



## Introduction

Most development initiatives intend to reduce poverty and bring about better living conditions for local people. These intentions anticipate changes usually expected to take place within and among the people themselves. The distance between good intentions and achieved changes; however, is often vast. How can one bring about change in people, communities, and organisations? This toolkit is an initiative contributing towards this end. It can help facilitators, development workers, and organisers to mobilise and involve people in development work.

The toolkit is composed of four interrelated but separate chapters on Social Mobilisation (SM), Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action (APPA), Market Analyses and Development (MAD), and Enterprise Support Services (ESS). A set of 34 field-tested participatory learning and action tools have been included in the last section. These are exercises and games to facilitate group discussions and generate data.

SM and APPA make up the organising phase where interest groups are built up and assets/opportunities discovered for possible income generation activities. MAD provides the incentives and direction toward identifying, selecting, and developing potential enterprises and ESS assists entrepreneurs by providing a conducive, institutional, and market environment for enterprise development. The four approaches help to shape a project cycle that can be used to create a participatory process and involve participants to utilise their skills and learning for economically empowering sustainable activities.

SM consists of seven stages, APPA works with five stages, and MAD and ESS each have three stages. Each stage involves more people and more capacity building. They contain separate activities for suggestion and discussion in order to move the process forward to the next stage.

This toolkit is not for beginners, but for practitioners who are 'training trainers', and who assist professionals in direct contact with communities. It can be relevant for planners and policy-makers attempting to draw lessons from the field and design new programmes.

Since the toolkit is based on experiences and situations from rural Nepal, terminologies like VDC, DDC, or CBO have been used in the context of Nepal’s social development structure. Their definitions can be found in abbreviations. Artworks have been made according to Nepal’s sociocultural background.

The information presented in this toolkit is open to discussion, as practitioners and facilitators may have their own experiences and insights to contribute to each chapter. The content is not static and should be continually developed and enriched by experiences from other countries, regions, and organisations. The toolkit provides minimal theoretical background and does not provide answers to all situations. Where needed or if information recommended tools is not available, toolkit users will have to refer to other sources for more in-depth information and materials, and the bibliography provides an overview of available documents/websites. People involved in the project cycle might require personal competencies and skills to deal creatively with particular situations.

Each chapter follows this general outline:

- introduction to each approach;
- information on key topics; and
- the stages belonging to each chapter.

Each stage is comprised of the following general structure:

- \* overview,
- \* methodology,
- \* guidelines, and
- \* use of tools.

Tools have been mentioned throughout the toolkit and one can refer to the section on PLA tools,(page 131) which outlines various tools alphabetically. These refer to both PLA and other tools. Toolkit users can choose which tool is most relevant or useful to their situation based on either references made in the text or, where it is applicable.

The four approaches including their specific stages are presented in the table.

The Four Approaches Showing Specific Stages

<b>SM</b>	<b>APPA</b>	<b>MAD</b>	<b>ESS</b>
Appraisal & Rapport Building	Discovery	Assessment	Analysis
	Dream		
Social Analysis	Direction	Analysis	Assessment
	Design		
Social Capital & Group Formation	Delivery	Action	Action
Social Action			
Alliance Building			
Advocacy			
Social Reflection			



## Background

This toolkit has been developed based on the experiences of the Netherlands development organisation SNV/Nepal. For this effort, the organisation prepared an inventory of practising approaches and strategies, examined existing documents, consulted field workers, and conducted workshops among programme teams to learn more about specific issues that were experienced first-hand. The results were organised and documented and compiled as a toolkit. It is hoped that the toolkit's ready-to-use style will make it easy for users to combine the four approaches and various tools.

The four chapters were developed at different times to serve and cater to the needs of facilitators and development workers who are involved in various programmes and organisations. They represent the shift in development approaches in the last decade from process-oriented community building to a more market-oriented approach with more attention on products and services. Initially, these approaches may have differed from each other in terms of basic steps and their links; however, in practice they complement each other based on the needs and interests prioritised by the target groups.

### *Who are the users of this toolkit?*

The toolkit has been prepared for those who are engaged in project management. It provides a basic framework that helps systemise their work and make it more effective. Serving as a reference, it provides the content for training on capacity building and monitoring at various levels. Staff members can use this toolkit and make suggestions to train their own local counterparts and partner NGOs. It is potentially useful to other practitioners who wish to improve field activities such as organisation, social action, advocacy, etc.

Chapter 1 (SM) and chapter 2 (APPA) can be used as a guide by staff of NGO partners involved in facilitating SM in programme districts; staff who support partner NGOs in carrying out these responsibilities; and programme staff, development facilitators, and trainers involved in community SM. Chapter 3 (MAD) is designed for people working within the private sector, government, or civil society organisations who are working with communities in the marketing and design for income-generating activities within their development programme. Chapter 4 (ESS) is for those who are involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of enterprise development programmes.

### *How to use the toolkit?*

When using the toolkit, bear in mind that the four chapters are interrelated but are independent approaches, each of which can be used as a whole, in parts, or separately (one doesn't need to start from SM or refer to all the chapters). Users can go directly to the part that is most relevant to them. The value of the toolkit; however, lies in its presentation of how to combine the approaches.

While going through each chapter, it is important to remember that the exact moment for entering a new stage is never precise. Sometimes a process stalls, goes back and moves forward, or simply runs out of options or themes. You can choose or combine the stages according to the context within which they are working, or go through the stages of each chapter creatively by combining and switching between each step. All of this depends on the situation in an area, the nature of the groups, and the overall economic and political situation at a given time.

The steps in each stage should be used preliminarily as a means to initiate the process, but it is up to facilitators to decide which methodology best suits each stage. Not every group, community, or organisation has to go through the same process. It is the interaction between the groups and facilitators that determine how the approaches can be combined. Figures and tables are integral to the toolkit and these either support the text or exemplify ideas and concepts. Tables can be shaped according to how they will be used.

### *When do you use each PLA tool?*

To assist facilitators and trainers, the four chapters of this toolkit combine concepts with field-tested participatory learning and action (PLA) tools and games. The uses and effectiveness of the PLA tools are highly correlated with a project cycle. There is no set order or 'recipe' for when to use which tools, although some tools are more effective to gather information about the community and its problems, while analytical tools are used to prioritise the community's problems and solutions. In general, the tools should be chosen based on the types of questions that need to be answered. Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatory action research (PAR) tools are part of the selection of PLA tools presented in this toolkit and timing for each tool is indicative; it may take less or more time than proposed.

### **Chapter structure**

