’S NOTES

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

#1 Video Scenarios

The “Thinking About Communication” clip from the IIED video helps to illustrate the following elements of communication that can either help or hinder the participation of a community during the PLA process:

<u>Seating arrangement</u>

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

<u>Facilitator’s dress</u>

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

Interpersonal communication (IPC)

Interpersonal communication (IPC) consists of both verbal and non-verbal communication. Good IPC can foster a positive relationship with community members and encourage them to "open up" to PLA facilitators. Poor IPC, on the other hand, can cause people to "turn off", withdraw, or become angry. Ask participants to brainstorm about different types of verbal and non-verbal communication and give examples of each. Write responses on a flip chart, and after the respondents have finished, add any of the following items that have not been mentioned to their list. Have participants discuss how IPC can either encourage or hinder the participation of community members in PLA activities.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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

#2 Active Listening

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

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

Examples of **non-verbal** cues:
- Not interrupting the speaker
- Nodding your head and smiling
- Leaning forward

Maintaining eye contact (if appropriate)
Avoiding distractions

#3 Conveying Emotions

This exercise[11] will help participants to become more aware of emotions that they communicate nonverbally to other people. These emotions can send to others positive and negative messages, which may or may not be intentional. Encourage participants to be creative when expressing an emotion and to use as many of the types of non-verbal communication techniques discussed above as possible. Make a list of all of the emotions that participants have chosen to express, and afterwards ask them to brainstorm about how each of these emotions might either encourage or discourage community members from participating in PLA activities.

Emotions that encourage participation

Empathy	Concern or caring
Friendliness	Humility
Affirmation or praise	

Emotions that discourage participation

Boredom	Superiority or haughtiness
Anger	Hostility
Impatience	

Emphasize that the emotions being conveyed should be appropriate for the situation (e.g., showing sympathy if a community member is telling a sad story).

#4 Different Types of Questions

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

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

Consider the following two questions, which ask similar things:

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[11] Adapted from Cunningham et al. 1997. Module 13, p.6.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SESSION 6
Team Building

Objectives

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

✔*...Be able to define the word "team"*

✔*...Form their field work teams*

✔*...Solve a team-building puzzle*

✔*...Resolve hypothetical field work problems*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers
Tape
Team member questionnaire

ACTIVITIES

#1 What Is a Team?

Write two African proverbs relating to teamwork on a flip chart and ask participants to explain their meaning. Ask participants to define "team" and to suggest other proverbs that illustrate teamwork.

#2 Choosing Field Teams

Explain to participants that you would like them to form PLA teams for field work (as opposed to the trainers choosing the team). Explain the ideal composition of a field team and the number of people who should be on each team. Ask participants to fill out the *Team Member Questionnaire*. After posting the labels for each team on the wall, have participants compose their own teams (see the guidelines below). Ask participants to assess whether their teams are multidisciplinary (by gender, language and sector), and if not, to adjust them accordingly.

#3 Broken Squares

Distribute envelopes with pieces of broken squares to each team member (one envelope per person). Ask one person from each team to be an observer. Tell the participants that the task of each team is to create five equally-sized squares from the pieces in their envelopes. They must assemble the pieces WITHOUT TALKING, and they have only 15 minutes to do so. Explain the ground rules for the task (see below). When all the teams have finished, ask each observer to share what kinds of group dynamics emerged in his or her team. Ask the participants to reflect on how these group dynamics might affect their field work.

#4 Challenging Field Situations (EVENING HOMEWORK TASK)

Ask participants to meet with their team members in the evening to discuss the "Challenging Field Situations" questions in their handbooks. Assign each team a different scenario. Explain that this exercise will help the participants to develop team norms for working in the field, in addition to helping them to anticipate challenging situations. After they have completed the exercise, each team should choose a leader and a note taker, based on the descriptions of the positions outlined in their handbooks.

The following morning, ask the teams to share any of the hypothetical field problems that they were not able to resolve. Have the other teams give suggestions for resolving the problems.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 What Is a Team?

Following are two examples of African proverbs that can be used to illustrate the concept of teamwork[12]:

> *"Cross a river in a crowd and the crocodile won't eat you."*
> *"A single blade of grass won't sweep the yard."*

Feel free to substitute your own proverbs that might be more familiar to the participants.

According to *Webster's New College Dictionary*, a team can be defined as "a group organized to work together." This definition can be expanded to read "a group organized to work together *towards a common goal*." Participants may have other definitions that are also valid. Once a definition is agreed upon, write it on flip chart paper and post it in the classroom for the remainder of the training.

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[12] Pretty et al. 1993. p. 39.

#2 Choosing Field Teams

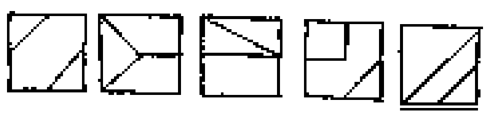
Participants will be less likely to complain about their team during field work if they have chosen the teams themselves. Doing so also gives them some responsibility for the quality of their field experience. The Team Member Questionnaire[13] tries to balance the team according to gender, sector, professional experience and languages spoken. A sample Team Member questionnaire appears in the Annex. The trainers can modify it according to their needs, depending on the characteristics of the course participants.

Place large pieces of paper with labels for the teams (A, B, C, etc.) on the wall. Ask each participant to post his or her questionnaire under a team. Participants must read the questionnaires that are already posted, and cannot join a team for which someone else has already posted their "qualifications". No one can move someone else's questionnaire without that person's consent. Encourage participants to make sure that each team is well-balanced, according to the criteria that were discussed in the previous activity.

Once participants have formed their teams, invite them to invent a fun team name.

#3 Broken Squares

Make sets of five cut-up squares, following the model below[14]. There should be one set for each team.
NOTE: When the squares are cut, each individual piece is 3 inches long (8 cm).



Once the squares for one set have been cut up, mix up the pieces and distribute them evenly into five envelopes to be distributed to five members of the same team. Make sure that the envelopes for each set stay together, so that each team has all the necessary pieces to form five squares.

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[13] Adapted from Pretty et al. 1993. p. 155.

[14] Exercise adapted from Pretty et al. 1993. p. 171.

Before the exercise, ask one member of each team to be the observer. That person should observe both the process that the team members use to solve the puzzle and the group dynamics that emerge. The observer will report on the team's progress at the conclusion of the activity.

Instruct participants not to talk during the exercise at all. Participants are also not permitted to take a piece from someone else; they can accept only pieces that are voluntarily given to them by other team members. At first, this rule may cause a lot of frustration for the participants, but it encourages them to focus on helping their fellow team members as opposed to solving only their own section of the puzzle. This exercise helps them to realize that the pursuit of a common goal is often more important than individual goals, and that what might be a good solution for one person might not work for the rest of the group.

After the exercise, ask participants to reflect on the following:

- ✦ *Was the task accomplished quickly? Why or why not?*
- ✦ *Did the group cooperate?*
- ✦ *What different roles did people play?*
- ✦ *How will this experience help you work better as part of a team in the field?*

#4 Challenging Field Situations (EVENING HOMEWORK TASK)

The scenarios of Challenging Field Situations appear in the Annex and in the participant handbook. Each team should choose one of the four scenarios for discussion. This activity challenges teams to solve hypothetical problems related to both group dynamics and the use of participatory methods. All of these questions were derived from real problems that arose during field work. Team members will benefit from this exercise by being prepared for some of the challenging situations they will be faced with in the field.

Although some participants may complain about being assigned "homework," this is a good exercise to do in the evening because it involves only discussion. In other words, the participants are not being asked to write, produce, or present anything. This exercise helps them to get to know one another better and to decide who will be appropriate for the different team roles (team leader, note taker, activity facilitators). Although one person should be the team leader during the entire field experience, the participants can trade off being the note taker.

SESSION 7
PLA Preparation

Objectives

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

✔*...Address any hypothetical field problems that could not be resolved during the previous session*

✔*...Understand how to organize and manage a PLA workshop*

✔*...Be able to describe what the PLA team does during an initial site visit*

✔*....Suggest ways to include hard-to-reach groups in PLA activities*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers
IIED Video

ACTIVITIES

#1 Debriefing: Challenging Field Situations

Ask participants if there were any challenging field situations that they were not able to resolve during the previous evening's homework exercise. Ask other participants to brainstorm about solutions.

#2 Logistical and Management Issues

Have participants brainstorm about what types of tasks would be involved in organizing and managing a PLA workshop. Go over the different tasks involved and ask participants if they would add anything.

#3 Introduction to the Community

Ask participants to divide into small groups of four to five people and imagine that their PLA Team has just arrived in the community for the preliminary site visit. (REFER TO STEP 3 OF THE PPD PROCESS. TELL THEM TO IMAGINE THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY DONE STEPS 1 AND 2) What are some of the things that they would do during that first visit? What information would they try to collect? Who would they talk to and why?

Bring the groups back together to share their results.

#4 Revealing Perspectives

Watch the clip entitled "Revealing Perspectives" on the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender & Environment*. Ask participants to brainstorm about strategies that they might use to make sure that societal groups that have the least power (e.g., women, youth, the elderly) participate fully in the PLA process. Also brainstorm about ways to deal with gatekeepers who want to dominate the discussion.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Debriefing: Challenging Field Situations

Take a few minutes to discuss any field situations that the participants could not agree on how to handle. Since many of the questions that the groups will discussing are similar, encourage other participants to suggest solutions before offering solutions yourself. Explain that their solutions will form the basis of a team contract, which they will draw up in a later session, before beginning the field practise.

#2 Logistical and Management Issues

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

- Training of the PLA team: Once a PLA team has been formed (including the community link persons), the first step is to conduct a brief training (a few days) in order to ensure that all team members have a basic knowledge of PLA principles and techniques. The exact length of the training will depend on the team members' level of experience with PLA. The training can be conducted by the team leader or another qualified trainer.

- Transportation: Arrangements need to be made for transportation of the PLA team to and from the community during the PLA workshop. In addition, the staff of the sponsoring agency who are responsible for following up with the community after the workshop will need transportation to and from the community.

●Food and lodging: If the PLA team members do not live near the community, it will be necessary to arrange accommodations during the PLA workshop (both for the PLA team and drivers). In addition, the team will need to arrange to either eat at local restaurants, cook food themselves or hire a community member to cook food for them (often a local woman will gladly welcome the opportunity to earn some extra money). The PLA team will either need to purchase cooking ingredients in the community or bring the ingredients with them if they are not available locally. The team leader should also verify whether or not the team needs to bring its own drinking water.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#3 Introduction to the Community

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

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

Other activities during the initial visit might include the following:

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

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

#4 Revealing Perspectives

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

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

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

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

SESSION 8 Introduction to PLA Tools and Semi-Structured Interviews

Objectives

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

✔...*Be able to name different PLA tools*

✔...*Understand the purpose and elements of semi-structured interviews (SSIs) in PLA*

✔...*Demonstrate SSI skills through a role-play*

Materials ✎

Papers with discussion topics

Stones, beans, or seeds

ACTIVITIES

#1 Introduction to PLA Tools

Give a brief summary of the main topics that have been covered up to this point in order to situate the use of PLA tools in the context of the whole PPD process. Then present the different types of tools which will be used during the course.

#2 Introduction to Semi-Structured Interviews

Introduce the concept of individual semi-structured interviews (SSIs) and ask participants to brainstorm about how they might be used in PLA (both with individuals and groups). Ask participants to think back to the session on interpersonal communication and to list some of the concepts that they learned would be important to apply during SSIs. Emphasize the importance of probing.

#3 SSI Practise

Have participants divide into pairs, with one person playing the role of the interviewer and the other playing the role of the informer. Give each pair a topic, and have the pairs role-play an SSI. Encourage the interviewers to use probing questions and avoid leading questions, and have them take notes about what was said. After a few minutes, bring the pairs back together and ask participants how well their partner demonstrated good interpersonal communication skills.

#4 Choosing Our Words

Divide participants into three large groups and have each group sit in a circle. Give each participant three stones or beans or seeds. Tell the groups to discuss what they have thought about the course so far. Every time a person speaks, he or she has to put a stone or bean or seed into the centre of the circle. Therefore, each person can speak only three times. After the discussion, bring participants back together and ask them to reflect on what the exercise taught them about communication and listening.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Elements of Semi-Structured Interviews

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

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

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

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

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

For SSIs that are planned ahead of time, several things must be prepared and considered. Of course, these steps may not be able to be followed if the semi-structured interviews are impromptu, in conjunction with another PLA technique (e.g., talking with a community member who is encountered during a transect walk)[15]:

1. ***Preparing the interview guide*:** An interview guide is developed based on research questions and issues relevant to the community.

2. ***Discussing the interview context:*** The time, place, seating arrangements, body language and biases are discussed ahead of time. Remember: The context of the interview is just as important as the questions that are asked.

3. ***Active Listening:*** The PLA facilitators listen in an attentive, open-minded, non-judgmental and empathetic manner. It must be emphasized that the respondent's answers will be kept confidential!!

4. ***Sensitive Questioning:*** The facilitators ask open-ended, probing questions. They don't ask two questions at once and are careful to avoid leading questions.

5. ***Judging and cross-checking responses*:** Information received from discussions is evaluated and the facilitators probe further if responses are not accurate or sufficient.

6. ***Recording the interview:*** Notes are taken during the interview because diagrams cannot convey the richness of the responses given. Interviewers should always get permission from the respondents to take notes, and then use a small, discreet notebook. In addition to recording what is said, non-verbal communication and respondent emotions (e.g., tension, laughter) should also be recorded. It is important to note the respondents' gender, age, and other important characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status) when recording their responses.   The process of how the interview evolved should also be noted, as well as the interviewer's personal impressions.

7. ***Doing a self-critical review:*** After the interview, the PLA facilitators discuss which parts of the interview went well and which ones need improvement. Questions may need to be revised in order to be more effective. In addition, team members discuss how the context of the interview affected the outcome. Team members should be honest about critiquing each other and do it with a positive attitude.

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

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[15] Adapted from Pretty et al. 1993. p. 74-76.

Group interviews are informal, directed conversations with a large heterogenous group of people (e.g., people with different characteristics), usually ranging in number from fifteen to fifty. A group interview is often conducted as a village meeting to which the whole community is invited. The community group is heterogeneous, and therefore it is important to ensure that everyone in the group has a chance to participate fully. If necessary the groups can be split into smaller groups.

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

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

Probing

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

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

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

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

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

#2 SSI Practise

The goal of Activity #2 is to give the participants experience conducting individual interviews. The interview topics to be probed should be subjects relating directly to the informant, so that he or she will be able to answer the probes without difficulty. Suggested topics include:

- Why the informant chose his or her profession
- The most interesting place the informant has visited and why
- Aspects of the city where the informant lives that he or she likes or dislikes
- The most important health problem in the informants' village

After the exercise, ask the interviewers to give brief summaries of their conversations and describe what kind of non-verbal communication they observed. Also ask the interviewers how easy or hard it was for them to probe, and ask the informants what it felt like to be interviewed.

#3 Choosing Our Words

One common mistake interviewers make in SSIs is to talk more than they listen, which limits the participation of the community members and may intimidate them. The goal of this exercise[16] is for participants to carefully reflect on what they say and to practise listening attentively. Each spoken remark is given equal value (one stone or bean or seed), and the participants must carefully choose what they say. After the exercise, ask participants to share what they learned from the exercise and how it can be applied to SSIs.

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[16] Adapted from Pretty et al. 1993. p. 180.

SESSION 9 Mapping

Objectives

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

✔*...Understand the purpose of mapping*

✔*...Be able to describe different types of maps*

✔*...Demonstrate two different types of mapping skills*

Materials ✎

Chalk
Local materials (such as sticks, stones or leaves)
Pencil and paper

ACTIVITIES

#1 Introduction to Mapping

Give an introduction to mapping and show an example of mapping from the IIED, EDI or RDWSSP video. Invite participants to brainstorm about all of the different types of information that can be presented through maps. Ask them to identify specific kinds of maps that could be useful during a PLA exercise for exploring issues in their sector (e.g., health, education).

#2 Mapping Practise

Go outside of the training centre to a location where participants can draw on the ground. Have participants divide into their field practise teams. Invite each team to draw a map on the ground of the training centre. Encourage them to use chalk, sticks, stones, leaves and other local materials. Ask each group to choose one person to record the group's map on paper.

Discuss the differences among the maps and ask participants whether the mapping exercise was difficult, and if so, why. Also ask participants how they might do mapping in a non-traditional community (e.g., factory workers in an urban area).

.#3 Body Mapping Practise

Have participants regroup into their field teams and assign each team a different health topic (see below). Ask each team to construct a body map on the ground to illustrate the topic. Have each team present its map to the rest of the group. Brainstorm about other types of body maps that could be drawn by community members during a PLA workshop.

TRAINER'S NOTES

CONTEXT: This session introduces the different types of techniques and then focuses on mapping. Mapping is one of the first techniques presented in the course because it is often the first exercise conducted during a PLA workshop.

#1 Introduction to PLA Tools and Mapping

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

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

NOTE: Referring to the stages posted up on the wall will help to orient the participants.

The next phase of the classroom training starts with Stage 4 (The PLA Workshop: data collection). Participants will be learning and practising the tools and techniques which are used in PLA.

These tools can be divided into several broad categories as follows:

Information/data gathering tools		**Analytical tools**
SPATIAL DATA:	Mapping (geographic and physical)	Preference ranking
	Transect walks and observation	Pairwise ranking
		Matrices
TIME-RELATED DATA:	Time lines	
	Seasonal calendars	
	Daily schedules	
SOCIAL/HEALTH DATA:	Semi-Structured Interviews	
	Well-Being Sorting	
	Body mapping	
	Pie charts	
	Venn diagrams	
	Flow diagrams	

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

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

NOTE: The tools presented in this course are a sampling of the most commonly-used tools in PLA. Other tools and techniques exist which participants might find more appropriate or useful in their own communities. Encourage them to refer to the other PLA resources listed in their handbooks in order to learn about additional tools. Also emphasize to participants that they may not need to use all of the tools that are presented here when they do PLA workshops in their own communities.

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

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

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

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

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

~~~~EXAMPLES OF MAPS~~~~

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

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

Maps can also be used to explore <u>specific topics</u>, for example:

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

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

#2 Mapping Practise

This mapping practise exercise encourages participants to be creative and gives the field practise teams an opportunity to start working together. Although the course participants are literate and can easily do this exercise using flip chart paper and markers, doing the mapping on the ground is a more realistic simulation of conditions that they will encounter in the field. It also helps them to identify locally available resources that can be used for markers, such as sticks, stones, leaves, and seeds.

When discussing why the teams' maps may have differed, it is important to point out that this may have occurred because different groups have different priorities, perhaps due to their professional biases or other differences in perspective. Emphasize how this can happen in the community, especially between men and women, and why it is therefore important to include all members of the community in the mapping exercise.

#3 Body Mapping

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

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

It can be difficult to explore these issues verbally because community members may be unfamiliar with anatomical vocabulary, and words may have different cultural meanings. Visual body mapping helps to overcome these barriers because it provides a shared point of reference for researchers and community members[17].

Issues such as the following can be explored with these techniques:

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

[17] Cornwall, A. 1992. p. 69.

CAUTION: Some of the subjects explored in body mapping can be embarrassing or sensitive. It may make sense to divide participants by gender or age group, depending on the situation[18].

Body Mapping Practise

Following are suggestions for topics that the participants can explore through body mapping. They can either use chalk or local materials to construct the maps on the ground.

- ✦How alcohol affects the body
- ✦How oral contraceptives keep a woman from getting pregnant
- ✦How malaria makes a person sick
- ✦How worms make a person sick
- ✦How HIV/AIDS makes a person sick

[18] Archer, D. & S. Cottingham. 1996. p. 176.

SESSION 10
Transect Walks & Observation

Objectives

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

✔*...Evaluate their own observation skills*

✔*...Understand the importance of observation in PLA*

✔*...Identify uses for observation and transect walks in PLA*

✔*....Demonstrate observation skills during a transect walk*

Materials ✎

Maps from Session 8
IIED video

ACTIVITIES

#1 Sharpening Observation Skills

Divide participants into two groups and have the groups line up in two rows facing each other. Each person carefully looks at the appearance of the person across from him or her and tries to memorize that person's appearance. Then, one row of participants turns around while each participant in the other row changes something about his or her appearance (e.g., removes a piece of jewelry, puts something in his or her hand, takes off his or her glasses). Participants in the first row turn around again and try to guess what their partner has changed. Repeat the exercise with the participants in the second row making the changes. Have participants share what this exercise taught them about observation.

#2 Transect Walks

Ask participants to brainstorm about what kinds of information could be gathered in a community using observation. Introduce the concept of **transect walks** and show a clip from the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender and Environment* to illustrate the use of transect walks. Discuss how to create an observation guide.

#3 Transect Walk Simulation

Ask six participants to volunteer to be PLA team members and give each of them a label for their shirts. The other participants pretend to be community members and scatter themselves throughout the training centre. The PLA team simulates a brief transect walk through the training centre and talks to the community members.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Sharpening Observation Skills

This activity is designed to help participants sharpen their observation skills. Often people think that they are observing something carefully, when, in fact they are not. This activity helps introduce participants to the rigors of observation and teaches them to pay attention to detail.

#2 Transect Walks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#3 Transect Walk Simulation

If there is sufficient time in the training schedule, have participants conduct a transect walk through the neighbourhood around the training centre or around the training centre itself. The participants divide into their field practise teams, and each team traces a different route through the neighbourhood. Each team’s route should cover all the zones, but not overlap with another team’s route (it is fine for two different teams to walk through the same area, but they should try to do it at different times in order to avoid being too disruptive). If possible, try and recruit some local community members to accompany the teams on the walk.

The trainers can either assign the teams a theme for the transect walk (such as one of the themes listed on the previous page), or the teams can be instructed to observe social conditions in general. Encourage the teams to have informal conversations with the local people they meet along the way.

Remind participants to practise good behaviour and attitudes and interpersonal communication skills during their transect walk, as they learned in Sessions 4 and 5. Instruct participants to return to the training site at a specified time. When everyone has returned, ask each team to share its observations, and discuss the differences and similarities between the groups.

SESSION 11 Time Lines & Sequencing

Objectives

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

✔*...Understand the purposes and uses of time lines, seasonal calendars, and daily schedules in PLA*

✔*...Demonstrate the creation of time lines, seasonal calendars and daily schedules*

Materials ✎

Blank paper
IIED video
Local materials (e.g., seeds, leaves, stones)

ACTIVITIES

#1 Time Lines

Introduce the use of time lines in PLA and ask participants to brainstorm about types of time lines. Go outside of the training centre where participants can draw on the ground. Divide participants into groups of three to four people, according to their native countries. **Within each group, have half the participants pretend to be community members and the other half PLA facilitators.** Ask the PLA teams to have the community members draw a time line of their country's history, using local objects to mark significant events.

#2 Seasonal Calendars

Introduce the concept of seasonal calendars and ask participants to brainstorm about different patterns that could be measured using seasonal calendars. Show a clip from the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender and Environment* to show a real village experience with seasonal calendars. Have participants return outside in the same groups. **Within each group, have participants switch roles so that the PLA facilitators become the community members**. Assign each group a topic and have it draw a seasonal calendar.

#3 Daily Schedules

Show a clip from the IIED video to illustrate a real village experience with daily schedules. Introduce the concept of daily schedules. Pass out paper, and ask each participant to draw a daily schedule for his or her own activities. Ask one male participant and one female participant to share their results, and compare the two.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Time Lines

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Time Line Practise

When practising the time lines, it is helpful to have half the participants act as community members and the other half as PLA facilitators, so that they get the experience of facilitating others using PLA tools. Ensure that participants stick to their “roles” since it may be tempting for the PLA teams to jump in and start doing the techniques along with the community members.

After everyone has finished, have each group present its work to the others. Finally, ask participants to share what they found challenging about being a facilitator and how they felt as community members being guided in the use of the techniques. NOTE: For each technique, have one member of each PLA Team record the diagrams onto paper.

#2 Seasonal Calendars

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

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

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

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

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

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

Following are some examples of different types events that can be plotted on seasonal calendars and relationships between events that can be explored. **Participants can also refer to examples of seasonal calendars in their handbooks**.

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

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

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

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

#3 Daily Schedules

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

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

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

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

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

There are three principal ways to construct daily schedules:

1. Make a daily time line, divided by hour, time period (morning, afternoon, evening) or changes in activity. Different activities are placed along the time line, and are either represented by words, symbols, blocks of time, or graphs.

2. Use a daily time line with an emphasis on symbols. Symbols are placed along the time line, and then small objects (e.g., seeds or beans) are placed next to the symbols to indicate the amount of effort expended for each activity.

3. Construct a matrix of activities, with the time blocks along one side and activities along another side. This makes it easy to illustrate multiple activities taking place simultaneously.

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

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

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

Participants can refer to examples of daily schedules in their handbooks.

SESSION 12
Diagramming

Objectives

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

✔...*Understand the purposes and uses of chappati diagrams, Venn diagrams, and flow charts in PLA*

✔...*Understand the use of diagramming in the context of an actual PLA project*

✔...*Demonstrate the creation of three different diagrams*

✔...*Identify additional uses for diagrams in PLA*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers
IIED video
Local materials (e.g., seeds, leaves, stones)

ACTIVITIES

#1 Introduction to Diagramming

Introduce the concepts of chappati diagrams, Venn diagrams and flow charts. Show clips from the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender and Environment* for illustration.

#2 Diagramming Practise

Go outside of the training center where participants can draw on the ground. Ask participants to divide into their field teams. **Within each group, have half the participants pretend to be community members and the other half PLA facilitators.** Assign each group topics and have them draw a pie chart, Venn diagram, and flow diagram (after each diagram, the PLA facilitators and "community members" can switch roles). Have one member of each PLA Team record the diagrams onto paper.

After everyone has finished, have each group present its work to the others. Finally, ask participants to share what they found challenging about being a facilitator and how they felt acting as community members being guided in the use of the techniques.

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

#1 Introduction to Diagramming

Chappati diagrams

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

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

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

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

Chappati diagrams can be used to examine a community's demographics, explore people's perceptions of issues and identify constraints or problems. Following are some examples[19] of the ways chappati diagrams have been used in PLA:

[19] Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

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

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

Participants can refer to examples of chappati diagrams in their handbooks.

Venn diagrams

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

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

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

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

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

Another way to create the diagram is to tape small pieces of paper to rocks of varying sizes in order to represent the different organisations. Both local and external institutions can be represented in the diagrams. The diagrams have been used to generate the following types of discussions[20]:

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

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

Participants can refer to examples of Venn diagrams in their handbooks.

Flow Diagrams

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

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

[20]Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

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

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

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

Flow diagrams can be used to examine many different types of processes and chains of events[21]:

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

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

Participants can refer to examples of flow diagrams in their handbooks.

#2 Diagramming Practise

When participants practise diagramming (or other techniques discussed in this manual), it is helpful to have approximately five of them act as PLA facilitators and the rest act as community members. This exercise allows the participants to practise facilitation skills and to envision how a community member might feel participating in a PLA exercise.

Often, however, participants forget which roles they are playing, because they all want to participate in creating the diagrams. To help remind them to stay in character, have the "PLA facilitators" tape to their shirt a VIPP card or piece of paper that says "facilitator."

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[21] Institute of Development Studies. 1996.

SESSION 13
Card Sorting

Objectives

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

✔*...Understand the concept of card sorting by applying it to themselves*

✔*...Be able to define of Well-Being Sorting and describe how it is conducted*

✔*...Understand the use of Well-Being Sorting in the context of a real PLA activity*

✔*...Identify other uses for card sorting in PLA*

Materials ✎

Index or VIPP cards
EDI video

ACTIVITIES

#1 Card-Sorting Practise

Have participants write their names twice on VIPP cards. Divide the participants into two large groups, and have each group sort the cards according to the criteria of their choice. (Encourage them to be creative.) When they are finished, ask them to shuffle the cards and sort them again, this time according to different criteria. Bring the participants back together and ask them to share the criteria that they used. Ask them what this exercise taught them about classifying people into different groups.

#2 Well-Being Sorting

Introduce the concept of well-being sorting and relate it to the exercise participants just completed. For illustration, show a clip from the EDI video *Groundwork: Participatory Research in Girls' Education* . Ask participants to brainstorm about what criteria they would use to define "well-being" in <u>their</u> communities.

#3 Other Types of Sorting

Ask participants to brainstorm about other ways that card sorting could be used in the PLA process. Introduce the concept of health behaviour cards.

OPTIONAL: Assign each participant a health behaviour and have them draw a card to represent it. Ask for three to five volunteers to sort the cards into good and bad behaviours while the others observe.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Card-Sorting Practise

This exercise introduces participants to card sorting and exposes them to the concept of letting the sorters choose their own criteria for grouping the cards. By choosing their own criteria for sorting their own names, the course participants gain an appreciation of the different perspectives present in the group and realize that there is more than one way of accomplishing the task. Possible criteria for the sorting include gender, profession, nationality, age group, personality traits (e.g., introverts, extroverts), physical characteristics and languages spoken.

#2 Well-Being Sorting

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

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

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

There is no set approach for conducting WBS. One suggested way is to create WBS cards using information from the community map that was created at the beginning of the PLA workshop[22]. Household names are written on the cards, and the two community link persons work with the PLA facilitators to ensure that no households have been left out. The sorting exercise should be done either with groups of five to seven people or with individuals, since there is a need to reach a consensus (which can take a long time in larger groups). Ask the community members to sort the cards according to their idea of what it means to be well-off, secure or comfortable.

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[22] Kane, E. 1996. p. 28.

After community members have sorted the cards, ask them to explain how the people in the first pile are similar to and different from the people in the second pile, how the people in the second pile are similar to and different from the people in the third pile, and so on. Once the well-being categories have been created, the facilitators may want to use them to relate well-being to a specific behaviour, e.g., using family planning, sending girls to school. For example, the facilitators could ask the community members questions such as "Tell me about the families in the first pile. Do they practise family planning? Why or why not? How about the families in the second pile?"

#3 Other Types of Sorting

One variation of well being sorting is the exploration of people's perceptions of health and disease through the sorting of **health behaviour cards**[23].   This exercise can either be done early in the PLA workshop, to help identify health problems, or later, after specific problems have been identified, in order to generate discussion about the causes.

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

[23]Narayan, D. 1996. p. 187.

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

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

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

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

SESSION 14
Ranking, Scoring, and Matrices

Objectives

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

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

Materials ✎

Local materials (e.g., sticks, seeds, beans)
Flip chart and markers
IIED video

ACTIVITIES

#1 Moving on to Problems and Solutions

Orient participants to the next stages in the PPD process (Stages 5 and 6). Explain that once data have been gathered about the types of problems present in the community, the PLA team synthesizes and presents the data back to the community members. After this has taken place, the community begins to prioritize problems and formulate solutions using ranking, scoring and matrices.

#2 Preference Ranking and Scoring

Explain the difference between preference ranking and scoring, then ask participants to brainstorm about the major health problems in Africa. Write the problems on flip chart paper. Have participants go outside and divide into their field teams. Within each team, have the participants assume the roles of facilitators and community members. Have each team prioritise the health problems by conducting a preference scoring exercise on the ground.

#3 Pairwise Ranking

Explain the concept of pairwise ranking. Have participants remain in their field teams but switch roles. Have the groups draw grids on the ground, with the health problems listed along both the horizontal and the vertical axes. Have the facilitators of each group lead a pairwise ranking of the health problems. Ask one facilitator from each group to tally the results, and list them on flip chart paper. See how the results differ from the results of the preference scoring exercise.

#4 Identifying Problems and Solutions Using Matrices

Invite participants back into the classroom and ask them to reflect on the challenges they encountered when doing the two ranking exercises. Introduce the concept of **matrix scoring** to identify solutions and show a clip from the IIED video *Questions of Difference: PRA, Gender and Environment* for illustration. Ask each of the two groups to think of three solutions for the most important problem that was identified through ranking. Next, ask participants to come up with a list of three to five criteria that they would use when evaluating solutions.

Have participants return outside and have each group draw a matrix scoring grids on the ground, with the three proposed solutions on the vertical axis and the criteria on the horizontal axis. Give each participant thirty seeds or beans and ask them to score each solution by placing more or fewer beans under each criterion. Ask one member of each group to tally the results. Bring the groups back together and have them share their results. Finally, ask participants to reflect on what they would do if the problems and/or solutions that the community identified did not fall within the mandate of their organization.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

#1 Moving on to Problems and Solutions

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

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

#2 Preference Ranking and Scoring

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

After participants have come up with a list of major health problems in Africa, ask them to find local objects to represent each problem, or have them draw symbols for each problem on pieces of paper. Within each group, have each person place the symbols or papers on the ground in order of priority, from the most important problem to the least important. The "facilitators" then make a chart on paper to tally the results. An example is provided below.

Community Problems

Problem	*Respondent* **A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**Total Score**	**Ranking**
No school	3	2	5	5	4	1	19	**3**
Bad roads	4	3	4	4	5	2	22	**1**
AIDS	5	4	3	3	2	3	20	**2**
Malaria	2	5	2	1	3	4	17	**4**
No health post	1	1	1	2	1	5	11	**5**

Respondent Scores:
5= biggest problem   1= smallest problem

Participants can find an example of a preference ranking table in their handbooks.

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

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

#3 Pairwise Ranking

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

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

The results can be tabulated in a table like the one on the next page.

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

Participants can find an example of a pairwise ranking table in their handbooks.

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

#4 Identifying Problems and Solutions Using Matrices

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

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

Once solutions have been identified, the PLA team helps the community members to come up with a list of criteria for evaluating the solutions. Some examples for criteria include[24]:

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

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

Facilitating Matrix Scoring

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

For the practise exercise, give each group of participants a pile of seeds, beans, or other local objects. Ask the “facilitators” to have the “community members” score the solutions according to the criteria by placing 1, 2, or 3 seeds next to each criteria (three seeds if the solution scores high according to the criteria, two seeds if it scores medium, and one seed if it scores low). The participants can reach consensus on how many seeds to place either by voting or another means. The number of seeds for each solution is tallied to determine which solution is most feasible. One of the PLA facilitators records the grids on paper for future reference.

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

[24] The PRA Programme. 1995. Egerton University.

PROBLEM: School Fees					
Solution	**Criterion 1: Time to Benefit***	**Criterion 2: Cost****	**Criterion 3: Feasibility**	**Criterion 4: Sustainability**	**Score**
Generate extra income through women's gardening	●	●●	●●●	●●●	9
Pay fees at end of harvest season	●●●	●	●●●	●●●	10
Get sponsors for girls' education	●	●●	●●●	●	7
Generate income--carpentry programme	●	●	●●●	●●●	8
Get government to reduce fees	●	●	●●	●●●	7
Notes: *For "Time to Benefit", a high score (3 beans) equals a short time to benefit. **For "Cost"--a high score (3 beans) equals a low cost.					

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

Participants can find an example of a matrix scoring grid in their handbooks.

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

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

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

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

SESSION 15
Community Action Plan Creation and Follow-Up

Objectives
By the end of this session, participants will...

✔*...Understand how to use a story to help community members address their problems*

✔*...Be able to describe the elements of a community action plan (CAP)*

✔*...Be able to explain the composition of an action plan committee (APC)*

✔*...Identify strategies for follow-up of the CAP*

Materials
Story illustrations
Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Story with a Gap
Ask participants to divide into groups of four to five people and imagine that they are at Stage 7 of the PPD Process. Post two large illustrations at the front of the room: one of a problem situation (a "before" scene), and one of an improved situation where the problem has been solved (an "after" scene). Ask participants to "fill in the gap" by creating a story about the process that the community might have used to solve its problem. Have each group share its story with the rest of the participants.

#2 Forming an Action Plan Committee and Creating a Community Action Plan
Explain the purpose of the Action Plan Committee (APC) and ask participants to brainstorm about who should be a member of it. Next, review the definition of a community action plan (CAP) and emphasize its crucial role in the participatory programme development process. Ask participants to list the types of information that they feel would be important to include in a CAP and the possible formats for the CAP.

#3 PLA Workshop Follow-Up
Have participants divide into the same small groups. Ask them to imagine that their organisation has completed a PLA workshop, and that the community has come up with a CAP. What else does the PLA team have to do after the workshop? Ask participants to brainstorm about steps that both the community and the sponsoring agency need to take in order to ensure that the CAP is implemented successfully. Explain the purpose of the PLA workshop report.

TRAINER'S NOTES

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

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

#1 Story with a Gap

This exercise is designed to make participants think through the different steps involved in implementing a CAP[25]. The trainers can either draw "before" and "after" pictures on flip chart paper, hire a local artist to draw them, or make photocopies of photographs or ready-made illustrations and distribute them to each group. Examples of scenes to illustrate include:

BEFORE Scenes	➜	**AFTER Scenes**
Long line of women waiting at a well		*One woman getting water from a pump*
A girl working in the fields		*A girl at school*
A malnourished pregnant woman		*A healthy pregnant woman*
A man who is sick in bed with malaria		*A healthy man working in the fields*
A child defecating in the bush		*A child using a latrine*

In the community, the PLA team can use a story with a gap to generate possible solutions to problems and to help develop the community action plan.

#2 Forming an Action Plan Committee and Creating a Community Action Plan

[25] Exercise adapted from Srinivasan, L. 1993. p. 118.

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

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

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

At least one person should be able to read and write, and all of the members should be well-respected and trusted by the community. The PLA team should work with the community to make sure that groups that are traditionally excluded from positions of power are included in the APC.

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

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

Community Action Plan (CAP)
For a community to promote its own social development, as in the stories created above, it must have an well-defined strategy and a concrete implementation plan. A CAP is a summary of the problems that were identified during the PLA workshop, and what the community will do to address them. The CAP is created by the community members after the PLA team has facilitated the ranking and scoring of problems and solutions.

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

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

Guidelines for Developing a CAP
The CAP contains the following elements[26] for each project that the community decides to undertake:

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

Normally, the CAP is written down, in order to provide a concrete frame of reference which can be used to track the progress of the project. In communities where literacy rates are very low, however, it may be possible for the ACP to present the action plan orally.

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

[26] Schubert et al. 1994b. p. 155-57.

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

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

Source: The PRA Programme. 1995. Egerton University. p. 73.

#3 PLA Workshop Follow-Up

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

1. The team writes a PLA workshop report summarizing the PLA activities, their results, and the problems and solutions that were identified. The report is distributed to the SA and to the APC (after being translated into the local language). A copy of the CAP can be included with the report. The SA and the APC use this workshop report as a point of reference during the implementation and monitoring of activities.

2. Before leaving the community, the PLA team identifies one or more persons from the SA and other relevant agencies (e.g., local government or other non-governmental organisations) that will work closely with the community to implement, monitor and evaluate the CAP. These liaisons meet with the APC to discuss exactly what kind of assistance they will be able to provide, and when they should return in the future to meet again.

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

SESSION 16 Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Objectives

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

✔*...Be able to differentiate between monitoring and evaluation*

✔*....Be able to define Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation (PM&E)*

✔*...Apply their knowledge of PM&E in an analytical exercise*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Monitoring and Evaluation Reflection

Present definitions of **"monitoring"** and **"evaluation"** (M&E) and ask participants if there is anything they would add. Ask them to brainstorm about different types of indicators for both monitoring and evaluation and give examples of each.

#2 Making M&E "Participatory"

Have participants divide into pairs and ask them to answer the following questions for an evaluation that they have been a part of: *Who was the evaluation conducted for? Who designed it? Who collected and analysed the information? What happened to the information after it was collected?* Bring the group back together and invite a few volunteers to share their responses. Write each of the four questions listed above on flip chart paper. For each question, ask participants how the responses would change if the community was more involved in the M&E process. Ask the group to produce a definition of "participatory monitoring and evaluation" (PM&E).

#3 PM&E Exercise

Have participants divide into small groups of three to four people and refer to the PM&E exercise in their handbooks. Ask each group to describe the monitoring system that they would use and examples of process, outcome and impact indicators. Then ask each group to think of how the PLA techniques that they have learned could be used for monitoring and evaluating the project. Bring the groups back together to share their responses.

TRAINER'S NOTES

CONTEXT: Once a community begins to implement activities outlined in its action plan, it will need to begin monitoring and eventually evaluating them. The plans for monitoring and evaluation should be developed before the activities begin.

#1 Monitoring and Evaluation Reflection

Although they are very similar, it is important to distinguish between **monitoring** and **evaluation**. **Monitoring** is an ongoing process of data collection that allows project managers and the community to examine positive and negative trends and readjust their strategies accordingly. Monitoring focuses on measuring outputs--process and products related to the project implementation. It is done on a regular basis throughout the life of a project and helps ensure that the project stays on track. One way to monitor a project is to track process indicators or output indicators. Examples of these types of indicators include:

- ✦Number of latrines constructed
- ✦Number of condoms distributed
- ✦Percentage of households that attend awareness-raising meetings
- ✦Number of women joining a garden cooperative
- ✦Amount of money raised for an emergency medical fund

The term "evaluation" is used in many contexts. It can be used to describe...

- The initial assessment or appraisal of a situation;
- The monitoring of the progress of a project; or
- The measurement of the overall impact of a project.

For the purposes of this course, the term evaluation will refer to the measurement of project outcomes (short-term effects) or impacts (long-term effects). In other words, evaluation measures whether the project has met its objectives. Examples of outcome indicators and impact indicators include:

- ✦Percentage of girls who complete primary school (outcome)
- ✦Percentage of men who remain faithful to their wives (outcome)
- ✦Percentage of children who are immunized (outcome)
- ✦Level of maternal mortality (impact)

✦Incidence of diarrhoea-related deaths among children (impact)

In practical terms, monitoring and evaluation are very similar. In fact, monitoring is sometimes referred to as “on-going evaluation.” Both monitoring and evaluation can be conducted using the same methods, which will be discussed below.

#2 Making M&E “Participatory”

While monitoring and evaluation of development projects have traditionally been done for the benefit of donors or sponsoring agencies (SAs), the main goal of **participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E)** is to build the community’s capacity to track the progress of its own development. Data are collected about the progress of activities so that the community can make its own decisions about...

- What is working well;
- What is not working well; and
- How to proceed next.

Community members are the key players and decision-makers in the PM&E process, although this does not exclude outsiders from the SA or donors. On the contrary, successful PM&E requires the support from the highest levels of these organisations. Staff of the SA only play only an advisory role, however, and leave the actual monitoring to the community members.

In many development programmes in the past, M&E has not been conducted with the full participation of community members. This does not mean that the M&E has not been valuable or valid. The information gathered through traditional M&E has improved programmes and provided valuable lessons. While traditional M&E may still be appropriate in certain situations, it is not ideal for measuring the progress or outcomes of projects that have been created by communities through PLA.

How is PM&E conducted?

PM&E is a *continuous process*, and not a one-time event. During the PLA workshop, the PLA team and the community work together to come up with a list of indicators which can be monitored on a regular basis by the community members. The action plan committee (APC) is responsible for ensuring that this monitoring takes place, in collaboration with the SA.

The same participatory techniques used during the initial PLA workshop can be used for PM&E.

There is no set formula for *which* PLA techniques to use for PM&E. Each community project will be different and will require different data to be collected. Below are examples of how some development organisations have used PLA techniques for M&E:

Mapping

- How many households have participated in the CAP activities

- How many people have used new health services
- Reductions or increases in disease patterns
- The percentage of girls enrolled in school

Diagramming
- Venn diagram to illustrate which projects have been most useful
- Venn diagram to illustrate new collaborations between organisations as a result of the project
- Flow diagrams to show the progress of the project implementation
- Flow diagrams to show how the project has affected the community in other ways

Ranking/Scoring
- Using matrix scoring to compare successful projects with unsuccessful projects according to various criteria

(e.g., number of people who donated labour, amount of external resources obtained, number of times the community met to work on the project)

Seasonal Calendars
- Illustration of trends in disease patterns or product outputs (e.g., number of trees planted)

Semi-Structured Interviews
- Discussions with community members about their perceptions of the project's success
- Discussions about problems with project implementation
- Discussions about the direct and indirect effects of the project on the lives of community members

Pie Charts
- Illustration of the increases or decreases in the percentage of people engaging in health-related behaviours

Communities can be confident that their PM&E will give a true picture of the progress they have made only if they are able to compare the information that was gathered in the initial PLA workshop with information that is gathered through PM&E. Therefore, the PLA team should encourage the APC to keep copies of all of the material (e.g., maps, diagrams, interview notes) that was created during the initial PLA workshop. Much of this information will be recorded in the workshop report written by the PLA team. By keeping this information, the APC will be able to refer to it later for comparison purposes.

One monitoring strategy is for the APC to convene regular community meetings to discuss the project. During the meetings, each of the activities are evaluated in a systematic manner, such as the following:

1. Review of implemented activities (using participatory techniques)

2. Problems encountered
3. Suggested solutions to the problems
4. Planning for the next cycle

Ideally, these meetings are facilitated entirely by members of the APC. If the APC does not feel comfortable enough to facilitate the participatory techniques, however, SA staff may be asked to attend and act as facilitators for the first couple of meetings, until the community members are able to facilitate the activities themselves. The frequency of these meetings will be decided by the community in collaboration with the SA.

#3 PM&E Exercise

Very few PM&E case studies exist. Therefore, this exercise takes an example of the PLA process and asks participants to brainstorm about how they would have continued the project, using PM&E. Following is a presentation of the experience of a Ugandan HIV/AIDS prevention programme which used PLA to assess community risk factors[27].

The goal of this exercise is for participants to think of some M&E indicators and how the PLA techniques that they have learned during the course could be used for M&E.

Ask the group to divide into pairs. Then ask each pair to give one example of a process/output indicator, an outcome indicator and an impact indicator that could be used to evaluate the Ugandan programme. Also ask each pair to brainstorm about how it would use at least two PLA methods in order to measure these indicators. There are no right or wrong answers, so encourage participants to be creative.

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[27] Source: Ssembatya, J. et al. 1995.

PM&E Exercise
The Rakai AIDS Information Network (RAIN)

Background

The Rakai AIDS Information Network (RAIN) is a Ugandan non-governmental organisation whose goal is to reduce the spread of HIV infection in the Rakai District. It is run and managed by health care providers, health educators, counsellors and trainers from Rakai District. The organisation's strategy is to provide integrated AIDS prevention interventions within a community-based health care framework. Its programmes include community-based health care (CBHC) which trains village health committees, community health workers, and traditional birth attendants. RAIN also runs a peer education programme for village youth and provides HIV counselling, testing and medical treatment through eight sub-clinics.

The PLA Workshop

Due to the high emphasis that it places on community participation, RAIN decided to facilitate PLA workshops in two rural areas with high HIV prevalence. The goal of the workshops was to help community members assess factors that put them at risk of HIV infection. A large group of people representing several different villages participated.

<u>Identifying Risk Factors</u>

The first PLA activity conducted was ***mapping****. The participants divided themselves by village, and each group drew a map of its village using locally-available materials (e.g, ash, beans, maize and stones). The participants first drew physical landmarks, such as hills, swamps and roads, and then added social markers, such as homes, churches, schools and farms. For each house, participants identified the number, age and sex of the inhabitants, and the number of deaths that had occurred during the previous year. The PLA facilitators asked the community members how many of the deaths were due to AIDS, but the villagers did not want to reveal this information due to the stigma associated with the disease.*

The village maps were transferred to paper, and then presented to the group at large. By identifying the number of deaths in the past twelve months, participants realized that there had been at least one death in each home. Although the causes of death were not identified, participants knew that many were caused by AIDS. By seeing the number of deaths, participants realized how widespread AIDS was in their community and the implications that this had for the community's survival.

Next, participants identified specific locations where they might be at risk of HIV infection. For example, they identified bars where men took casual sex partners. They also identified isolated areas, such as wells and wooded lots, where women were at risk of being raped.

After mapping, a group of community members created a ***seasonal calendar*** *on the ground in order to examine the patterns of various diseases. For each of the twelve months of the year, participants identified the prevalence of malaria and diarrhoea.*

After they had finished and transferred the map to paper, some of the more educated participants related the occurrence of the two diseases to the presence of sunshine or rain.

Many of the participants were surprised by this relationship, because they had previously associated malaria and diarrhea with eating certain foods that were present at specific times of the ear (e.g., maize and mangos). The PLA facilitator then asked the participants whether HIV had a transmission season. Surprisingly, the villagers said that yes, HIV transmission was highest during the harvest season (June, July and August), when men had more money. Because the men had more money, they could drink more alcohol and pay for casual sex. In addition to the harvest season, the villagers pointed out that HIV transmission was higher in March and December, when men sold their stored crops to prepare for the Christmas and Easter holidays.

The final exercise involved the creation of ***twenty-four hour activity clocks*** *(daily schedules), to allow the villagers to identify the differences in the amount of work performed by men and women and to identify leisure time that might lead to risky behaviours. The men and women conducted the exercise separately, and members of each group discussed what they did for each hour of the day. The exercise revealed that women engaged in many more activities than men during the day, and men had more leisure time than women. The exercise also revealed that women were frequently asked by their husbands to have sex as much as three times a day, and that the women were often too tired to comply. Because of their extra leisure time and their tired wives, many men took on additional sex partners. Both sexes realized that this behaviour was putting men and their wives at risk for contracting HIV.*

<u>Proposed Solutions</u>
After each activity, participants were asked to think of solutions to the problems that were identified.

After the mapping activity, participants realized that men were at risk of contracting HIV at bars (where they would pick up casual sex partners) and women were at risk of being raped in certain isolated places. As solutions, the men proposed that all drinking be done during the day and that they come home early in the evening. To protect themselves from attack, women decided to go in groups to collect firewood and water, and some of the men offered to accompany their wives.

When it became evident that HIV transmission was greatest at the times of year when men had the most money, the RAIN staff decided to increase their condom distribution efforts and health education activities during these months. The village women also realized that they needed to protect themselves more during the harvest and that they needed to encourage their husbands to take extra precautions during this time.

As a result of the creation of the twenty-four hour activity clocks, the villagers proposed that husbands and wives decide together how to better share the workload. This would make the women less tired and keep the men more occupied.

Questions

1. *If you were a RAIN staff member, what system would you suggest to the villagers for monitoring the implementation of their proposed solutions? How could they determine whether they were successfully protecting themselves from HIV?*

2. *Come up with one example for each of the following: a PROCESS/OUTPUT INDICATOR, an OUTCOME INDICATOR, and an IMPACT INDICATOR.*

3. *For each indicator, identify a PLA technique that the villagers could use to measure it.*

Following are some examples of indicators that could be used by RAIN:

PROCESS INDICATORS:

Number of condoms distributed during the harvest
Number of health education activities conducted

OUTCOME INDICATORS:

% of men accompanying women to isolated places
% of women going in groups to collect firewood
% of couples that have discussed how to share the workload
% of men helping their wives with chores
% of men using condoms during the harvest

IMPACT INDICATOR:

Number of AIDS deaths during the past year

At the end of the session, emphasize that there is a great need for the dissemination of **lessons learned** from PM&E. Encourage the participants to share their experiences using it when they go back and to use it in their own organisations.

SESSION 17
Field Work Preparation

Objectives

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

✔*...Have a basic understanding of the field site and the agency sponsoring the field work*

✔*...Prepare themselves as teams for the first day of field work*

Materials ✎

Flip chart and markers

ACTIVITIES

#1 Presentation by Sponsoring Agency

Have a representative from the sponsoring agency (SA) give a presentation about his or her organisation, the field site, the local culture and key phrases in the local language.

#2 Strategy for the First Day

In the large group, ask participants to brainstorm about what kind of information they would like to collect during the field work (for all of the days). Based on their feedback, have participants select one or two tools to implement the first day.

Also brainstorm about how participants can introduce themselves to their communities.

Introduce the **daily activity matrix** as a way to summarize their data at the end of the day.

#3 Defining Team Roles

Have participants break into their field teams and have each team choose a leader.

Also ask participants to decide who will be facilitators and who will be note takers on the first day.

#4 Team Contract

Ask each team to develop a “contract” for its field work in order to ensure that everyone agrees on a code of behaviour. Participants may write down the contract, or it can be stated orally.

TRAINER'S NOTES

CONTEXT: Before the start of the PLA workshop, the PLA team normally makes a preliminary site visit to the community (Stage 3 of the PPD process). Because of the time limitations of this course, it is not possible for the field practice to include a day just for the preliminary site visit. This session is therefore designed to give participants an introduction to the community where they will be working and to help them prepare for the first day's activities.

#1 Presentation by Sponsoring Agency

As an introduction to the field work, the trainers should ask a representative from the agency that will be hosting the participants to come to talk about their agency's work and the local communities. At a minimum, it is helpful for the agency representative to cover the following:

- ✔The agency and its work in the community
- ✔Description of the local communities
- ✔Local customs that need to be observed by participants (e.g., dress code)
- ✔Basic phrases in the local language (e.g., hello, goodbye, thank you)
- ✔The community's expectations of the participants (e.g., what they have been told about the field work)
- ✔Whether it is more appropriate to have men and women do the PLA activities together or separately

#2 Strategy for the First Day

There may not be enough time in the field to have the participants conduct a preliminary visit before the first day of the PLA workshop. Therefore, they may have to introduce themselves and explain their purpose before the first activity. Ideally, a representative from the SA will accompany each team of participants in order to serve as a liaison with the community and, if necessary, a translator.

The participants should think about how they want to introduce themselves, and all of the teams should agree on what they will tell the community about the purpose of their activities. One suggestion is to remain as vague as possible and say that they have been invited by the SA to come to learn about the community. It is important that participants do not raise the community's expectations about receiving money or other types of assistance. While the SA may be able to offer this type of assistance, the community needs to understand that the participants themselves are not able to do so. The trainers should discuss this with the SA before this session, so that they can agree on how to best present the purpose of the PLA workshop to the community.

On the first day, a good activity to do is **mapping**, since it serves as an icebreaker and the whole community can participate. Men and women may need to do separate mapping activities if this is culturally appropriate.

If the participants have only a few hours in the community, it may not be possible to do more than one activity. Therefore, they shouldn't plan too many activities or rush in order to fit in more activities. It is better to do one activity thoroughly than to do many activities hurriedly.

Remind participants that they should meet in the evening to discuss their experiences and summarize their data. Introduce the **daily activity matrix** (see Annex) as a way of summarizing activities at the end of every day.

#3 Defining Team Roles

Within each team, the participants need to choose a leader. For the first day, they must decide who will be note takers and who will be facilitators. These roles can be switched on subsequent days, although it is helpful for the team leader to remain the same.

#4 Team Contract

Each team must agree on a code of behaviour for the field work. This can be tied in to the "Challenging Field Situations" exercise from Session 6. Ask participants to think back to the situations that they discussed, and use these as a basis for their team contract. For example, they may want to make it a rule that everyone shows up for meetings on time, or that no one dominates discussions with community members. Every team contract will be different, and the contracts can either be oral or written.

Participants should also invent signs or signals that they can use with each other to communicate messages about their behaviour (e.g., touching their right ear if a team member has talked too long).

SESSION 18 Presentations and Closure

Objectives

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

✔*...Learn about the field experiences of the other participants*

✔*...Appreciate the challenges of implementing PLA in urban areas*

✔*...Identify institutional barriers to implementing PLA*

✔*...Be able to see how their knowledge and attitudes about PPD have changed during the course*

✔*...Evaluate this course*

Materials ✎

Bowl or basket
Small pieces of paper
Course evaluations
Self-evaluations

ACTIVITIES

#1 Field Work Presentations

Have each team make a presentation of the team's field work. Discuss the similarities and differences in the experiences of the different teams.

#2 PLA in Urban Areas and "Out of the Vacuum"

If the field practice has been done in a rural area, ask participants what challenges they might face when doing PLA in urban areas. Have them brainstorm about how to address these challenges.

Next, introduce the various institutional challenges of implementing PLA, and the dangers of working in a "vacuum." Distribute a blank piece of paper to each participant, and ask the participants to write down one obstacle that they anticipate facing when they implement PLA in their own organisation. Mix all the papers in a bowl or a basket. Read out loud as many of the papers as time allows, and ask the participants to brainstorm about how to overcome these obstacles.

#3 Case Study Examination and Final Evaluations

Pass out participants' responses to the Introductory Case Study from Session 1. Ask them if they would change any of their responses based on what they have learned in the course and, if so, to make those changes. Collect the responses again, and then have participants fill out the course evaluations.

#4 Course Closure

Refer participants to different PLA networks and publications (listed in the participant handbooks). Thank them for their participation and encourage them to share with others their future experiences in implementing PLA.

TRAINER'S NOTES

#1 Field Work Presentations

The presentations of the field experiences provide a good synthesis of the course and allow participants to reflect on what they have learned. The length of the presentations and their exact format are determined by the trainers, depending on the time available for this last session. The presentations do not need to be elaborate or formal; the most important aspect is the team reflection that takes place when preparing the presentations.

Following are suggested elements of the presentations:

- Summary of activities conducted by the team
- Summary of findings
- Reflections on what the participants found most challenging about the field work
- Reflections on what they enjoyed most about the field work
- Things that they would do differently during their next field experience

Encourage the teams to share at least one of the visual materials that was developed during the field work (e.g., a map or diagram).

#2 PLA in Urban Areas and "Out of the Vacuum"

See the section entitled "Urban Adaptations of PLA" at the beginning of this manual for information about challenges posed by conducting PLA in urban areas. Encourage participants to think of other challenges besides those mentioned here.

It is impossible to conduct PLA in a vacuum. Within an organisation, the participatory programme development process is affected by existing policies, working mechanisms, hierarchies and organisational philosophy. Each of these factors can either help or hinder the implementation of PLA. Therefore, the success of PLA requires more than just the training of one or two staff members. There is a need for a serious commitment to participation within all levels of the organisation. In other words, junior level field workers must be empowered to facilitate PLA, just as communities must be empowered to promote their own development. This successful institutionalization of PLA may take many years and may prove to be very challenging. Following are some factors that may pose obstacles to participants when trying to implement PLA in their projects[28]:

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[28] Absalom, E. et al. 1995. p. 5, and Adhikari et al. 1996.

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

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

There are several strategies that can help organisations to institutionalize PLA[29]:

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

#3 Case Study Examination and Final Evaluations

Pass out the answers to the introductory case study from Session 1 (since the participants have identified their papers with their birth dates, circulate the papers so that participants can take their own from the pile). Ask participants if they would change any of their responses based on what they have learned, and if so, how.

Ask participants to take a few minutes to fill in their new responses (and to distinguish somehow the new responses from the old responses on the sheet). Collect the case studies again when everyone has finished. The differences in responses will indicate how much participants have learned during the course.

[29] Absalom, E. et al. 1995. p. 5, and Adhikari et al. 1996.

Next, distribute the final course evaluations in order to assess the participants' opinions of the course content and structure. An example of a course evaluation appears in the Annex; it can be modified according to the trainers' needs.

#4 Course Closure

As explained in Session 2, one of the three pillars of PLA is **sharing**. This includes the sharing of experiences among PLA practitioners. Encourage the participants to share their implementation experiences with each other and with the wider PLA community, especially their experiences with participatory monitoring and evaluation. Distribute a list of the participants' names and addresses so that they can keep in contact with each other.