

COMMUNITY-BASED MONITORING AND EVALUATION TEAM*

Sleeping on our Own Mats: An Introductory Guide To Community-Based Monitoring and Evaluation

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Acronyms

ANPA	African Network on Participatory Approaches
CAP	Community Action Program
CDD	Community-Driven Development
CECI	<i>Centre Canadien d'Etude et de Coopération Internationale</i>
CMC	Community Management Committee
LLI	Local level institution
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PAMR-B	<i>Projet d'Appui au Monde Rural-Borgou</i>
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PNDP	Programme National de Développement Participatif
PNVRA	<i>Programme National de Vulgarisation et Recherche Agricole</i>
SSI	Semi-structured interview
VIP	Village Infrastructure Program
VLPA	Village Level Participatory Approach

Executive Summary

"The one who sleeps on a borrowed mat should realize that he is sleeping on cold, cold ground." – Moré proverb, Burkina Faso

The World Bank's internal evaluation unit has found that community-based projects in the Africa region have performed better than the region's projects as a whole. Yet only one in five of the community-based development projects were likely to be sustainable, no better than the Africa-wide average of 28%, and significantly less than projects in South Asia (47%) or Latin America and the Caribbean (54%).

From May 2001 to June 2002, our core team of World Bank staff and consultants, as well as NGO and government partners, engaged in participatory action-research in eighteen villages in Niger, Benin and Cameroon, with the generous support of the World Bank's Community-Driven Development (CDD) team for Africa. We initiated this action-research in order to develop a locally appropriate monitoring and evaluation system, to help communities sustain the results of their community development projects.

Moreover, as the Moré proverb suggests, communities cannot be independent without their own tools and resources. Communities can use the approach developed here to achieve and renew their local development goals, with or without significant external assistance.

Action-research objective

In the twenty-six communities in which we worked, communities were not interested in monitoring and evaluation if they were only going to monitor externally funded projects. Instead, they sought a means of comprehensively monitoring and evaluating their development. After initial field visits, we therefore refined our approach: we would develop a community-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that would enable communities to link monitoring and evaluation of their development activities to their local development plan, and to community development as a whole.

We therefore define community-based monitoring and evaluation as:

Monitoring and evaluation of community development by an interested community, so that the community can make independent choices about its own development.

Community-based M&E is not formal monitoring and evaluation. It does not aim to make a statement about the impact of a community development project. It is, instead, a tool for building communities' capacity to direct their development.

For whom? This paper is intended mainly for practitioners, to enable them to train community development workers to support community-based monitoring and evaluation. Decision-makers, by contrast, will likely find the rationale for this approach the most interesting.

Action-research rationale

World Bank evaluations have cited institution/capacity building and community empowerment as essential to the sustainability of community development projects – and often absent from them. Strong participatory methodologies, such as the Village Level Participatory Approach (VLPA), have enabled thousands of communities to set their own community development goals and to achieve them. We argue, however, that the VLPA and other participatory methods do not go far enough in bringing the entire community together for equitable, collective decision-making.

In our initial fieldwork, we found that communities implemented local development plans, but did not systematically re-visit nor re-adjust those plans. If communities cannot critically re-assess their development, we cannot say that we have truly facilitated their “empowerment.” We undertook the present research-action in order to reinforce current participatory methodologies, so that they could promote community capacity and empowerment more effectively. This, in turn, would increase the chances that investments by the World Bank and other agencies would be maintained over time.

Action-research findings

Our action-research in Niger, Benin and Cameroon has helped us to develop a basic approach to community-based monitoring and evaluation. It includes a *system* (or “how to”) for its use and the operational *tools* to use in facilitating community’s monitoring and evaluation. Several *methodological recommendations* for community-based M&E are made in the text.

The findings are intended primarily for trainers and development workers who seek to introduce and support community-based monitoring and evaluation in community development projects. In addition, Annex 1 provides training sheets for each of the tools that we discuss below. In Annex 2, they can find the sample schema for sequentially introducing a community-based M&E approach.

Community-based monitoring and evaluation system. Community-based monitoring and evaluation is intended to fit into participatory rural approaches, whether the *Village Level Participatory Approach (VLPA)* or other participatory approaches. There are five stages to its implementation:

1. Preparation;
2. Introduction of the monitoring and evaluation concept to communities;
3. Development of the community’s ‘monitoring and evaluation’ work program;
4. Monitor development activities; and
5. Evaluate and re-appraise local development

The tools. A core set of tools is designed to introduce the M&E concept to communities and to help communities to put the approach into practice. These tools include (i) signs of well-being table; (ii) internal organizations chart; (iii) external organizations chart; (iv) activity monitoring table; (v) meeting calendar; and (vi) service provider agreement.

Conclusion: The Way Forward

We consider community empowerment to be community ownership, management and control of their life choices. By honing skills to monitor and evaluate their development, communities become capable of managing the development process on their own. This ability, and the motivation that it engenders, enables communities to independently sustain their development process.

As with any initiative, however, community-based monitoring and evaluation will be of little use if it is not consistently supported by all stakeholders. Community members must, *de facto*, support its use. Just as importantly, the World Bank and other development agencies must make a long-term commitment to the use of community-based monitoring and evaluation and complementary participatory approaches.

The first step in doing so is to maintain loan instruments that permit long-term community development projects. Building community capacity for monitoring, evaluation and general management of the development process is a gradual process. The loan and grant instruments of the Bank and other development agencies must accommodate the measured nature of community change.

The second step is to ensure that development workers provide on-going, consistent support to participating communities. Too often, "community-driven" initiatives fall flat when they lack support from the development workers whose job it is to provide technical assistance.

The final step is to support evaluation of the effectiveness of community-based M&E, in increasing the sustainability of externally-supported development projects. The merits of various participatory methodologies can be endlessly debated, but we cannot make solid statements about their relative value without rigorous, independent evaluations. The Bank and other agencies must allot funds to support impact and process evaluations of community-based projects, including those in which community-based M&E is used. The evaluations' findings should be fed back into the continued strengthening community development projects, and our stock of knowledge about how to successfully structure such programs.

One participant in our research, Papa Musogui Alafiarugui of Benin's Sontou village, described the relevance of community-based M&E for his community. The approach, as he put it, helps the community to unearth "what will happen in the near future with the many things that we do today, how they will be married happily and take care together of the new children that we all wish for." To realize this process of discovery, and to make their own development choices, community members must gain requisite skills in analysis and re-assessment of local development. We believe that community-based monitoring and evaluation will help community members to develop these skills. Development agencies can then legitimately assert that their projects have supported community development, rather than imposing an external "development" process at odds with indigenous community change.

**Sleeping on our own mats:
An introductory guide to
community-based monitoring and evaluation**

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he is sleeping on cold, cold ground.” – Moré proverb, Burkina Faso

The World Bank’s internal evaluation unit has found that community-based projects in the Africa region have performed better than the region’s projects as a whole. Yet only one in five of the community-based development projects were likely to be sustainable, no better than the Africa-wide average of 28%, and significantly less than projects in South Asia (47%) or Latin America and the Caribbean (54%).¹

We initiated this action-research in order to develop a locally appropriate monitoring and evaluation system, to help communities sustain the results of their community development projects. Moreover, as the Moré proverb suggests, communities cannot be independent without their own tools and resources.² Communities can use the approach developed here to achieve and renew their local development goals, with or without significant external assistance.

Action-Research Objective

Our original research objective was to develop a community-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that communities found both simple and inherently interesting. If communities controlled the monitoring and evaluation of their development activities, we reasoned that they would feel more commitment to them. These activities would, in turn, be more likely to be kept up by communities over time.

Colleagues pointed to simple community M&E systems that would enhance the sustainability of community sub-projects: communities provide a handful of indicators, or meet certain criteria, in order to continue to participate in community development projects. In the twenty-six communities in which we worked, however, communities were not interested in monitoring and evaluation if they were only going to monitor externally funded projects. Instead, they sought a means of comprehensively monitoring and evaluating their development.

We therefore refined our action-research objective: we would develop a community-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that would enable communities to link

¹ As cited in World Bank. 2000a:5. 75% of African community-based projects completed between 1988 and 1998 were evaluated as satisfactory, as compared to 70% of all Africa projects evaluated 1998-99 and 60% over the period 1994-97.

² World Bank, 2000b:4.

The community-based monitoring and evaluation team included Josef Toledano (TTL), Wilda Sajous (PA) (AFTR2); Amos Ben Mayor, Consultant; Wakili Tairou, Consultant; Bernadette Ryan, Consultant and Hope Neighbor, Consultant. We are grateful for the tireless assistance of Mamadou Abdou Sani (Consultant) in Niger, the Community Action Program (CAP) preparation team; the Centre Canadien d’Etude et de Coopération Internationale (CECI) de Niger; and each of the CAP’s NGO or bilateral partners for the pilot phase; in Benin, the staff of the Projet d’Appui au Monde Rural-Borgou (PAMR-B), the CARDER/BORGOU, and the GERED NGO; and in Cameroon, the staff of the Programme National de Recherche et de Vulgarisation Agricole (PNVRA). We would also like to thank Jim Edgerton for sharing his rating system with us, which we have used to help communities to rate external service providers.

monitoring and evaluation of their development activities to their local development plan, and to community development as a whole.

We define community-based monitoring and evaluation as:

Monitoring and evaluation of community development by an interested community, so that the community can make independent choices about its own development.

Community-based M&E is not formal monitoring and evaluation. It does not aim to make a statement about the impact of a community development project. It is, instead, a tool for building communities' capacity to direct their development.

For whom? This paper is intended mainly for practitioners, to enable them to train community development workers to support community-based monitoring and evaluation.

↳ A ↳ indicates information especially for trainers and/or community development workers. Decision-makers will find the first section, on the rationale of this approach, the most interesting.

In this note, we seek to, first, provide the rationale (or "so what?") for community-based monitoring and evaluation; second, outline the methodology that we used in the development of this approach; third, present our findings, in terms of both the *tools and system* developed and *observations* about the use of the system; and, fourth, conclude with a few remarks about the potential for community-based M&E as a complement to participatory techniques already used within community development projects.

So what? Rationale for community-based monitoring and evaluation

Both institution/capacity building and community empowerment serve as guiding principles for community development, supported by the World Bank as well as by other development agencies.³ As highlighted in the introductory paragraphs, sustainability remains a concern for community development projects. Bank evaluators considered the main reason for the low likelihood of sustainability in African community-based development projects to be a weak institution-building approach. Furthermore, while the projects evaluated did allow for some participation of local people in project design and implementation, the projects "were typically earmarked for specific sectors and did not empower communities to set priorities or manage projects...Participation without empowerment proved unsustainable."⁴

The World Bank and other development partners often argue that community development projects must devolve responsibility for choosing, implementing and evaluating development activities to the communities themselves, if we seek to increase community capacity and empowerment. This is most definitely true. Strong participatory methodologies, such as the *Village Level Participatory Approach (VLPA)*, have enabled thousands of communities

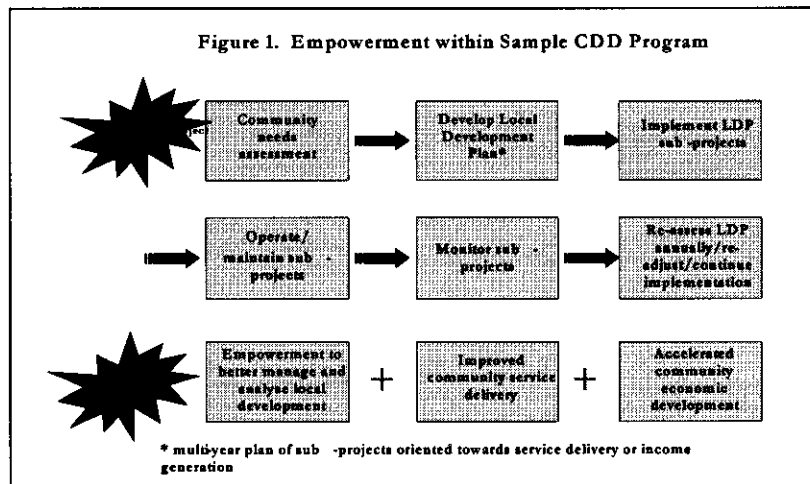
³ Some NGOs and donor agencies call these programs simply 'community development' or 'people-oriented' projects; the World Bank refers to them as 'community-driven development' (CDD) projects.

⁴ World Bank, 2000a:5.

to set their own community development goals and to achieve them. The VLPA was launched in Benin's Borgou region in 1996, for example, helping over 400 villages to articulate their local development priorities and to generate enthusiasm for realizing these goals.

We argue, however, that the VLPA and other participatory methods do not go far enough in bringing the entire community together for equitable, collective decision-making. They enable communities to plan and implement development activities, but not to track and re-assess them. If communities cannot critically re-assess their development, we cannot say that we have truly facilitated their "empowerment." "Empowerment" — to do what? We explore weaknesses in the commonly practiced participatory methods below.

Limited empowerment. We often believe that community development projects promote empowerment, or increased community control of its development and life choices, through the simple design-implement-assess process illustrated in Figure 1. Just a small slice of any one community participates in community development activities, however: not all community members are equally "empowered" to participate in project design and implementation. Furthermore, we know that the members of community development committees tend to be predominantly community elites, and male. Through the basic participatory process, then, the community as a whole is little likely to be "empowered" to alter traditional hierarchies of power, or to argue for a more equitable distribution of community development resources. This is especially true in more stratified communities.



Imbalanced skills and capacity. When we began our research, we found that our implementing partners were often unsure of how to adapt existing participatory tools to enhance communities' capacity to make choices about their development. We often assume that the community members involved in community development activities have, or can gain, requisite skills in planning, managing and shepherding community development over time. We did find that community members could design a local development plan and implement the development activities listed on the plan. They were not nearly as at-ease, on the other

hand, in supporting re-evaluating their plan. As a result, there was no feedback loop: communities did not make new development choices based upon measured, consistent assessments of the past development activities.

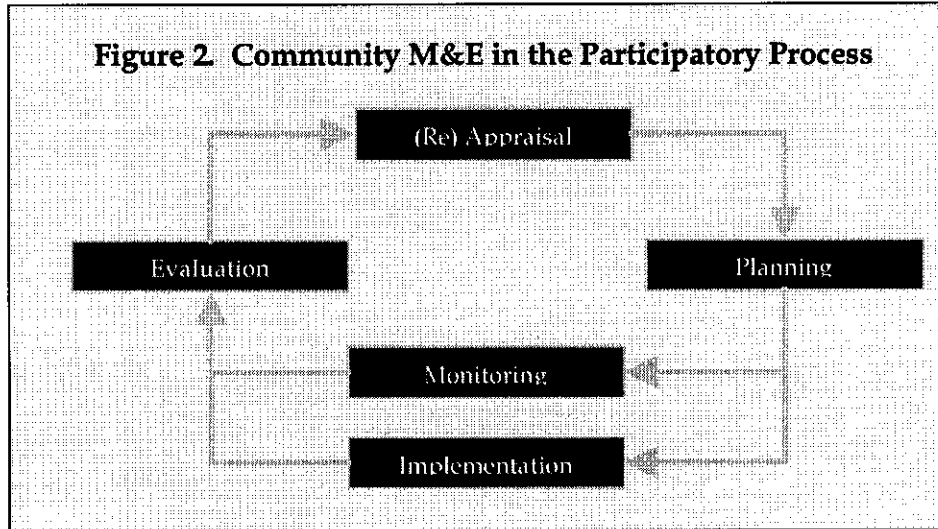
The weaknesses in community monitoring and evaluation are tied to the lack of well-developed, consistently supported methods for doing so. The authors of the VLPA toolkit wrote, "We do not yet fully understand how to organize [community-based monitoring or] evaluations effectively."⁵ While there are a host of participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) methodologies, they do not respond to the same needs as does community-based monitoring and evaluation. Participatory monitoring and evaluation seeks to increase communities' participation in the development process by including community members in the collection and some use of data about project implementation.⁶ In this type of PM&E, communities are placed in the wings, part of but not central to the project's monitoring and evaluation system.

Through the approach, then, a broader, and more representative, portion of the community is involved in monitoring and evaluation activities. At critical moments, such as the re-evaluation of the local development plan, we suggest that the community as a whole come back together to make decisions and consider the future of local development. We hope that this will increase the "empowerment" reach of community development projects. We also place community members at the center of the monitoring and evaluation exercise, working to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluation.

⁵ ANPA, 2000:38.

⁶ Most participatory methodologies include seven phases: (i) decide who participates; (ii) establish goals; (iii) develop indicators; (iv) gather information; (v) analyze results; (vi) share results; and (vii) take action (Galia Schechter, e-mail communication, June 2002). These methods are intended to evaluate the *project*, rather than communities' own development. Examples of participatory M&E methodologies include Jacob Pfohl's 1986 *Participatory Evaluation : A User's Guide*; the UNDP's 1997 *Who Are the Question-Makers? Participatory Evaluation Handbook*; and Alexandra Stephens' 1988 *Participatory Monitoring and evaluation: Handbook for Training Field Workers*.

As Figure 2 illustrates, community-based M&E reinforces the connections between the implementation of community development activities, monitoring of these activities, evaluation of community development, and re-adjustment (or "re-appraisal") of the local development plan, to better suit community development needs.



Methodology of "Mutual Learning through Action-Research"

To develop and test this methodology, we engaged in participatory action-research in eighteen villages in Niger, Benin and Cameroon,⁷ from May 2001 to June 2002. A technical team of Bank staff, consultants and project and NGO staff in each of the three countries undertook the action-research.

Case selection. Niger became part of the research because of the expressed need to develop PM&E further, by several of the NGOs and bilaterals participating in the Niger Community Action Plan's (CAP) pilot phase. The Canadian volontariat CECI and a dynamic member of a CAP guiding team on M&E were interested in working on the development of the methodology, making collaboration with partners in Niger easy. The selection of villages was based upon CECI's zone of intervention, in western Niger.

Building upon our work in Niger, we solicited a partnership with Benin's PAMR-B team. PAMR-B has been widely recognized for its quick and efficient support of community development in the Borgou, Benin's primary cotton producing region, and its use of the Village Level Participatory Approach (VLPA). The PAMR-B team sought greater support in developing its community-based monitoring and evaluation approach. PAMR-B villages were chosen in function of geographic diversity, with villages in the southern and eastern sections of the Borgou selected for work with the research-action team.

Cameroon, finally, joined this initiative thanks to the results achieved within its Programme National de Recherche et de Vulgarisation Agricole (PNVRA). The PNVRA had used a participatory approach in over 200 villages in two regions. Villages participating in the PNVRA had already developed solid bases in participatory work. We sought to fold the community-based M&E approach into the pre-existing participatory foundation laid in these villages, as community-based M&E is intended to be part of the participatory approach as a whole. Cameroon is also preparing a national CDD program, the Programme National de Développement Participatif (PNDP). World Bank and project staff in Cameroon felt that the participatory methods used in the PNVRA could use reinforcement in community-based monitoring and evaluation. They could then be used to facilitate community development in the PNDP.

"Community"

Throughout, we refer to the local populations that we work with as "communities." As you may have noticed, however, we did our fieldwork in villages. The reason for using "community" as our frame of reference is to accommodate the community development projects that occur at the supra-village level, re-grouping several villages in one "community." We do not seek to suggest that communities are monolithic bodies with little internal variation or difference. To the contrary, we have designed the present system to accommodate difference, and to reinforce the checks and balances that let all voices be heard.

⁷ These villages included, in Niger: the villages of Tchoulan, Kibba Tombo, Kibba Adamou, and Kossey (Loga, Dosso Province); Souloulou (Maradi Province); and Falki Karama and Gangara Boulama (Zinder Province); in Benin, the village of Kori (N'dali, Borgou); Woré (Parakou, Borgou); and Sontou, Sonon et Guinagourou (Peréré, Borgou); and in Cameroon, the villages of Kouffen, Manfu, Foyet, et Njimon (Foumban, West province) and Sorawel et Djougui (Mayo Louti, North Province).

How we work. We consider our working mode to be “action-research.” One of our team members, Amos Ben Mayor, expertly described this approach in thinking back to a conversation that he had with Robert Chambers and Jan Weetjens in June 2000. Chambers challenged Ben Mayor and Weetjens to justify the Bank’s tendency to scale up its projects too quickly: not enough proper research, too much quick action, quality drowned out by quantity, etc. Ben Mayor countered that quantity need not obscure quality, but that we must take the time to understand communities’ motivations for community development.

He commented: “Both ‘searching and ‘doing’ are intrinsic in the real desire of the community for a better life ...It is possible for this hidden potential of the community to be sensed, discovered and well articulated by a group of dedicated people.”⁸ Our approach, then, was to first unearth a bit of this intrinsic motivation in back-and-forth, semi-structured interviews with communities, and then to develop tools that would allow development workers to build upon that motivation instead of stifling it with inappropriate or blunt-edged participatory techniques.

We used semi-structured discussions with entire village populations to develop the methods for both generating community interest in monitoring and evaluation for their own use, and for introducing a community-based monitoring and evaluation system. We would first discuss local history, to generate community interest and to gauge community members’ level of proficiency in deducing cause and effect. We would then introduce a few of the monitoring and evaluation tools, described in the Findings section below, often breaking the participants into small groups to work with the tools more intensively. In Niger, we also formed monitoring and evaluation committees and worked with committee members to select rudimentary indicators for tracking local development. Our local partners followed up with these communities, working with them over the course of last year to put a monitoring and evaluation system into place.

⁸ Ben Mayor, 2002.

Action-Research Findings

Our action-research in Niger, Benin and Cameroon has helped us to develop the following approach to community-based monitoring and evaluation. In this section, we describe the *system* (or "how to") for its use, the operational *tools* for development workers to use in facilitating community's monitoring and evaluation, and finally offer several *methodological recommendations* for community-based M&E.

↳ Trainers and development workers can read through the findings to understand how to sequentially introduce and support community-based monitoring and evaluation. In addition, in Annex 1, they will find training sheets for each of the tools that we discuss below. In Annex 2, they can find the sample schema for introducing a community-based M&E approach (This is basically an outline version of this section's text. The outline may be easier for some readers to understand.).

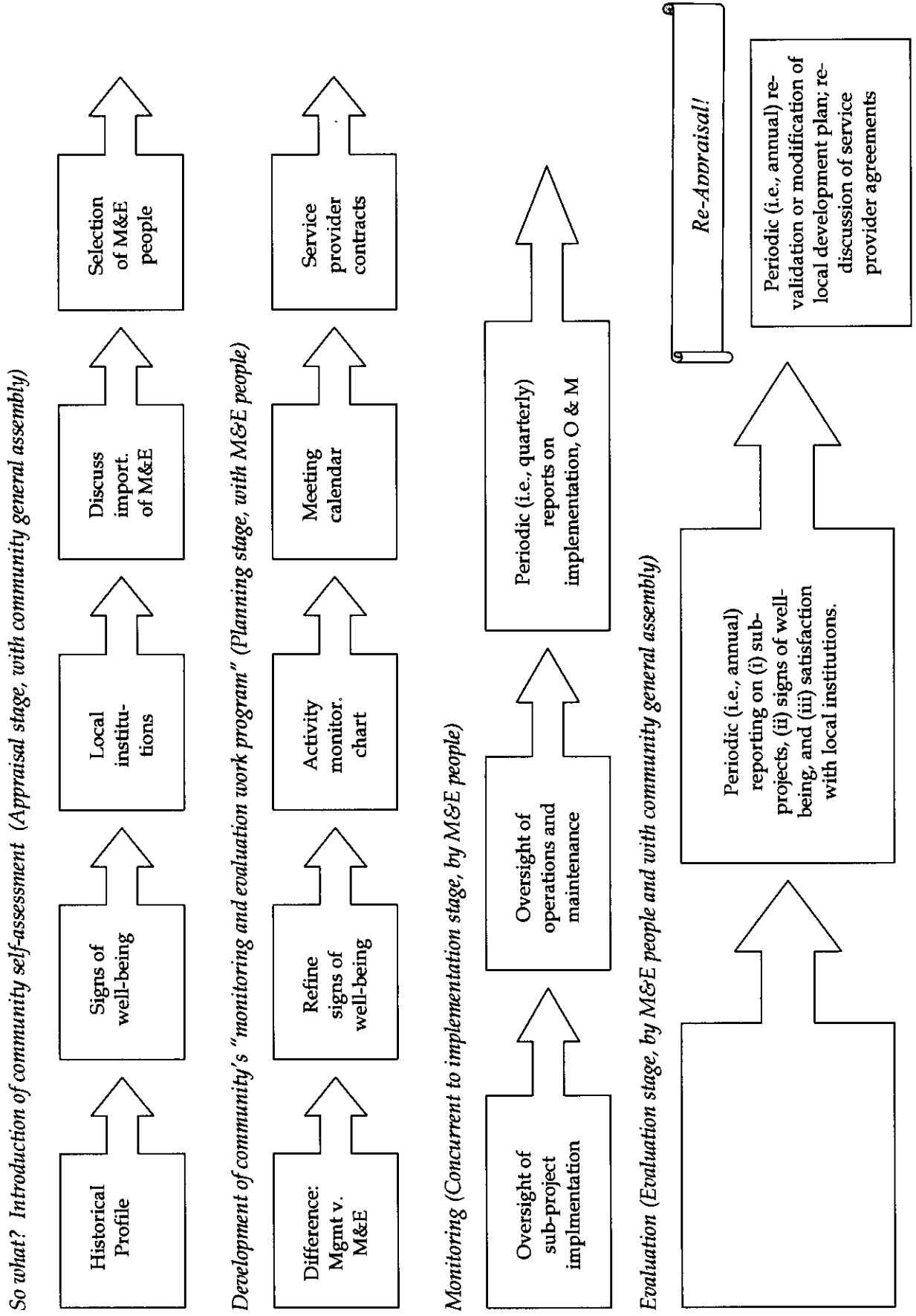
Community-based monitoring and evaluation system

Community-based monitoring and evaluation is intended to fit into participatory rural approaches, whether the *Village Level Participatory Approach (VLPA)* or other participatory approaches. There are five stages to its implementation:

1. Prepare;
2. Introduce the monitoring and evaluation concept to communities;
3. Develop the community's 'monitoring and evaluation' work program; and
4. Monitor development activities
5. Evaluate and re-appraise local development

Community-based M&E complements strong, existing participatory methodologies. Figure 3 illustrates the system in flowchart form. It indicates, in parentheses, where each stage occurs in the participatory process laid out in Figure 2.

Figure 3. Community-based Monitoring and Evaluation System



Preparation. Development workers must first decide which tools, described in the following section, are most appropriate for the communities in which they work; chart out when the monitoring and evaluation idea will be introduced to a community, within the participatory appraisal process; decide which materials are needed for the introductory session, and prepare them; and consider what follow-up may be proposed to communities.

Introduction of the monitoring and evaluation concept to communities. After the preparation phase is finished, the development worker can request a general assembly in each of the communities in which she works. Covering the points below usually takes two general assemblies. During these initial encounters, the facilitator can introduce the community-based M&E idea to the general assembly. The initial encounters can include a village history; the community's vision for its future, and signs of well-being; a discussion of the importance of community M&E; and identification of local level institutions. Finally, the general assembly selects community members to be responsible for M&E.

Village history. After introductions are made, the development worker can initiate a debate of village history in order to spark communities' interest in monitoring and evaluation and re-visit causes and effects of community change over time.

One team member observed that people in each of the four villages visited in Benin told a similar tale in the course of this exercise: "The village, when first founded by a wise king or a brave hunter-warrior, enjoyed a period of accelerated construction and prosperous economy and social life. A long period of decline and stagnation followed, sometimes a displacement to a nearby site, and memories of instability and even despair.

"At the time of the national Independence, the newborn State tried to revive the rural zones and a new period of village expansion and development began; but, again, this period was short lived and government support was not sustained and almost vanished. The village sank again into a period of slower development and poverty.

"[A few years ago], a new period of vigorous social and economical evolution began, is still self-sustained and brings a new hope for better community life."

An interesting debate emerged from this pattern: "What are the **reasons** for these *alternating periods* of blooming and waning? What are the **possibilities** that will ensure, this time, a continuous, sustainable pace of development?"⁹

PM&E methodologies commonly focus on development projects' performance in a given community, eliciting participants' views on how the project has affected them. The communities in which we worked had much more to say about their development over time, rather than the effects of single development projects. It is important to build upon this in developing a community M&E approach.

Community vision for its future, and identification of signs of well-being. At this stage, the facilitator can make a natural transition into discussing the community's vision for its future

⁹ Ben Mayor, 2000.

and developing the signs of well-being that will show whether or not a community is making progress towards this vision. The facilitator may use a “signs of well-being table” (described in the next section and developed as a training tool in Annex 1) to identify a few indicators that the community believes would indicate a change in the pace of local development. It is important to talk about cause and effect during this discussion: is it realistic that the community’s development activities will result in changes to the signs of well-being?

Discussion of the importance of M&E. Near the end of the introductory session(s), the development worker can shift to the discussion to consider whether M&E is important for communities. The discussion should not be an imposition of the facilitator’s point of view. Rather, it should be a frank debate about whether monitoring and evaluation is worth the bother for the community.

Nonetheless, the facilitator can use the tools outlined here, or other participatory methods, to enhance debate about the utility of community M&E. In the village of Manfu in Cameroon’s West province, for example, the Management Committee president could not say how many meetings the committee had held in the last six months, nor which topics were discussed. By facilitating an introductory exercise with a sample calendar for planning meetings (tool 3), our team was able to illustrate the importance of regular meetings for both discussing implementation of the local development plan, and checking up on the implementation.

Identify internal and external organizations. If a community decides that it would like to begin to monitor and evaluate its development, the community development worker can help the community to identify its internal and external organizations. Our work is to strengthen the existing social fabric. Identifying and rating community and external organizations allows participants, first, to identify the strongest candidates for partnership in local development and, second, to establish a baseline assessment of the strength of each of these organizations. Once that a community has made a baseline rating of a service provider, they can use subsequent ratings as a point of leverage when discussing changes or additions to service with the service provider.

Selection of local people to be responsible for M&E. The local people chosen to monitor and evaluate development are critically important. If they are of the same class and gender as members of the management committee, they are not likely to strongly counterbalance this committee. As our Nigerien partners noted, community development movers and shakers often come from the community elite. Unless explicit effort is made to encourage the participation of those who do not usually weigh in upon village affairs, the people responsible for monitoring and evaluation are not likely to differ much from those managing community development.

There are several means of ensuring broader representation amongst those responsible for community-based M&E. A development worker might:

- Encourage marginalized members of the community to attend the community general assembly, prior to the meeting;
- Actively engage their participation during the meeting;

- Hold off on selection of those responsible for M&E until after the community's management committee has been chosen;
- Ask participants about the characteristics they thought M&E people should have, and *then* ask for nominations of people possessing those qualities. Communities in the west of Niger, for example, cited availability, an open mind, patience, respect, functional literacy and honesty as characteristics important for those responsible for monitoring and evaluation; and
- Use examples of women's contributions in other areas of community life to begin a discussion about the role for women in M&E. We typically made an analogy to the household, where women's influence maintains children's health, family nutrition and general well-being. If women's influence is positive, it follows that the inclusion of women in community affairs could only improve the community's well-being.

Our Nigerien partners found that class was an important consideration when community general assemblies choose the people to be responsible for M&E. Evaluating our pilot M&E Committees, in six villages in Niger, they found that 80% of the M&E Committee members were close to the traditional chief's family. In only one committee were members from other classes more numerous than those of the chief. In this community, M&E Committee members were far more likely to be vocal about, and alter the course of, local development. Development workers must heed community members' class origins when facilitating community discussion of M&E persons' selection.

Only a small group of people (less than six to eight) is needed for community-based M&E. A larger group becomes unwieldy, and motivated community members can become discouraged from further involvement in community development. Community members can either act at large, or in a Monitoring and Evaluation Committee. On one hand, an M&E Committee might serve as a stronger counterweight to a community Management Committee than local individuals working alone to oversee sub-project implementation or track community development over time. On the other hand, a community might feel that another committee will perturb the smooth functioning of community development. We suggest that the development worker ask the community general assembly which approach they prefer.

Development of the community's "monitoring and evaluation work program." In order to develop their M&E work program, the development worker can first reinforce the difference between the community roles of managing, and monitoring and evaluating, development. Those responsible for M&E can, finally, design an activity monitoring chart and a meeting calendar, and develop service provider agreements.

Reinforcement of management/monitoring and evaluation differences. Before developing the monitoring and evaluation tools to be used, it is important to make the difference between management and monitoring and evaluation clear. The *management* and *monitoring and evaluation* roles are often confused. The Management Committee's role is to guide the implementation of the local development plan. This *does* include receiving feedback about the status of sub-project implementation. This is sometimes referred to as 'monitoring,' which often makes dividing work between management and monitoring and evaluation difficult. While the Management Committee should ensure that the sub-project is being

implemented as planned, those responsible for M&E should serve as a counterweight to the MC, overseeing or auditing their work.

In Kossey, in Niger's Dosso province, as well as in other areas, we worked with community members to make this difference more concrete. Though only two hours from Niger's capital, Kossey's population had never worked with external development organizations before. Returning to Kossey in January 2002, we asked the M&E and Management Committees about their work over the past year. Committee members were still waiting for the first tranche of sub-project funding to arrive. We asked members of each committee how planned to manage and oversee, respectively, the implementation of the first sub-project when the first tranche of funding did arrive. It quickly became clear that the members of either committee didn't have a strong sense of who was to do what. One M&E Committee member was even to co-sign the Management Committee's withdrawal slips for funds from the bank!

We shifted to an example. In the market, the butchers slaughter their animals at the beginning of the day, we mentioned. But before the slaughter, an animal inspector makes the tour of the market to ensure that the ill-fated animals have no obvious health problems. Would it make sense, we asked, for the inspector to also be one of the butchers? The outcry belied the response, "But, no, the animal inspector would lie about the meat!" Committee members quickly understood that, like animal inspectors at local markets, those responsible for monitoring and evaluation needed to have separate responsibilities from the people who were managing the community's development activities.

In practice, development workers need to consistently work with both the Management Committee and those responsible for M&E, to define their roles and emphasize the complementary *differences* between them. This will help these community members to more effectively manage and monitor their community development process, respectively. As importantly, it will help to foster a transparent culture of questioning community development, to identify problems and resolve them before they become intransigent obstacles to community development.

Developing the tools: activity monitoring chart and a meeting calendar, and develop service provider agreements. The community members responsible for M&E can work with the development worker to design these tools, described in greater detail in Annex 1. The development worker should also work with the M&E people to refine the "signs of well-being" selected by the community. The number of signs should be kept to a minimum. With a few strong indicators, the M&E people will be able to facilitate a clear discussion with the community general assembly about the community's development.

They might keep these tools, and the local institutions chart, in a log book. The log book can also be used to record their activities, including the minutes of meetings. As with Indonesia's Village Infrastructure Program (VIP), communities could present these log books to visitors to illustrate their work and to register complaints, if any. The log book becomes a point of pride, a record and a way to document problems or misdoings in community development. The log book must be kept up to date, however. The community development agent must support community members in record-keeping and note-taking.

Monitoring development activities. Once that the community members responsible for M&E have developed each of their M&E tools, they are ready to begin monitoring sub-project implementation and evaluating community development. As with the rest of this approach, M&E should complement the rest of the participatory development process.

Sub-project monitoring. Tracking a sub-project takes a strong commitment on the part of community members. It would be a shame for the sub-project implementation to be for naught. Development workers can help to arrange a regular exchange between the community Management Committee and the community members responsible for M&E. Communities often hold quarterly meetings to discuss progress on the implementation of their local development plan. Quarterly meetings are a convenient, and appropriate, time for the M&E people to present their observations about sub-project implementation, and to suggest changes to make sub-project implementation more efficient and transparent.

Evaluating and re-appraising local development. There are three parts to communities' evaluation of their development.

Update "signs of well-being." Periodically (each year, for example), community members responsible for M&E can update their "signs of well-being" table. How has community development progressed? Are these changes surprising? They can ask the community general assembly to rate their satisfaction with the community's local institutions, and the external organizations that work with them. By rating their institutions, and comparing the new and old ratings, the community can develop a more rigorous sense of changes in their quality of life, and use changes in ratings in their discussions with service providers.

Re-adjusting local development plans. The M&E people can then present their findings to the community general assembly, generally at an annual general assembly for community development. Based upon their findings, the M&E people can make suggestions for changing the local development plan.

Re-negotiating service provider agreements. They can also propose discussions with external service providers whose service is not satisfactory to the community. How can the service be improved? How will change be measured? If the community general assembly endorses the proposed discussions, the M&E people can return to external service providers to discuss the service provider agreements drawn up a year prior.

Many participatory approaches peter out, instead of institutionalizing a vigorous culture of re-examining local development plans so that they continue to be relevant to community needs. The VLPA approach proposes an "overall assessment meeting," to re-adjust the local development plan. In the VLPA communities in which we did our fieldwork, however, no community had practiced this critical re-validation step. Development workers will need to conscientiously support communities so that re-adjustment becomes an indispensable part of the participatory development process.

Tools

In combination with a debate about village history, these tools may be used to *introduce* community-based monitoring and evaluation ideas to communities. More importantly, the tools are designed to help community members responsible for M&E to put a community M&E system into place and to help the system to function.

The tools include: (i) internal organizations chart; (ii) external organizations chart; (iii) signs of well-being table; (iv) activity monitoring table; (v) meeting calendar; and (vi) service provider agreement. They are summarized in Table 1, following page.

- ↳ Communities, trainers and development workers can pick and choose among these tools. The entire set of tools may be just right for some communities, and too burdensome for others: flexibility in their use is key!
- ↳ Please see Annex I for training methodologies for each of the tools.

Table 1. Tools for Community-Based Monitoring and Evaluation

Tool	Purpose	Description
Signs of well-being table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities identify signs of well-being, and track local change over time in order to establish whether their community is moving towards achieving their long-term vision for community development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table provides a baseline for local development, by measuring local signs of well-being at the present time. Community members responsible for M&E update the chart periodically (i.e., annually), to measure their community's progress towards their vision for development. Measurement can be proportional, or in absolute numbers (proportional: the number of houses in mud brick, or children in school, 'out of ten' in the village; absolute: the number of motorized irrigation pumps in the village). Community members responsible for M&E bring updated table of signs of well-being to periodic community development meeting, to guide community's changes to, or re-validation of, their local development plan.
Internal organizations chart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow community members and development workers to identify the local level institutions (LLIs) that community development intends to build upon Allow community members to rate their satisfaction with these organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chart lists the name of each community organization, its principal activities, and the level of community satisfaction with that organization. Satisfaction is rated using five symbols, representing satisfaction from "bad" to "very good." Community satisfaction with internal organizations can provide another means of assessing change in community well-being over time.
External organizations chart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow community members and development workers to identify the external 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chart lists the name of each external organization, its area of intervention, its principal activities in the community, and the community's level of satisfaction with the organization's assistance. Community satisfaction with external organizations can provide another

	<p>organizations that assist the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide community members a basis for discussing service provider agreements (below) with external service providers 	<p>means of assessing change in community well-being over time.</p>
<p>Meeting calendar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and organize local development, to increase the likelihood of sub-project success, and strong monitoring and evaluation thereof • Facilitate regular, open community exchanges about development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendar plans all community meetings, and records whether or not they took place.
<p>Service provider agreement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage previously non-evaluated services to become accountable to the populations that they are mandated to serve • Identify the community's responsibilities towards the external service provider • Create a common document that summarizes the expectations of each party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement lists the activities planned, between a community and an external service provider; the responsibilities of each party in undertaking the activity; the party or person(s) responsible; the deadline for each activity; and the actual date of completion of each activity.

Methodological recommendations

We would like to close this section on 'Action-Research Findings' with a few remarks about community-based M&E.

Capacity-building. We found that communities were willing and eager partners in the assessment of their own development. Nevertheless, community members often lacked the skills to organize, plan, monitor or evaluate their community development. Without an explicit focus on building these skills, community development projects stand little chance of "empowering" communities to realize a brighter future.

Facilitate capacity-building explicitly. We recommend, therefore, that the participatory rural appraisal process include an explicit focus on capacity-building. As the director of Cameroon's PNVRA cautioned, capacity-building sessions must have clearly defined objectives and a well-respected timeline for the visits. Training specialists might work with development workers to design a capacity-building program, taking into account communities' expressed training needs.

Use group meetings or workshops to train more people at one time. The M&E people or members of Management Committees from several communities can be trained at one time, at a sector-level capacity-building seminar. In Niger, the CECI NGO has created sector-level M&E and Management Committees. Each community sends its M&E and Management Committee members to these committees' meetings. The meetings can provide the occasion for each committee to receive training as well as to share lessons learned, to exchange ideas, or to provide, as a group, feedback to external service providers.

Reinforcement of monitoring, evaluation and management skills is especially important if the capacity of community members responsible for these functions varies. Our Nigerien partners noted that any one group's work, whether that of the Management Committee or the people responsible for M&E, typically depended upon the dynamism of one or two of its members. This translates into a concentration of information and power in the hands of a very small number of people. Every effort should be made to reinforce the capacity of *all* committee members, instead of relying on the strengths of one or two.

Support capacity-building with functional literacy classes. In Niger's Dosso province, the NGO CECI is supporting functional literacy classes. They have been a great success, with both women and men of all ages attending class in straw-fenced schoolrooms. Reinforcing this initiative, or instituting it in other areas, is a strong means of enhancing the skills needed for community-based M&E.

Using local language to describe M&E concepts. In Nigerien communities, we noticed that the community development agent translating for us sprinkled the French words for "monitoring" and "evaluation" amidst his description of the concepts in local language. We realized that the notion was not at all simple in local language. We would have to find equivalent words to describe this concept, if we were to have any hope of debating M&E. After a lively discussion, we were able to suss out words to describe basic M&E concepts. In Hausa, for example, we settled upon "bin saw da kafa," which translates as "follow step by step in the quest for performance." The Zarma translator used the word "nessiant," which means "to

measure." He also used "lassabou" several times, as well, meaning "comparing things today with how they were in the past."

NGO CECI has proposed the development of a basic M&E lexicon in local language, with the National Office of Literacy, for their project zone. Community development projects in other regions and countries might find a similar approach useful.

Cost of this approach. Critics might point to what appears to be a heavy load for development workers facilitating this process. The Nigerien team made quick calculations of the additional facilitation costs of this method. They conclude that the cost comes to less than \$50 a community per year. To our mind, this cost is insignificant when compared to communities' gain, in being able to control and *successfully* guide a sustainable development process.

Conclusion: The Way Forward

We consider community empowerment to be community ownership, management and control of their life choices. By honing skills to monitor and evaluate their development, communities become capable of managing the development process on their own. This ability, and the motivation that it engenders, enables communities to independently sustain their development process.

As with any initiative, however, community-based monitoring and evaluation will be of little use if it is not consistently supported by all stakeholders. Community members must, *de facto*, support its use. Just as importantly, the World Bank and other development agencies must make a long-term commitment to the use of community-based monitoring and evaluation and complementary participatory approaches.

The first step in doing so is to maintain loan instruments that permit long-term community development projects. Building community capacity for monitoring, evaluation and general management of the development process is a gradual process. The loan and grant instruments of the Bank and other development agencies must accommodate the measured nature of community change.

The second step is to ensure that development workers provide on-going, consistent support to participating communities. Too often, "community-driven" initiatives fall flat when they lack support from the development workers whose job it is to provide technical assistance.

The final step is to support evaluation of the effectiveness of community-based M&E, in increasing the sustainability of externally-supported development projects. The merits of various participatory methodologies can be endlessly debated, but we cannot make solid statements about their relative value without rigorous, independent evaluations. The Bank and other agencies must allot funds to support impact and process evaluations of community-based projects, including those in which community-based M&E is used. The evaluations' findings should be fed back into the continued strengthening community development projects, and our stock of knowledge about how to successfully structure such programs.

One participant in our research, Papa Musogui Alafiarugui of Benin's Sontou village, described the relevance of community-based M&E for his community. The approach, as he put it, helps the community to unearth "what will happen in the near future with the many things that we do today, how they will be married happily and take care together of the new children that we all wish for." To realize this process of discovery, and to make their own development choices, community members must gain requisite skills in analysis and re-assessment of local development. We believe that community-based monitoring and evaluation will help community members to develop these skills. Development agencies can then legitimately assert that their projects have supported community development, rather than imposing an external "development" process at odds with indigenous community change.

Annex 1: Tools for Community-Based Monitoring and Evaluation

Tool 1: Signs of Well-being Table

Objectives:

- (i) Facilitate a community discussion of a common development vision for the next five years;
- (ii) Assist communities in identifying signs of community well-being;
- (iii) Train community members responsible for monitoring and evaluation to measure their community's progress towards their vision for development over time, by measuring change in their signs of well-being; and
- (iv) Measure community progress towards their vision for development over time (Community members responsible for M&E)

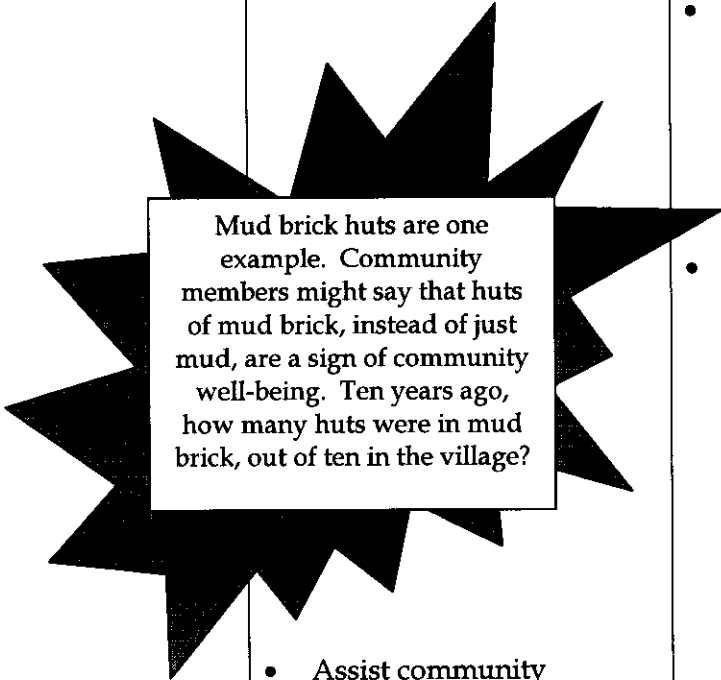
Participants: Community general assembly; Community members responsible for M&E

Materials needed:

- Rocks
- Paper
- Markers
- Stand for paper, if available
- Log book, optional

Time: 2 hours initially, plus follow-up each year

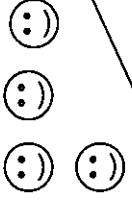
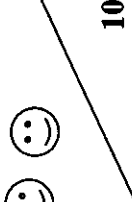
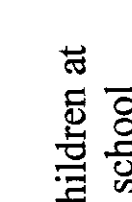
Objective	Steps	Notes
Facilitate a discussion of a common vision for community development over the next five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask community members to compare their community's past with the present • Ask community members how to maintain a rate of development that they had in the past, or turn around a period of slower development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some facilitators use a discussion of village history to get at these questions of the <i>pace</i> of development over time. See discussion of village history, under "Action-Research Findings: Community-based monitoring and evaluation system." • Facilitators can also ask about changes that are related to one another: a new road alone is one development, but a new road that leads to a health center will increase health outcomes, as well. If the community talks about

		<p>interrelated events, the facilitator can stress that two related developments often yield more benefits than two developments standing alone.</p>
<p>Assist communities in identifying signs of community well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask community members to identify a few signs that, to them, are most likely to change if their community's quality of life changes • Ask community members to decide how many of one of these signs existed in the past and today <div data-bbox="360 806 1078 1482" style="text-align: center;">  <p>Mud brick huts are one example. Community members might say that huts of mud brick, instead of just mud, are a sign of community well-being. Ten years ago, how many huts were in mud brick, out of ten in the village?</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist community members in making goals for these changes, to reflect the level of community development they would like to achieve • Repeat the exercise for each of the signs mentioned • Evaluate the strength of these signs. If they are not likely to change with changes in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use rocks or local materials to allow participants to visualize the concept of proportion. Communities that we worked with saw this tool as a game, making it an effective and interesting means of discussing community development. • Make sure to incorporate women's participation: though less forthcoming than men, they often have very interesting things to say about healthy communities. • Help community members to draw the links between their vision for community development, and the signs of well-being that they have chosen to measure it. The links may not be direct, but the process of making the links is important for understanding how <i>specific</i> development activities can interact to speed community development <i>as a whole</i>. (The activities together are more than the sum of their parts.) • After the exercise is completed, the "signs of well-being table" should be kept in a safe place for up-dating later.

	<p>community's social, economic or natural resources status, further the debate so that community members link the signs more closely to community development. The same goes for the community's development goals: is this level of change attainable?</p>	
<p>Ensure the strength of signs of well-being selected</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-visit the community's signs of well-being with the M&E persons • Evaluate the strength of these signs and discuss the number of signs chosen. Are they too many to be easily charted, or for the M&E people to easily facilitate a clear discussion with the community general assembly about the community's development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Train community members responsible for monitoring and evaluation to measure their community's progress towards their vision for development over time, by measuring change in their signs of well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice the re-measurement of community 'signs of well-being' with community members responsible for M&E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give community members hypothetical situations of changes in signs of well-being, working with them to ensure that they are able to measure these changes and, more importantly, deduce reasons for which these changes may have occurred. <i>This is critical to empowering community members to offer suggestions for re-orienting their local development plan and/or re-negotiating external service provider agreements.</i>
<p>Measure community vision for development over time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodically (e.g., annually), community members should update the chart of signs of well-being, to take into account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members can be reminded that the process of community change is slow. After one or two years of concerted

	<p>changes in community well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The community members charged with monitoring and evaluation can then report back to the annual community general assembly: What has happened to the signs? Have they improved, or gotten worse over time?• These community members can then present their own ideas about what the signs say about community development. What needs to be changed?	<p>community development efforts, the community's well-being may not have improved significantly. It takes years of effort for change to happen!</p>
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Sample Signs of Well-being Table

<div style="text-align: center;">Time</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Sign of well-being</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Past</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Proportion of the community which has access</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Present</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Proportion of the community which has access</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Future</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Proportion of the community which has access</div>
<div style="text-align: center;">Children at school</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">10</div> 	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">10</div> 	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">10</div> 
<div style="text-align: center;"><i>Other indicators</i></div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">x</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">x</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">x</div>
	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">y</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">y</div>	<div style="text-align: center;">Reference base</div> <div style="text-align: center;">y</div>

Tool 2 : Internal Organizations Chart

Objectives:

- (i) Allow community members and development workers to identify the local level institutions (LLIs) that community development intends to build upon
- (ii) Allow community members to rate their satisfaction with these organizations
- (iii) Train community members to update community satisfaction with LLIs

Participants: Community general assembly; Community members responsible for M&E

Materials needed:

Paper
Pens/Markers
Ruler
Sticky notes, optional
Log book, optional

Time: 1 hour initially, and 2 hours for periodic updating of chart

Objective	Steps	Notes
Prepare the exercise	Draw a chart similar to that shown on the following page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the general assembly, you might draw the chart on large-size paper
Allow community members and development workers to identify the local level institutions (LLIs) that community development intends to build upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly explain what LLIs are • Ask communities why they might be important, for locally appropriate community development • Ask participants to offer examples of LLIs, to ensure understanding • Ask participants to identify the organizations in their community, the main activities of each organizations, and the services rendered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analogies and debate will help to make this point. • You might divide the participants into smaller groups, to more effectively brainstorm about LLIs. Participants may overlook small women's savings associations, neighborhood councils and the like. Ask about these types of associations in particular
Allow community members to rate their satisfaction with these organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing community members back to the large group, ask them to rate their satisfaction with each LLI • Ensure that the ratings are kept in a safe place, such 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the rating scale following this table • Developing a rating by consensus might shut out the voices of people with less influence in the community (pastoralists,

	<p>as in the community log book</p>	<p>women, youth, etc.). In Sierra Leone, a World Bank team gives small sticky notes to each community member. The facilitator can hang one sheet of paper with the five rating categories (“bad” to “very good”) on a tree. Community members can, for each organization, place their sticky note under the rating category that they believe is most appropriate. Participants can also use small rocks to vote.</p>
<p>Train community members to update community satisfaction with LLIs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with community members whether periodically updating this chart is important • Ask the community members responsible for M&E to identify a member of their group to be responsible for facilitating the community’s updating with LLIs • Facilitate a discussion about the purpose of updating the LLI chart • Near the time of the updating (e.g., one year later), work with this person to practice the facilitation of this session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All communities may not feel that updating their LLI chart is important. The LLI chart can remain a strong tool for the development worker, to identify which organizations exist locally and how they might contribute to community development • An updated LLI chart can be used in the periodic ‘re-validation’ meeting for the community’s local development plan. Community members responsible for M&E might feel that this is an important way to gauge changes in the community’s quality of life

Tool 3 : External Organizations Chart

Objectives:

- (i) Allow community members and development workers to identify the external organizations that assist the community
- (ii) Allow community members to rate their satisfaction with these organizations
- (iii) Train community members to update community satisfaction with external organizations, providing a basis for discussing service provider agreements (tool 6) with external service providers

Participants: Community general assembly; Community members responsible for M&E

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Pens/Markers
- Ruler
- Sticky notes, optional
- Log book, optional

Time: 1 hour initially, and 1 hour for periodic re-rating of external service providers

Objective	Steps	Notes
Prepare the exercise	Draw a chart similar to that shown on the following pages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the general assembly, you might draw the chart on large-size paper
Allow community members and development workers to identify the external organizations that provide service to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an analogy to kick-off the debate about whether or not to evaluate external service providers • Ask participants to offer examples of external service providers, to ensure understanding • Ask participants to identify the organizations that provide service to their community, the main activities of each organizations, and the services rendered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure to ask about all types of organizations. Has the project under which you are working been mentioned? What about any churches or religious organizations? Are they considered internal or external?
Allow community members to rate their satisfaction with these organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a discussion about why it might be useful to rate external service providers • Ask community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that participants <i>do</i> want to rate external service providers before asking them to do so • Use the rating scale

	<p>to rate each of the external service providers</p>	<p>following this table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As with the 'internal organizations chart,' allowing each participant to vote by sticky note (or with small rocks) means that the voices of less influential people will not be shut out of the rating process
<p>Train community members to update community satisfaction with external organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss with community members whether periodically updating community ratings is important• Ask participants how they might use updated ratings of external service providers• Ask the community members responsible for M&E to identify a member of their group to be responsible for facilitating the community's re-rating of the external service providers• Near the time of the updating (e.g., one year later), work with this person to practice the facilitation of the "re-rating" session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This tool can be introduced with the external service provider agreement. Participants may understand the usefulness of ratings more easily, if rating service providers is connected to gaining better service delivery.

Tool 4 : Activity Monitoring Table

Objectives:

- (i) Train community members to outline each of the steps necessary to implementing a community development activity;
- (ii) Establish monitoring and evaluation persons' responsibilities in monitoring this activity;
- (iii) Reinforce the difference in roles between the Management Committee and M&E people; and
- (iv) Monitor sub-projects or other community development activities (Community members responsible for M&E)

Participants: Management Committee, and community members charged with M&E

Materials needed:

Paper
Pens
Ruler
Log book, optional

Time: 1 hour initially, and 1 hour for the list for each development activity

Objective	Steps	Notes
Prepare the exercise	Draw a table similar to either of those shown on the following pages, to be used for monitoring a community development activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depending upon community preferences, an activity monitoring chart using the community's <i>agricultural calendar</i> may be preferable to a list using a 12-month calendar. Consult members of the community before deciding which calendar to use.

<p>Train community members to outline each of the steps necessary to implementing a community development activity;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the importance of planning, in common life situations. • Draw a comparison to highlight the importance of planning for community sub-projects. • Take one of the community's planned sub-projects. Ask participants to outline each of the steps necessary to implementing this sub-project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an analogy to a planned event that community members might know well: saving for marriage, going to school, or putting enough grain aside from one harvest to plant for another. • You can also ask community members about development projects that they have had in the past, and whether they have been maintained. Ask why/why not. • In addition to sub-project implementation, planning lists can be equally valuable for sub-project operation or maintenance, or for any community development 'to do.' • Identifying the activities necessary to micro-project implementation can be a difficult exercise initially. In our field visit to Sonon, in Benin, we noted that community members had difficulty in identifying and evaluating planned activities.
<p>Establish monitoring and evaluation persons' responsibilities in monitoring implementation, and Reinforce the difference in roles between the Management and M&E Committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide <i>who</i> will be responsible for each task, and <i>when</i> it will be accomplished. Note these on the to do list, as well. • Discuss who will be responsible for keeping the to do list up to date, and ensuring that everyone is on track • Reinforce that the accomplishment of the tasks on the list is the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By discussing the M&E Committee's role, and the corrective measures that it could take, with both the M&E and Management Committees, the decisions represents the consensus of both committees. If the Management Committee's work veers off-track, they will be less able to point fingers at the M&E Committee and say, 'We

	<p>responsibility of the Management Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the participants what the role of the M&E Committee should be.• Ask the participants how the M&E Committee can do its job: should it verify that the activity monitoring table is up-to-date, periodically? Should it check the sub-project implementation site? When? What steps should the M&E Committee take if sub-project implementation is off-track?	<p>didn't agree to their role!</p>
<p>Monitor sub-projects or other community development activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep the table in a safe place (e.g., the community logbook)• Support the person responsible for the to do list continues to respect it• Ensure that the M&E Committee follows up on its agreed-upon responsibilities• Repeat the exercise for each sub-project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community empowerment does not mean setting communities up for failure! It is the development worker's job to provide support to communities, consistently, in their community development activities. This means that the CDF may offer continual support to communities in this and other development activities.

Tool 5 : Meeting Calendar

Objectives:

- (i) Train community members to plan community development meetings, to ensure regular and transparent communication about and planning of community development
- (ii) Respect planned meetings (Community members responsible for M&E, and Management Committee members)

Participants: Management Committee, and community members charged with M&E

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Pens
- Ruler
- Log book, optional

Time: 1 hour initially, and planned meetings

Objective	Steps	Notes
Prepare the exercise	Draw a calendar similar to one on the following pages	
Train community members to plan community development meetings, to ensure regular and transparent communication about and planning of community development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to describe a situation where regular planning helped ensure success (or where lack of planning meant failure) • Use an analogy to reinforce the importance of regular meeting, for community development • Ask community members whether they see regular meetings as important • If so, ask participants to draw up a meeting calendar, assisting with the planning as necessary • Store the calendar in a safe place. Ensure that someone is responsible for calling meetings, and for keeping the meeting calendar up-to-date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The success or failure of past community development projects is often contingent upon regular meetings. Using the community's example, discuss the advantages of regular meetings for all dimensions of community development (not only community-based M&E) • One analogy to underscore the importance of regular meetings is traditional boxing. Traditional boxers don't just practice from time to time; they do so regularly. If they do not train regularly...they lose!

Respect planned meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the community member responsible for calling meetings to do so• Support the community member(s) responsible for leading meetings to plan productive meetings	
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Tool 6 : Service Provider Agreement

Objectives:

- (i) Introduce the external service provider concept to communities
- (ii) Create a common document that summarizes the expectations of the community and each of its external service providers
- (iii) Discuss terms of service provision with external service providers (Community members responsible for M&E)

Participants: Community members responsible for M&E; service providers; community general assembly, optional (this tool can be a strong one for illustrating the purpose of M&E, and communities' role in asking for legitimate improvements to service delivery)

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Pens
- Ruler
- External organizations chart (tool 5)
- Typewriter, if available
- Log book, optional

Time: 1 hour initially, and 2 hours for periodic updating of chart

Objective	Steps	Notes
Prepare the exercise	Draw up a service provider agreement similar to sample shown on following pages	
Create a common document that summarizes the expectations of the community and each of its external service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the 'service provider agreement' concept to participants • Ask the participants to select one person (of those responsible for M&E) to discuss service provision with each of the external service providers • Refer to the external organizations chart. Ask participants to choose three external organizations to evaluate. • Divide participants into three groups. Give one organization to each group. Ask each group to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants if it will be possible for them to discuss terms of service with the service providers that come to their community. Why? Why not? • When discussing each group's work on the sample external provider agreements, debate each of the main tasks the groups have listed. Are these representative of the tasks that need to be accomplished to ensure strong service?

	<p>think of the main tasks that, in their mind, will show that the external service provider is rendering good service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring the three groups back together. Ask a member of each group to explain her group's findings 	
<p>Create a common document that summarizes the expectations of the community and each of its external service providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute as many external service provider agreements as there are external service providers • Divide participants into groups. Ask each group to fill out a service agreement for one of the service providers • Bring the groups back to a general assembly. Review the tasks listed, deadlines and persons responsible for each task. Are these realistic? • Discuss the most important point(s) on each agreement. If the service provider does not agree with each point of service, which point(s) do(es) the community think are most important to retain? • Ask community members what action they might take if they find that an external service provider is <i>not</i> living up to her obligations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending upon the number of external service providers, this step may take a long time. It may be broken up into several sessions
<p>Discuss terms of service provision with external service providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the person responsible for discussing the service provider agreements to make appointments with each of the service providers • Practice, with this person, the discussion of service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing situations where the community member and the service provider do <i>not</i> agree is most important. Can the community member still make the community's point of view heard,

	<p>the discussion of service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the community person as needed in discussing service with each provider• De-brief after each meeting	<p>without putting service delivery at risk?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• De-briefing is very important, to ensure that the community member is as comfortable and effective as possible in talking with each service provider. What worked well? What did not? What can be changed the next time? How committed did the service provider seem to be to delivering quality service?
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Sample Service Provider Agreement

THE COMMUNITY OF: _____

AND: _____

SERVICE OBJECTIVE: _____

SERVICE/PROJECT DURATION: _____

Activities foreseen	Tasks to be performed	Person responsible	Planned date of completion	Actual completion

Community representative:

(Signature)

Date:

Representative organization:

(Signature)

Date:

of implementing

Annex 2:
Sample Methodology for Introducing Community-Based Monitoring and Evaluation

Step 1 : Preparation						
Objective : Prepare village visit						
Method	Tool	Time	Participants	Specific objectives	Results	Notes
1. Team preparatory planning meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Questions & answers 	Day 1 (1/2 day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff team • Implementing partners (CARDER, GERED, other NGOs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define mission's objective • Select villages • Double-check logistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work plan established • Travel time between villages determined 	
2. Initial contact meeting in villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion 	Day 1 (1/2 day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff team • Community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform community of mission's objective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of community informed 	

Step 2 : Analysis of signs of well-being						
Objective : Identify and quantify long-term development indicators (for the next five years)						
Method	Tool	Time	Participants	Specific objectives	Results	Notes
1. Introduce members and objectives of the mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenary discussion • Q&A 	Day 2 (15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team leader • Village chief • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know one another • Explain the objectives and expected results of the mission to the community • Present a rough agenda for the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know one another • Objectives are presented to and understood by the participants 	

Step 2 : Analysis of signs of well-being Objective : Identify and quantify long-term development indicators (for the next five years)						
Method	Tool	Time	Participants	Specific objectives	Results	Notes
2. Review the community's past and present development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plenary discussion ISS Profile of community's development 	Day 2 (30 minutes in previously visited villages or 60 minutes in new villages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development worker Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and strengthen the participation of the whole community Engage the community Enhance community's understanding of development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community participates and takes an interest Main elements of community's past and present development are identified 	
3. Analyze the community's past and present record in terms of signs of well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group discussions SSI (semi-structured interview) Table of past vs. present scores on signs of well-being Chart of signs of well-being Time trend chart 	Day 2 (90 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development worker Community groups (women, men, youth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare present to past pace of development Assist the community in evaluating their level of development compared to the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analytical approach strengthened List of signs of well-being (past/ present) drafted Charts of signs of well-being drawn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The same signs must be used to assess the past and the present Upon completion of the signs of well-being, that chart should be linked to the chart of community resources, if any
4. Synthesize results of the analysis signs of well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plenary discussion Table of past vs. present scores on signs of well-being Social mapping 	Day 2 (30 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development worker Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a consensus on signs and levels of well-being in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final list of signs as well as past and present levels of well-being in the community Final maps displaying past/ present indicators of well-being 	

<i>Step 2 : Analysis of signs of well-being Objective : Identify and quantify long-term development indicators (for the next five years)</i>						
Method	Tool	Time	Participants	Specific objectives	Results	Notes
5. Develop a vision for development over the next five years within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of past vs. present scores on signs of well-being Social mapping 	Day 2 (variable time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development worker Community groups (women, men, youth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a discussion within the community on their vision of local development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of well-being reviewed and discussed Signs of well-being charted for the next five years 	
6. Presentation of the community's vision of development for the next five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of past vs. present scores on signs of well-being Social mapping SSI 	Day 2 (60 to 90 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development worker Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a consensus within the community on their vision of local development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of well-being reviewed and discussed Signs of well-being charted and finalized for the next five years Time trend charted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development worker should stress the interactions between the activities chosen. No community that we visited developed the interactions between development activities (which lead to more complementary, effective development) on their own.
7. Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plenary discussion Q&A 	Day 2 (15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Worker Community 			

Step 3 : Draft project monitoring documents for each development activity Objective: Raise the community's awareness of the importance of monitoring development activities						
Method	Tool	Time	Participants	Specific objectives	Results	Notes
1. Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of preliminary agenda 	Day 3 (15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development worker • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the day's main objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives presented to and understood by participants 	
2. Plan main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSI 	Day 3 (30 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development worker • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan activities necessary to complete any one development activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of planned activities 	
3. Review of task to be undertaken for each activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring table (planned tasks, level of implementation, comments, changes, actions taken) 	Day 3 (60 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development worker • Community groups (women, men, youth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help each community member to become more aware of the role of monitoring in the implementation of any one project 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group might review one monitoring table, and make suggestions for strengthening the implementation outlined on the table
4. Conclusion		Day 3 (30 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development worker • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review importance of project monitoring 		

Resources

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