Session 5
Social Mobilisation and Needs Assessment Using PRA Tools

Time: 6 hours

Preparation

Purpose of the Session

The purpose of this session is to introduce the concept of the social mobilisation process and to provide some basic information on different techniques and tools of participatory rural appraisal (PRA), which is often used during this process. These tools supplement the gender analytical tools described in Session 4 and should be applied and tailored according to need before and during the social mobilisation process.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session the participants will be able to
- understand the importance of social mobilisation and the different stages/steps involved in the social mobilisation process
- understand the importance of group formation and organisational capacity building
- know the application of different PRA tools and their use in assessing problems, and identifing prioritised needs and action, in the community
- differentiate between the use of different tools for different purposes

Session Contents

A. Social mobilisation process
B. Importance of group formation and organisational capacity building
C. Use of PRA tools for problem identification and needs assessment

Materials

Flipcharts, markers, coloured pencils, masking tape, white board and board markers (different colours), overhead projector and overhead transparencies, meta cards, masking tape, soft board with map/thumb pins, a bundle of thin sticks

Handouts

5A   The Social Mobilisation Process: Stages and Underlying Objectives and Processes
5B   The Community Mobilisation Process: Example from the UNEP/ICIMOD Project in India
5C   Role, Responsibilities, and Functions of the Social Mobiliser, example from the UNEP/ICIMOD Project
5D   Group Formation Process
5E   Summary of Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Techniques
5F   Selected PRA Tools: Social Map/ Resources Map, Transect Map/Walk, Well-being Ranking, Pair-wise Preferences Ranking, Seasonal Calendar, Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Trainer's Preparations

Collect together the materials and handouts for the session.

Activities

A. Social Mobilisation Process

Step 1
- Explain the concept of the social mobilisation process and its importance for carrying out community development activities. Distribute Handouts 5A and 5B and ask the group to study these for about 30 minutes.

Step 2
- Hand out meta cards to each participant and ask them to write down their ideas and thoughts about the objectives and process of social mobilisation in two or three sentences. Allow 10 minutes.

Step 3
- Collect the cards and read them aloud one by one. Ask the participants for their reactions. Place cards with a common idea in one group and pin them in these groups on the soft board, or stick on the flipchart/wall.
- Distribute Handout 5C and discuss the role of the social mobiliser.

Trainer's Notes

What is social mobilisation?
Social mobilisation is a process of organising people in joint action to achieve common societal goals though self-reliant effort, motivation, sensitisation, animation, and facilitation. It involves planned actions and processes to reach, influence, and involve all relevant segments of society across all sectors in order to create an enabling environment and effect positive behaviour and social change. It is primarily a mechanism of building organisational capacity at the grassroots and hence of community empowerment. Capacity building is a dynamic process by which individuals, groups, organisations, institutions, and societies increase their ability to perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives, and understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner. Social mobilisation begins with identifying marginalised areas and people within selected geographical areas for a given programme.

Social mobilisation is a dynamic process occurring at different levels, although the term is most often used for activities in a local community – community mobilisation. Community mobilisation uses deliberate, participatory processes to involve local institutions, local leaders, community groups, and members of the community to organise collective action towards a common purpose. There are several stages and steps involved in the social mobilisation process (see Handout 5A).

Make it clear to the participants that not all stages of the social mobilisation process illustrated in Handout 5A are fully covered in this session. For example, there is separate session (Session 9) on participatory action planning, monitoring and evaluation to deal with the social action stage of social mobilisation.

B. Group Formation and Organisational Capacity Building

Step 1
- Game: 'Breaking the stick and the bundle'. In the plenary group, ask one of the participants to volunteer to break one stick.
- Give another participant a bundle of sticks and ask the participant to break the bundle.

Step 2
- Ask the players to share their experiences and explain why it was easy to break one stick and difficult to break the bundle.
- Explain the strength of a group and its different phases as outlined in the Trainer's Notes below.

Trainer's Notes

A Group is
- a source of strength
- a way to save time and energy
- a source of help in times of difficulty
- required to raise its voice for justice and demand action from the authorities
- required to work for the benefit of the individual and the community

The Four Stages of Groups

Formation stage
- Individuals want to impress others
- Individuals look for personal benefits
- Individuals do not trust each other

Transition stage
- Loss of leadership and disciplinary behaviour of initial stage
- Increased debate
- Individuals try to protect themselves
- Frequent changes in the relationship of group members to each other

Stage of unity
- Less tension
- Increased unity among group members
- Individual thinking for the benefit of the group
- Group becomes more effective and strong

Functional stage
- Group becomes mature
- There is respect for other member's feelings
- Appreciation of group decisions made for individual interests

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Step 4
- Explain the group formation process and the dimension of organisational capacity building at the grassroots. Distribute Handout 5D and ask the group to study it.
- Ask the participants to write their ideas and thoughts about the objectives and process of group formation in two or three sentences on metacards.
- Collect the cards and read them aloud one by one. Place cards with a common idea in one group and pin them in these groups on the soft board, or stick on the flipchart/wall.
- Discuss the most important points

C. Needs Assessment Using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Tools

Step 1
- Describe the general principles of participatory rural appraisal tools and the need to select the right tool or combinations of tools for the type of knowledge required and the situation.
- Distribute Handout 5E listing a variety of PRA techniques. Summarise the main features of each class of tool and the type of knowledge it is used to gather.

Step 2
- Divide the participants into three groups
- Distribute Handout 5F and ask each group to study two of the methods described for about 30 minutes and discuss what they think are the main points of the methodologies.

Step 3
- Ask the plenary group to reform and each subgroup to present what they understood about the methods they studied, and the advantages, disadvantages, and uses of the methods.

Step 4
- After each presentation ask the participants if they have any queries or problems in understanding the tool and request that they write these by the side of each tool on a transparency or on flipchart paper.

Trainer's Notes

There are a variety of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools that can be used for participatory action research. The selection of which mix of methods to use in the field is entirely contextual as it depends very much on the nature of the information one wants to acquire. It is important to determine what we want to know, and select the methods most appropriate to filling that knowledge gap. If a community is concerned about the water and energy needs of women, it is important to tune the entry point to these concerns. In general, participatory field methods involve a set menu of sequential activities: carrying out first a resource map, then a wealth ranking, then a needs or problem analysis. A resource map, for example, can be used to identify the best location for a gasifier plant or a water tap. The social map can be used to identify where the poorest live, and how to ensure that they indeed get included in the benefits, for example a water distribution system. Needs or problem analysis can be used to identify the most prioritised needs of women and men in water- and energy-related technologies.

If possible, take the group to a field site and conduct one of the PRA tools and explain the techniques of using other tools in place of the group presentation. The PRA session should be conducted by an expert who has more knowledge of this specialist area than the gender expert.

5A: The Social Mobilisation Process: Stages and Underlying Objectives and Processes

Stages	Objectives and Processes
Appraisal and rapport building	**Initiate dialogue** • Organise a rapport -building workshop, or a mass meeting with local institutions and relevant stakeholders in the community to explain the objectives and approach of the pr ogramme, including the expected role of people • Conduct a group discussion at the village level to understand the gender roles and relations • Organise information meetings and visits
Social analysis	**Assess the situation** • Organise an orientation meetin g with village institution representative(s) and share the information collected in Stage 1 • Carry out a transect walk and group discussion with people to understand the community's present situation • Collect basic information (socioeconomic, existing infra structure, institutions) in the communities using PRA tools (explained below) supplemented by other methods including case studies, questionnaires, surveys, and life histories • Identify key issues such as gender relations within households and communitie s, opportunities and constraints, and the priorities of different stakeholders • Prepare and share the findings emerging from the above social analysis • Discuss an approach for raising awareness and the possibility of organising or reorganising the group
Social appraisal and group formation	**Create social capital through group formation** • Conduct a mass meeting at the village level and discuss the benefit of social capital and organisation of people into a group • Initiate the process of group formation and re organisation of the group • Develop and implement organisational capacity building • Develop a social action plan
Social action	**Develop and implement an action plan/programme** • Organise a planning workshop with group members to prioritise the proble ms and issues identified and analyse the opportunities and resources available • Formulate an action plan emphasising the problems and the actions needed for solving them • Set clear objectives, determine resources, budget, timeframe, and responsibility plan • Implement and monitor the activities
Coalition or alliance building	**Network and build coalitions** • Identify the potential organisation and agencies for establishing linkages and coordination • Form a coordination committee for the smooth implementation o f the project at the local level • Develop a coalition plan to generate resources and other support for the action plan prepared by the group
Advocacy	**Raise awareness about the coalition** • Develop an advocacy message to influence decisions made at different levels • Advocate and evaluate outcomes
Social reflection (self evaluation and reflection)	**Enhance advocacy for policy, programmes, and value change in order to improve the situation of women, the poor, and the disadvantaged** • Develop the participatory ev aluation methodology with the help of the group and enhance the group's capacity for conducting self evaluation • Determine the conclusions and learning points
Source: Adapted from ICIMOD/SNV 2004	

Handout

5B: The Community Mobilisation Process: Example from the UNEP/ICIMOD Project in India

Assessment of institutional arrangements – Before the intervention process, the village-level institutions, village panchayat forest user groups, panchayat women or youth groups, cooperative societies, and other groups were identified and an intensive dialogue and interaction conducted with them to find out their strengths and possibilities for collaboration in the project. Collaboration and local support yielded positive results during the project implementation. The panchayat members were also made aware of the needs and priorities of different households for different types of energy and water resources and technologies.

Community meetings – After door-to-door visits, village-level general meetings were held at times convenient for the local people, especially women. Efforts were made to involve at least one member from each household in the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to make people aware about the views of the community on the energy- and water-related situation, the participation of the community, cost sharing, the technologies best suited for the community, and the timing of project implementation, as well as other related issues.

Participatory appraisal of natural resources and situation analysis – Group discussions and structured questions were asked about the community's natural resources to find out about the status of natural resources, knowledge about natural resources, and the perception of natural resources according to the women in these areas. Specific details were observed regarding the status of energy and water availability from discussions to enhance the water and energy situation at the village level.

Formation of management committee and self-help groups – After the motivation programme, a committee was formed to create awareness among women. The committee also helped in planning, programme implementation, supervision, operation, maintenance, and others. Initially training was provided to all committee members in project-related programmes. The main responsibility of the committee was to inform the community about the progress of the programme. They were also responsible for keeping a record of the accounts.

Motivation and observation tours – Observation tours for interested women were organised around the 'seeing is believing' idea. Visits were organised to state forestry and agricultural universities, demonstration sites, NGO-developed sites, and villages. These tours were organised locally as well as interstate.

Preparation of an action plan by needs identification – With the help of community members, a detailed assessment was made to assess the costs and benefits of various appropriate technology options. A survey was conducted to discover the choices of women and possible areas of intervention for energy, water, and income-generating activities. All key persons, village elders, and women were contacted to prepare the action plan.

Training of women – Training sessions were conducted for the women of the project areas to implement suitable technologies with the help of a local NGO.

Implementation – TERI played the role of 'interface' between the local NGO and the village committee during the implementation phase. A trained person (motivator) lived in the village to provide technical support. The motivator provided feedback to the village women with the help of a village committee. The management committee undertook the entire responsibility during the implementation to facilitate local support by motivating men and women of the locality to adopt the new technologies. The local NGO procured the raw materials, organised a working team, and provided technical know-how.

Human resources development – This aims to develop grassroots institutions through educational processes, and requires a great deal of effort to create awareness, skill, and knowledge through education and training (both managerial and skill development) and exposure visits.

Source: TERI 2004

5C: Role, Responsibilities, and Functions of the Social Mobiliser, Example from the UNEP/ICIMOD Project

- Responsibility to implement energy- and water-related technology options that aim at reducing poverty, drudgery, and health hazards associated with procuring energy and water

- Awareness creation regarding the need for and importance of an energy and water management programme among local people.

- Organise local women into energy and water management groups (as per the local needs and conditions) and build their organisational capacity to identify their needs, to enhance their knowledge, enlarge their skills, and encourage a positive improvement in their attitude

- Hold a discussion with newly-formed groups/organisations and inform them about the programme and their roles and responsibilities

- Support conducting of PRA for resource assessment, needs assessment, planning, well-being ranking, and others

- Motivate local people to promote the integration of women in planning, decision making, implementation, and management of household energy and water initiatives

- Mobilise trained women members to motivate the group and share their experiences with group members

- Periodically organise interaction programmes among trained members, social workers, and representatives of line agencies, and the local energy and water users organisation and the beneficiaries

- Transfer the acquired knowledge and skills regarding energy and water technology best practices to the communities who are organised

- Follow up, monitoring, and supervision of the local mobilisers, trained members, groups/organisations

- Coordination and linkage with concerned institutions for smooth operation and continued support from them

- Review of progress (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, and annually)

Handout

5D: Group Formation Process

Organising people into groups (separate groups for women and men or mixed groups) is a critical stage of the social mobilisation process. The group should be more than a gathering of individuals formed in order to receive services provided by a programme or for another objective imposed upon them. The primary objective of social capital and group formation is to build organisational capacity at the grassroots to take collective action for the common goal of improving the group's situation in different spheres of their life.

The primary reason for organising a group in the context of this training is for women to take action on energy and water management issues which they themselves have identified and prioritised during the social analysis process.

Need for Women's Group Formation
- To organise women at village/settlement and village development committee level
- To provide a forum in which they can identify their needs, potential, strengths, and weaknesses
- To provide support in identifying appropriate energy- and water-related activities
- To use the available energy- and water-related local resources efficiently
- To provide support for the reduction of women's energy- and water-related drudgery and associated health hazards

Guidelines for Group Formation

Groups should be self-governing and voluntary – The participants themselves should decide who should join the group, what rules they will follow, and what activities they will undertake. The group can develop criteria for membership in sub-groups based on the kinds of activities being undertaken. Decisions should be taken by consensus or by majority vote. The role of mobiliser is to ensure the inclusion/participation of women, the marginalised, and the disadvantaged in the group.

Allow sub-groups in a large village-level organisation – Allow sub-groups to operate within the large groups according to their needs and interests. For example, forest management may include all households in the village as a user group, while water management activities may concern smaller numbers of group members. Members of the sub-groups should preferably live under similar economic conditions and have close sociocultural affinities. This allows for more trust among the group members, reducing potential conflict and increasing joint liability.

The group must be formed around viable self-help – The experience of the group in planning and implementing successful self-help activities without any outside assistance is critical to the functioning of the group. Savings and credit can function as a focal point for organising people and gradually expanding to a broader base of activities.

The group organising process must be preceded by participatory analysis – The mobilisation process must not begin with forming the group, as the group organisation requires background work. PRA processes provide a meeting point for coming together as a group.

Awareness raising activities should be implemented before or simultaneously with forming the group – Awareness activities built around the energy and water problems identified during the base line stage of the project can help prepare the people to get organised in groups, and deepen the feeling of group solidarity.

Avoid going too fast or too slow – Both overly-rapid and overly-long delays in the formation or reformation of the group should be avoided to keep the interest of members.

Group Formation Process cont.

Prerequisites for Group Formation

- Motivation – individuals should be motivated to work without any force or pressure from the group.
- Membership – there must be group membership and commitment to work to receive benefits.
- Homogeneity – group members must have similar needs and interests to achieve their group goal: people of the same locality, same economic and social background, and having the same requirements make a strong and successful group.
- Size – a group should have a reasonable number of individuals. A group that is too big or too small will have problems functioning. By and large a group with an odd number of members is thought to reach consensus more easily if there is conflict.
- Geography – the group should have people from the same locality where possible so that it is easier to meet as and when desired.

Steps in Group Formation

- Conduct a mass meeting at the village/settlement level to further endorse the energy- and water-related issues and actions identified through the needs assessment and PRA process.
- Hold a discussion on whether women are ready to take the initiative to address these issues.
- If women are not ready to take the initiative to address the issues identified, then discuss the possibility of implementing awareness-raising activities.
- If women are ready to take the initiative, discuss the possibility of the existing groups taking the initiative.
- Conduct an intensive discussion with the group members on the benefits of being organised in a group.
- If no appropriate group exists, discuss the process of group formation.
- If women are not ready for group formation immediately, discuss the possibility of implementing appropriate awareness-raising activities.
- If the existing group is ready to take the initiative, reorganise them around the energy and water management issue.
- If a new group is formed, organise them around the energy- and water-related problems identified.
- Identify sub-groups within the larger group (the village) according to their specific energy and water issues and needs.
- Form other sub-committees to support the income generating and community development activities within the larger group.
- Conduct group organisational assessment.
- Prepare the groups' rules, regulations, and policies.
- Develop a group/organisational strengthening plan or capacity and capability building plan for group members.
- Start the process of getting recognised as a legal entity.
- Develop coordination and linkages with related organisations/agencies.
- Implement an organisational strengthening plan (this should preferably include training on group dynamics and planning skills).
- Develop energy and water management social action plans or self-help activities.

Handout

5E: Summary of Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Techniques

Visual techniques
- Diagrams: flow/causal diagram; Venn/institutional diagram; systems diagram; pie charts; histograms
- Ranking techniques: preference ranking and scoring; pair-wise ranking; direct matrix ranking; ranking by voting; wealth ranking
- Time trends analysis: historical and future (visioning) mapping; time trend charts
- Mapping techniques: mobility mapping; social mapping; transect (walks)
- Calendars: seasonal calendar; historical seasonal calendar

Group and Team Dynamics Methods
- Focus group discussions
- Role-play
- Participatory workshops

Other Complementary Methods of Investigation
- Secondary data review
- Structured questionnaires
- Semi-structured interviews
- Case studies
- Participant observation
- Direct observation

5F: Selected PRA Tools

The tools selected for assessments in this section are social mapping, resource mapping, transect map/walk, well-being ranking, preferences ranking, seasonal calendar, and focus group discussion (FGD).

Social Map/Resources Map

A social or village map is drawn to analyse the social infrastructure in a pictorial way, e.g. the number of houses, natural resources, facilities, and service centres. It can be used to identify where the poorest live, and can help to work out how they can be included in benefits such as water distribution systems. Moreover, useful information can be gleaned from the mapping about the village economy (landholdings, irrigation facility, livestock types, and improved or local occupations); production patterns (paddy, wheat, maize, millet, potato, vegetables, ginger, fruit); educational status (those in the community who are educated/illiterate). Making a social map in the initial stages of a project helps to make the project community-oriented. The exact content of the map should be governed by the specific requirements of the situation.

Although mapping can be done both on paper and on the ground, it is better to let local people draw such a map on the ground so that many people can participate and contribute to the mapping process. Once the map is prepared it is important to copy the map into a notebook to make a permanent record of the information. Depending on the purpose of the exercise, different names can be given: 'social map', 'resources map', 'village map', 'land use map' and so on.

Contents of Social Map (examples)

Information	Detail
No. of households	condition of settlement, ethnicity, population, men and women, economically active population
Households having	ICS, biogas plant and biogas stove, briquette stove, kerosene oil stove, wood/agricultural residue stove, sawdust/rice husk stove, LPG gas, charcoal stove, kerosene light (petromax)
Households having	convenient latrine, cemented tank latrine, bamboo latrine, mud latrine, no latrine
Households having	water mill, turbine
Households having	solar home system, rural electrification, peltric set
Household source of drinking water	tap, pond, river, 'kuwa' (well)
Literacy rate	literacy rate of men and women
Occupation	main occupation, other occupation, unemployed situation
Landholding	total landholding, irrigated land, upland, rent in/out, landless, marginal landholders
Cropping pattern	cereal crop, cash crop: vegetables, fruit, oil, pulse, ginger
Livestock raising system	types of livestock, i.e., cows, buffaloes, goats, chickens, sheep and others
Supporting line agencies offices	office of supporting line agencies: agriculture/ veterinary service centre, forest office, drinking water, forest user group association

Handout

Selected PRA Tools cont.
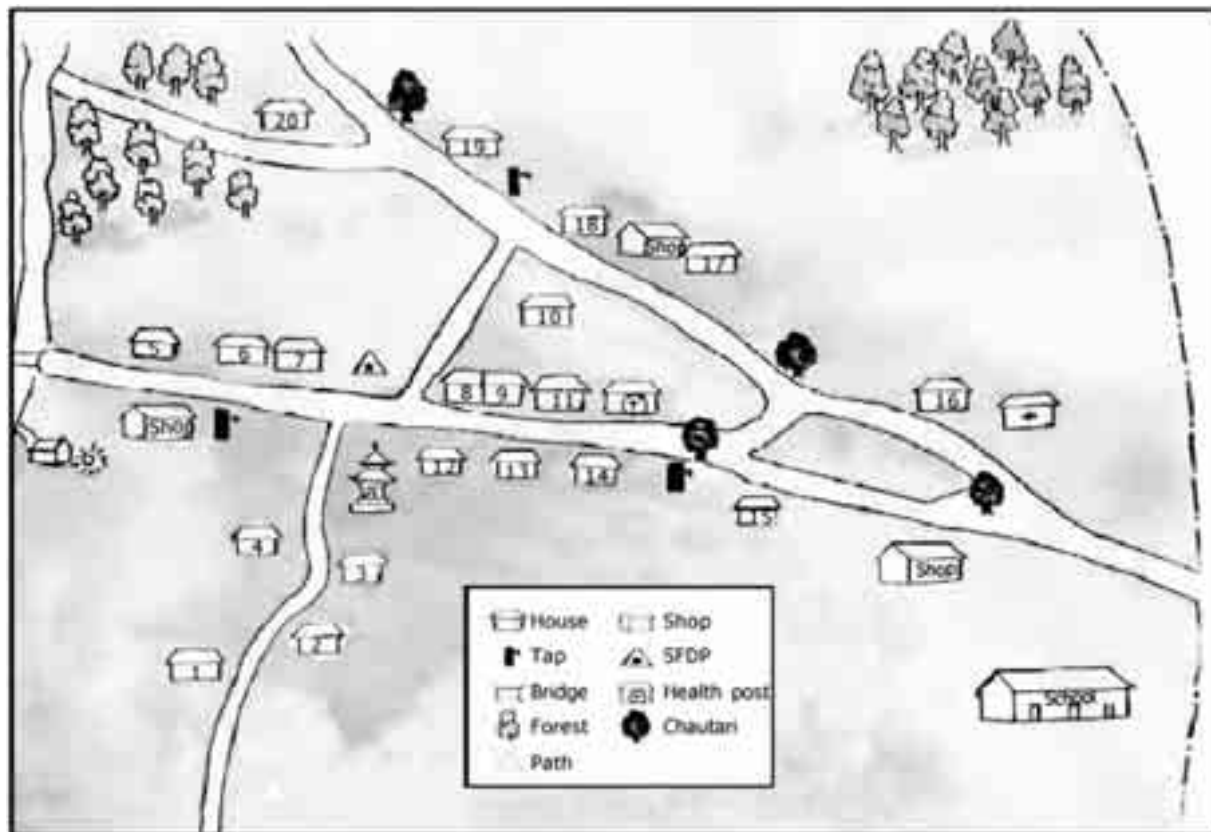
Example of a village map

Source: ICIMOD/SNV 2004

Selected PRA Tools cont.

Transect Map/ Walk

A transect map or transect walk is used to study the geographical/topographical structure and the resources available in the project area. It is a systematic walk with a few key informants through an area observing, asking, listening, discussing, and identifying different zones, local technologies, constraints, and opportunities, and then mapping and making diagrams of resources and findings. It analyses the potential of agricultural crops, natural resources, and potential renewable energy sources, and the activities related to these. It is also useful in analysing problems and opportunities in the project areas. It is useful in assessing the status of available resources in the target area such as water resources, forest resources, mines, grazing land, upland that is not irrigated; ownership of natural resources or who controls the natural resources. A transect map or transect walk can be used to find out how natural resources are used, for agriculture, livestock, construction materials, herbs, raw materials for industries, the collection of products like honey, aquatic products, medicinal herbs, edible roots, and so on. On the basis of availability, use pattern, and potentiality, the need for appropriate energy-related activities can then be identified from focus group discussions with target beneficiaries.

Sample of Transect Map

Sector/Transect	Forest	Rural Energy-Related Activities	Water Resource	Settlement Area	Upland	Lowland/ Cultivated Land
Types						
Ownership						
Utilisation pattern						
Cropping system						
Herbs						
Vegetables						
Fruits						
Trees Fodder plants						
Types of soil						
Problems						
Opportunities						

Handout

Selected PRA Tools cont.

Well-being Ranking

This tool is used to rank the well-being level of households as categorised by the participating community. Various factors including landholdings, crop production, appropriate land for housing, number of livestock and value, occupation (government job/abroad, business), political status, social status, assets (energy equipment and appliances), and educational status can be considered when assessing the well-being ranking. It is useful for finding out local people's economic status and for assessing the real needs as well as the real purchasing capacity for rural energy-related activities.

The first step is to obtain, through discussion with community members, some of the key local criteria or characteristics of poverty and wealth. Then, by applying these characteristics, it is possible to determine a set of useful categories that make sense in local terms. It is important to choose terms that have broad social acceptability. For example, one community in Uganda agreed on a four-fold classification:
- 'Those who can manage' (the relatively wealthy who could look after their own interests without help from anybody)
- 'Those who have something' (those with a small amount of assets and an opportunity of developing)
- 'Those who earn slowly' (those with no real capital assets, who struggle on a daily basis to make ends meet)
- 'Those who cannot manage' (those who are destitute and require external support to survive)

The categories are made on the basis of high to low ranking of well-being. For example, in the case of the UNEP/ICIMOD project, the project partner in Nepal classified the well-being of local communities into four categories on the basis of the following criteria set by the local people.
- Food sufficiency: all year round; for 9 months, for 6 months, for 3 months
- Occupation: government service, private service, overseas, business, agriculture, seasonal, no occupation
- Number and value of livestock
- Type of landholdings: irrigated land/upland, for housing purposes, close to local road, fertile and productive, suitable for cash crops
- Educational status of family members
- Different household assets

Categories of well-being ranking

Category	Household no.	Characteristics
Category A		
Category B		
Category C		
Category D		
Note: Key informants should first develop the parameters they think are important to consider while ranking the households and then keep placing households in the appropriate categories e.g. 'A' for richest and 'D' for poorest households.		

Selected PRA Tools cont.

Pair-wise Preferences Ranking

Pair ranking is simply a technique by which *every* item in a list is compared to *every* other item according to a single criterion, the final ranking emerging from a simple tally of the number of wins. This method can be used to prioritise a need or problem through a group exercise. Needs and problems can be mixed together but need to be better redefined before entering them into the matrix. Prioritised needs must be arrived at by counting the number and ranking them accordingly. In the pair-wise comparisons matrix shown below, people must choose between two options in terms of which is the greatest need or problem.

This method works best when needs are prioritised within a common interest group. The exercise should be taken over by all the participants in the group. The participants should be asked why they have made this particular choice. To identify potential gender differences in preference and underlying criteria, it is essential to carry out this exercise by splitting the participants into groups according to sex. This is because women and men often have different criteria for selecting a particular technology. For example, women's criteria for selecting a particular energy source/technology mostly relate to reducing workloads and drudgery, minimising heath hazards from indoor air pollution, and meeting cooking energy needs. Men's indicators of useful energy mostly concern saving cash expenditure and marketing. In the example below it was argued that you need water before you can put in biogas, therefore water must be a priority; women need simple cost-effective, fuel-efficient devices to address their cooking energy needs and reduce indoor air pollution so ICS was considered more important than other energy technologies.

An example of pair-wise ranking on water and energy

	Drinking water	**ICS**	**Solar home system**	**Biogas**	**Micro-hydro**	**Micro-credit**	**Market**	**Skills training**
Drinking water		Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water
Improved cooking stove			ICS	Biogas	ICS	ICS	ICS	ICS
Solar home system				Biogas	Micro-hydro	Credit	Solar	Training
Biogas					Micro-hydro	Biogas	Market	Biogas
Micro-hydro						Micro-hydro	Market	Training
Micro-credit for income generation							Credit	Credit
Market								Training
Skills training								

Problem/Needs		No. of times		Rank
Drinking water	=	7		(1)
ICS	=	5		(2)
Biogas	=	4		(3)
Micro-hydro	=	3		(4)
Credit	=	3		(4)
Training	=	3		(4)
Market	=	2		(5)
Solar	=	1		(6)

Handout

Selected PRA Tools cont.

Seasonal Calendar

The seasonal calendar helps researchers to assess the availability, shortages, and potential of resources (e.g. drinking water, irrigation water, food grain, fodder/forage, institutional credit, availability of natural resources, and facilities) in the project area.

Seasonal calendar of resources (and hazards)

S.N.	Activities	Months											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Fuelwood availability												
2	Availability of electricity												
3	Availability of labour												
4	Fodder/forage												
5	Irrigation												
6	Drinking water												
7	Landslides												
8	Others												
Note: Use 1 for scarcity of resources; 2 for adequate natural resources; 3 for surplus resources													

Selected PRA Tools cont.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussion (FGD) is a popular and useful tool for collecting qualitative information in social science research. FGDs are mostly conducted with different groups of people to understand the details of a situation of the same nature and then be able to compare and contrast data to help ensure reliable findings. Emphasis is given to the homogeneity of the groups as far as possible so that individuals will be able to share experiences of the same nature.

Process of FGD
- The discussion should be on special issues, e.g. women in water and energy, gender and development, poverty alleviation through water and energy.
- Discussion should be lively, with supporting questions being asked to generate more information.
- Make the group as homogeneous as possible.
- The group size must not exceed 10, the appropriate size being 6-10 people.
- Give open-ended questions and build up the next question wherever necessary.
- Train the researchers or the interviewer before the FGD so that they can control the group and give each individual a chance to contribute, and this get accurate information from the field.

Usefulness of FGD
- Collection of data from the authentic voice of the target population
- Much information in a short time
- Useful for cross-checking of collected information
- Useful in needs assessment and planning of rural energy, natural resources, and income-generating related activities
- Helpful in exploring experiences/potentialities/capabilities
- Especially useful in socioeconomic assessments (anthropology/demography)

Constraints of FGD
- Time-intensive
- Danger of data manipulation and question of reliability
- Less validity compared to other scientific methods
- Useful mostly in micro-level data collection
- Requires high level of expertise
- Requires more expertise in data interpretation than quantitative research