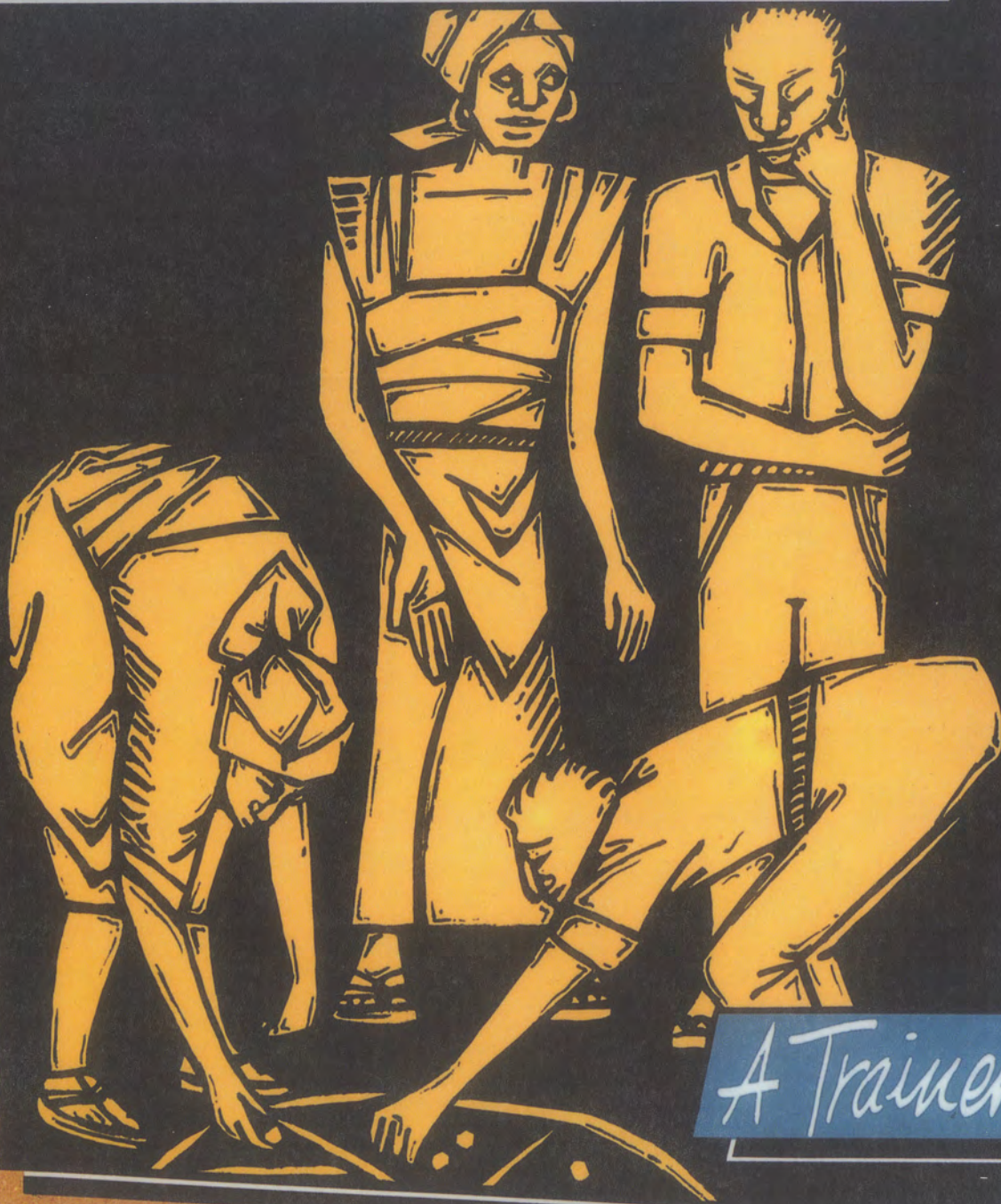




# Participatory Learning & Action



JULES N PRETTY  
IRENE GUIJT  
JOHN THOMPSON  
IAN SCOONES

## A Trainer's Guide

# A Trainer's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action

JULES N PRETTY · IRENE GUIJT  
IAN SCOONES · JOHN THOMPSON

Illustrations: REGINA FAUL-DOYLE

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## IIED PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY SERIES

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"Would you tell me please, which way  
I ought to go from here?" said Alice.  
"That depends a good deal on where  
you want to get to," said the Cat.

*Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland*

And with the best leaders  
When the work is done  
The task accomplished  
The people will say:  
We have done this ourselves.

*Lao-tzu, China, 4000 BC*

The only way in which a human being  
can make some approach to knowing the  
whole of a subject is by hearing what can  
be said about it by persons of every  
variety of opinion, and studying all modes  
in which it can be looked at by every  
character of mind. No wise man ever  
acquired his wisdom in any mode but this;  
nor is it in the nature of human intellect to  
become wise in any other manner.

*John Stuart Mill, On Liberty*

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This guide is a part of the *Participatory Methodology Series* produced by the Sustainable Agriculture Programme of the International Institute for Environment and Development. The series provides a range of materials on the various aspects and applications of participatory learning and action methodologies for development. The series is aimed at trainers and practitioners alike and includes both books and audio-visual material (a video and slide pack). Other titles in the series are:

- *How People Use Pictures: An annotated bibliography for development workers* by Sarah Murray Bradley. To be published in conjunction with the British Council.
- *Rapid Appraisal for Community Forestry* by Donald A. Messerschmidt.
- *Questions of Difference: PRA, gender and environment* by Irene Guijt. A multi-lingual trainer's pack comprising a video, trainer's guide and slide set.
- *A User's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action* (in preparation).

These guides and other materials have grown out of work conducted by the Sustainable Agriculture Programme, whose staff have played a role in the recent development and spread of Agroecosystem Analysis (AEA), Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The Programme has been actively involved in training and building capacity through field-based and workshop-based training courses since 1986. The authors of the guides have been directly involved in training programmes and courses in Austria, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, India,

Indonesia, Kenya, Lesotho, Netherlands, Nepal, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, UK, USA and Zimbabwe.

The Programme also distributes the informal journal *RRA Notes* to institutions in some 120 countries. This was first published in 1988 and, by the end of 1994, 21 issues had been published containing more than 200 articles. In 1995 the name changed to *PLA Notes (Notes on Participatory Learning and Action)*.

#### **DANGERS OF HANDBOOKS**

The expansion in interest and application of participatory methods has led to a growing demand for handbooks. But handbooks and manuals carry special dangers. Large texts intimidate new practitioners, particularly if instructions require comprehensive reading before practice. Strict instructions and frameworks on how to do something tend to block innovation and so lead to standardisation.



The participatory methods for visualisation, interviewing, sampling and group dynamics described in these guides are not techniques, tools or instruments. They do not guarantee an output in the way that a carpenter can repeatedly make a particular joint to fit together two pieces of wood. The success of the use of these methods depends on the individuals involved, on the quality of facilitation, and the context in which they are applied. It is only the underlying philosophy and aspects of process that can be transferred from context to context. All other elements of the methods and methodology must be individually adapted by facilitators and practitioners.

Many practitioners have learnt from colleagues and from their own improvisations in the field. Many innovations have occurred when practitioners have not known or not followed the guidelines derived from earlier practice, while still following the main principles. Participatory learning and action refers to and draws on experiences from a growing group of participatory approaches to research and development. There is now a huge diversity of names and terms, most of which have common underlying principles and values. These guides are not intended to reflect exclusive support for one set of methods or approaches over another. Rather, it is hoped that they will support the process of invention and adaptation.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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The Programme is also grateful to Regina Faul-Doyle for the illustrations, Lee Robinson for the design and layout of the guides, and Deviani Vyas, Ginni Tym, Fiona Hinchcliffe, and Stephanie Dickens for help in the preparation of the manuscripts.

There are 101 exercises and games listed in Part II, together with sources known to us. It should be made clear, however, that these sources are not necessarily the inventors of an exercise. Almost every trainer or practitioner makes adaptations and changes, and the notion of an inventor completely uninfluenced by others is rather unlikely.

However, if any reader feels that an exercise is incorrectly attributed, then we would be pleased to hear from them, and will make the appropriate changes to later editions of this guide.

The International Institute for Environment and Development is very grateful to several organisations for financial support for the development of the *Participatory Methodology Series*. It has been funded primarily by a grant to the Sustainable Agriculture Programme from the Swedish International Development Authority. An earlier grant from the Farm Management and Production Economics Service of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, Rome was important in the early development of the series.

Supplementary support has come from The European Commission; *The Health, Population and Nutrition Division* of The German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ); *The Pilot Project Natural Resource Management by Self-Help Promotion* (NARMS) of GTZ; Division 425, GTZ; *Pilot Project Institutional Development*, GTZ; Intercooperation; The Swiss Development Co-operation; UNICEF and The World Bank.

The *Questions of Difference* training pack was supported by UNIFEM, SIDA, NOVIB, OXFAM, SDC, and ODA, and *How People Use Pictures* by the British Council.

#### **USE OF THE MATERIALS**

Please feel free to photocopy what you need from these guides and distribute the information widely, if the original text is properly acknowledged and the objective is not for profit or gain. The copyright on these guides is both to protect the property rights of the authors and illustrator and to encourage citation. The cartoons can also be used within reason without request to the publishers, authors or illustrator, provided details of the source are prominent. Please send copies of any publications which draw on this material to the publishers.



**T**his guide is designed for both experienced and new trainers who have an interest in training others in the use of participatory methods, whether they are researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, villagers, or even trainers themselves. But it is not intended to be used as a conventional training manual or 'cook-book'. There is no standard formula or 'recipe' to follow to ensure that your training event will produce the desired results.

It is not necessary to read this guide from beginning to end before you can begin. This would be an intimidating task. It is designed for dipping into, to excite interest, to give you a taste of what is possible. It contains suggestions for the use of methods and exercises, as well as details of the theoretical and conceptual challenges facing all trainers and facilitators.

If you are an experienced trainer, you will know that no two training events are alike; each one offers a unique challenge to you as a professional and as a person. Each exercise is an opportunity to try something new and to learn something new – about managing group dynamics, about your subject matter, and about yourself. It is through this process that trainers acquire the 'tricks of the trade' that help them make appropriate decisions to suit the circumstances.

If you are new to training, do not worry about mastering all of the elements of designing and conducting an effective training programme the first time, or even the second or third. Developing and improving your skills as a trainer is a continuing process. The best way is to start, and to learn by doing. Gain experience by being self-critical, by learning from mistakes, and by trying out new ideas.

All learning is ultimately self-learning, which is a very individual process. Differ-

ent individuals learn best in different ways and at different rates. One person may learn better by reading, another by attending lectures, and yet another by involvement in group activities. As each of us is responsible for our own learning, your role as trainer or facilitator is to help others identify their own individual and collective needs, priorities and potentials. Through your facilitation in training events you will be helping others develop the skills and capacities to use participatory methods in a sensitive manner.

Chapter One of this guide examines the basics of interactive training, compares different methods of instruction and suggests effective ways to establish an atmosphere that encourages learning.

Chapter Two focuses on the principal roles, skills and techniques that you, as the trainer-facilitator, should consider before undertaking any training activity.

Chapter Three assesses the implications of managing group dynamics and building the interdisciplinary teams that are so essential in the practice of participatory research and development. You can draw on the 101 exercises described in Part II (fully referenced throughout) that have proved useful in energising participants, improving group interactions, enhancing interviewing skills, encouraging analysis of local livelihoods and conditions, and evaluating various exercises and training events.

Chapter Four gives a summary of the principles of participatory learning and action to help you discuss them with the participants.

Chapter Five describes the process of workshop training in three groups of participatory methods: semi-structured interviewing, visualisation and diagramming methods, and ranking and scoring methods.

Moving out of the workshop and into the field, Chapter Six focuses on the complexities of training in a real-world setting and how to deal with them. This includes discussions on planning the fieldwork, forming groups, getting started, encouraging the use of the range of participatory methods available, using the methods concurrently and sequentially, conducting community meetings, analysis of both process and content, and recording and writing up results.

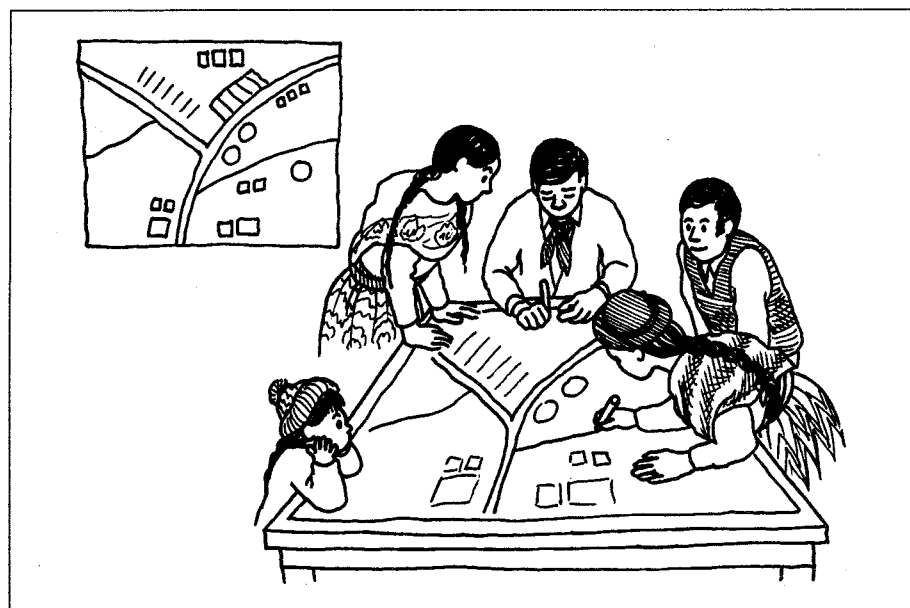
Chapter Seven discusses the conditions necessary for preparing a training course or programme on participatory methods.

Each chapter concludes with a checklist of questions for trainers.

Part II contains details of 101 games and exercises for use in workshop and classroom settings and in the field. These are divided into nine sections:

- *Getting Started*: Exercises for Introductions and Icebreakers (1–12)
- *Picking up the Tempo*: Exercises for Energising and Forming Groups (13–25)
- *Keeping it Together*: Exercises for Enhancing Group Dynamics (26–40)
- *Learning to Listen*: Exercises to Improve Listening and Observation (41–50)
- *Learning to Reflect*: Exercises for Improving Analysis (51–62)
- *Summing it Up*: Exercises for Evaluation (63–73)
- Exercises for Semi-Structured Interviewing (74–87)
- Exercises for Diagramming and Visualisation (88–95)
- Exercises for Ranking and Scoring (96–101).

Please use the information and suggested exercises to guide your own work. Experiment and be open to making your own discoveries.



---



**1.1 TEACHING AND LEARNING**

This guide is all about helping people to learn about participatory approaches. Although the basic objective of training should be to create a learning environment, it is regrettably often about teaching. Teaching is what we are all used to. Much, but not all, of our time in school or college is characterised by teaching. One person, the teacher, stands at the front of rows of students or children. This one person knows something, and is trying to encourage the others to know it too. It is formal, and often has little to do with learning.

Learning is not usually an outcome of formal teaching. Instead it comes from a process of self-development through experience. So trainers who aim to encourage learning have a particular challenge. They have to do something quite different if they are to be agents of change. This guide is about how trainers can impart skills and enhance the knowledge of trainees, participants, adult learners\*, students. These people can then apply what they learn to change their behaviour and attitudes about themselves and others, modify the institutional contexts in which they work, and initiate more participatory processes and procedures in their work.

It is important to reflect on terminology. You, the trainer, are also a facilitator, tutor and teacher. The people you are working with are trainees, but also participants, students and learners. None of these terms is entirely satisfactory. In this guide, we use both 'trainer' and 'facilitator' to describe the same role, and 'participant' or 'trainee' when referring to the people attending your sessions or workshops.

The actions you initiate should always lead to growth for the trainees. This is the basic building block of all training. Learning is about developing yourself. To achieve

**Box 1.1 How adults learn**

- Adults are voluntary learners. They perform best when they have decided to attend the training for a particular reason. They have a right to know why a topic or session is important to them.
- Adults have usually come with an intention to learn. If this motivation is not supported, they will switch off or stop coming.
- Adults have experience and can help each other to learn. Encourage the sharing of that experience and your sessions will become more effective.
- Adults learn best in an atmosphere of active involvement and participation.
- Adults learn best when it is clear that the context of the training is close to their own tasks or jobs. Adults are best taught with a real-world approach.

*Sources: Robert Smith (1983); Alan Rogers (1986); Jenny Rogers (1989)*

success, trainees have to be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning experience, so that it continues long after the training workshop or course has ended.

In almost every training situation, you will encounter a diverse group of people with different training needs. The learning approaches you use should cater to these different needs. They should be chosen keeping in mind some basic facts about adult learning processes (Box 1.1). In particular, it is important to note that people

**1.1 Teaching and Learning**

- 1.1.1 On Being a Learner
- 1.1.2 The Motivation to Learn
- 1.1.3 Communication Barriers and Aids

**1.2 What Makes a Good Trainer?**

- 1.2.1 From Manipulation to Facilitation
- 1.2.2 The Importance of Feedback

**1.3 Trainer's Checklist: Adult Learning**





learn best when they feel they are in control of the learning process, rather than receiving a lesson or subjected to teaching. Not all modes of instruction are able to do this. Participants learn best when they are actively involved and motivated.

#### 1.1.1 ON BEING A LEARNER

Most trainers do not pay sufficient attention to individual learning capacity. It is widely regarded as something that people either do well or poorly and are unable to change. Yet the ability to learn is valuable and can be encouraged by trainers. The most important attribute is the ability to learn from others by keeping an open mind. David Kolb (1984) has suggested that there are four different kinds of abilities that learners need if they are to be effective. They must be able to:

- involve themselves fully, openly and without bias in new experiences: *concrete experience*;

- reflect on and observe these experiences from many perspectives: *reflective observation*;
- create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories: *abstract conceptualisation*;
- use these theories to make decisions and solve problems: *active experimentation*.

Most people develop learning styles that emphasise some learning abilities over others. Busy managers, for example, are usually strong on active experimentation but weak on reflective observation skills; a pure academic may have the opposite skills; an extension worker may be strong on concrete experience but weak on abstract conceptualisation. Such differences in learning styles can create problems for trainers, particularly if they do not pay attention to the mix of skills, attitudes and experience present in participants.

What is clear, though, is that all learning is best done through active involvement. This implies that the process of learning (or training) matters more than the actual subject. Adults have a particular problem with learning. It is that as we grow older, our short-term memory faculty becomes less efficient and more easily disturbed. We find it harder to translate what we see or hear to long-term memory. Any method that relies too much on short-term memory, such as lectures or demonstrations, is doomed to failure (see Box 1.2). The words of the lecturer end up crowding in on listeners with the result that none are digested. For learning to stick, it has to be internalised. Trainees must make it their own. Learning occurs when the learners are wholly and actively involved in their learning all the time, and when they are allowed to work at their own pace.

**Box 1.2****The disadvantages of lectures**

■ Real knowledge is assumed to belong to the lecturer, as communication is one-way with no participation, feedback or reinforcement from the audience.

■ It is assumed that there is a knowledge gap between the lecturer and the listeners. It is assumed that the trainees' heads are empty vessels which need to be filled with facts.

■ As trainees are passive recipients of information they soon become bored or restless.

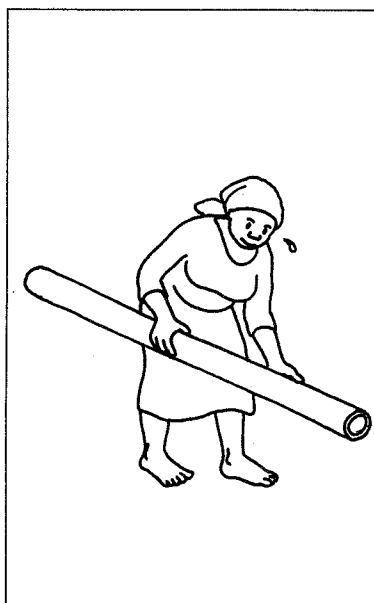
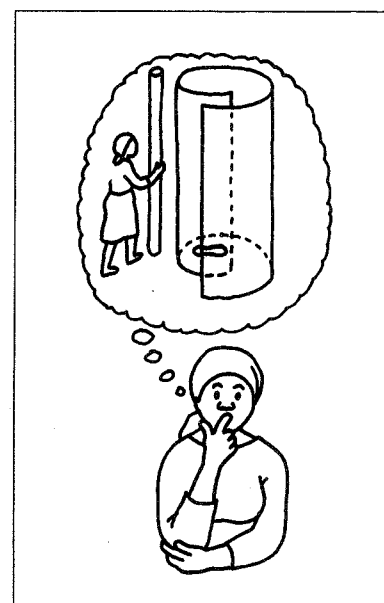
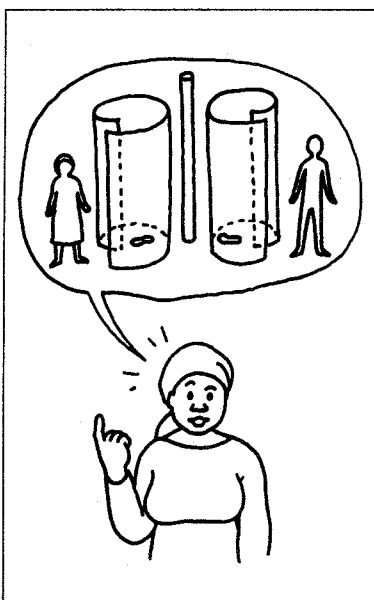
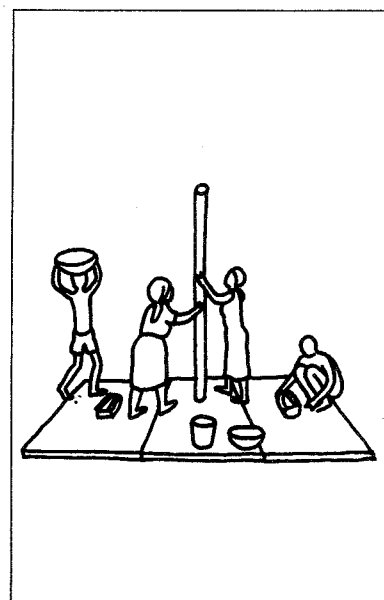
■ The lecture method emphasises the transfer of information and facts, but the strength of the message depends upon much more than the facts themselves.

■ Attention spans are limited, especially if the lecture is delivered in a monotonous voice. The average person immediately forgets 50% of what he/she has heard.

■ Too often the lecture is a 'canned' talk, prepared only once and repeated often.

■ The lecturer has no way of knowing how well trainees are understanding or believing the messages if there is no focused feedback during or after the lecture.

Source: Ray Ison (1990)

**The different kinds of abilities that learners need to be effective****Concrete experience****Reflective observation****Abstract conceptualisation****Active experimentation**

All of this requires continued and regular practice: "Without reinforcement, many people forget vital parts of what they have learned after about six months" (Jenny Rogers, 1989). A well-designed course obliges the participants to continue building on skills and knowledge learnt earlier. Without reinforcement, the skills will fade.

Paradoxically, many trainees or participants will not know themselves what they need to help them learn. They may resist your attempts to introduce new learning methods, even though these are more enjoyable. To encourage your trainees to feel at ease in the training setting you are providing, consider how best to draw in different types of learners that are present in your session. As trainees in participatory methods will be adults, it is important to consider how adults learn best. To encourage learning in adult trainees, consider the following points (see also Box 1.1):

- Ensure that they feel necessary, involved or important. This gives them the motivation which is necessary for learning to take place;
- Communicate clearly what the training programme will entail. They must be convinced that it will be relevant, and that specific skills learnt will fulfil needs;
- Ensure that there are plenty of practical exercises. As they are 'doing', self-confidence increases and they are able to adapt what they are learning to their own circumstances;
- Respect and encourage individuality since people learn at different rates and have different styles;
- Continue to relate new material to information and skills which they already know.

### 1.1.2 THE MOTIVATION TO LEARN

Unless trainees or participants are motivated, they will not and cannot learn. Throughout any course, workshop or session, you must tap into and keep refuelling the motivation of the participants. If you do not, everything will collapse. A key element of motivation is strong self-esteem in participants, so it is important to seek ways of building this. One practical way to do

this is to have participants write down all the things they can do. This is different from asking them all the things they would like to do or have. Appreciating what you can already do builds self-esteem and motivation.

This again comes back to the difference between learning and teaching. Some trainers and teachers still believe that just being exposed to the subject is enough; and that skills and knowledge 'trickle down'. But lack of motivation is one of the main reasons why learning fails. There are many reasons why participants may not be motivated or lose motivation, including that:

- they have been instructed to attend your workshop, against their personal wishes;
- they do not know why they are attending the workshop;
- they are aware of work mounting up in their normal place of work, and so their minds are elsewhere;
- your teaching style is not sufficiently participatory to involve their knowledge, skills and insights;
- they have been 'taught' all this before, so they feel they already know it;
- they harbour misconceptions about you or your organisation.

As a trainer, you should be able to deal with many of these issues before a workshop. It is important to start by asking: "*Why are participants attending your workshop or course? What are their personal reasons for coming?*" As indicated above, they may have had no choice, with someone senior instructing them to attend. If they have not been forced, then there are a range of motives that they may be bringing with them to the learning process. They may be curious about the course, having heard from

others of its value. They may be hoping to learn new skills to do their job better. They may be very dissatisfied with current approaches and procedures, which are known to be failures. The course may be perceived as leading to promotion opportunities, or at least to changed roles and responsibilities. They may also be hoping that it will lead to the forging of new linkages with other institutions, and so offer new working opportunities.

Motivation may change during a workshop. You may begin with suspicious participants and end up with a fully motivated group. On the other hand, keen participants may become demoralised. You need to be alert to these changes during the course of a workshop (see Box 1.3). Common signs of demoralisation include arriving late or being absent, deteriorating quality of work, and challenging perceived authority. But don't confuse the storming phase of groups (see Chapter 3) with flagging motivation. Each group naturally passes through a difficult phase in its life cycle, which is not a sign of lack of motivation.

### 1.1.3 COMMUNICATION BARRIERS AND AIDS

Good communication and the free exchange of information is at the heart of all training and human resource development. But this can be threatened by barriers constructed or already present in both trainers and trainees. Despite choosing appropriate exercises and instruction methods, other barriers may reduce the effectiveness of the communication between the sender and the receiver of the messages. If you are sending a message, for example in a lecture, it is important that you confirm that the receiving participants have picked up what you intended to communicate. If participants do not or apparently will not understand, then your training goals will

#### Box 1.3

##### Trainer's motivation checklist

- Do you know the reasons all your participants have given for being present?
- Have they been asked to state their personal goals, ie what they hope to achieve by the end of the course?
- Do you have a system for feedback on motivation during the course?
- Is there provision at the end of the course for feedback on whether they achieved their goals?
- Do you have a system for guiding participants whose motivation or goals are not well matched to yours or the group's?
- Do you have a system for monitoring and controlling:
  - latecomers?
  - poor work?
  - inattentiveness?

Source: Jenny Rogers (1989)

not be achieved. If you are receiving a message from participants, be it verbal or non-verbal, then it is important to confirm that you have understood what they intended to convey.

In a training situation, trainers hope to encourage trainees to change. But most people resist change unless they see the direct benefits. Initial perceptions and preconceived notions make it difficult for us to see and analyse things openly; our minds are set in one particular pattern of thinking. As trainers, we cannot expect trainees to let go of their own ideas and behaviour immediately. However, you can ensure

that there are as few barriers to communication as possible, so that participants are encouraged to change.

There are many barriers to communication in groups. When a person is experiencing a problem, he or she usually has strong feelings. When involved in a learning process which requires behavioural change, many trainees become defensive to avoid feeling embarrassed, threatened, vulnerable or incompetent.

Many responses that we, as trainers, commonly give in such situations might seem helpful but can actually aggravate communication blocks and increase the feeling of pressure and isolation (Box 1.4).

Feelings and emotions can be very strong obstacles to communication. Many emotions are sent as non-verbal cues, in

the look of the eyes, the holding of the arms, or the bearing of the body. A sensitive trainer will pick up both verbal and non-verbal indications of strong emotions. Remember that what someone says is not always what they mean: try to read behind what is being expressed.

To avoid misunderstandings, trainers should be open and explicit about what the session is trying to achieve and should encourage questions and comments. To challenge our own assumptions as trainers, it is good to clarify doubts we might have or undercurrents we feel by asking for regular feedback, either from individuals or in plenary (see Exercises for Evaluation, nos 63–73 in Part II).

If making assumptions and ignoring feelings prevents good communication, then helping a person to express his or her feelings will build it. How well do you listen? It is not as easy as it may sound. Very often we listen only to the first few words and start to form an opinion before we have listened to the end of the statement and actually *heard* what the person has said. Using skills to listen is one of the most helpful things we can do. Different ways to achieve this and respond openly include:

- **Passive listening:** remain silent and let the person talk. We can communicate our interest and concern by our non-verbal behaviour;

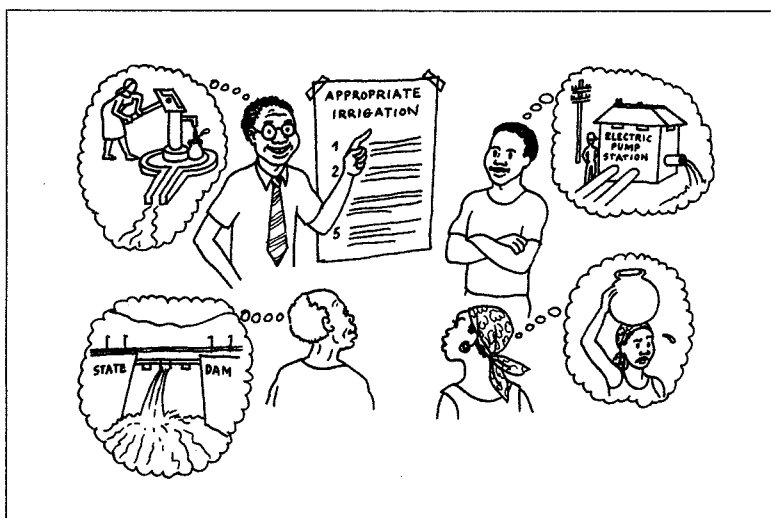
- **Acknowledgements:** use brief expressions that communicate our understanding and acceptance, such as “aha”, “mmm”, “I see”;

- **Door openers:** instead of direct questions, use expressions which invite the person to expand on or to continue expressing their thoughts and feelings. For example: “Tell me about it”; “I’d like to hear more about that”;

#### Box 1.4 Typical communication blocks

<i>Solution or advice:</i>	We imply indirectly: “You are too stupid to figure out the problem, so do it my way; your feelings are not important.”
<i>Orders:</i>	Giving orders can provoke resentment as people are not given a choice and their feelings have not been considered
<i>Threats:</i>	We use our power to tell people what will happen if they don't do it our way. Their feelings are not important.
<i>Moralising or lecturing:</i>	When we tell people what they should or ought to do, we value our own values more than their feelings.
<i>Criticism or ridicule:</i>	We deny people's feelings by telling them that they are bad people and do not have a right to feel the way they do.
<i>Praise or sympathy:</i>	We try to substitute or cover up their feelings with another feeling. These statements avoid the real issue.
<i>Questioning:</i>	By trying to get people to think logically, we deny their feelings.

Source: Sam Joseph, pers. comm.



● **Content paraphrase:** repeat what we have heard to confirm that we have an accurate understanding. For example: *“So you’re saying that if the plan works the problem will be solved?”*;

● **Active listening:** help the person to understand both the thoughts and feelings of their communication by describing your impressions of what has been said and the feelings which are observed. For example: *“You sound upset about him using your ideas”*; *“You seem to be unsure about what to do next”*. A special type of active listening can occur when the person does not say anything verbally, but displays feelings. You can feed back an observation of that person’s behaviour. For example: *“You look sad”*; *“You seem anxious and upset”*.

● **Provision of support:** respond to legitimate needs for support, such as providing information. For example: *“The meeting will be at 4 pm today”*.

By listening carefully to feedback you can gauge how well the issues under discussion are being understood. Listen between the lines, listen for new ideas or unusual

perspectives, listen for underlying tensions or confusions, and most importantly, do not let your emotions get in the way. When faced with criticism, we tend to become defensive. Be careful not to block the participants’ free expression by sending negative verbal or non-verbal messages, such as show-

ing impatience or scepticism. You will be better able to deal with the situation if you try to understand the opposing perspective. Also, do not over-react: what one participant says may be a minority view, so do not lose the other participants by responding at length. Finally, when responding to negative comments or queries, you might wish to try using the *agreement frame* described in Chapter 3 (Box 3.5).

Your tone of voice as the trainer is as important as the words you use. By projecting your voice and showing enthusiasm and interest in your subject, you can create a pleasant atmosphere for learning. However, you must be aware that, like body language, the pitch or inflection of the voice can reveal more than we may wish, including negative emotions or tensions. A harsh or patronising tone can be just as abrasive



and insulting as any critical comment (see Chapter 2).

### 1.2 WHAT MAKES A GOOD TRAINER?

Many of the problems that appear in groups are ultimately related to the personality and skills of the trainer or facilitator. Jenny Rogers put it this way:

*“Thinking back to my own schooldays and to the teaching I have encountered since, the outstanding teachers all shared an enthusiastic, open, relaxed style while teaching.”*

To be a good facilitator requires time and experience, and learning by doing is the best way. The most effective trainers and facilitators have a range of key characteristics (adapted from Jenny Rogers, 1989):

- a warm personality, with an ability to show approval and acceptance of trainees;
- social skill, with an ability to bring the group together and control it without damaging it;
- a manner of teaching which generates and uses the ideas and skills of participants;
- organising ability, so that resources are booked and logistical arrangements smoothly handled;
- skill in noticing and resolving participants' problems;
- enthusiasm for the subject and capacity to put it across in an interesting way;
- flexibility in responding to participants' changing needs;
- knowledge of the subject matter.

Some of these characteristics can be attributed to people's personality. Others can be learned or improved through experience and practice. Still others can be developed

by using specific exercises that are structured to provide some of the conditions for learning by participants (see Part II). Most importantly, though, the learning of facilitation requires you to be self-critical about your performance at each stage of the session or workshop. Rather than asking yourself whether you could have done better, ask what and when you could have done better. Constructive criticism from colleagues or peers is an important addition to self-reflection. When doing this do remember that you will never be able to fully satisfy every participant. If you have managed to encourage learning amongst the majority, then you have done your job well.

#### 1.2.1 FROM MANIPULATION TO FACILITATION

The way in which you communicate with participants will also depend on whether you are manipulating the group or facilitating it. There is a big difference between manipulation and facilitation. Manipulation is trainer-centred. You are in charge and everyone knows it. You yourself rarely learn. Facilitation is learner-centred. You are helping others to learn, and you will be learning too.

As a trainer, you are in a position of relative authority, especially during the initial stages of the training. Guiding groups without imposing or steering too much is harder than it sounds. There is nothing more tempting for a nervous trainer than to keep tight control over the proceedings, and to decide what, when, how, where, why, and with whom something should be done. A rigid, top-down training approach can be efficient and reassuring for the anxious trainer, but it rarely leads to real learning and strong group building.

A learner-focused approach to training encourages creativity and reflection by participants, leading to shifts in attitude

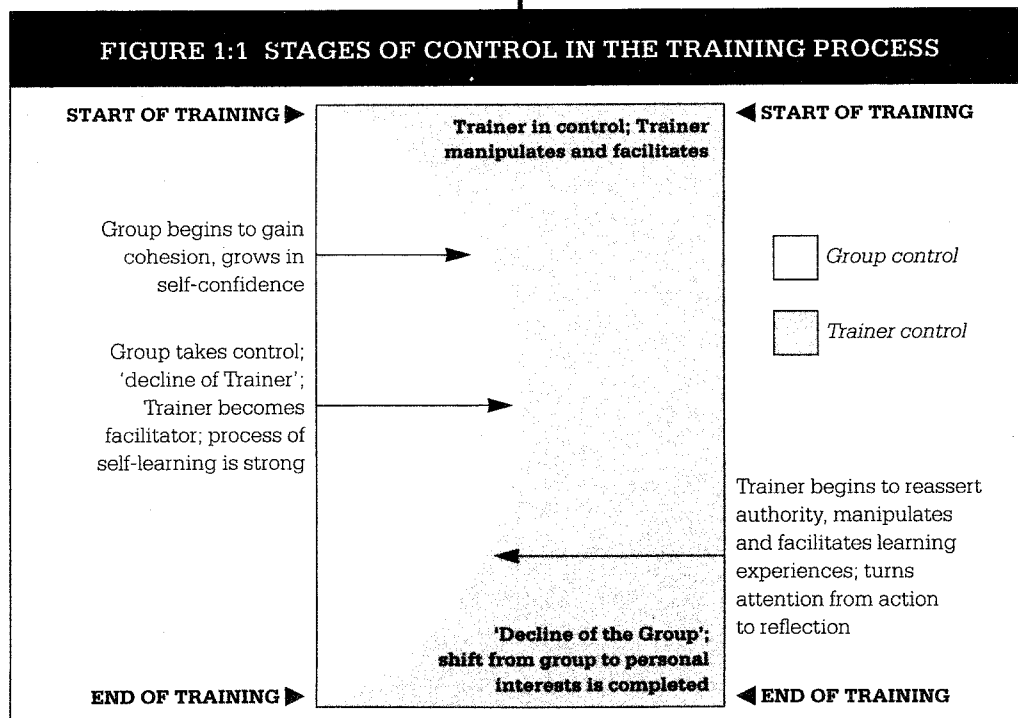
and awareness. Facilitation is the preferred approach to training in participatory methods. But manipulation should not always be seen as entirely wrong. You may combine facilitation with the manipulation of training events, as, in many instances, only you know in detail what the final learning objectives of a particular exercise are and how best they can be attained. Sometimes you will have to create a situation or prompt a reaction to ensure that the participants understand a particular learning point. There is a place for this in any good session, as long as the intention is to encourage or stimulate learning, and not to maintain power over the group.

In most cases, the trainer is the dominant figure at the beginning of the training event and most trainees will expect guidance (Figure 1.1). Generally, the trainees will be unfamiliar with the concepts, prin-

ciples and methods to be discussed. They may be apprehensive, sceptical or even uncertain about why they are attending the training. Senior trainees may not have been in a formal learning setting for many years and may be anxious about how they will be seen by their more junior counterparts. At the same time, the junior participants may feel reluctant to speak openly for fear of directly confronting their superiors.

At the early stage, you will have to direct the training to make the trainees feel more at ease and create the right conditions for learning. There are many things you can do to reduce tension and encourage active participation. This is also the period when lecturing may be used to good effect in order to situate the training in its proper institutional and methodological context, and to set the stage for more interactive activities.

**FIGURE 1:1 STAGES OF CONTROL IN THE TRAINING PROCESS**





As trainees grow more comfortable with one another and with the overall process, group cohesion will increase and they will begin to assert their own authority over the training. You can then turn over control to the trainees. This shift in control is sometimes referred to as the *decline of the trainer*, or even the *death of the trainer*. The phrase is meant to describe a process in which you slowly fade from centre stage as the trainees accept greater responsibility and initiate various activities independently.

You can encourage trainees by asking timely questions, suggesting various group exercises, and using a range of dynamic methods of instruction, such as buzz groups (section 2.3.2) and brainstorming sessions (section 2.3.3). Since the group members have grown more self-confident and independent, this is a good time to propose the role plays, detailed case studies and other activities which require greater amounts of active participation and risk-taking.

As the training draws to a close, you will need to reassert authority over the participants once more. Some direction may be required to bring out key learning points and encourage the group to switch from action to reflection. Be open with the group and tell them about these changing roles. With this encouragement, the trainees will turn their attention away from their present activities and towards the future, when they will have to apply what they have learned to their own work settings. This change in focus from the public to the personal is sometimes referred to as the *decline of the group*, which is an essential part of any training activity.

Even the best training session in participatory methods can give only a partial impression of how the trainees will perform in a real-world situation. Once it ends, the

participants must return to their normal work routines and adapt the skills and knowledge they have gained during the training to suit their particular situations.

### 1.2.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK

Trainees generally find it difficult to be open and critical about their own behaviour. Giving constructive feedback or encouraging self-reflection are therefore critical skills. Jenny Rogers (1989) describes the challenge:

*“Teaching adults is complicated enormously by the difficulty of criticising an equal. Not giving the right quantity or quality of feedback is one of the main reasons why adult learning fails... There are two dangers: giving it in the wrong way and not giving enough.”*

If you do not let participants know when they are doing things well, then they will not be able to reinforce the good things they are doing. It is also very easy to hurt trainees by being destructively critical and not acknowledging their efforts. Many adults find it difficult to recognise that they have made a mistake, and even more difficult to unlearn it. They hide behind defensive reasoning, avoiding a confrontation with past experiences and misunderstandings, thereby blocking their own progress.

As a trainer, you will have to guide self-reflection and give feedback immediately, in order to address some of the mistakes from the past. There are five simple rules for giving feedback:

- *Give feedback as soon as possible.* Do not wait until the error or success is repeated.
- *Limit comments* to only two or three aspects of good or bad performance. There is a limit to how much we can absorb at any one time.

- *Don't immediately correct mistakes yourself.* There is always great temptation to help directly and to demonstrate. But such help only creates dependency. The most difficult thing for a trainer is to keep quiet and let participants learn by doing it themselves. It might take longer but the learning impact will be greater.

- *Give praise* before offering negative comments. However poor the performance, there must be something you can praise. Build up participants' self-esteem.

- *Criticise the performance, not the person.* Whenever you offer feedback, make sure it encourages the participant to act upon it.

The checklist in Box 1.5 guides the process of supportive feedback.

Self-reflection is a critical component of any feedback that aims to encourage learning. By asking the participants themselves to reflect critically on their own performance, they will realise better that they are ultimately responsible for their own learning.

However, many adults have not learnt to do this and find it difficult to see, accept and acknowledge in public that their performance can improve. There are different ways to make this easier, and what is possible will clearly vary per culture. Two suggestions are:

- after an exercise or session, ask participants to reflect on and write down the main lessons they have learnt from their own performance. Ask: *"How would you do things differently now?"*;

- in pairs or trios, ask participants to give each other comments on their overall performance. This is less threatening than if done in plenary.

Good facilitation leads to good group feeling and empathy between participants and trainers but it is also tiring. Participants may lose concentration or daydream, but as a trainer, you will have to be sufficiently concentrated to follow every idea, nuance and intervention.

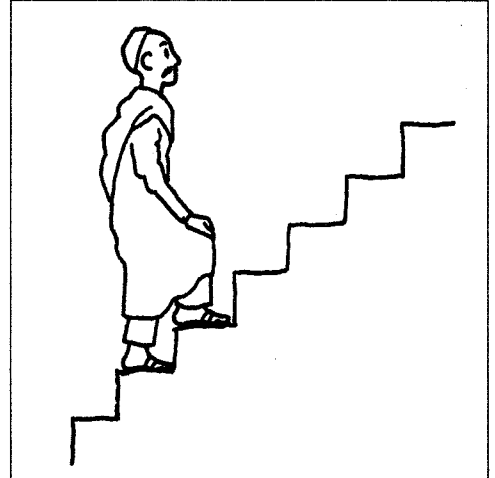
#### **Box 1.5 Trainer's feedback checklist**

- Do you use several ways to offer feedback to learners: written comments, general progress discussions, comments on each performance, action plans?
- Does every learner receive feedback during each session?
- Do you always give feedback immediately?
- Do you always praise the good points before criticising the bad?
- Do you criticise the performance not the person?
- Do you always give reasons for your feedback?
- Do you check that the learner has understood the feedback by asking open-ended questions?
- Do you concentrate on just a few criticisms at a time?
- Do you create an atmosphere where trainees can give constructive feedback to each other?

*Source: Jenny Rogers (1989)*

**1.3 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST:  
ADULT LEARNING**

- *Is the atmosphere of your sessions friendly and encouraging?*
- *Have you made plans to relieve any anxieties your trainees might feel?*
- *Will your teaching methods allow learners' previous experiences to be acknowledged or used?*
- *Will learners be 'rewarded' for their contributions?*
- *Does the work allow participants to measure their own progress?*
- *Do you make it clear that you are available for additional help if individuals have difficulties?*
- *Are the first few minutes of your sessions always attention-grabbing?*
- *Do you build in frequent opportunities for reinforcement and practice?*
- *Are you avoiding lectures, or at least limiting them to 10–20 minutes?*
- *Have you built in regular feedback sessions?*





## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the roles, skills and techniques that you, the trainer or facilitator, ought to consider before initiating a training session. Practical steps and tips are suggested to help you create the optimal learning environment. No one can get the process right without careful preparation and practice. The following sections discuss ways to plan a training programme, prepare training materials and teaching aids, deal with nerves, handle questions, and conduct thorough debriefing sessions. It also discusses how to work effectively with other trainers, and ways to train trainers on the job.

## 2.2 BASIC PREPARATIONS

The first place to start with preparations is with yourself. Being a facilitator is not easy, and it is important to be aware of the limits of this task. Being clear about your position and responsibilities early on in your preparations will help to prevent any inappropriate interpretation of your role as a trainer (see Box 2.1).

### 2.2.1 OBJECTIVES OF TRAINING

Before you begin, you must be clear about the objectives of your talk, lecture, seminar, workshop or training course. Why are you going to do a training? Who are you being asked to train? What is the primary content you are hoping to communicate in your training? There are six general objectives of communication and at different times yours will probably be one or more of these:

- To Change Behaviour
- To Persuade
- To Inform
- To Stimulate Thought
- To Entertain
- To Motivate for Action

### Box 2.1 Responsibilities of a trainer

■ It is important to demystify your role as trainer. Unless the group understands your role, they will probably view you as an authority and will not see that they have to take responsibility for their own learning process. Keep reflecting back to the group their need to take responsibility for learning.

■ Remember that you cannot expect to meet your own emotional needs while working as a facilitator. Do not be tempted to use the power delegated to you by the participants to fill your own needs, such as asking for attention or respect, or making friends.

■ Being a facilitator does not mean that you are qualified to be a psychotherapist, either at a group or an individual level. Take great care when participants reach out to you, either directly or indirectly, with their emotional needs.

■ It is essential that the group understands what you are doing with them: what your goals are, how you expect to meet their needs, what you can and cannot give them, and how you are going to do it. It is the group's right to hold you accountable for what you do with them.

*Source: Auvine et al. (1977)*

Besides these overall objectives, you will need to formulate a specific objective for the workshop, based on the subject matter. Writing it down in a single sentence will help to select materials and will clear your mind of irrelevant topics.

The purpose of all training is to build skills and encourage behavioural and attitudinal changes in participants. So it is essential that this specific objective relates

## 2.1 Introduction

## 2.2 Basic Preparations

- 2.2.1 Objectives of Training
- 2.2.2 Knowing the Participants
- 2.2.3 Choice of Venue and Room(s)
- 2.2.4 Seating Arrangements
- 2.2.5 Timing of Sessions
- 2.2.6 Pace and Content of Sessions

## 2.3 Methods of Training

- 2.3.1 Lectures
- 2.3.2 Buzz Groups
- 2.3.3 Brainstorming and Collecting Ideas
- 2.3.4 Role Plays
- 2.3.5 Case Studies
- 2.3.6 Using Notes and Visual Aids

## 2.4 You as a Performer

- 2.4.1 Articulation and Expression
- 2.4.2 Dealing with Nerves
- 2.4.3 Dealing with Questions and Answers
- 2.4.4 After You Have Finished

## 2.5 Other Trainers

- 2.5.1 Working as a Team
- 2.5.2 Training Resource People at the Same Time
- 2.5.3 Training Community Trainers

## 2.6 Trainer's Checklist: Preparations



to something that can be measured or evaluated. There are usually two kinds of objectives that can be identified for a training course. The first kind describes general objectives using words like: *to understand*, *to appreciate*, *to know* and *to recognise*. Formulating objectives in this manner highlights the process-oriented learning that takes place. However, when objectives are framed in this way it is not easy to assess participants' performance. How can you know when trainees achieve a desired level of understanding or can appreciate an issue? You will have to identify more concrete ways for being able to evaluate the learning impact.

The second kind of objectives are more specific, often dealing with concrete skills that the participants will have. Ask yourself what you hope your trainees will be able to do. If possible, use words such as: *to make*, *to write*, *to plan*, *to construct*, *to produce*, *to identify*, *to compare*, *to assemble*, *to draw*, *to solve*, *to measure*.

An objective that says "*the trainees will understand the principles underpinning participatory learning approaches for development*" is important but vague. Compare this with: "*at the conclusion of the workshop the trainees will be able to plan their own use of participatory methods in their fieldwork*". This can be assessed and evaluated much more easily by an outsider (see also Chapter Seven).

### 2.2.2 KNOWING THE PARTICIPANTS

Next, think about your trainees. No training programme should proceed until you are clear about who you will be training. Try to find out:

- How many people will be present?
- Why are they attending; is it their own choice or has a superior instructed them to be present?
- What are their hopes and expectations?
- What are their fears and concerns?
- What range of experience, discipline, age, gender, status is likely to be represented?
- Do they have any biases towards or against you or your organisation?
- What prior knowledge might they have about the subject matter of the training?

These questions will help you determine the sort of programme you will prepare and the training materials and teaching aids you will select. Answering such questions will help you design your sessions to meet the participants' anticipated needs. A description of a full training needs analysis is contained in Chapter Seven, together with other details of logistics and planning.

Be sensitive to participants' religious or cultural needs. These might have implications for the timing of sessions and meals,

particularly if, for example, the workshop is held during a religious festival during which certain regulations apply.

### **2.2.3 CHOICE OF VENUE AND ROOM(S)**

Although you may be unable to do anything about the venue at which the training will be held or the time of day or year it is planned, you should be aware how these affect your participants' ability to learn. If possible, visit the training site before the participants are due to arrive and set up your materials. Check whether the room will suit the type of session you have planned. You may need to adapt the mix or sequence of learning methods to match the situation. For example, if you wish to do a role play but there is no open space in the room, then you have time to find another suitable area.

Try to identify potential sources of distraction in the room, both to yourself and your trainees. If you stand in front of a window outside of which there is movement, then few people will be listening to you. See if you can stand elsewhere. Will other people need to pass through your room? Is there a telephone? If it is connected, you can be sure it will ring just when something important is happening. Can everyone see the screen or board easily, or are there pillars that block the view? Can those sitting at the back of the room hear those speaking at the front? You should walk around the room before the session starts and sit in various seats to check which perspectives the people sitting in those places will have. If you find any serious distractions or obstacles that may interfere with the training, then this is the time to correct them.

You will also need to set aside sufficient time to plan the training materials and teaching aids that you will use. Do you have enough accessible power points for

any electrical equipment (slide projector, overhead projector, film projector, video and television, special lights)? Or do you need to move to a different corner for the slide presentations? Will you be allowed to stick flipcharts on the walls for reference during the workshop, or will you be limited to using only one wall or stand? Do the bulbs in the projectors work properly? Can the video cassette that you wish to use during the workshop play on the equipment provided? Do you have all of the materials, such as coloured markers and pens, flipcharts, chalk, scissors, pins, tape that you will need? Test the electrical equipment that you need and, if necessary, rewind the video so that it is at the correct starting position.

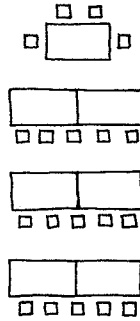
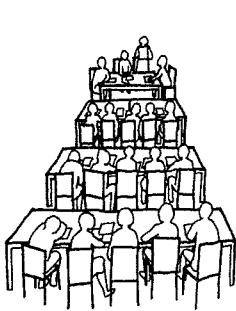
Sorting out these items beforehand will make the session proceed more smoothly and will give you extra confidence.

### **2.2.4 SEATING ARRANGEMENTS**

Seating arrangements have a big influence on the session. Although these can vary greatly, there are six main types (see illustrations on next page): 1. *Rows of tables and/or chairs*; 2. *Hollow U-shape*; 3. *Banquet or fish-bone style*; 4. *Conference table*; 5. *Circle of chairs*; 6. *Table trios*. Each arrangement has particular advantages and disadvantages. In general, the more group work you have planned, the better it is to use the banquet or fish-bone style. This does not require the moving of chairs, and therefore limits the disruption as you shift from a presentation or lecture to buzz groups.

Think about the type of chairs. Are they so comfortable that your participants will be encouraged to doze off in the middle of a slide presentation? Is it a room that the participants know well and if so, are they likely to sit in familiar seats of their own?

**2 YOU, THE TRAINER AND FACILITATOR**



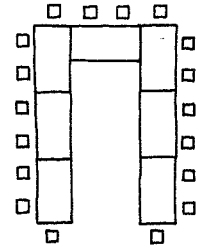
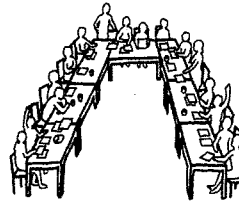
**I: ROWS OF TABLES AND/OR CHAIRS**

*Advantages*

- Can fit more people into room
- Everyone faces the front

*Disadvantages*

- Participants cannot make eye contact with each other
- Difficult for trainer to make eye contact with those at the back
- Trainer cannot walk easily amongst participants
- Impossible to break into groups without major reorganisation of chairs and tables
- People tend to sit at the back first, distancing themselves from the trainer
- It is like classrooms at school; too formal



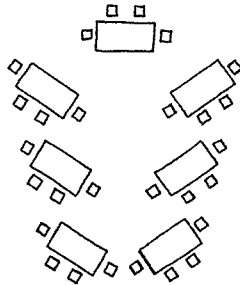
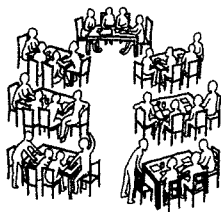
**II: HOLLOW U**

*Advantages*

- Trainer can walk amongst participants
- Trainer has eye contact with all participants

*Disadvantages*

- Participants along each arm of U do not have eye contact with each other
- Fewer people can fit into the room
- Impossible to break into buzz groups without reorganising chairs and tables



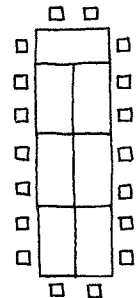
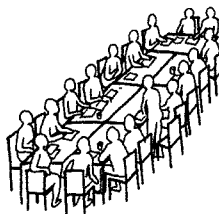
**III: FISH-BONE OR BANQUET STYLE**

*Advantages*

- Participants arranged in groups
- Arrangement is easy to use if mixing lectures with buzz sessions and group work
- Trainer can walk easily amongst groups

*Disadvantages*

- Fewer people can fit in the room
- Participants cannot make full eye contact with all other trainees
- If tables are too long and thin, participants at the ends are likely to be left out of the conversation



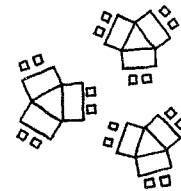
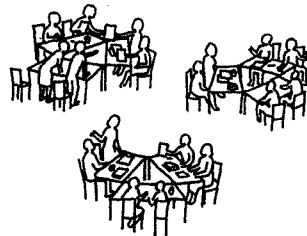
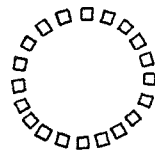
**IV: CONFERENCE TABLE**

*Advantages*

- Large proportion of participants have eye contact with each other
- Large table useful for plenary group discussions

*Disadvantages*

- Cannot break into small groups easily
- Cannot fit many participants around table
- During general discussion, several sub-discussions may form and disrupt proceedings

**V: CIRCLE OR SEMI-CIRCLE OF CHAIRS***Advantages*

- People can relax and interact well
- Participants able to adopt open poses
- No natural 'top' position for trainer, so very egalitarian
- Easy to move into various exercises and games
- Stops people sticking to a specific desk or chair

*Disadvantages*

- No flat work surface
- No tables on which to rest books or materials
- No physical barriers, so more openness needed
- Intimidates shy people
- In large groups, participants sit far from those opposite them

**VI: TABLE TRIOS***Advantages*

- As with Banquet style
- With tables pointed towards the front, the trios are all close together, so better than banquet for group work

*Disadvantages*

- Need many tables, more than banquet style, if the total group is large
- Tables take up much space

Many people are used to sitting in rows, knowing that they may be able to daydream or fall asleep at the back. If you do not arrange them in rows, then it might help to explain to them why you have made these arrangements. If you have the time, you could initiate a session to explore the relative advantages and disadvantages of each arrangement.

Be creative with seating arrangements. They should not be seen as static, and re-arranging them can help to keep participants active. Robert Chambers (pers. comm.) describes how he continually changes the seating:

*"I use sequences a lot. For a one day workshop, I start with participants sitting in threes at tables. Then after a few*

*buzz groups, I join tables for a chart exercise (such as participatory mapping on the ground or paper). Then for fruit salad all the tables are moved to the wall, leaving space for circles and much else with practical work, ending the day with no chairs at all."*

**2.2.5 TIMING OF SESSIONS**

The length of your sessions will have a crucial effect on the concentration of your audience. People do not concentrate well for long periods if there is little variation in the style of presentation. If there is to be no active participation, you will need to carefully plan lecture-based presentations. After 20 minutes you are likely to lose the attention of some, if not all of the participants. You can break the monotony with





visual materials, exercises, stories, jokes, or breaks. If you are planning to use visual aids, allow for enough time.

If you are lecturing, do not talk beyond the time you have promised to stop, even if it means you have to cut short a session. Everyone will be thinking of that cup of tea or plate of food that is waiting, or finding the lavatory, or keeping that appointment they have arranged. They will no longer be listening to you. If it is an active session or a lively discussion, then the participants might take the initiative themselves to extend the session.

The time of day also has a big impact on how well people respond to different kinds of learning approaches. In the morning, people are generally more concentrated. After lunch when stomachs are full, trainers and speakers must overcome the

dreaded 'graveyard session'. Participants will be tired, slower to respond and less concentrated. You will, therefore, need to make sessions more lively; the more active participation the better. Avoid lecturing or long slide presentations at all cost. It is better to begin the period with some kind of an energiser game (see Exercises 13 to 25), then introduce longer, more interactive exercises which allow participants to move around and discuss issues or practise skills amongst themselves.

#### 2.2.6 PACE AND CONTENT OF SESSIONS

It is important to structure each session carefully. Suggestions for organising and facilitating entire training programmes are given in more detail in Chapter Seven. Begin by thinking about the trainees again:

- How much do they already know?
- What do they need to learn?
- How much time do you have to cover the material?

To help in the selection of material, think about what the participants:

- must know
- should know
- could know.

The day after a ten-minute talk, the average member of the audience is unlikely to remember more than one or two major points. This may seem surprising – most of us want to try to fit in more, especially if it is a subject we know well. It is always tempting to want people to learn everything you know. But too much detail covered too quickly will hinder the success of the presentation. You can only expect participants to remember a few key points. For a 30-minute talk you should select no more than five of these



So what ARE my  
main points?



Allow plenty of time for the preparation of notes and materials. A safe rule of thumb is to allow double the time of the presentation for preparation. But if you are presenting a topic for the first time, it may take much longer. Do not forget to plan anecdotes and jokes as part of your presentation.

main points, or 'golden nuggets'. The rest is detail to keep everyone interested.

The session should then be structured around the key points you think they **MUST** know by the end of the training session. Although it may seem unnecessary to you, always repeat the golden nuggets or central ideas, whether it is a presentation or an exercise. Repetition reinforces memory. If you are trying to communicate five main points to the group, then try to save the most important for last. Begin by capturing the interest of the group, and then give a taste of what is to come. Deliver the detailed message in the main body of the presentation and build up to the most important point. Then summarise everything by restating the purpose and the major points.

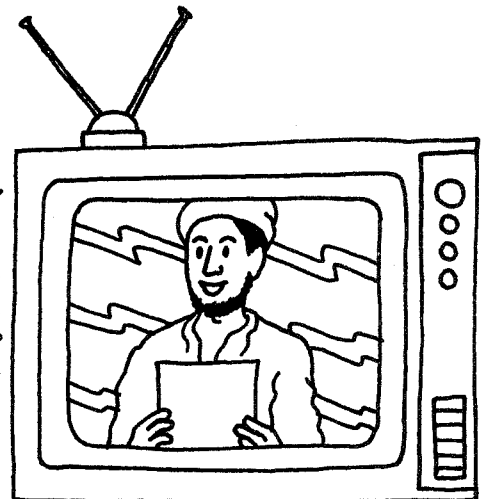
Whether you are giving a lecture or facilitating a group exercise, planning a session around these three stages will help to ensure that the key issues are remembered. If you are planning to give a lecture, then it will be more effective if you follow these stages:

- tell them what you are going to tell them;
- tell them;
- tell them what you have just told them.

A good speaker or trainer makes jokes or remarks which appear unrehearsed but are likely to have been prepared. They may well have said the same thing several times before, but a well-planned joke or story can sound spontaneous and can reinforce the learning points.

For each training session, it is very helpful to prepare a planning sheet which clearly lays out what it is you intend to do and achieve. A suggested structure for

Good evening.  
I'm going to tell  
you about crops.  
**CROPS ARE  
GOOD!**  
Yes, I just said  
"Crops are good!"



**2 YOU, THE TRAINER AND FACILITATOR**

planning your session is provided in Box 2.2. A blank sheet that can be photocopied for your own use can be found at the end of this chapter.

**2.3 METHODS OF TRAINING**

Many methods of instruction can be used during training. No single one is better than the rest, although formal lectures are still the most widely used. For a training which stresses active participation and open dialogue, it is essential that trainers use a style of training that is consistent with the values of participation.

It is best to use a combination of learning methods and to alter the tempo of the training. A regular change of both the methods and pace will keep trainees interested and ready to learn. It will also be more interesting and less tiring for you as a trainer. The methods described in the next sections can all be used to good effect in a training session on participatory approaches.

**2.3.1 LECTURES**

Traditional teaching and training most frequently rely on the lecture. This is the one-way communication of a prepared talk, sometimes accompanied by a period of questions and answers at the conclusion. Lectures appear to be an efficient training method, as little time is spent on discussion. However, learning is not guaranteed through lectures.

Lectures can be used for groups of any size. For very large groups, they are the most common method of instruction. The trainer is in complete control of the session and can usually predict the content and timing accurately. They are useful for introducing new subjects or presenting summaries or overviews to participants. They are often combined with visual aids, such as slides and/or overhead transparencies. Even in training programmes on participatory methodologies, some lecturing will be needed.

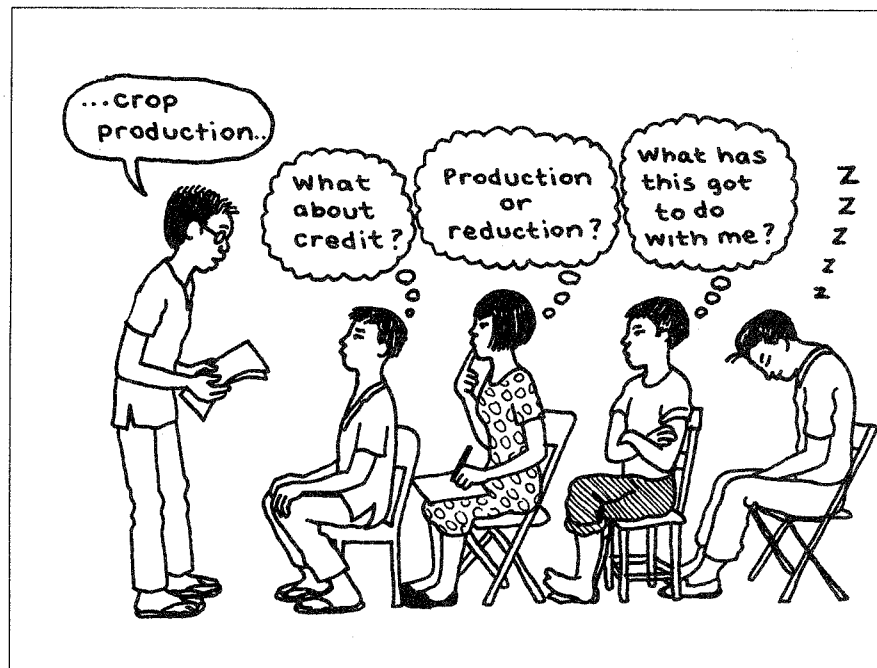
**Box 2.2 Workshop planning form**

Date .....

Time	Topic/ Objective	Method	Format	Predicted Energy Level of Participants					Responsibility	Logistical Needs
				1	2	3	4	5		
Before									Senior official	Tables in banquet
0900	Opening of workshop	Speech from front	Plenary	■					Trainer	Head table
0920	Introductions	Stepping Stones	Small groups and plenary	■	■	■	■		Trainer	Banquet style
0945	Introductions to principles	Lecture with buzz groups	Plenary	■	■	■				OHP + slide projector

Despite these apparent merits, lectures have many disadvantages. A lecture is usually delivered as a monologue and does not take into account the individual needs and interests of trainees. Discussion and debate are kept to a minimum, and, in most instances, only the lecturer's ideas are expressed. They can quickly become monotonous. The person lecturing often hides behind a desk or lectern, physically removed from the participants. For the trainees, the main disadvantage is that creative and reflective learning is limited. As a result, many lectures are extremely tedious and boring for both sides.

The problems with lectures are well known. Yet most of us as trainers will need to lecture from time to time. To avoid falling into the trap of talking and hoping the audience (they are rarely participants) are not only listening but absorbing too, use the checklist in Box 2.3 before you start. In particular limit the lecture to 15–20 minutes,



and break it up with short buzz sessions and exercises selected from Part II to illustrate key learning points. In this way, both the pace of the lecture and the dominant style is changed.

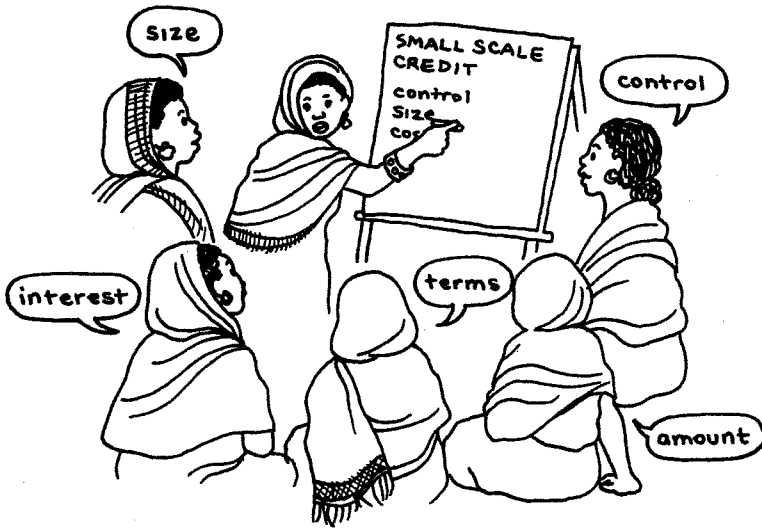
### Box 2.3 Lecture checklist

- Are you using lectures for those occasions when other methods will be less useful to your participants?
- Have you limited your talk to no more than 20 minutes?
- Does your talk have a clear beginning, middle and end?
- Do you always keep to simple key points?
- Do you support your talk with a clear hand-out?
- Do you know your own body language mannerisms and how these affect the lecture?

Source: adapted from Jenny Rogers (1989)

### 2.3.2 BUZZ GROUPS

Another method of instruction is the buzz group. During a longer session, the plenary group can break into sub-groups to discuss one or two specific questions or issues. The room soon fills with noise as each sub-group 'buzzes' in discussion. If appropriate, after the discussion one member of each group can report its findings back to the plenary. Buzz groups can be in pairs, trios, or more depending on the activity. People turn to their neighbours for a quick buzz, or form larger groups of three or more. This allows almost everyone to express an opinion. While they are 'buzzing', participants are able to exchange ideas and draw on their wide collective experience. It may provide



a good opportunity for trainees to reflect on the content of a lecture. A good buzz session will generate many ideas, comments and opinions, the most important of which are reported back. By contrast, questions and answer sessions at the end of lectures commonly involve only a few people, and intimidate shy or junior people. Your role as the facilitator is to watch time and manage feedback concisely.

Buzz groups are helpful for trainers as they allow you to:

- draw your breath;
- gauge the mood by listening to some of the discussions;
- change the pace of the session;
- encourage participants to reflect on what they have learnt and how they might apply it in their work.

The main obstacles to using buzz sessions lie in unfamiliarity with their use, the time

required, the need for leaders or facilitators within each sub-group, and the need to have tables and chairs arranged for quick and easy discussions. In particular, feedback may take time. One way to shorten this is to encourage participants to shout out key suggestions and ideas randomly in plenary. Another way to organise feedback is to have one group present their ideas with other groups only contributing new ideas, avoiding any repetition.

### 2.3.3 BRAINSTORMING AND COLLECTING IDEAS

The purpose of a brainstorming session is to discover new ideas and responses very quickly. It is a particularly good way of getting bright ideas. It differs from the buzz group discussion in that the focus is on generating as many ideas as possible without judging them. In this technique, all ideas are given equal credence. Participants are encouraged to let ideas flow freely, building on and improving from previous ideas. No idea, however crazy, should be rejected.

These ideas are listed exactly as they are expressed on a board or flipchart, or written on bits of paper and tacked to a pin-board. This combination of swiftly generated ideas usually leads to a very animated and energising session. Even the more reserved participants should feel bold enough to contribute.

An idea collecting session is slightly different from brainstorming in that it is simply a listing of known facts or impressions. The purpose of this is not necessarily to encourage creative thinking but rather to collect existing experiences and thoughts. It is useful to collect answers to questions when you expect much repetition in the responses.

After a brainstorm session, the ideas can be discussed further and evaluated, for example listing the best options in a

systematic way. Ideas can be grouped and analysed so that they belong to the group rather than individuals. Unlike a buzz session, a brainstorm session can work well with a large group and usually takes less time. It is best to limit the time for plenary brainstorms, as you might lose the attention of some participants. See Exercise 74 for details of how to use brainstorming to develop interview guides.

### 2.3.4 ROLE PLAYS

In role plays, participants use their own experiences to play a real life situation. When done well, role plays increase the participants' self-confidence, give them the opportunity to understand or even feel empathy for other people's viewpoints or roles, and usually end with practical answers, solutions or guidelines. Role plays are useful for exploring and improving interviewing techniques (see Exercise 86 in Part II) and examining the complexities and potential conflicts of group meetings. They help participants to consolidate different lessons in one setting and are also good energisers.

However, role plays can be time-consuming and their success depends on the willingness of participants to take active part. Some trainees may feel a role play is too exposing, threatening, or embarrassing. This reluctance may be overcome at the outset by careful explanation of the objectives and the outcome. Some role plays can generate strong emotions amongst the participants. It is therefore essential that a role play is followed by a thorough debriefing. This provides the opportunity for the trainer and the participants to raise and assess new issues.

### 2.3.5 CASE STUDIES

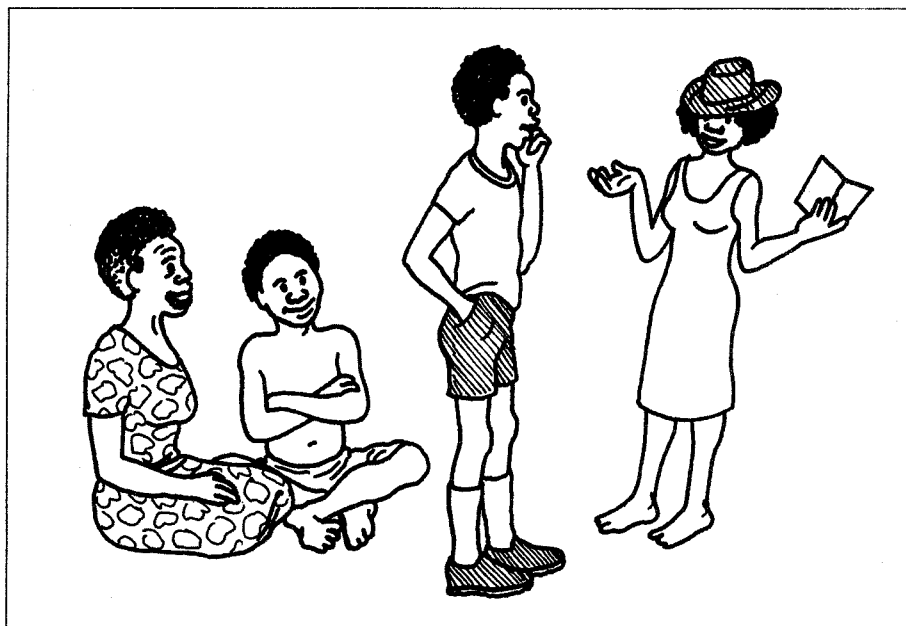
The case study involves the presentation and analysis of an incident or scenario that

has happened or could happen. There are two types of case studies:

- a short presentation or description of a situation;
- a longer simulation exercise.

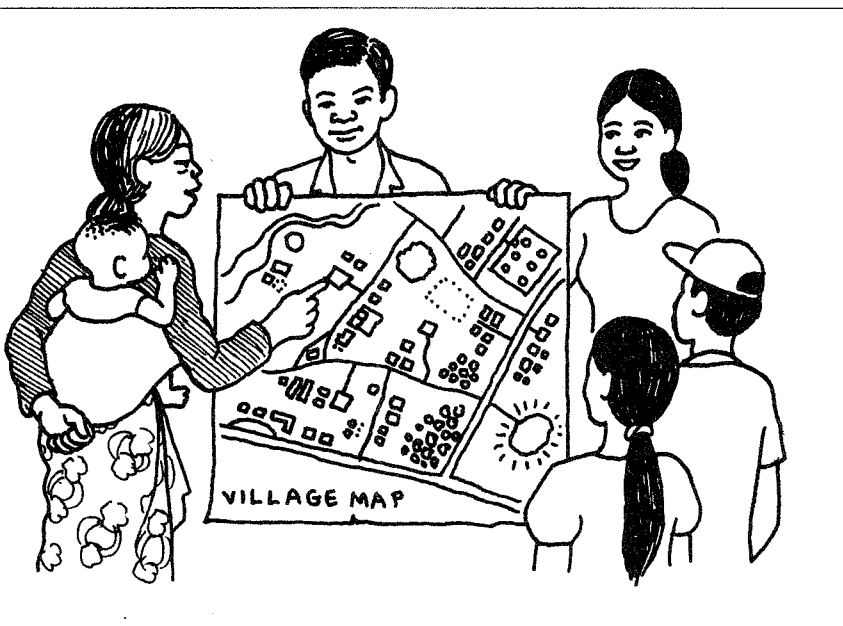
In the short case study, trainers select examples of relevance to the trainees. In training in participatory methods, such case examples are especially useful for participants to learn the various diagramming methods of analysis and understand how they can be applied in sequences in the field (see Chapter Six). However, they require considerable preparation, should be thoroughly pre-tested and so are time-consuming.

Simulation exercises or games are a form of experiential learning that uses both case study material and role plays. Participants are briefed about a 'real world' situation in which they make decisions and must accept the consequences. They are



sometimes assigned pre-determined roles (for example as village elder, project manager, or single mother) who might have both public and hidden agendas. They are then asked to act out the situation from the perspective of their respective characters. The learning comes from processing the case study material and drawing parallels with one's own situation, both in the assigned role and in normal life. Trainees discuss and analyse the case study material for a limited time period, and then present their findings or suggested solutions.

These experiential activities are highly participatory but require clear and explicit objectives and careful facilitation. A wide range of participatory methods can be learnt in the workshop environment by simulation, such as mapping and modelling, seasonal calendars, Venn diagrams, matrix scoring and interviewing techniques (see Chapter Five). As with role plays, extra time must be set aside for a thorough debriefing session.



### 2.3.6 USING NOTES AND VISUAL AIDS

Even very experienced trainers will usually require some notes. These are best made in the form of key points or topics arranged in the order of presentation, and are planned around the use of various visual aids. Many speakers use small cards on which they write key points. If you want to convey a long document, then make copies of it and distribute it to the participants. Do not read it to the group; this is boring. Only read from a manuscript if you wish to read out a quote.

Remember the old saying: "A picture is worth a thousand words." It has been said that trainees remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, and 50% of what they hear and see. Visual aids such as overhead transparencies, slides, flipcharts, posters, pinboards, chalkboards, flannel boards, films, videos and models help to ensure effective communication and are a crucial part of any well-designed training session. They are effective in introducing or reinforcing critical points and can help to illustrate complex information. They can also be used as a prop and prompt for the trainer, thereby reducing the need for notes. Using them can change the tempo of a training activity.

As you stand in front of a group of people, remember that you are also part of the visual message. It is impossible to 'switch off' our eyesight. Make sure that you use visuals that accompany the message you are giving. Do not leave visuals up on the screen when you are talking about something different. Good use of visual aids requires thorough preparation. Guidelines for their use include the following:

- Check all equipment thoroughly before you start. Load slides, set up videos, check that overhead pens work, ensure that there are spare bulbs, etc.

- Limit the number. Use them to help express or stress something rather than to impress. Use them when words are not sufficient to convey the message.

- Keep them simple and legible. Do not use too many words, stick to 'bullet points' (the main headings or key points). A common error is to write too many words on one transparency. This can be very difficult to read from the back of the room. Participants also spend too much time reading every detail instead of listening to you.

- When presenting visuals always face the group, not the image. A very common mistake is talking to the screen or flipchart when presenting them.

- Give the audience time to absorb them. But do not leave the audience looking at something that no longer relates to what you are saying.

- Never rely on them completely. You might have a power failure but the show must still go on.

- If appropriate and possible, hold a permanent exhibition. Put visual aids on the walls of the training room for participants to look at during breaks and while waiting for a session to start.

Charts can be part of permanent exhibitions. These are often good alternatives and supplements to overhead transparencies. The trainer can then walk around the room and refer to the charts while speaking. People don't rush to copy them down as they do with overheads. You can skip points knowing that they will not be completely lost. This is invaluable if time is short.

Participants will often want to take notes during an audiovisual presentation. If you have the facilities, it is useful to make copies of the key overhead sheets and other

materials you will be presenting. These can be distributed to the trainees before the training or discussion begins, allowing your audience more time to concentrate on what is being said. These 'training notes' may also include essential readings, case studies and overview articles and can be placed in special folders for participants. During the training, participants can add their own notes to the folder. In this way, each person will have a complete set of personal notes and key readings to take away at the end of the training.

#### 2.4 YOU AS A PERFORMER

To train well is to give a performance. It is not sufficient to assume that the weight, power or relevance of the message will carry the day. Again, remember that you are a 'visual aid' to your spoken message. You will need to pay attention to the way you present yourself, your style of performance and the learning environment. The message you are giving comprises three components – the words, the tone of your voice and your body language. Less than 10% of the total message is conveyed by the words you use. People will grasp your main message if you *keep it simple* and *avoid jargon*.

As your gestures and body language can overwhelm your words, here are a few suggestions:

- Look at the group. Do not stare at your notes or the screen. Make eye contact with the whole group by letting your eyes roam around the room. Do not look above people's heads. While looking you can also assess the level of interest by people's reactions.

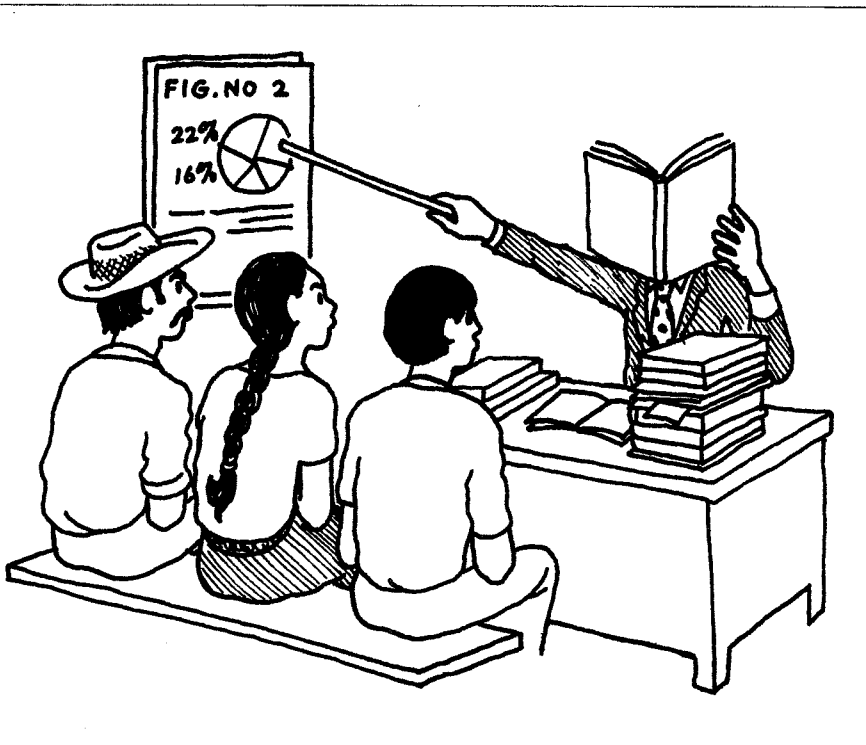
- Smile – even if you are nervous or apprehensive. It will put your audience more at ease and, believe it or not, it will relax your vocal chords too.



- Avoid placing barriers between yourself and the trainees. A desk at the front is tempting to hide behind. But don't sit behind it. A lectern is another trap. Don't stand behind it. Crossed arms or legs are symbolic barriers, too. Be open in your posture, particularly when participants are giving feedback to you as a trainer.
- Avoid distracting body movements. Don't wave your arms, put your hands in pockets, jangle keys, wear noisy bracelets, fiddle with pens, flick your hair. Your audience will focus on these nervous gestures rather than listening to your message.

#### 2.4.1 ARTICULATION AND EXPRESSION

More than 50% of the message is conveyed by how you say the words. The statement *"I'd like to suggest that we now try a role play on semi-structured interviewing"* can



carry many different meanings according to where you place the emphasis (Box 2.4).

Guidelines for helping you to articulate your thoughts include:

- Do not be afraid of pauses. Audiences like some silence. Pause after your key points to allow the group to absorb them. This is the moment to look carefully at your trainees. You will be able to tell whether they have understood you from the expressions on their faces and their body language.
- Use a wide range of vocal tone and pitch to strengthen expression and emphasis in your message. Practise by yourself. Listen to your voice on a tape recorder, if possible.
- Act a little. It is not as easy to exaggerate as you might think. In a large group you have to go a long way before you are in danger of going over the top.
- Speak clearly. Practise making your voice resonate. A resonant voice carries further and sounds better. It also does not become strained so easily. Articulate words carefully. Do not let them run together.
- Speak up by breathing deeply but do not shout. Both a loud and a quiet voice can add emphasis or drama to a statement.

All these practices help to build a favourable learning climate.

#### 2.4.2 DEALING WITH NERVES

Those who are training for the first time commonly misunderstand performance anxiety or 'nerves'. They see them as obstructions to performance. Maria Pemberton (1982) assures us that: *"a common reaction to being asked to speak to a group is one of sheer terror... Do not be fooled, however, into thinking that nerves disappear once you have become used to speaking. They do not."*

**Box 2.4****Impact of emphasis on meaning**

1. "I'd like to suggest that we now try a role play of semi-structured interviewing." Plain statement without emphasis.
2. "I'd like to suggest that we now try a role play of semi-structured interviewing." Emphasis on *I'd* emphasises that it is the speaker rather than anyone else who is doing the suggesting.
3. "I'd *like* to suggest that we now try a role play of semi-structured interviewing." Emphasis on *like to suggest* carries an implicit 'but' after the statement, ie 'I'd like to suggest, but either it won't be accepted or there is no time'.
4. "I'd like to suggest that we *now* try a role play of semi-structured interviewing." Emphasis on *now* implies that a role play may have been suggested at another time, but didn't work or wasn't accepted, and that now is a better time.
5. "I'd like to suggest that we now try a *role play* of semi-structured interviewing." Emphasis on *a role play* implies that other methods for semi-structured interviewing have been used, and now it is time for something different.
6. "I'd like to suggest that we now try a role play of *semi-structured interviewing*." Emphasis on *semi-structured interviewing* implies that role plays have been used, but not yet for semi-structured interviewing.

Source: Karen Schoonmaker Freudenberg, pers. comm.



Being nervous keeps the adrenalin flowing and helps you deal with problem situations. Even experienced trainers feel nervous or anxious before beginning a training course. Rest assured, audiences hardly ever notice when you are nervous, unless your hands shake or you wear a nervous expression.

There are ways to deal with nerves and use them to help, rather than hinder, your performance:

- Prepare thoroughly. Nothing builds self-confidence like good preparation.
- There is no need to be defensive in your presentation. The audience will read it and react by becoming hostile.
- Distract yourself before you begin. Visualise what your ideal performance would look like.
- Find a place where you can be alone for 5 minutes beforehand. The best time is 10 minutes before a session starts, so that you are back in the training room for a few moments before the session starts. A good quiet place is the toilet.

- Find a quiet place to do some neck exercises before you begin. Tension builds up in the neck and shoulders when we are worried. So try neck rolling. Lean your head right back; gently and slowly roll it right round in a circle until your chin comes to rest on your chest. Repeat by rolling upwards.

- One of the best ways to calm yourself and slow your heart beat is by inhaling and exhaling deeply several times. You can do this whenever you have a spare minute during a session.

- Relax tense parts of your body by flexing and then releasing the muscles. Stretch your hands and close them tight a few times. Then shake them vigorously so that they are loose. Stretch and relax your feet and calf muscles.

- Start talking to participants as they begin to arrive. Smile and be relaxed. Get to know a few names and faces. It will make the group less intimidating.

- If appropriate, then do a 'Who We Are' exercise as soon as possible (Exercise 12). This sets an informal tone for the entire session.

The main thing is to try to keep your nervousness under control, but not to get rid of it entirely. Being a bit apprehensive may make your performance a bit sharper. Nervousness can be limited by explaining at the outset that the session will be informal. By putting your participants at ease, you will also feel more relaxed and friendly. You can express this informality by using some of the following techniques:

- Highlight the benefits that the participants will derive from attending the meeting or session.

- Speak to the participants as equals rather than as students – use “we” and “our” rather than “you” or “your”, eg *our* tasks in the field, rather than your tasks....

- A good habit is to try one or more new exercises during each training programme. Don't be afraid to try new activities because you fear criticism. Mistakes are a valuable part of the learning process. They may even help as an equaliser between you and the trainees.

- Try to relate training materials and exercises to the past experiences of participants. Building on their skills helps their self-esteem and helps them to relax. This encourages open learning.

- Plan an easy and concrete exercise early on in the programme so that participants can experience success.

### 2.4.3 DEALING WITH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

As we have described earlier, the best type of training to ensure that everyone can learn together is based on 'doing' rather than 'listening'. Nevertheless, there are still occasions when you will need to present issues to a group. Even in such situations some participation can be encouraged by mixing short individual or group exercises in the lecture.

A useful, brief exercise is to ask the participants to reflect on a question that you give them and to write down their thoughts. For example:

- *"What problems have you faced in using such methods?"*

- *"How might you use this approach in your work?"*

- *"Let us suppose you have to do ....., how would you proceed?"*

The objective is not to collect the answers and discuss or rank them. Rather, it is to encourage the trainees to participate more actively by reflecting on what you have presented. Alternatively, you can divide the

trainees into sub-groups for a quick buzz session on the subject under discussion. If, for example, you are talking about the unanticipated negative impacts of certain policies on tropical forest use, then you may ask participants to stop and reflect on their own experiences. By asking *"What examples do you know of where these policies have had some negative consequences for forest management?"*, the participants will be much more involved than if you were to give the examples yourself.

Dealing with questions also allows more participation during a presentation. A question and answer session can be very productive or it can let a whole session down and leave everyone passive and uninterested. Even in very complete presentations, a question session is probably essential. Questions help to clarify topics and points for other participants. They allow participants to explore how they might apply what they have just heard to their own situations and practices.

If you have time, then have a quick buzz in small groups before a question and answer session. This gets everyone active and contributing something. Each sub-group can then select the best questions to ask. It also gives you a few moments to catch your breath.

It is not always easy to facilitate question and answer sessions. The following suggestions may help to make them go more smoothly:

- Do not expect the questions to flow immediately. An audience cannot switch immediately from listening to speaking. If the session has been participatory, then this is less likely to be a problem. But have a few controversial points or questions up your sleeve just in case. These may help to provoke debate and discussion.

- Put questions to participants like *"let's suppose..."* or *"in your experience..."* to encourage further questions from them.

- If the room is large or the questioner has a soft voice, then repeat the question for all to hear before answering it.

- Write down the key points of a question when it is being asked. Sketch out your comments or answers with one or two key words.

- Answer concisely. If you don't know the answer, smile and say so. Never invent an answer.

- When answering questions, remember to pause. Be brief, honest and accurate.

- Take questions from all over the room and don't forget those sitting at the back.

- When time is limited, tell the group by saying *"Just two more questions, please"*.

- If you sense hostility, try to remain calm and keep your sense of humour. Give the question back to other participants by asking them to comment on hostile statements or questions. When responding, you can use the "Agreement Frame" discussed in Chapter 3 (Box 3.5) to reduce the tension and acknowledge the value of opposing viewpoints.

- If a questioner is making a statement rather than asking a question, then pause and acknowledge their input by saying: *"Thank you. That is an interesting thought. Next question please"*.

- If in doubt, then rephrase the question by asking, *"Do I understand you to be asking ..."*

- Summarise what the group has said to round off the question and answer session.

#### 2.4.4 AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED

Conducting training sessions or workshops in participatory methods is always exhaust-

ing for trainers. If you are new to training, then you will be surprised at how tired you feel at the end. Make sure that you have space and time to recover.

Do not organise workshops back to back. Immediately after the workshop is a critical time to learn from the experience, even though you will be tired. If you wait, you will forget many learning points. You can learn through self-reflection or by asking participants for comments.

It is an excellent habit to make notes on your performance as soon as possible so you can learn from yourself and improve for next time. Analyse the good and bad points by reviewing each session thoroughly. How could it be done better next time? How accurate was the time-keeping? Were you able to maintain the interest of the trainees?

Focus in particular on the weak points of your performance. It is from mistakes that we can learn the most. Why did some parts not work well? Would a change of style or substance have helped? Were you responding to the participants' needs? Or were there peculiar conditions or factors involved? Think carefully about the detail. Your audience was learning from you; and you can now learn from them how to do an even better job next time.

Make a list of the things you know you do not do well. This is not easy. For many people, it is easier to be seduced by focusing only on what went well. Did you, for example:

- make sure that you did not mumble to yourself?
- preach too much?
- allow sufficient time for questions to be raised?

- show too much material on overhead transparencies?
- include too many games/exercises/practical sessions at the cost of reflection and discussion?
- lose your temper with the organisers before the session started because of the bad room, lack of chalk, broken slide projector, etc?
- show too many slides?
- talk too long and too quickly?
- try to make the breaks too short?

A good way to learn from your trainees is to ask them to evaluate you. This can be done formally with a written evaluation of their overall training experience. Do not ask more than one or two pages of questions. You could ask them specific questions about the content and organisation of the overall workshop, relevance of the content for their work, the trainer's style and preparedness and the logistical arrangements and adequacy of the venue.

Another way to gauge their thoughts would be to ask them to comment on each of the major sessions in terms of its organisation, content and style. Still another approach would be to ask open questions: "What did you find most useful about the training? What did you dislike about it? If you were organising a training of this kind, then what would you do differently? What would you do the same way?" You may also want to leave space for any additional comments people would like to make.

However you structure the evaluation form, ensure that you leave sufficient time for people to consider and respond to the questions. It is generally advisable to distribute the forms one or two days before the end of the training. If you wait until the very end, the responses will be hastily

What could I have done better?



written and less thoughtful than if people have a day or two to reflect on them. Ask them to fill it in before they leave, otherwise you may never see any.

Remember that only you and a select group of other people (typically the organisers) will have the opportunity to read the written evaluations once they have been completed. Therefore, in addition to asking the trainees to complete a formal evaluation, you may want to set aside time for an informal plenary discussion to receive comments about any aspect of the training. This gives each person the opportunity to express his or her views, whether positive or negative, so that the other participants can hear them. This need not take more than 20 minutes, but it is advisable to leave some time for a free-ranging evaluation.

Another way to make public but anonymous evaluations is through exhibitions. You can prepare a set of questions, written up on a form or on a chart to be stuck to the wall. Each participant then sticks up her or his comments under the appropriate question. These questions are useful for rapid feedback:

- Which of your expectations or fears were met?
- What did you find most useful?
- What did you find least useful?
- How could this be done better another time?
- How will you use participatory methods in your work?

Exercises 63–73 in Part II give further suggestions for evaluation exercises.

## 2.5 OTHER TRAINERS

Interactive training demands good concentration, flexible planning and improvisation, creativity in dealing with problems and

above all, patience and enthusiasm. Your training can be made more effective by working with another facilitator, thereby providing each other with mutual support. In some cases you might also be asked to train resource people on the job. So as to conduct an effective training, you will need to prepare thoroughly your collaboration with all co-trainers.

### 2.5.1 WORKING AS A TEAM

Working with another trainer has several advantages:

- During a session you are juggling many tasks at the same time: providing theory, assessing group mood, dealing with audio-visuals, providing guidance to groupwork, etc. Sharing the sessions gives you the opportunity to catch your breath and be more effective in your next session.
- You have twice as much creativity and experience to deal with any problems.
- By complementing each other's input, you are less likely to overlook a key learning point in debriefing sessions.
- Have one female and one male facilitator, or one who is more energetic and another who is calmer. Changes in style and rhythm between trainers will keep the group more concentrated.
- Having at least one facilitator from the same area and ethnic group as the participants can help them to feel that the learning experience is directly relevant.

Although working with another facilitator can have clear benefits, smooth teamwork will not happen automatically. It is important that you are seen to work together as a team as conflict between trainers will undermine the learning process. There are

several issues about which you should reach agreement with your co-trainer(s). Make sure that your training styles and methods are complementary. It is confusing for the trainees if one trainer is very authoritarian and another very flexible. Make sure that you agree on the content of the workshop. This will require lengthy discussions and mutual explanations about the basic principles, process and methods which you hope to impart to the trainees. You will also have to agree on the overall programme, the timing of sessions and the division of responsibilities.

One way to ensure good collaboration is to draw up a Trainers' Team Contract (Box 2.5). This requires that all the trainers make explicit what they require to work effectively and how they expect the partnership to develop.

#### **Box 2.5 A team contract for trainers**

- We will strive to communicate with each other honestly.
- We are committed to attend all trainers' team meetings.
- We will strive to be together during the training course as much as possible.
- We will have daily assessments of each other's performance.
- We will not interrupt each other's sessions.
- We will try to contribute constructively during each other's sessions by mentioning at the end of the session any additional learning points that the session coordinator might have missed.

*Source: Irene Guijt, Karafa Manneh, Mary Martin, Terri Sarch (1992)*

Daily review sessions are essential and should be conducted throughout the workshop and any fieldwork. They are valuable moments of reflection from which you can learn about your performance and during which the programme can be adjusted. Assessing individual participants together will give you a more balanced picture of group dynamics and what might be needed to enhance these.

#### **2.5.2 TRAINING RESOURCE PEOPLE AT THE SAME TIME**

It is not uncommon to find yourself as the only formal trainer, with other experienced practitioners of participatory methods acting as resource people. You might be asked to combine an on-the-job training for these resource people with a field-based introductory training in participatory methods. Ensure that you have enough time with them before the workshop to discuss training styles and to prepare sessions together. For a 10–14-day field-based training this should be at least two days, preferably three (Box 2.6). For a three-day seminar, one day should give you enough time to discuss and decide on the basic elements. This helps to increase the confidence of the 'trainee trainers' and leaves more time in the evenings to review the day's work.

There are basically two types of resource people: those with no prior training experience and those with some training experience. The more training experience they have, the more you will need to discuss training approaches and strategies, as each trainer is likely to want to continue in their own style. If these styles are similar, then problems should be minimal. But if they are very different, then problems might arise. You can avoid this to some extent by making explicit the assumptions that each of you is making about training.

The most important issues to clarify before the training begins are:

- what kind of guidance they are expecting from you;
- what kind of responsibilities they are expecting to have;
- what you are expecting from them.

If your opinions on these questions differ, sort them out first until you have reached an understanding. If not, you might jeopardise the learning experience for both the participants and the resource people.

It is especially important to come to an agreement about the degree to which they will be actually leading training sessions or simply acting as facilitators for sub-group work when called on. If the resource people are less involved than they had expected, then they are likely to feel frustrated and resent you as the main trainer. If it is clear that you are the main trainer and the others are facilitators, then you should avoid burdening them with more responsibility than they feel comfortable with. This might make them feel out of their depth and miss key learning opportunities.

You will need to determine the training programme together, allocating tasks to each person, taking into consideration what you have agreed on earlier. First discuss the overall programme and the rationale for training sequences. Then break each day down into different sessions. Discuss thoroughly what each person's ideas are about each session. If the resource people have no prior training experience, then they will obviously depend on you for many of these ideas.

When determining the programme for each session, you will need to describe each exercise in detail, highlighting what the learning objective is of each exercise, buzz session, game or brainstorm. It is essential



that any jargon or complicated instructions are clarified. For example, if it is not clear to the resource people that a *brainstorm* should be short and free-ranging, a long and drawn-out discussion might develop which upsets the timing for the other sessions. Other aspects of training that might need to be clarified include:

- how to manage the timing of each session flexibly;
- how to write short and clear flipcharts during discussions;
- how to present: voice, speed, nerves, body language;
- how to train with a sequence of exercises and discussions as this reinforces learning points;
- how to deal flexibly with the programme.

Daily review is essential. Discuss each session: what went well and what could have been better, the timing, body language, group dynamics and so on. In order to do



**Box 2.6 Indicative programme for training of trainers****Day 1**

- Registration and Introductions
- Expectations and Experiences
- Training Overview: Components of a PRA Training
- Review of Past PRA Trainings
- Designing Training Sessions on Group Dynamics and Team Building

**Day 2**

- Designing Training Sessions on Specific PRA Methods
- Preparing for and Conducting Fieldwork
- Documentation and Follow-up
- Future Applications and Limitations
- Feedback and Evaluations
- Visit Villages to Make Arrangements for Fieldwork

**Day 3**

- Group Dynamics and Team Building Sessions:
  - *Introductions and Ice-Breakers; Energisers; Attitudes and Behaviour; Analysis and Reflection; Monitoring and Feedback*
- Main Methods Sessions:
  - *PRA Overview; Semi-Structured Interviewing; Mapping and Transects; Matrix Scoring and Pairwise Ranking; Seasonality Analysis and Historical Trends; Diagramming (systems, impact, etc); Institutional Analysis (Venns, networks, etc)*
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Fieldwork Preparation and Implementation:
  - *Checklists, Team Contracts and Logistics; Getting Started; Keeping It Going; Village Meetings*
- Post-Fieldwork Activities:
  - *Documentation and Dissemination; Follow-up in Villages; Reflection: Preparing for the Future; Evaluation*

**During the fieldwork:**

- Review of Trainers' Performance
- Discuss Team Dynamics and Process
- Plan Next Day

**After participants leave:**

- Trainers' Action Plans
- Trainers' Process Notes
- Review of Organisational Support Needed

this, make notes during the sessions that are led by the other facilitators to remind you during the evening review. It is likely that you will also be the main timekeeper, as the others will be absorbed by their session.



Make sure the daily review continues during the fieldwork, even if there are teams working in different field sites. During the fieldwork, the trainers' roles shift and issues like group dynamics, feedback and analysis in the village teams become important. Much of the learning takes place then, so it is important for the main trainer to brief the others about the aims and process of the fieldwork, and what situations to expect. Field notes and a trainer's diary kept by the facilitators can form the basis of discussions, and allow the main trainer to pick up on problem areas and help identify solutions.

### **2.5.3 TRAINING COMMUNITY TRAINERS**

Participatory methods are an important component of training of local people as analysts, managers and agents of institutional change. PRA methods have been shown to enhance the capacity of local volunteers in interacting with all sections of the community and in developing a com-

mon perspective for local resource development. These training programmes for community volunteers should have several components:

- Most of the training should take place in a community, and should be based on practical local problems. Local institutions can be encouraged to use the training programme as an opportunity for their own programme development;
- The training should place a strong emphasis on problem-solving and decision-making. Problems are discussed and alternative solutions appraised. For example, the problem of low agricultural productivity can be discussed by participants, who then analyse the reasons for low productivity with different households;
- Training should be iterative, so that participants can analyse issues in detail and report findings back to each other;
- Significant time should be devoted to sharing experiences amongst the group. This helps community members to develop confidence in analysing and finding solutions to regional problems, by giving a broad base to their expertise;
- The skills of analysis, planning and appraisal should be further consolidated through exercises in the community facilitated by the participants. They should be encouraged to make presentations to groups of local people as well as to each other. This ensures wide consultation and the development of skills before development programmes are taken up.

The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) has long been training village analysts in participatory appraisal and planning in Gujarat State, India. Its process of village level training of volunteers or para-professionals is described in Box 2.7.

**Box 2.7 The process of village level training in the AKRSP, India**

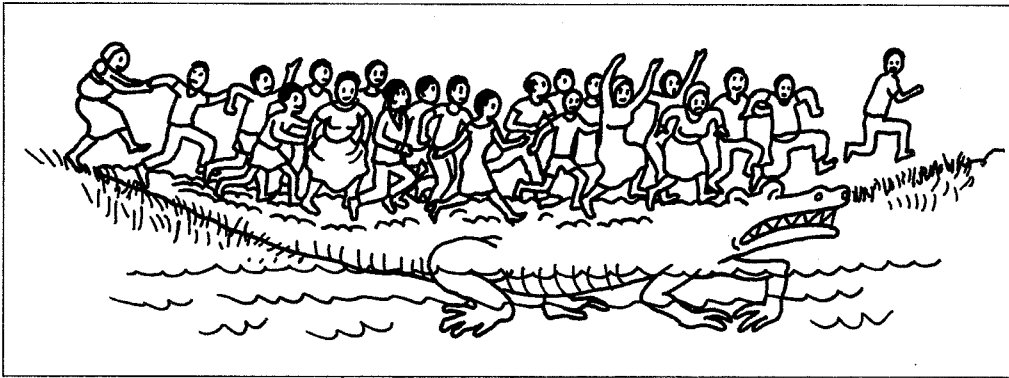
1. The local village institution nominates a group of three or four volunteers for training, preferably from varied backgrounds. The selected volunteers are asked to carry out 'test' exercises using verbal and visual methods in their own village before participating in the training programme.
2. The training programme starts with presentations by participants of their experiences. This enables trainees to talk about their village's specific problems and helps them to develop confidence in presentation and analysis. This is followed by group exercises to develop group dynamics and teamwork. Peer group feedback from these exercises allows trainees to look critically at their own behaviour.
3. After the description of each method the participants are asked to practise them with a group of villagers. This helps them become familiar with the methods and to analyse the problems related to the resource they are studying.
4. The next phase concentrates on appraisal and planning, in which participants are encouraged to make presentations to the different groups in the village, aggregate village natural resource management plans and conduct discussions on the feasibility of these plans. This helps the host village to develop its plan and also equips the volunteers to carry out similar exercises in the future.
5. Each volunteer is asked to give verbal or written feedback on what she or he has learnt from the programme, the problems encountered and in which areas more support would be needed in future. Volunteers work with each other in ways of providing mutual support in their future work.
6. This is followed by a feedback and refresher training programme in which presentations are made by all the participants about the exercises in the village, describing the issues discussed and the problems faced. Active discussion among the participants is encouraged to facilitate critical self-awareness and to develop networking between the volunteers.
7. The volunteers, on return to their villages, conduct similar village planning exercises.
8. During the training the volunteers who prove to be good facilitators are identified as potential trainers by the group. These are known as master extension volunteers. Once selected, the master extension volunteers are then trained as trainers, during which they are encouraged to design training programmes and develop training material using simple language to illustrate local problems.

*Source: Parmesh Shah and Meera Kaul Shah, pers. comm.*

**2.6 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST:  
PREPARATIONS**

- *Are you clear about the overall training objectives?*
- *What are your specific training objectives?*
- *Have you reached an agreement with co-trainers about the division of roles, training objectives, the programme and training styles?*
- *What are the main characteristics of the likely participants?*
- *Have you adapted your schedule to the time of year when the training workshop is held?*
- *Have you planned your sessions taking into consideration the time of day when they will take place?*
- *Have you prepared the sessions to include an introduction, main section and summary?*
- *Have you planned your sessions to include a variety of learning methods?*
- *Are you clear about the 'golden nuggets' that you wish to communicate to the participants?*
- *Are you aware about your style of intonation, articulation and expression?*
- *Are you planning to use several techniques to calm yourself before the session starts?*
- *Have you planned for question and answer sessions?*
- *Are the room and seating arrangements suitable for your session?*
- *Have you planned for changes in seating arrangements?*
- *Have you checked all the electrical equipment you will use?*
- *Have you prepared all the audiovisual aids that you will require, without overdoing it?*
- *Have you planned an evaluation for your session or workshop?*

<b>Workshop planning form</b>										
Date: _____										
Time	Topic and Objective	Method	Format	Likely Energy Level of Participants					Responsibility	Logistical Needs
				1	2	3	4	5		



### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the key components of participatory methods is the emphasis on multidisciplinary teams of participants. By working as a group, the team members can approach a situation from different perspectives, carefully monitor each other's work, and carry out several tasks simultaneously. The training required for good participation is based on a thorough understanding of the way in which groups perform. Groups can be powerful and productive when they function well. The performance and output of the team is likely to be greater than the sum of its individual members. As two proverbs from Africa say: "Cross a river in a crowd and the crocodile won't eat you", and "A single blade of grass won't sweep the yard".

#### 3.1.1 THE LIFE CYCLE OF GROUPS

When several people come together to work on a single initiative or project, they are not necessarily a productive team. Before a group of people can function well together, they must pass through a series of stages. These have been characterised by Charles Handy (1985) as: 1. *Forming*; 2. *Storming*; 3. *Norming*; and 4. *Performing* (see Box 3.1). The challenge of every good trainer is to help their trainees move through the various phases of group formation until they reach this final stage.

Initially various individuals come together, sometimes as strangers, sometimes as colleagues, to create a new group for some stated purpose. In this early *forming* stage they are still a collection of individuals, each with his/her own agenda and expertise and little or no shared experience. As these individuals become more familiar with one another, they will almost certainly enter a *storming* phase where personal values and principles are challenged, roles and responsibilities are taken on and/or rejected, and the group's objectives and way of working together are defined. If there is too much conflict and discord within the group, it will collapse (see section 3.1.2). If, however, some common ground can be found, then the group will gain greater cohesion and a sense of purpose.

As the group members begin to understand their roles in relation to one another and establish a shared vision or goal, they will develop a clear identity and group-specific norms of behaviour. At the *norming* stage, the group has settled down. People know each other better, they have accepted the rules and probably developed little sub-groups. Once these norms have been established, the group will be ready to focus on output and will enter the *performing* phase. It is in this phase that they will work most effectively as a *team*. The confidence

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The Life Cycle of Groups
- 3.1.2 Dealing with Group Conflict
- 3.1.3 Group Composition
- 3.1.4 Range of Roles in Groups

### 3.2 Using Exercises and Games to Enhance Group Dynamics

- 3.2.1 Using the Exercises
- 3.2.2 Debriefing After the Exercise

### 3.3 Types of Group Process Exercises and Games

- 3.3.1 Getting Started: Exercises for Introductions and Icebreakers
- 3.3.2 Picking Up the Tempo: Exercises for Energising and Forming Groups
- 3.3.3 Keeping it Together: Exercises for Enhancing Group Dynamics
- 3.3.4 Learning to Listen: Exercises to Improve Listening and Observation
- 3.3.5 Learning to Reflect: Exercises for Improving Analysis
- 3.3.6 Summing it Up: Exercises for Evaluation

### 3.4 Trainer's Checklist: Group Dynamics

level of the team members will have reached the point where they are willing to take significant risks and try out new ideas on their own.

Groups generally produce fewer ideas than individuals working separately. However, they do produce better ideas as they

are discussed more carefully and thought through more deeply. Therefore, groups are also more likely to identify errors of judgement before action is taken. Rather surprisingly, groups take riskier decisions than the individual members would have done if acting independently. A group therefore also tends to act more adventurously as members take courage from each other.

But, groups that are too cohesive also have drawbacks. Religious sects, military groups, sports teams and political groups all show a tendency towards a dominant group identity. They tend to believe in their own propaganda. This is commonly called 'group think'. In extreme cases, the individual's principles are sacrificed for group loyalty, harmony and morale. Seeking a consensus at all costs can make the group highly selective in the facts it sees, sorts and accepts. Maintaining an open agenda, creating a sense of self-critical awareness and preventing secrecy is essential if group 'delusions' are to be prevented. As a trainer, you will need to balance any tensions between group and individual identity to encourage continued shared learning.

### Box 3.1 The four stages of group development

#### Forming

1. Group is not yet a group, but a set of individuals
2. Individuals want to establish personal identity within the group and make an impression
3. Participation is limited as individuals get familiar with the setting, the trainer and each other
4. Individuals begin to focus on task at hand and discuss its purpose
5. The group is essentially evolving ground rules on which future decisions and actions will be based

#### Storming

1. Characterised by intra-group conflict and lack of unity
2. Preliminary ground rules on purpose, leadership and behaviour are damaged
3. Individuals can become hostile toward each other, and express their individuality by pursuing or revealing personal agendas
4. Friction increases, rules are broken, arguments can happen
5. But, if successfully handled, this stage leads to new and more realistic setting of objectives, procedures and norms

#### Norming

1. Characterised by overcoming tensions and by developing group cohesion in which norms and practices are established
2. Group members accept the group and accept each other's idiosyncrasies
3. Group allegiance develops and group strives to maintain it
4. Development of group spirit, harmony becomes important

#### Performing

1. Characterised by full maturity and maximum productivity
2. Can only be reached by successfully completing previous three stages
3. Members take on roles to fulfil the group activities since they have now learnt to relate to one another
4. Roles become flexible and functional
5. Group energy channelled into identified tasks
6. New insights and solutions begin to emerge

Source: Charles Handy (1985)

### 3.1.2 DEALING WITH GROUP CONFLICT

Conflict is an inevitable part of working with groups of people who have different interests, backgrounds and experiences. Conflict need not be destructive if it is identified and used constructively. Even small conflicts should not be ignored by trainers as they may grow out of proportion and affect the entire group. There is no prescription for dealing with conflict in groups. It will depend on the individuals involved, culturally-bound ways of expressing dissent and disagreement, and your own style as a trainer. Conflict can happen between different kinds of people and be revealed in many different ways (Box 3.2).

**Box 3.2 Common types of conflict**

1. **Clique versus Clique** People may form strong associations in clearly defined sub-groups, which try to exclude others.
2. **Trainee versus Trainee** One individual may object to the ideas and opinions of another, and confront that person directly or indirectly.
3. **Clique versus Trainee** One individual gets singled out by a sub-group which may try to make that person's life difficult, undermining his or her position.
4. **Clique versus Trainer** A sub-group may take an intense disliking to you and may go to great lengths to prove you wrong, draw you into an argument or make you lose face in some way.
5. **Trainee versus Trainer** An individual may take an intense disliking to you and may go to great lengths to prove you wrong, draw you into an argument or make you lose face in some way.

It is important to get a sense of the nature of the conflict. It may simply be a function of the group life cycle: *forming*, *storming*, *norming*, and *performing*. A storming phase (which commonly begins on the second or third day of a training programme) may have little to do with course content or you as the trainer, and much more to do with group dynamics. It may be that individuals have hidden agendas that have little to do with the workshop theme and may conflict with declared group objectives. They may, for example, have been forced to attend the training by a superior, may feel they know the subject matter better than you, may fear that you will challenge their authority or expose their weaknesses in front of junior staff, or may think you are using your position to show off. In group work, there are always trade-offs between individual and group objectives. Accepting such trade-offs can only happen if participants trust one another sufficiently to agree on common objectives.

Conflicts between groups or individuals in the training may be due to institutional affiliations, ideological or political





alliances, religious or ethnic identification, professional relations or personality differences, about which you may know little. Raised voices, tense faces and nervous body language are all clear expressions of anger and conflict. Silence can also convey conflict, whether it is shown by the entire group, a sub-group or an individual (Box 3.3). While these symptoms may be relatively easy to observe, the root cause of the conflict may be harder to discover. Indeed, many of these disputes may be beyond your ability to resolve. They may require intense arbitration and negotiation outside the workshop setting. Other conflicts may simply be due to differences in opinion about a subject raised during a discussion. These, of course, will be far easier to deal with in the workshop.

**Box 3.3 Silence as a form of conflict**

Silence is a complicated form of behaviour to interpret. People who do not speak can be silent as a way of showing disapproval of what the rest of the group is saying. They can be silent out of shyness or diffidence or laziness, silent because they would like to speak but conditions never seem right for them to start, or simply because they prefer to listen to other people rather than to talk themselves. Remember that silence is not necessarily disruptive to the rest of the group.

Conflicts that arise between a particular trainee or group of trainees and you may also be the result of some of the more complex issues mentioned above. In the worst situation, that person or group of persons may have to be asked to leave the training if they continue to disrupt the proceedings. Fortunately, in most cases, the conflict can at least be reduced, if not reconciled during the training (Box 3.4).

In the workshop, the discussion should not aim to reach a consensus about an issue, but to develop understanding, and to learn how to make decisions, how to assess evidence, and how to formulate conclusions. The conclusion of a discussion may well be irrelevant. When you see argument and conflict developing you can step in and use your position as facilitator to calm the atmosphere with a joke or an invitation to examine other issues.

One way to help diffuse conflicts is to reply to negative statements using the format in the *Agreement Frame* (Box 3.5). Words such as *but* or *however* are negative and can convey feelings of condescension, superiority or defensiveness. By saying, "I agree with you, *but...*," you are actually implying that you really do *not* agree with the person you are addressing and will soon show them why they are wrong. Remember that as a trainer you are in a very powerful position. By making a statement that appears to undervalue or belittle a comment made by a participant, particularly at an early stage of a training activity, you can create anxiety and resentment, and alienate people in the process.

By using the agreement frame you are telling the trainee that you acknowledge and understand their perspective. This allows you to move the discussion in a more constructive direction and build a sense of mutual respect and common interest. You are showing that there is room for multiple opinions, and that each person's contribution is valued and encouraged.

Sometimes it is not possible to ask people in front of the entire group to explain why they are thinking or behaving in a certain way. Some of the more reserved members of the group may have difficulty expressing their frustrations openly. Many interactive games and exercises can be

**Box 3.4 Dealing with difficult individuals**

■ As soon as you begin to see problems arise, take the opportunity to talk to the person individually. Try to understand what is bothering them. Sometimes disruptive people just want more individual attention. Try to diffuse the situation before the person becomes a ringleader for wider opposition.

■ If this has not helped and there is somebody in the group who has a personal relationship with the individual and can act as an intermediary, ask that person to discuss the disruptive behaviour sympathetically with the person in question.

■ Give the person a particular responsibility in the training that will focus their energies, such as leading a training activity or being in charge of the end-of-training party.

■ Do an exercise that allows complaints to be voiced and discussed anonymously (for example Exercises 66 or 72, Part II). Participate in the exercise yourself and include your own comments about difficult behaviour so that the issues can be aired.

■ You can also encourage participants to develop self-critical awareness about the quality and length of contributions to discussions. You can open it up by inviting the group to evaluate each other's contributions:

*"Would anyone like to comment on that?"*

*"What do other people think?"*

*"Some of you have a special knowledge on this subject. Would any of you like to say something on this?"*

■ Only deal with difficult individuals publicly in exceptional cases. You can ask the person in question to make a comment in plenary and ask the group to resolve it together. But remember that this approach can be very threatening for the person and might be counter-productive.

used by trainers to deal with group tensions. Some of these are described in detail in Part II. If there appears to be a conflict and there is some reluctance to talk about it, a suggestion box, memo board or Mood Meter (Exercise 65) can be used to gauge opinion. This will allow people to make anonymous comments on the training, your performance and the behaviour and attitudes of other participants without the risk of being identified.

**3.1.3 GROUP COMPOSITION**

Once the group is working together, it can achieve its common purpose. To do this it

must have members with the necessary range of skills and abilities. The larger the size, the greater the diversity of talent, skills and knowledge likely to be present. Small

**Box 3.5 The Agreement Frame**

■ *"I appreciate ... and ..."*

or

■ *"I respect ... and ..."*

or

■ *"I agree ... and ..."*

*Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*

groups may be less effective due to a limited collective range of knowledge. Yet if you make a group too large, then new learning constraints arise (Box 3.6). Individuals are more likely to be inhibited in discussions and the more active members may strongly influence the group. It takes far more courage to speak in a large group than in a small one. A group of 5–7 team members usually works best for achieving optimum productivity and participation. There is, of course, no single ideal group size because other factors, such as leadership, cohesiveness, and desire for consensus play an important role. Chapter Six deals with the formation of field teams.

During training, you will find a need to form groups of different sizes and composition – for workshop sessions, for fieldwork, for discussion, for evaluation. You need to be aware of group dynamics when helping to form groups. In Part II, exercises are described that help in the formation of groups (Exercises 13–25). These include energising games that allow groups of different sizes

#### **Box 3.6 Group size and participation**

3–6 people:	Everyone speaks
7–10 people:	Almost everyone speaks. Quieter people say less. One or two may not speak at all.
11–18 people:	5 or 6 people speak a lot, 3 or 4 others join in occasionally.
19–30 people:	3 or 4 people dominate
30+ people:	Little participation possible

Source: Jenny Rogers (1989)

to form, as well as exercises that encourage the self-selection of groups according to a range of non-evaluative criteria.

The mix of participants will have an important bearing on how well the groups work together. It is important to have a sense of existing hierarchies: putting junior staff with their seniors may mean they will never get the chance to speak. Gender and age may also influence the degree to which participants feel free to join in group work. There may be existing personality clashes. If possible check with the organisers or other trusted participants whether they know of any particular problems. Some participants may come from an organisation which sees itself in conflict with another organisation which is also represented by your participants. It is also important to know if all your participants are from different organisations who know they will not work together after the workshop. Any group work intended to address the real world may not be treated seriously.

#### **3.1.4 RANGE OF ROLES IN GROUPS**

The capacities of individual team members do not necessarily determine whether a group performs well. Management training has shown that teams composed of the brightest individuals do not necessarily turn out to be the most productive. Specific functions are needed if a group is to realise its objectives. Trainers should be familiar with the range of roles required to make a group perform well enough to achieve goals, in this case learning about participatory methods. These involve both *task roles*, those that help to achieve the goals of the group, and *maintenance roles*, those that help in the process of achieving these tasks. It is important to consider the compatibility and conflict between the need to fulfil roles within the group. A certain amount of ten-

sion helps to keep the group active but compatibility may be more important when the task is particularly complex and requires close interaction between team members.

Although formal job titles will have influenced the selection of participants for a team, the roles that individuals play within the team are more crucial to its success. For example, there may be individuals good at listening, others who are skilled at seeking information, or clarifying, organising, relieving tension, setting standards, group diplomacy or dissecting ideas. Individuals may play a number of roles at different times. These roles can be identified as nine distinct types (Box 3.7).

Nobody is perfect, and therefore each role or function is accompanied by an allowable weakness. Acknowledging these allowable weaknesses creates openness in the team. Individual team members feel more comfortable about not having to be perfect and feel free to concentrate on their strengths. The best teams are those which have a wide mix of roles and functions represented. Teams consisting entirely of one type of person, however brilliant the individuals may be, can be disastrously ineffective. For example, a team with several *Shapers* will stay locked in conflict, whereas too many *Resources Investigators* will produce a team good at gathering information and making contacts but poor at reflecting and implementing.

### **3.2 USING EXERCISES AND GAMES TO ENHANCE GROUP DYNAMICS**

There are many games and exercises that can be used to enhance learning in the workshop. The principal emphasis is on creating an environment in which individuals and groups feel free to *experience, reflect and change*. In particular, games and exercises are invaluable for:



- relaxing the participants;
- stimulating the flow of communication between strangers;
- bringing private expectations and group reality closer;
- encouraging everyone to participate and learn;
- rounding off or introducing a session;
- developing new skills;
- exposing participants to new ways of judging their own actions, particularly in relation to the impact on group work.

The enjoyment that can be created by games and exercises acts as a basis for group cohesion and openness. Each game or exercise emphasises a particular message, sometimes only to be revealed to participants as the exercise ends. The games and exercises described below (see Part II

**Box 3.7 The nine types of team member**

<b>The Coordinator</b>	The team's natural chairperson; confident, talks easily, listens well; promotes decision-making; able to encourage contributions from all team members; need not be brilliant intellectually. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> a bit manipulative.
<b>The Energy Plant</b>	The team's vital spark and chief source of ideas; creative, unorthodox, imaginative. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> lacks practicality; a bit of a handful; up in the clouds.
<b>The Implementer</b>	The team's workhorse; turns ideas into practical actions and gets on with them logically and loyally; disciplined, reliable, conservative. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> can only adapt if told why; lacks imagination.
<b>The Resources Investigator</b>	The fixer; extrovert, amiable, good at making and using contacts; an explorer of opportunities. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> undisciplined; short attention span.
<b>The Shaper</b>	Usually the self-elected leader; dynamic, positive, outgoing, argumentative, a pressuriser; seeks ways round obstacles. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> not always likeable; tendency to bully; provokes opposition.
<b>The Monitor/Evaluator</b>	The team's rock; strategic, sober, analytical, introvert; capable of deep analysis of huge quantities of data; rarely wrong. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> an unexciting plod; lacks imagination.
<b>The Teamworker</b>	A counsellor and conciliator; social, perceptive, accommodating, aware of undercurrents and others' problems; promotes harmony; most valuable in times of crisis. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> indecisive.
<b>The Completer/Finisher</b>	The team's worrier and stickler for detail; deadlines and schedules; has relentless follow-through; chief catcher of errors and omissions. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> reluctant to let go; worries about small things.
<b>The Specialist</b>	The team's chief source of rare knowledge and skill; a single-minded loner; self-starting, dedicated and makes the occasional dazzling breakthrough. <i>Allowable Weakness:</i> contributes on a narrow front.

Source: Meredith Belbin (1992)

for detail) are simple, easy to learn and relatively quick to use. All are known to be useful in a range of workshop situations and institutional and cultural contexts.

### 3.2.1 USING THE EXERCISES

Some words of caution are necessary. First, the games and exercises must be explained carefully. Trainees see workshop exercises in quite a different way to the trainer. They do not know what to expect or what is the purpose of a particular exercise. In general, surprise is not useful, although it may be important when the exercises involve role-playing and performance. In such cases, it may make sense not to give too much information to your trainees in advance as they will worry about their performance and not concentrate on the task at hand.

To offset nervousness, panic or plain suspicion, remain informal and relaxed, explain the objectives clearly, and, where required, draw attention to the relevance to their work or the goals of the workshop. If necessary, start the exercise yourself by giving the first example or presentation. Some participants may think that exercises are 'silly', 'foolish' or 'only for kids', until they realise the deeper learning points. Sometimes those who are reluctant to take part gain enthusiasm and confidence by watching others participating and enjoying themselves.

However, training should not be seen as non-stop entertainment. Exercises should be balanced with sufficient time for discussion and reflection. Too little reflection and too much action will leave participants confused and frustrated. Remember, it is not the quantity of activities but their quality that should be foremost in your mind. If you are working with limited time, then it is often better to carry out one exercise completely than do three quickly.

You must be well organised when you are using exercises. In particular, you need to consider how they will link with other parts of your training programme. You can use a game or exercise for a smooth transition to shift the group to the next phase of training. When energy levels are low, participants are getting frustrated or bored, or there is tension in the air, an energising game can work wonders.

Getting the balance right is important. The games and exercises outlined in Part II are meant to provide a range of options from which the trainer can choose during different stages of a workshop. They may be used as described or modified to fit your particular training situation. But do not restrict your use of games and exercises to these alone. There are many innovative games and exercises available from a wide range of sources, some of which are listed in Appendix A. Use your imagination, experiment



with variations, and search actively for new ideas. Used selectively, these games and exercises can reinforce important concepts and behaviour, and have a powerful effect on the training experience.

### 3.2.2 DEBRIEFING AFTER THE EXERCISE

Effective training follows a pattern of *reflection, action, reflection*. Therefore, at the conclusion of an exercise, be sure that you leave sufficient time to debrief with the participants. During this reflective stage, the most important lessons are learned. It is tempting to take over at this stage, but remember that the switch in style from a game to authoritative teaching will limit learning. Give participants the chance to draw their own conclusions, rather than imposing your own. Ask:

*"How did you think it went?"*

*"What did you think of the way you handled ...?"*

*"How did this compare with the way you deal with this issue in real life?"*

Each exercise in Part II is accompanied by suggestions for debriefing questions. You can use the buzz sessions or brainstorming techniques described in Chapter One to draw out the trainees' thoughts and feelings about the experience. For example, by exploring trust and even the effects of betrayal of trust in an exercise, individuals can learn about the process of developing cooperation in groups. You can encourage participants to ask questions of themselves to consider whether their behaviour could be modified to suit the goals of the group.

Many of the exercises will require debriefing in groups. It is important to allow sufficient time for the groups to prepare and

present their findings to plenary. These could be visual outputs or just a verbal summary. Rather than slip back to the conventional lecture-style of everyone presenting from the front to a static audience, try Rotating Plenaries or Information Markets. In the rotating plenary, the whole group moves to the position of one of the groups and hears their presentation. They may stand or move chairs to sit down. After the presentation and discussion, everyone moves to the next group location to repeat the process. The regular movement keeps everyone active, and it also allows groups to present from their 'home' territory.

A variation of this is the information market. If there is not time to hear the full presentations from each group, and the findings are sufficiently visual to observe, then give the plenary group a fixed period to move around in their own time. Ask them to take notes on the information they find. You can ask everyone to write down two things they agreed with and two they disagreed with from each group. Then initiate a single plenary discussion at the end.

As participants wind down after an exercise, it is important to make the transition into general discussion about underlying themes. This is particularly important when the exercise has involved elements of role play. Questions can be prepared in advance:

*"Has the exercise revealed general difficulties which are similar to problems in the real world?"*

*"Has it revealed new insights?"*

*"What has this exercise shown about obstacles to ideal solutions?"*

Never feel disappointed if an exercise does not work according to plan, or when

participants appear to make mistakes. As a trainer, you can never know enough to predict completely the outcome of an exercise. As most exercises have multiple functions, all exercises will provide some useful lessons for someone, and these should be highlighted by the trainer. It may be that the particular group of participants and the exercise are not well suited. It may be that the group finds a better way of doing things. Always treat outcomes as alternatives rather than as failures. Most importantly, do not let the fear of failure stop you trying something new the next time.

Finally, always thank those involved in role plays for their efforts. This is important because, as Jenny Rogers (1989) puts it:

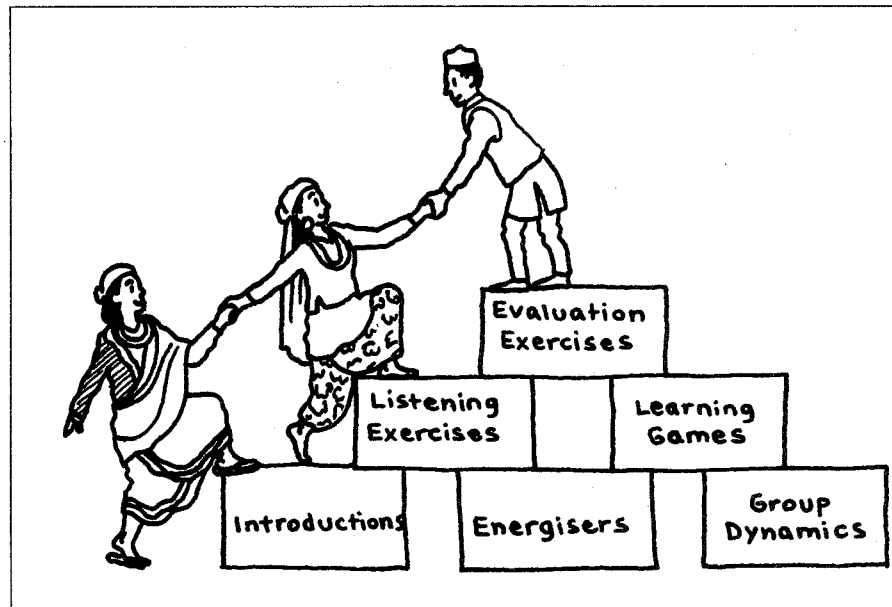
*"many people will have taken part vigorously, but may privately wonder later if they have lost face by doing so. Forestall this reaction by making it clear that it is entirely thanks to their skill and commitment that such a valuable discussion was possible."*

### 3.3 TYPES OF GROUP PROCESS EXERCISES AND GAMES

There are six main categories of group process exercises and games which are effective in participatory training:

1. introductions
2. energisers and group formation exercises
3. group dynamics exercises
4. listening exercises
5. analytical exercises
6. evaluation exercises.

Each of these types is described briefly below, and references are given to Part II where each exercise is described in terms of objectives, materials, the time needed, procedure, debriefing and variations. The exercises mentioned here are known to be



effective at reinforcing important ideas for successful participatory research and development training. They illustrate some basic training principles and approaches and should be adapted as necessary. If they are not appropriate to your particular training conditions, then modify a game or exercise to suit your needs. The aim is not to be prescriptive, but to suggest the range of options available.

Where there is a single source for a particular exercise or game, the reference is given. Many of those described in Part II have been adapted from the original source or are combinations of a number of sources. Full references to the sources of games and exercises described in this and other chapters in this book can be found in Appendix A.

#### 3.3.1 GETTING STARTED: EXERCISES FOR INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS (NOS 1-12, PART II)

When people come together to take part in a training course it is important to make everyone feel welcome and part of a group.



Introductions are important and should not be regarded lightly. It is critical to get everyone, especially the shy people, involved and talking to one another by breaking the tensions and nervousness at the beginning of a workshop.

Conventional introductions involve stating name, past history and current status. This means barriers and hierarchies are established right away. The objective of most of the exercises suggested here is to avoid such problems. Participants are introduced in ways which encourage a greater sense of equality between them. These exercises should help to create an open and trusting learning atmosphere. Lighthearted and non-threatening games to relax people and gain participants' commitment early on in the workshop contribute greatly to its success.

When people meet for the first time there is often a degree of nervousness. They may be uncertain about what to do after they have said hello. Individual group members will be asking themselves: "*Shall I start talking? Who shall I talk to? Shall I take the*



*initiative? Will they like me? Won't I make a fool of myself?"* The initial conversation is likely to be guarded and superficial. Any attempt to relax the group and break the ice must offer the group members the following:

- a safe, clear and acceptable structure;
- conversation subjects which are both interesting and non-threatening;
- enough scope for making and receiving distinct impressions of each other (but preventing competition);
- some action, when possible, to relieve the tension;
- the possibility for laughter, for the same reason.

The exercises in this section have been chosen with these characteristics in mind. As the trainer you can speak first, thereby setting an example and showing an interest in getting to know the group members. In a training situation this is obviously best done by expressing your interest in the learning goals of the participants, and showing a willingness to incorporate them into the programme.

Some of the most effective exercises for breaking the ice and getting the training started include:

1. Paired Interviewing
2. Expectations and Ground Rules in Writing
3. First Name Introductions
4. Hopes and Fears
5. Self Portraits
6. Something from Home
7. Stepping Stones
8. Symbolic Introductions
9. Drawing Concepts
10. The Seed Mixer
11. Name Game
12. Who Are We?

### **3.3.2 PICKING UP THE TEMPO: EXERCISES FOR ENERGISING AND FORMING GROUPS (NOS 13–25 & 35, PART II)**

*Energisers* are games that energise the group. These can be vital in maintaining the momentum of training. During the first morning session or in the 'graveyard' session after lunch, participants can be distracted and tired. Similarly, after a long session during which trainees have been seated or concentrating hard, it may be necessary to take a break and reactivate their minds. A quick, amusing game that gets everyone moving can work wonders. Effective energisers include:

13. Fruit Salad
14. 'A's and 'B's
15. The Numbers Game
16. Move to the Spot
17. Move If
18. Streets and Avenues
19. Robots
20. Family Members
21. Breakthrough
22. Statue Stop
23. Countdown
24. Group Self-Select
25. Group Sculpture

*Group formation* is necessary in training workshops on participatory methods as they should involve a lot of intensive group work. There is a constant need to form groups of different sizes and compositions. Games can be an extremely useful way of forming groups in an entertaining and non-threatening manner. They can be used for random mixing or for purposive formation of groups (preselected mixes). Many of the group formation exercises in Part II can also be used for energising. However, these exercises are not always necessary. There are times when it is good to allow and encourage people to form subject groups with

people with the same interests, or who come from the same institution. Group formation exercises include:

13. Fruit Salad
15. Numbers Game
17. Move If
23. Countdown
24. Group Self-Select Exercise
35. Postcard or Jigsaw Puzzle

### **3.3.3 KEEPING IT TOGETHER: EXERCISES FOR ENHANCING GROUP DYNAMICS (NOS 26–40, PART II)**

Games and exercises can be valuable in helping people through the various stages of group development described in Chapters Two and Three. The general aims are to demonstrate the power of working in groups, to encourage individuals to respond openly to others and to abandon preconceived ideas. Such exercises can bring difficult issues of conflict and dominance out into the open in a non-threatening way. It is important that these exercises are followed by a thorough debriefing to help trainees reflect on their own behaviour in the group.

Effective exercises to enhance group dynamics include:

26. Nominal Group Technique
27. Group Profiles
28. Saboteur
29. Knotty Problem
30. Trust Walk
31. Group Problem Solving & Team Contract
32. Chairs
33. Group Strategies: Prisoner's Dilemma
34. Cooperative Squares
35. Postcard or Jigsaw Puzzle
36. Look Who's Talking
37. Rope Square
38. My Corner
39. Group Roles
40. Excluding Numbers

**3.3.4 LEARNING TO LISTEN: EXERCISES TO IMPROVE LISTENING AND OBSERVATION (NOS 41–50, PART II)**

Adopting a listening and learning attitude is central to training for participatory learning and action, particularly when it comes to fieldwork and direct contact with local people (see Chapter 5 on Semi-structured Interviewing). These games and exercises can help to shift people's views, allowing participants the chance to reflect on how they behaved in the exercise. Debriefing discussions following listening and observing games are crucial.

41. Matches
42. Pillow Game
43. Watch It!
44. Non-Verbal Circles
45. Voting Debate
46. Folding Paper Game
47. Drawing Bricks
48. Empathetic Listening
49. Noddors and Shakers
50. Wayward Whispers and Story Sequences

**3.3.5 LEARNING TO REFLECT: EXERCISES FOR IMPROVING ANALYSIS (NOS 51–62, PART II)**

Good participatory training should permit and encourage reflection on how we learn and observe, including realisation of how



our personal experiences and our personality influence what we see. These games and exercises focus on how we observe and remember, what we ignore, how we assimilate new information, and how difficult it is to be objective. Games and exercises that highlight the biases and complications of the learning and analysis process can generate important insights during a workshop.

51. Learning by Association
52. Seeing the Ks or Hs
53. Fact, Opinion, Rumour
54. Swap Over
55. Playing Detective
56. The Coat or Rucksack
57. Which Watch? Whose Shoe?
58. The Margolis Wheel
59. Johari's Window
60. Beans in a Jar
61. Map Reversals
62. Handclasp

**3.3.6 SUMMING IT UP: EXERCISES FOR EVALUATION (NOS 58, 63–73, PART II)**

As a trainer, it is important continually to evaluate how the workshop is developing and how to adjust your programme to meet changing conditions. Formal evaluations are usually less appropriate in such cases, and so quicker, more participatory alternatives are necessary. The games and exercises suggested here should be helpful to trainers, both for quick updates on the group's mood and for more thorough evaluations at the end of the workshop.

58. Margolis Wheel
63. Scoring Individuals and Groups
64. Resents and Appreciates
65. Mood Meter
66. Graffiti Feedback Boards
67. Monitoring Representatives
68. Evaluation of Session

- 69. Evaluation Wheel
- 70. Hopes and Fears Scoring
- 71. Role Play for Creative Evaluation
- 72. Problem Hat
- 73. Mental Gifts

#### **3.4 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST: GROUP DYNAMICS**

- *Are you clear about whether your own leadership style is laissez-faire, authoritarian or democratic?*
- *Does it need to be changed in any way?*
- *Have you planned how the participants will introduce themselves?*
- *Have you discussed your proposed training methods with the participants?*
- *What plans do you have to avoid the trap of talking too much yourself and imposing your ideas on the participants?*
- *Are you alert to the probable life cycle of your group: forming – storming – norming – performing?*
- *Which potential conflicts have you anticipated and how will you deal with them?*
- *Are the groups the optimum size for their various tasks?*
- *Is everyone participating actively in each session?*
- *Have you carefully selected exercises to complement your other training methods?*
- *How will you explain the purpose of the game or exercise to the participants?*
- *How will you debrief after each exercise?*
- *Is the room the right size and shape for the exercises you selected?*
- *Can the chairs and tables be rearranged to suit your purposes?*
- *Have you thought carefully about where you will stand or sit yourself during the exercises?*



#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Training for participatory learning involves more than just dealing with methods. These, as is illustrated in Chapter 5, are relatively straightforward to learn. What is more difficult is ensuring that these methods are taught whilst also understanding some theoretical and organisational issues. A major concern of yours should therefore be how to ensure that trainees are aware that participation does not simply imply the mechanical application of a 'technique' or method, but is instead part of a process of dialogue, action, analysis and change.

The roots of the participatory methods and approaches in this guide can be traced to many sources. This diversity is part of their strength. This chapter describes how these approaches have developed, sets out the key principles of participatory learning and action, and discusses the implications of these principles. It highlights the emerging dangers and limitations, drawing out key challenges that you, as a trainer, will need to bring to the attention of the trainees.

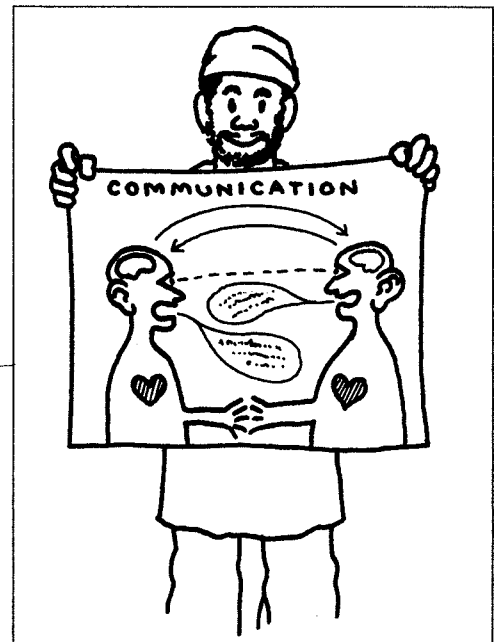
#### **4.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR A TRAINING APPROACH**

This chapter is arranged into sections that can each form the basis of a one to two-hour workshop session. These can be adapted as modules and can be used in any order, depending on your particular needs.

You may feel tempted to present these issues of institutional context, history, key principles, theory and limitations in the form of lectures. Although lectures are an important element of any training course, they do have limitations. It is all too easy for lectures to become boring for participants, particularly if they go on too long; and it is all too easy for trainers to assume that everything they have said has been

absorbed. There are, however, a number of ways that can help ensure that sessions involving some lecturing stay interesting and exciting. The basic principle is to use the experience and knowledge of your participants as the starting point. Your participants know a great deal already, and your challenge is to draw this out and add new ideas, principles and concepts. Some suggestions for doing this are as follows:

- *Buzz sessions* in the middle of a lecture. Ask participants to turn to their partners and discuss their own experience of an issue or their understanding of a particular term. These might include "What do you understand by the term participation?"; "What would prevent you using participatory methods in your organisation?"; "What are your experiences of where some development improvement has gone wrong?". These buzzes are usually short, and reporting back is in a brief plenary discussion chaired by the trainer.



- 4.1 Introduction**
- 4.2 Suggestions for a Training Approach**
- 4.3 The Development of Participatory Approaches**
  - 4.3.1 A Brief History
  - 4.3.2 Common Principles
  - 4.3.3 Criteria for Trustworthiness
- 4.4 'Participation' in Development**
  - 4.4.1 Types of 'Participation'
- 4.5 Emerging Training and Institutional Pressures**
  - 4.5.1 Training for Transformation
  - 4.5.2 Issues for Institutionalisation
- 4.6 Training for Analysis**
  - 4.6.1 Who Analyses?
  - 4.6.2 What is Analysed?
  - 4.6.3 When is it Analysed?
- 4.7 Misconceptions and Dangers**
  - 4.7.1 Some Dangers
  - 4.7.2 Ten Myths About PRA
- 4.8 Trainer's Checklist: Key Principles**

- *Brainstorming sessions* of longer duration, in which larger groups of trainees consider a topic or issue and try to produce a comprehensive list of related concerns or experiences.

- *Drawing a concept*, in which you ask participants to interpret something abstract by drawing it. For example, you can ask them to draw 'participation', 'development', or 'livelihoods'. This again allows participants to reflect on their experiences. The hidden message you are giving is that you value what they already know.

- *Use of video material*, in which you show a complete video or just selected parts, and ask participants to engage in 'active viewing'. Ask them to watch and take notes on a particular issue. Again this might be the types of participation shown, the methods used, what worked, what was patronising, and so on. Ask participants to share their thoughts in small groups and then report back to plenary. Alternatively, ask them to list the issues on large sheets of paper, and have a roving exhibition.

## 4.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES

### 4.3.1 A BRIEF HISTORY

In recent years there has been a rapid expansion of new participatory methods and approaches in the context of sustainable development. These have drawn on many well-established traditions that have put participation, action research and adult education at the forefront of attempts to emancipate disempowered people (Box 4.1). To the wider body of development programmes, projects and initiatives, these approaches represent a significant departure from standard practice. Some of the changes under way are remarkable. In a growing number of government and non-government institutions, extractive research

### Box 4.1 Participatory approaches: some origins

The participatory approaches in use today have evolved from several sources and traditions. Five of these have been particularly important:

- *activist participatory research*: inspired by Paulo Freire (1968), this approach uses dialogue and joint research to enhance people's awareness and confidence and to empower them to take action. Although its special focus on the underprivileged and on political action has limited its spread, its key contributions to the current approaches lie in its recognition that poor people are creative and capable and should be empowered, while outsiders have a role as catalysts and facilitators.

- *agroecosystem analysis*: developed by Gordon Conway and colleagues (for example see Conway 1987), this approach draws on systems and ecological thinking, combining the analysis of systems (productivity, stability, sustainability, equity) with pattern analysis of space, time, flows and relationships, relative values and decisions. Among its major contributions to current approaches are its use of transects, informal mapping and diagramming and the use of scoring and ranking to assess innovations.

- *applied anthropology*: although conventional social anthropology has been mainly concerned with understanding rather than changing, applied anthropology became more recognised in the 1980s as a legitimate and useful activity, especially in its ability to help development professionals to appreciate better the richness and validity of rural people's knowledge. It also emphasises the benefits of unhurried participant observation and conversations and the importance of attitudes, behaviour and rapport.

- *field research on farming systems*: two branches of this discipline simultaneously revealed on the one hand the rationality of small and poor farmers and on the other their activities as experimenters. Farmers' participation in agricultural research therefore became a focus, especially in the context of complex, diverse and risk-prone farming systems.

- *rapid rural appraisal*: emerging in the late 1970s, this was a reaction to general dissatisfaction with the biases inherent in the "rural development tourist" approach, which tended to hide the worst poverty and deprivation. It was also a reaction to the tediousness, expense and frequent inaccuracy of the conventional process of questionnaire surveys. In answering the question "Whose knowledge counts?" it sought to enable outsiders to gain insight and information from rural people about rural conditions in a cost-effective and timely manner.

Sources: Andrea Cornwall, Irene Guijt and Alice Welbourn (1993); Robert Chambers (1992)

is being complemented, and even replaced, by investigation and analysis by local people themselves. Methods are being used

not just for local people to inform outsiders, but also for people's own analysis of their conditions.

#### 4.3.2 COMMON PRINCIPLES

The interactive involvement of many people in differing institutional contexts has promoted innovation, and there are many variations in the way that systems of interaction have been put together. There are many different terms, some more widely used than others (Box 4.2). Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), for example, is now practised in at least 130 countries, but Samuhik Brahman is associated just with research institutions in Nepal. However this diversity and complexity is a strength.

Despite the different ways in which these approaches are used, most share common principles:

- *A defined methodology and systemic learning process.* The focus is on cumulative learning by all the participants, which include both professional trainees and local people. Given

the focus of these approaches as systems of joint analysis and interaction, their use has to be participative.

- *Multiple perspectives.* A central objective is to seek diversity, rather than simplify complexity. This recognises that different individuals and groups make different evaluations of situations, which lead to different actions. Everyone's views are heavy with interpretation, bias and prejudice and this implies that there are multiple possible descriptions of any real-world activity. Everyone is different and important.

- *Group learning process.* All involve the recognition that the complexity of the world will only be revealed through group analysis and interaction. There are three possible mixes of investigators: those from different disciplines, from different sectors, and from the outside (professionals) and the inside (local people). Within each of these there are other types of mix, for example not all local people in a 'community' are the same.

#### Box 4.2 The variety of terms for participatory approaches to learning and action

- Agroecosystems Analysis (AEA) ■ Beneficiary Assessment ■ Development Education Leadership Teams (DELTA) ■ Diagnosis and Design (D & D) ■ Diagnóstico Rural Participativo (DRP)
- Farmer Participatory Research ■ Groupe de Recherche et d'Appui pour l'Auto-promotion Paysanne (GRAAP) ■ Méthode Active de Recherche et de Planification Participative (MARF)
- Participatory Analysis and Learning Methods (PALM) ■ Participatory Action Research (PAR)
- Participatory Research Methodology (PRM) ■ Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)
- Participatory Rural Appraisal and Planning (PRAP) ■ Participatory Technology Development (PTD) ■ Participatory Urban Appraisal (PUA) ■ Planning for Real ■ Process Documentation
- Rapid Appraisal (RA) ■ Rapid Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge Systems (RAAKS)
- Rapid Assessment Procedures (RAP) ■ Rapid Assessment Techniques (RAT) ■ Rapid Catchment Analysis (RCA) ■ Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REA) ■ Rapid Food Security Assessment (RFSA) ■ Rapid Multi-perspective Appraisal (RMA) ■ Rapid Organisational Assessment (ROA) ■ Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) ■ Samuhik Brahman (Joint trek) ■ Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) ■ Theatre for Development ■ Training for Transformation ■ Visualisation in Participatory Programmes (VIPP).

● *Context specific.* The approaches are flexible enough to be adapted to suit each new set of conditions and actors, and so there are multiple variants. Encourage your participants to invent new methods, terms and names, as this will encourage a greater sense of ownership.

● *Facilitating experts and stakeholders.* The methodology is concerned with the transformation of existing activities to try to improve people's situation. The role of the external 'expert' is best thought of as helping people carry out their own study and so achieve something. Encourage your participants to think of themselves as facilitators of other people's learning, particularly when they get to the village or urban neighbourhood.

● *Leading to change.* The participatory process leads to debate about change, and debate changes the perceptions of the actors and their readiness to contemplate action. The process of joint analysis and dialogue helps to define changes which would bring about improvement and seeks to motivate people to take action to implement the defined changes. This action includes local institution building or strengthening, so increasing the capacity of people to initiate action on their own in the future.

#### **TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

##### **1. Brainstorm on participation**

- What does participation mean to you?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of participation?

##### **2. Viewing of video showing participatory methods in use**

- Discussion of positive issues and ways to improve approach shown.

#### **4.3.3 CRITERIA FOR TRUSTWORTHINESS**

It is common for trainers to be asked by sceptical participants a question along the lines of "but how does it compare with the real data?" (see Gill, 1991). Many people assert that participatory methods are 'undisciplined' and 'sloppy', and that their 'subjective' nature means that it is possible only to respond to selected members of communities. Terms like 'informal' and 'qualitative' are used to imply poorer quality or second-rate work. Rigour and accuracy are assumed, therefore, to be in contradiction with participatory methods.

This means that it is those using participatory methods who are expected to prove the value of their approach, not the conventional investigator. Conventional researchers use four criteria to persuade their audiences that the findings of their research can be trusted (Lincoln and Guba, 1985):

1. How can we be confident about the 'truth' of the findings (internal validity)?
2. Can we apply these findings to other contexts or with other groups of people (external validity)?
3. Would the findings be repeated if the inquiry were replicated with the same (or similar) subjects in the same or similar context (reliability)?
4. How can we be certain that the findings have been determined by the subjects and context of the inquiry, rather than the biases, motivations and perspectives of the investigators (objectivity)?

Trustworthiness criteria were developed by Guba (1981) to judge whether or not any given inquiry was methodologically sound. Four alternative, but parallel, criteria were



**TRAINING SUGGESTION:****1. Brainstorm on what makes information and data trustworthy**

- How do we normally ensure trustworthiness?
- What criteria do we use to establish whether something is to be trusted or rejected?

developed: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. But these are still based on researchers' priorities and concerns.

Further 'authenticity' criteria have been suggested to help judge the impact of the process of inquiry on the people involved (Lincoln, 1990). Have people been changed by the process? Have they a heightened sense of their own realities? Do they have an increased awareness and appreciation of the constructions of other local people? To what extent did the investigation prompt action?



Drawing on these, and other suggestions for 'goodness' criteria, a set of 12 criteria for establishing trustworthiness have been identified (Box 4.3). These criteria can be used to judge information, just as statistical analyses provide the grounds for judgement in positivist or conventional science. Use of participatory methods without, for example, triangulation of sources, methods and investigators and participant checking of the constructed outputs, should be judged as untrustworthy.

However, note that it will never be possible to be certain about the trustworthiness criteria. We cannot say that 'x has a trustworthiness score of y points', but we can say that x is trustworthy because certain things happened during and after the process of joint investigation and analysis. The trustworthiness criteria should be used to identify what has been part of the process of gathering information, and whether key elements have been omitted. Knowing this should make it possible for any observer, be they reader of a report or policy-maker using the information to make a decision, also to make a judgement on whether they trust the findings.

**TRAINING SUGGESTION:****1. Small group discussions on participants own experiences of the trustworthiness criteria**

- Which of these criteria are most relevant and important?

**2. Use a case study and/or video to analyse other organisations experiences with establishing trustworthiness**

**Box 4.3 A framework for judging trustworthiness**

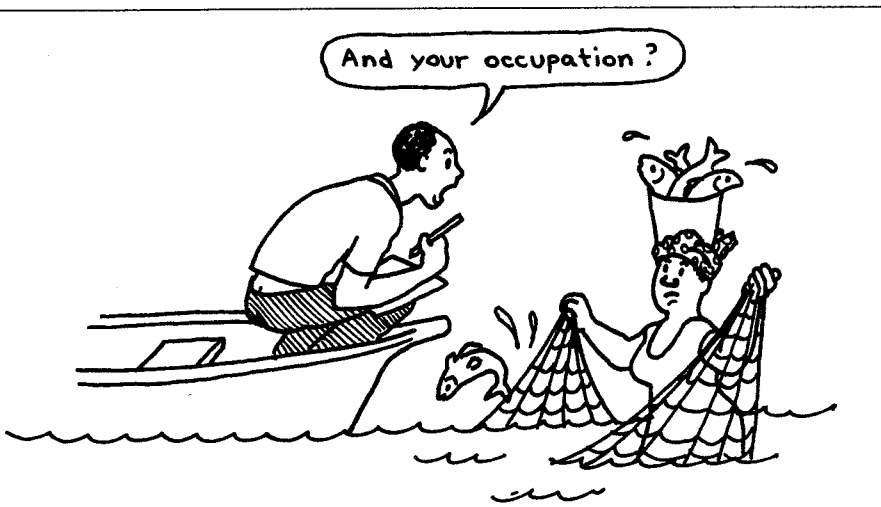
1. *Prolonged and/or Intense Engagement Between the Various (Groups of) People.* For building trust and rapport, learning the particulars of the context, and to keep the investigator(s) open to multiple influences.
2. *Persistent and Parallel Observation.* For understanding both a phenomenon and its context.
3. *Triangulation by Multiple Sources, Methods and Investigators.* For cross-checking information and increasing the range of different peoples' realities encountered, including multiple copies of sources of information, comparing the results from a range of methods; and having teams with a diversity of personal, professional and disciplinary backgrounds.
4. *Expression and Analysis of Difference.* For ensuring that a wide range of different actors are involved in the analysis, and that their perspectives and realities are accurately represented, including differences according to gender, age, ethnicity, religion, class.
5. *Negative Case Analysis.* For sequential revision of hypotheses as insight grows, until one hypothesis accounts for all known cases without exception.
6. *Peer or Colleague Checking.* Periodical review meetings with peers not directly involved in the inquiry process.
7. *Participant Checking.* For testing the data, interpretations and conclusions with people with whom the original information was constructed and analysed. Without participant checks, investigators can make no claims that they are representing participants' views.
8. *Reports with Working Hypotheses, Contextual Descriptions and Visualisations.* These are 'thick' descriptions of complex reality, with working hypotheses, visualisations and quotations capturing people's personal perspectives and experiences.
9. *Parallel Investigations and Team Communications.* If sub-groups of the same team proceed with investigations in parallel using the same approach, and come up with the same or similar findings, then these findings are more trustworthy.
10. *Reflexive Journals.* These are diaries that individuals keep on a daily basis to record a variety of information about themselves.
11. *Inquiry Audit.* The inquiry team should be able to provide sufficient information for an external person to examine the processes and product in such a way as to confirm that the findings are not a figment of their imaginations.
12. *Impact on Stakeholders' Capacity to Know and Act.* For demonstrating that the investigation or study has had an impact, for example if participants are more aware of their own realities, as well as those of other people. The report itself could also prompt action on the part of readers who have not been directly involved.

Sources: Jules Pretty (1994), adapted from Lincoln and Guba (1985); Marshall (1990); Smith (1990)

#### 4.4 'PARTICIPATION' IN DEVELOPMENT

##### 4.4.1 TYPES OF 'PARTICIPATION'

In recent years, there have been an increasing number of analyses of development projects showing that 'participation' is one of the critical components of success in irrigation, livestock, health, water, sanitation and agriculture projects (Montgomery, 1983; Kottak, 1991; USAID, 1987; Baker et al, 1988; Reij, 1988; Finsterbusch and van Wicklen, 1989; Bagadion and Korten, 1991; Cernea, 1991; Guijt, 1991; Pretty and Sandbrook, 1991; Uphoff, 1992; Narayan, 1993; World Bank, 1994; Scoones and Thompson, 1994; Pretty, 1995). All the evidence points towards long-term economic and environmental success coming about when people's ideas and knowledge are valued, and power is given to them to make decisions independently of external agencies. Although the result has been the adoption of the terms 'people's participation' and 'popular participation' as part of the normal language of many development agencies, including NGOs, government departments and banks, this has created many paradoxes.



The term 'participation' has different meanings for different people. The term has been used to build local capacity and self-reliance, but also to justify the extension of control of the state. It has been used to devolve power and decision-making away from external agencies, but also to justify external decisions. It has been used for data collection and also for interactive analysis. But *"more often than not, people are asked or dragged into participating in operations of no interest to them, in the very name of participation"* (Rahnema, 1992).

There are basically seven ways that development organisations interpret and use the term participation, ranging from passive participation, where people are involved merely by being told what is to happen, to self-mobilisation, where people take initiatives independently of external

##### **TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

**1. Ask participants to give examples from their own work of different kinds of participation.**

- Why were they different?
- What happened as a result?

**2. One particularly important challenge for trainers is to find ways of moving institutions from the top half of the typology towards the bottom. Photocopy the typology and hand it out to participants.**

- Ask participants to brainstorm on the types of processes that could help this transition.
- What is needed? Who should be involved? How long will it take? Which elements are needed now, and which later?

**Box 4.4 A typology of participation**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Characteristics of each type</b>
1. <i>Passive Participation</i>	People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals.
2. <i>Participation in Information Giving</i>	People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
3. <i>Participation by Consultation</i>	People participate by being consulted, and external people listen to views. These external professionals define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
4. <i>Participation for Material Incentives</i>	People participate by providing resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much on-farm research falls in this category, as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in the experimentation or the process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.
5. <i>Functional Participation</i>	People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organisation. Such involvement does not tend to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.
6. <i>Interactive Participation</i>	People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. These groups take control over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
7. <i>Self-Mobilisation</i>	People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Such self-initiated mobilisation and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power.

Source: Pretty (1994), adapted from Adnan et al (1992)

institutions (Box 4.4). However, if the objective is to achieve sustainable development, then nothing less than functional participation will suffice.

Great care must therefore be taken with both using and interpreting the term participation. It should always be qualified by reference to the type of participation, as most types will threaten rather than support the goals of sustainable development. What is important is to ensure that those using the term both clarify their specific application and define better ways of shifting from the more common passive, consultative and incentive-driven participation towards the interactive end of the spectrum.

The dilemma for authorities is that they both need and fear people's participation. They need people's agreement and support, but they fear that this wider involvement is less controllable, less precise and so likely to slow down planning processes. But if this fear permits only stage-managed forms of participation, then distrust and greater alienation are the most likely outcomes. This makes it all the more crucial that judgements can be made about the type of participation in use.

In conventional rural development, participation has often centred on encouraging local people to sell their labour in return for food, cash or materials. Yet these material incentives distort perceptions, create dependencies, and give the misleading impression that local people support externally-driven initiatives. This paternalism undermines sustainability goals and produces results which do not persist once the project ceases. Few have commented so unequivocally as Roland Bunch (1983, 1991) on the destructive process of giving things away to people, or doing things for them. He suggests five major problems:

- give-aways blind people to the need for solving their own problems;
- people become accustomed to give-aways, and come to expect them;
- give-aways are "monstrously expensive";
- give-aways hide people's indifference to programme efforts; and
- give-aways destroy the possibility of there ever being a multiplier effect.

Despite this, development programmes continue to justify subsidies and incentives, on the grounds that they are faster, they can win over more people, the people cannot help themselves, or that the people are just so poor that justice demands they are given one chance. As little effort is made to build local skills, interests and capacity, local people have no stake in maintaining structures or practices once the flow of incentives stops.

#### **4.5 EMERGING TRAINING AND INSTITUTIONAL PRESSURES**

##### **4.5.1 TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION**

No matter where you look today, there is rapidly growing interest in participatory approaches and methods. The demand for training far exceeds the current supply. But despite the growing enthusiasm, many institutions are facing some common and

#### **TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

##### **1. Ask participants to reflect on their own experience of subsidies or food-for-work.**

- How do subsidies influence local people's desire to maintain new practices or technologies?

pressing problems. One of these is how to train sufficient numbers of staff to use the methods properly and effectively, as part of their standard working practices. It is one thing for an organisation to discover the power and potential of participatory approaches, but quite another for it to be able to train its own staff to tap that potential and use it with some sensitivity and consistency.

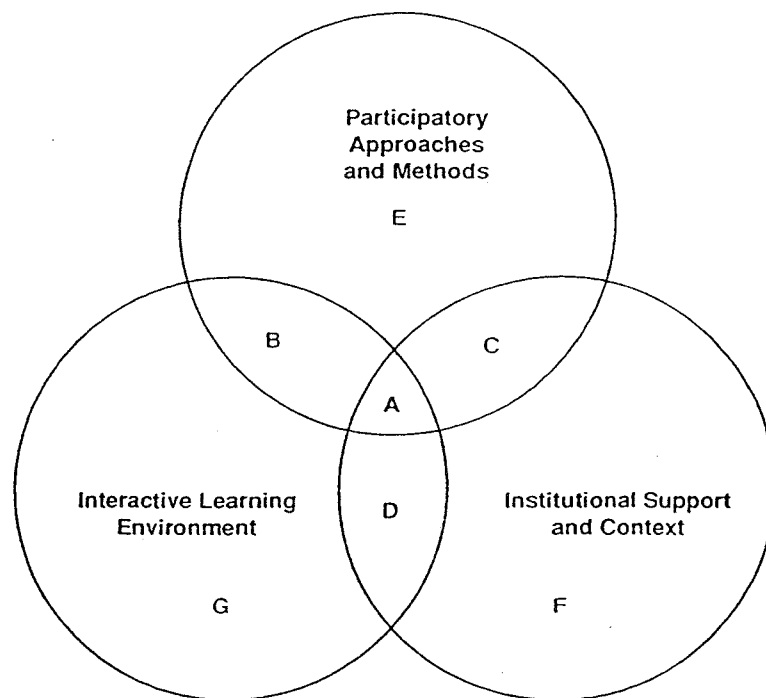
Intensive, field-based training courses alone will not ensure that the trainees have a satisfactory grounding in the basic concepts, principles and methods to use them competently in their work, let alone the capacity to train others. This is because training does not take place in a vacuum. It happens within a particular policy context and organisational culture with its own management structures, professional norms and field practices. Any agency contemplating the adoption of participatory approaches must recognise that training alone will not convert a conventional, technically-oriented institution into a more people-centred and sensitive one. The existing structures and procedures must also be reviewed if their role is to be transformed to one that supports local people. Improving staff training may help this transformation to occur.

There are three essential areas to tackle. These are new methodologies for field-level work, new learning environments for professionals and rural people to develop capacities, and new institutional environments, including improved linkages within and between institutions. These three areas for action are shown in Figure 4.1 as intersecting circles. The most effective actions lie in the overlapping central sector.

The following assumptions underlie this conceptual framework (see Pretty and Chambers, 1993):

- participatory approaches and methods support local innovation, respect diversity and complexity, and enhance local capabilities, represented by the ECAB circle;
- an interactive learning environment encourages an open-minded and sharing attitude, creates interest and commitment, and so contributes to agreed courses of action, represented by the GBAD circle;
- institutional support encourages the spread between and within institutions of participatory methodologies. This is represented by the FDAC circle, which occurs where a whole organisation shifts towards participatory methods and management, and where there are informal and formal linkages between different organisations.

**FIGURE 4:1**



In this perspective, sectors G, F and E represent starting points and preconditions, but none is likely to spread well unless it receives support by moving into D, C or B, and then into A.

Thus, participatory field methods, as in E, are likely to be abandoned unless there is institutional support or a learning environment. This has been a recurrent experience with field training workshops in participatory methods. Those who have taken part may be convinced, and wish to introduce participatory methods into their organisations, but find they cannot do this alone. Partly they may lack confidence or clout, but also their colleagues may be sceptical or hostile.

Sector G on its own, a creative and participatory learning environment without institutional support or participatory field methods, is typically marginal, vulnerable, and short-lived. Such environments tend to rely on one person or a small group, and disappear when the person or group moves or is moved out. Where there is institutional support for participatory modes, as in F, it is liable to remain only rhetoric and intent unless expressed through a participatory learning environment and/or the use of participatory field methods. Examples are known of where a director has been convinced of the value of participatory methods but staff, wedded to top-down methods of investigation, have resisted reform. In consequence, nothing much changed.

In sector A, support within institutions exists at the top, and authority is more decentralised. Linkages are encouraged with other institutions, whether NGO, government or local organisations. The learning environment focuses on problem-solving, and is interactive and field-based. Responsibility is personal more than procedural, relying more on discretion and judgement

and less on rules and manuals. Behaviour and attitudes are democratic, stressing listening and facilitation, not didactic teaching. Local groups and organisations are supported, and encouraged to conduct their own experiments and extension, and to make demands on the system.

It is important for your trainees to understand that the training they are involved in is only one part of a wider organisational shift. This may help them to readjust any unrealistic expectations and to identify follow-up support they might require.

#### **TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

##### **1. Ask trainees to identify examples from their own experiences of sectors A to G.**

- What kind of changes have recently taken place in these organisations?
- What is good and bad about the different types of organisation?

#### **4.5.2 ISSUES FOR INSTITUTIONALISATION**

Institutionalising participatory processes can take many years. Training is an integral element in the process of developing organisational learning, and so it is important that you deal at some point with some of the issues that participants are likely to face. Some prior knowledge of the most common issues can help to overcome or at least avoid problems likely to prevent success:

##### **1. Quality Assurance**

It remains very difficult to assure quality in training or practice, as there are no 'standards' by which to judge performance. Anybody can claim to be an 'expert' in participatory approaches and there is no easy way to determine his/her authenticity until after the work is done.

## 2. Contradictory Donor Policies

Participatory approaches have become extremely popular among donors, who remain interested in saving money and achieving tangible results quickly. As a result, these approaches are increasingly making their way into terms of reference and project guidelines, whether or not they are appropriate. Some major donors have begun to push their respective programmes and projects to use PRA or work 'in a PRA-like manner', without the least idea of what this entails. Unfortunately, although they are promoting participatory approaches, many continue to set short-term physical 'targets' (eg, kilometres of rural roads built, hectares of irrigated land rehabilitated) and use financial indicators (eg, amount of allocated funds spent in Financial Year X) as measures of success. This mode of investment and expenditure makes it difficult for programmes to apply participatory approaches appropriately, as they are still expected to initiate visible 'projects' almost as soon as funds are allocated.

## 3. Mechanistic Applications

Simply because an organisation has made a policy decision to follow a participatory path does not necessarily mean that it is using it in a flexible way. All too frequently, 'participatory' approaches are applied within rigid and standardised hierarchies that constrict decision-making, limit the range of possible development or research options, and, ultimately, diminish the effectiveness of the efforts. This is true for both training and field practice.

## 4. The Search for Shortcuts

Participatory approaches are not substitutes for the thorough preparation, long-term planning, constructive dialogue and sustained interaction that any development process requires. No participatory approach offers a

quick solution to complex problems. There are no shortcuts to success. The first use of a participatory approach between an external agency and a local community should be seen as the start, not the end, of a long, but mutually beneficial process of joint analysis, self-critical reflection, capacity strengthening and resource mobilisation.

### TRAINING SUGGESTIONS FOR VISUALISATION:

1. **Ask participants to produce their own lists of how to recognise good practice in participatory development and what should be avoided. Refer to the typology of participation (Box 4.4) and the criteria for trustworthiness (see Box 4.3).**
2. **Ask participants to buzz on what external conditions make it difficult or even impossible to adopt participatory planning.**
3. **Ask participants to reflect on the internal conditions that encourage or discourage innovation and adaptation of participatory planning.**
  - Is the methodology likely to be applied in a mechanistic way, or will the methods be continually adapted?
4. **Ask participants to reflect on how their institutional processes should be changed to ensure that capacity is built up over time.**
5. **Brainstorm on why shortcuts do not work and why are they so popular.**



#### 4.6 TRAINING FOR ANALYSIS

The use of participatory methods can lead to the collection of excess information which does not feed into an action plan. On many occasions, there has been a tendency for participants or trainers to get carried away with the use of the methods, while neglecting the importance of analysis. To lead to change, analysis of the information is a crucial component, one which many people find difficult to deal with.

There are three critical questions about analysis that require attention in training and in practice: who analyses; what is analysed; and when is it analysed?

##### **TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

1. **Ask the group to identify who they feel should be involved in the analysis at which stage, and why. If the output is not very participation-oriented, you can challenge this as a trainer in further discussions.**

##### 4.6.1 WHO ANALYSES?

During participatory work, there are many moments when it is possible to see two different sets of 'analysts': the external facilitators and local women, men and children. Usually the external group start the interaction and so initially have more control over the process. While it is relatively easy to encourage trainees to hand over the discussions and diagramming to the local people they are meeting with, this is much more difficult when it comes to analysis. It is during this stage that much participatory work gets diluted in favour of analysis by outsiders.

With an approach such as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), that emphasises local

information more than the process of participation, analysis is carried out by the external researcher or planner. Therefore, any good workshop on RRA should deal with that process in detail, aiming to help the group of external trainees understand and interpret locally-derived data.

In participatory planning, the emphasis is on building the process of discussion and conflict resolution. Thus the training workshop should focus on encouraging trainees to understand how to stimulate local analysis, rather than imposing their own forms of analysis. Trainees need to be aware that participatory fieldwork is not a fact-finding mission, but is about facilitating learning and analysis by local people. If this is not emphasised enough in training sessions, then the fieldwork can become a mad rush for useless information and the whole purpose of participation is distorted. This does not mean that the external agent is neutral or does not engage in discussions. The issue is a more subtle one of relative power and devolving analysis and decision-making consciously. This is what becomes important to emphasise in training.

##### 4.6.2 WHAT IS ANALYSED?

The second aspect of analysis is about what is analysed. There is a real risk of simply focusing on analysing 'data', rather than reflecting on the process that develops during discussions. This is just as important in the development of a community action plan as the 'data' themselves. However, becoming aware of this aspect is often difficult for many newcomers to participatory methods, and trainees can find it difficult to know what 'process' aspects to document.

Participatory approaches are lost if always used with local empowerment as an objective. Empowerment will not emerge

from the data, but from the process around the generation and analysis of information. Critical reflection on the process, therefore, allows for an understanding of whether local knowledge and capacities were enhanced.

#### 4.6.3 WHEN IS IT ANALYSED?

In participatory fieldwork, there is no single appropriate phase for analysis. There are many steps that contribute to the overall analysis of issues and opportunities, each of which needs special attention in a training setting. Several steps in analysis can be followed: in documentation, through probing, team analysis, plenary analysis, and the community feedback meeting (see Table 4.1). This is not an exhaustive list of possible aspects of analysis and the process does not stop with the end of the fieldwork period of the training workshop.

The process in Table 4.1 is only one example and is not a model. Participatory

analysis is context specific, in terms of both content and process. Any model would severely limit the extent to which a locally-carried process of dialogue, priority setting and planning is established.

## 4.7 MISCONCEPTIONS AND DANGERS

### 4.7.1 SOME DANGERS

The use of participatory approaches in research and development has not been without its constraints. Practitioners have encountered a range of difficulties and dilemmas when working with local people to analyse their situation (Box 4.5).

The intense involvement of local people in research and development tends to generate much enthusiasm and anticipation about the action that they have identified. Although this is, in principle, a positive aspect, it can cause problems if any support promised by the facilitating agency is not forthcoming.

**TABLE 4.1 ANALYTICAL STEPS (AS FOLLOWED BY TRAINEES IN A WORKSHOP IN UGANDA) (FROM GUIJT, 1994)**

Aspect of Analysis	Who	When
Identification of sub-group objectives, possible issues, methods	each team	before first fieldwork
Writing up the process and content of each discussion	each team	during or after any discussion
Asking community members what they have learnt from the discussion	villagers and each team	after each discussion
Listing of key issues from first discussions	each team	after 1½ days
Sharing of diagrams and key issues from first discussions	plenary of teams	after day 2
Second listing of key issues from further discussions	team	after day 4
Sharing of diagrams and second list of key issues	plenary of teams	after day 4
Selection of diagrams with key issues for community presentation	villagers per team	after day 6
Comparison of similarities, contradictions and conflicts between key issues identified by community sub-groups	plenary of teams	day 7
Identifying possible top priority areas and unresolved issues	each team	day 8

**TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

1. **Ask the group to develop a list of possible limitations and benefits of participatory planning.**

Although participatory learning and action is not simply the mechanical use of methods, this does occur. Participatory methods can be applied without an appreciation of the reasons for their use. The outcome will therefore depend on the attitude of the people employing the methods. For example, if the user of participatory methods is not conscious of gender differences within a community, then it is highly probable that the analysis will not deal with such issues. Likewise, if they are not aware of local power differences, then these are likely to be overlooked in the findings.

The downside of flexibility is that participatory approaches need to be adapted to fit each situation. Those who are looking

**Box 4.5 Important considerations about participatory approaches**

- When facilitated by outsiders, participatory approaches can raise expectations of local people for continued involvement
- The outcome depends on the attitude and vision of the persons facilitating the process
- If carried out too quickly, they can lead to incorrect insights
- The choice and sequence of methods needs to be adapted to fit each situation
- In most cases, they will not lead to quantifiable results
- They will never provide final answers! (but then no approach ever will)

for a fixed, blue-print approach will not find it in participatory methodologies. Also, the type of information that generally results from the use of participatory approaches is usually qualitative, reflecting the diversity and complexity of the situation it is describing.

**4.7.2 TEN MYTHS ABOUT PRA**

A wide range of myths about participatory methods, and particularly about participatory rural appraisal (PRA), have grown up and continue unchallenged by development practitioners, donors and academics alike. Here are ten myths that can be used for further discussion and debate (Scoones, 1995).

1. *That it's quick*

While many of the techniques associated with PRA may be relatively cost-effective methods of encouraging dialogue, joint analysis and learning, the processes of participatory development that PRA and similar approaches encourage are slow, laborious and complex.

2. *That it's easy*

PRA methods are appealingly simple. This is partly why they have attracted so much attention. They are accessible to a wide range of actors, from villagers to field practitioners to academics. However, as any experienced PRA practitioner will note, the successful application of the approach requires many other skills, especially communication, facilitation and conflict negotiation skills.

3. *That anyone can do it*

Anyone can carry out a matrix ranking, transect walk or mapping exercise with some success, but this does not mean that open learning leading to action will result.

Attitudes and behaviour of participants, the organisational context for planning and action and the wider political economy all affect opportunities for success. The fact that consultancy groups and large international aid bureaucracies are embracing the concepts and rhetoric of participatory development does not mean that their actions in the field will be successful. Wider issues of organisational change, management and reward systems, staff behaviour, ethics and responsibilities have to be addressed too.

4. *That it's 'just' fancy techniques*

The popular and visible image of PRA is the array of techniques that have emerged over the past decade or so. These have proved effective and widely applicable. However, methods are only part of a wider shift being seen within development agencies, both government and non-government. These have much more far-reaching and radical implications than the adoption of particular approaches. Apparent successes appear to be based on a constellation of interacting factors which combine the adoption of participatory approaches and ways of working, shifts towards a learning environment within organisations, and enabling institutional and policy frameworks that allow space for change and room for innovation.

5. *That it's based on particular disciplinary perspectives*

PRA has not grown out of universities and academic departments, it has grown from responses to practical experiences in the field. The main innovators have been field workers based in the South (but increasingly in the North too). PRA has deliberately drawn from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (section 4.3.1). This lack of

**TRAINING SUGGESTION:**

1. **Before discussing the myths, ask the group to identify which of the myths is true and why. Then present the myths, and hold further discussion.**
2. **If you are doing fieldwork, come back to the myths at the end of the training and ask if any opinions have changed as a result of the field experience.**

disciplinary focus is sometimes seen as threatening (interpreted in various ways: not rigorous, unpublishable, unacceptably soft, etc) by academia. While students and practitioners demand support in these approaches, the teaching professionals have sometimes resisted. As a result, across the world, the universities have been the last to take up PRA and other approaches in course curricula and teaching/learning styles.

6. *That it has no theoretical base*

PRA is associated very much with practical situations and has been taken up most by people engaged in practical development activities. But this does not mean that it is without a rich theoretical underpinning. PRA is based on an action-research approach, one where theory and practice are constantly challenged through experience, reflection and learning. The dominance of theory over practice in most academic disciplines ensures that praxis-oriented PRA approaches are often not taken seriously. This is a shame as recent work has shown the issues thrown up by participatory approaches resonate with a range of philosophical debates within the social sciences.

7. *That it's a new invention*

PRA has evolved and continues to do so. It is not a magical package that has suddenly appeared from nowhere. As with all major shifts in thinking and practice, PRA has converged around dispersed and dislocated debates in a number of areas. Its lineage can be traced to early anthropological work (notably the methods used by the Manchester School in southern Africa from the 1940s), to qualitative research approaches prior to the hegemony of statistics and quantification, or as far back as two centuries to the Rural Rides of William Cobbett in England.

8. *That training is the answer*

One response to new ideas is that everyone should be trained in their application. The demand for training in PRA is phenomenal. This is potentially dangerous. Why? First, the demand far outstrips the supply of trainers jeopardising quality and follow-up. Second, the notion of training as a simple solution is flawed. Too often, organisations wanting training for staff have not examined their motives thoroughly and they have not explored the implications for their organisation in terms of follow-on post-training. Training is often conceived of simply as the putting on of courses (the shorter and cheaper the better). Ways of encouraging new ways of learning within organisations are rarely fully addressed. Training courses may be part of the answer, but they are not the only one.

9. *That social actors involved are neutral*

Any engagement carries with it implications. Actors are never neutral, whether they are village participants or external agents. Interrogating the consequences of this is central to any action-research activity. The myth of the neutral, detached,

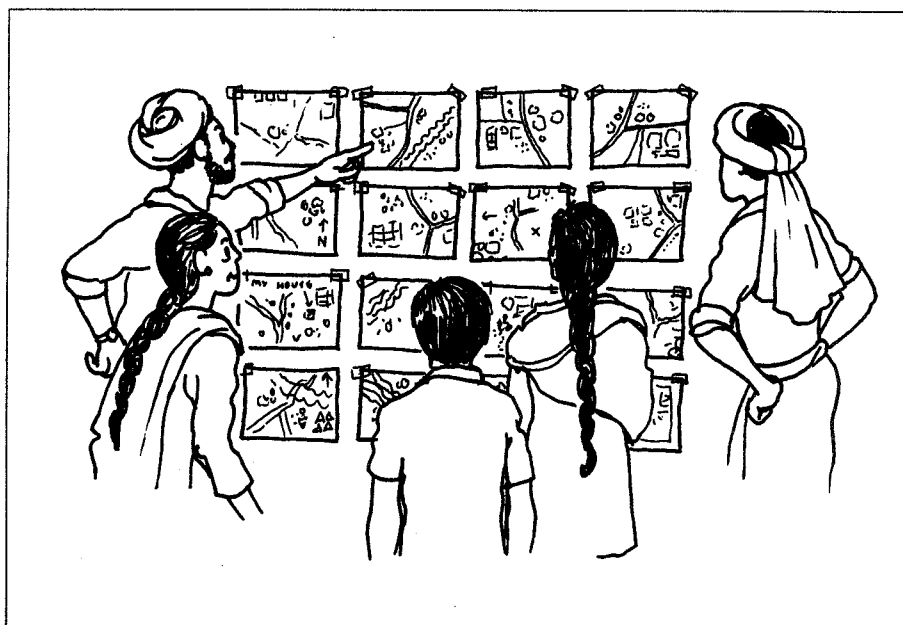
participant-observing researcher/practitioner is deeply flawed. All actors are participants in some way or other, and these roles are unavoidable and need to be addressed. This necessarily affects the information gathered and the analyses performed. In PRA, all participants have responsibilities for their actions. The political and ethical implications of participatory action-research and development must therefore be unpacked, discussed openly with all and responded to.

10. *That it's non-political*

Actors involved in participatory research-action (or any research/development activity for that matter) are not neutral, their actions necessarily carry with them political consequences. Power, control, authority are all part and parcel of the negotiation of engagement in participatory processes. Conflicts, disputes and tensions may be raised through engagement. All participants must be aware of this and not ignore it. Dealing with issues of power and control, conflict and dispute must necessarily be part of an action-research approach to development. This may mean taking sides, or it may mean taking a mediating/negotiating role. In whatever case, these are political acts.

**4.8 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST:  
KEY PRINCIPLES**

- *How will you draw out and build upon the existing knowledge and experience of the participants?*
- *How long do you plan to lecture before breaking up for buzz or brainstorm sessions, or for an energiser?*
- *Have you prepared any handouts ahead of time?*
- *What are the five key lessons you want participants to remember from any session on principles and institutional challenges?*
- *How will you encourage participants to develop a deeper understanding of the word 'participation'?*
- *How do you plan to get participants to reflect on their own organisations' constraints to adopting participatory?*
- *How will you bring up the issue of quality assurance?*
- *How will you encourage participants not to use the methods mechanically?*





**5.1 Introduction**

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Interviewing (SSI)**

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**5.5 Trainer's Checklist:  
Participatory Methods  
in the Workshop**

**5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Understanding the theoretical and conceptual basis of participation and the dynamics of groups is important for all trainers. Specific methods for learning and analysis are outlined in this chapter. These focus on methods that are used during the fieldwork to facilitate communication between the external team members and local people, and amongst local people themselves. These methods enhance the understanding and analysis of local situations, problems and possible opportunities.

The exercises described in this chapter provide a range of examples of how to train in participatory methods. They are not intended to be prescriptions. Many of them evolved through individuals making adaptations to fit their own needs and contexts. So do adapt those presented here to meet your own particular training requirements. Even better, invent your own and find your own way of doing things. All training in participatory methods should cover three basic groups of methods: 1. *Semi-Structured Interviewing*; 2. *Diagramming and Visualisations*, and 3. *Ranking and Scoring Methods*. This chapter contains detailed descriptions of a variety of practical exercises for learning about each of these groups of methods.

**5.2 BIASES AND BEHAVIOUR**

When people are exposed to participatory approaches for the first time, the most common response is disbelief and resistance. Trainees often say that these may work elsewhere, but not in their country, district, village or institution. The vital ingredients for success, however, are not the methods themselves, but the attitudes and behaviour of those who use them.

Accepting and valuing other knowledges will be difficult at first. Where ex-

tension workers are used to believing that they have the 'correct' message to teach, now they must learn what it is that people need before making suggestions. Where scientists are used to believing that they have higher status because they possess 'better' knowledge, now they must be open to learning from local people as well as colleagues from other disciplines.

These changes imply very significant shifts in the way participants are used to thinking and behaving. This is a critical component to address in any training course. At first, participants may be sceptical of the approach, but through practice they will learn what is needed to make it work effectively. They will still, however, need to be encouraged to reflect upon their own attitudes towards other people's knowledge and skills. This is essential if participants are to consciously seek to involve those who are often ignored, such as the poor, women and the very young and very old.

Part II contains details of a wide range of exercises that can be used to encourage greater self-awareness amongst trainees about their non-verbal behaviour, and how they express dominance and submissiveness.

It is essential to ensure that participants think carefully about their own attitudes and behaviour before they begin field activities. In particular, you may wish to refer to:

- 28. Saboteur
- 31. Group Problem Solving and Team Contract Exercise
- 43. Watch It
- 44. Non-Verbal Circles
- 49. Noddors and Shakers
- 80. Picture Captions
- 82. Traditional Practices and Beliefs

**Box 5.1 Checklist: training in attitudes and behaviour**

- buzz session to identify differences between our knowledge and local people's knowledges
- discussion on 'rural development tourism' and biases – when outsiders visit rural areas, which places they tend to visit, who they tend to talk to when they get there, how long they tend to stay
- buzz session on how to offset biases in fieldwork
- 'do-it-yourself' (DIY) session in the village – being taught local activities by villagers
- using video playback of images of fieldwork facilitated by trainees to see behaviour and correct immediately
- team contracts, shoulder tapping

86. Role Play of Good and Bad Interviews

91. Transect Walk

Any activity that emphasises how much local people know, and how important it is to listen openly, is valuable. One good way is 'Do-It-Yourself' (DIY) sessions, during which participants learn skills from local people. Local people may teach outsiders how to plough, fetch water, sew, cook, weed and so on. Trainees commonly react with surprise at how difficult it is to perform apparently straightforward tasks. This again emphasises that local people know a great deal, and that it is important to create the space for them to participate. Suggestions for topics to cover in a training session on attitudes and behaviour are shown in Box 5.1.

**5.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWING (NOS 74–87, PART II)**

At the heart of all good participatory research and development lies sensitive interviewing. Without it, no matter what other methods you use, the discussion will yield poor information and limited understanding. It may create feelings of suspicion, fear or even hostility in the local people. Yet effective training in interviewing skills is remarkably difficult as it largely depends on self-critical awareness, perceptive listening and careful observation. These qualities take time and effort to acquire and refine.

Semi-structured interviewing (SSI) can be defined as:

*“Guided conversation in which only the topics are predetermined and new questions or insights arise as a result of the discussion and visualised analyses.”*

Semi-structured interviewing appears informal and conversational. It is a well defined and systematic activity, with a set of clearly defined goals and guidelines. Unlike structured or formal interviews, SSIs concentrate not only on the questions asked, but also on the context in which the interview takes place: who carries out the interview (and with whom), how it is conducted, and when and where it is done. Effective interviewing also involves interviewees posing questions to the interviewers. In SSI, the interview context is recognised to have as great or even greater influence on the quality of the information exchanged than the questions themselves. It is clear from these definitions that SSI differs markedly from formal survey interviews.

Although semi-structured interviewing is the most essential skill for participatory methods, it is also the most difficult method to master and the most difficult to train others in. Good interviewing skills will only



come with plenty of practice and constructive feedback from colleagues. In this section, a variety of exercises, examples and tips are presented that have proved useful in training team members in SSI techniques.

### 5.3.1 KEY COMPONENTS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWING

There are seven core components to semi-structured interviewing which need to be addressed in training: *team preparation, interview context, sensitive listening, sensitive questioning, judging responses, recording the interview, and self-critical review*. Each aspect can be emphasised through the use of a range of workshop exercises.

#### 1. TEAM PREPARATION

Team preparation and planning, including the development of an interview guide, is a good place to begin. The key questions are: what does the team think is important to understand more about and how will they find this out? Team preparation should focus on developing and refining an interview guide or checklist, assigning team roles and responsibilities, and promoting good group dynamics and behaviour.

To develop an interview guide, participants can be encouraged to brainstorm in small groups to produce the major issues. The following exercises can be used to help develop a checklist and a fieldwork plan:

- 74. Brainstorming
- 75. Delphi Technique
- 76. Spider Diagrams
- 77. Matching Issue and Method
- 78. Sequences Analysis.

Ideally, field teams should represent a diversity of skills and backgrounds, with a balance of disciplinary interests, gender, professional experience, and so on. Groups may be self-selecting or may be chosen by

you, the trainer, on the basis of a range of predetermined criteria. To discuss logistics and team roles and responsibilities try some of the following exercises:

- 27. Group Profiles
- 28. Saboteur
- 31. Group Problem Solving and Team Contract Exercise
- 32. Chairs
- 36. Look Who's Talking
- 37. Rope Square
- 39. Group Roles.

#### 2. INTERVIEW CONTEXT

Raising awareness amongst trainees about the importance of the interview context can be done in a variety of ways. Issues raised should include: setting, timing, body language, seating arrangements, biases, etc. Exercises that can enhance awareness about these issues include:

- 44. Non-Verbal Circles
- 79. Interview Context Analysis
- 80. Picture Captions
- 81. House--Tree--Dog
- 86. Role Play of Good and Bad Interviews.

#### 3. SENSITIVE INTERVIEWING

To encourage sensitive listening and an open attitude amongst workshop participants, you will need to create opportunities for them to practise and gain direct experience. Some useful exercises that give trainees an initial understanding of appropriate and inappropriate interviewing include:

- 28. Saboteur
- 41. Matches
- 42. Pillow game
- 45. Voting Debate
- 46. Folding Paper Game
- 47. Drawing Bricks

- 48. Empathetic Listening
- 50. Wayward Whispers and Story Sequences.

#### 4. SENSITIVE QUESTIONING

It is very difficult to ask open-ended and non-directive questions, and to probe carefully the responses. Yet effective interviewing will only occur if this happens. Here is one example from Tony Dunn at Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia:

*"Most of our RRAs have sought farmers' knowledge of their environment and an expression of their problems. Within this we (the team) have blended our own agenda for finding out about a specific problem or area of interest. To get the interview started, we begin by asking the farmer what he/she is doing now. This gives a description of the farm and its basic operation. Then we ask what was it like in the past (what have you done?). This allows them to express their achievements and give historical information. Finally we ask what will you do in the future. This usually gets to the problems they face, which is the most sensitive area of the interview. We try to keep farmers on what they do, rather than what they think."*

These exercises will help trainees understand the value of careful questioning:

- 53. Fact, Opinion, Rumour
- 83. Tricky Transcript
- 84. What's Wrong with the Question?
- 85. But Why?
- 90. Mental Maps Analysis
- 95. Comparative Diagrams Analysis

#### 5. JUDGING AND CROSS-CHECKING RESPONSES

It is important to encourage participants to judge the information which is generated through discussions, and not to accept the

first answer they hear immediately. Two exercises can be used to encourage an enquiring attitude, and promote careful cross-checking and verification through probing:

- 53. Fact, Opinion, Rumour Game – FOR
- 85. But Why?

#### 6. RECORDING THE INTERVIEW

Recording the detail of interviews is vital. In most fieldwork, a great deal of valuable information is lost due to the failure to take good notes and as a result of excess focus on diagrams. The richness of the discussion cannot be conveyed only with a diagram. Some of the main recording guidelines to remind your trainees of include (see also A User's Guide in this series):

- Ask permission to record discussion of those present
- Use a discreet notebook (not a big clipboard)
- Record the detail of what is said and, whenever possible, what is not said but can be sensed (such as hesitation or tension, which can be equally important) – this is sometimes referred to as the 'hidden transcript' or 'subtext'
- Record the detail of what is observed and how the interview developed (the process)
- Record who said it (female/male, young/old, worse off/better off)
- Make follow-up notes after the interview (during which team members can compare their notes with others to cross-check information)
- Record personal impressions of the interview.

In the workshop, recording can be incorporated into these exercises:

## 5 TRAINING IN PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN THE WORKSHOP

- 28. Saboteur
- 45. Voting Debate
- 48. Empathetic Listening
- 49. Noddors and Shakers
- 85. But Why?
- 86. Role Play of Good and Bad Interviews
- 91. Transect Walks.

### 7. SELF-CRITICAL REVIEW

After the interview is over, it is important to assess critically which questions were effective and which were not, how some questions could have been phrased differently, how the context influenced the flow of information, everyone's body language. It is vital to encourage participants to share honestly their feelings about how others in their team performed. In the workshop, self-critical review can be incorporated in these exercises:

- 47. Drawing Bricks
- 48. Empathetic Listening
- 50. Wayward Whispers and Story Sequences
- 81. House-Tree-Dog
- 85. But Why?
- 86. Role Play of Good and Bad Interviews
- 87. Statues in Interviews.

It is essential that participants are given time to discuss and practise all these aspects of interviewing. Different aspects can be combined in single exercises, such as recording and listening skills. For instance, in the *But Why?* game described in Part II (no 85), the interviewers in the groups can be given one of two roles – one group can be instructed to take thorough notes, while the other group simply listens and observes. During feedback, the interviewers who did not take notes can be asked to give their recollection of the interview. This can be followed by feedback from the note-taking interviewers. In most instances, those who took notes will be

able to provide more details than those who did not.

### 5.3.2 GUIDELINES FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWING (SSI)

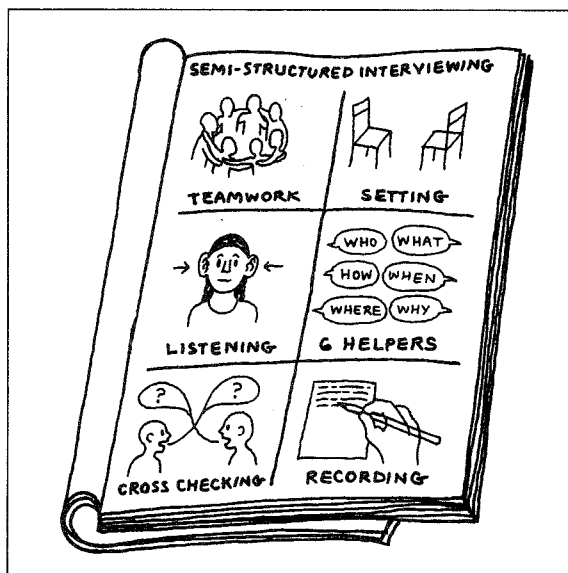
Semi-structured interviewing is clearly a complex process requiring extensive training and practice. To help the trainees remember the key points of SSI, you can discuss with them its core elements (Box 5.2).

Instead of providing this list to your participants, you may want to ask them to discuss in small groups what they consider to be the core elements of SSI. Afterwards, you can add any items on the list that they might have missed, or hand out copies of the list. Encourage them to write

#### Box 5.2

#### Ten points for sensitive interviewing

1. *Prepare* as a team and agree a *Team Contract*
2. Use a *Checklist* or *Interview Guide*
3. Be *Sensitive* and *Respectful* to everyone involved
4. Use *Visualisation* methods to enhance participation and dialogue
5. *Listen* and *Learn*
6. Ask *Open-ended Questions* using the Six Helpers (Who?, What?, Why?, Where?, When?, How?)
7. *Probe* responses carefully
8. *Judge* responses (facts, opinions, rumours)
9. Verify through *Triangulation* (cross-checking)
10. *Record* responses and observations fully



these points in their notebooks and to refer to them regularly when in the field. Trainees new at this type of interviewing will not be able to remember everything at first. Exercises 74–87 provide more detail on how these key interview elements can be introduced to the participants and how they can be encouraged to monitor their own performances.

### 5.3.3 STRUCTURING AN SSI TRAINING SESSION

There are many ways to design an SSI training session. The programme set out in Box 5.3 suggests a series of buzz sessions, plenary discussions, role plays and small group exercises which address various aspects of SSI. The entire programme will require from one half to one full day to complete, if time is given for detailed discussion and debriefing. You can use this programme as a guide. The final mix of exercises and sequences will depend on the participants' prior skills and the time you have to spend on basic interviewing skills. Arrange the session in the way that best suits your particular programme.

### 5.4 DIAGRAMMING AND VISUALISATIONS (NOS 88–95, PART II)

Many of the recent innovations in participatory approaches have involved a shift from verbally-oriented methods (formal interviews and written assessments) to visually-oriented ones (participatory diagrams and visualisations). Everyone has an inherent ability for visual literacy, and the impact of visual methods on communication and analysis can be profound. They allow non-literate and literate people to participate in the process as equals, facilitate the exploration of complex relationships, and generate collective knowledge.

Diagrams and visualisations are pictorial or symbolic representations of information, and are a central element of participatory analysis and learning. They work because they:

- provide a focus for attention while discussing an issue



## 5 TRAINING IN PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN THE WORKSHOP

- stimulate discussion by both non-literate and literate people
- can represent complex issues or processes simply
- provide a means for cross-checking and therefore provoke effective group work
- evoke creative associations
- stimulate people's memory about their past and present situations
- reinforce the written or spoken word
- assist in decision-making and monitoring

There are many different diagrams and visualisations. These include resource maps (agro-ecological zones, land tenure, land use, etc), social maps (health, wealth and well-being, etc), mobility maps, transects, time lines and historical profiles, seasonal calendars, daily routines, flow diagrams, impact diagrams, crop biographies, pie diagrams and Venn diagrams.

As with most participatory methods, the best approach to training is *learning by doing*. Participants will learn quickest, be better able to apply the key lessons to their own work situations and understand

### Box 5.3 Sample structure: an SSI training session

1. Introduce session and then go into plenary brainstorming:
  - *What are the different types of interviews? [key informant, focus group, etc]*
  - *How do the trainees expect to find respondents/participants in the field?*
  - *Write comments on flipchart*
2. Small group discussions on interviewing:
  - *Discussion of interview context around Interview Context Analysis (no 79) or Picture Captions (no 80). Participants develop a list of 'good' and 'bad' aspects of interviewing using the photographs as prompts. Lists are written on large sheets of paper, then displayed and discussed.*
3. Focus on how to ask questions, using:
  - *Tricky Transcript (no 83)*
  - *What's Wrong with the Question? (no 84) [examples of closed-ended, directive questions]*
4. Focus on assessing quality of information and need to listen, observe, probe and judge, using:
  - *Fact, Opinion, Rumour (no 53) – for judging responses*
  - *But Why? (no 85) – for probing*
5. Group dynamics, conflict resolution, and sensitive behaviour and attitudes (ie., what can go wrong during an interview and how you can deal with it), using:
  - *Saboteur (no 28)*
6. Sub-groups develop a series of very short role plays or skits to illustrate appropriate and inappropriate interviews, using the 'good' and 'bad' lists prepared by the groups earlier.
  - *Role plays (no 86)*
7. Debriefing session on use of SSI for research and development

<b>Box 5.4 Comparing the verbal and the visual</b>	<b>Verbal</b> <i>(interview, conversation)</i>	<b>Visual</b> <i>(diagram, model, drama, play)</i>
Investigator's mode and role	Probing investigator	Facilitator and catalyst
Local person's mode and role	Reactive respondent	Creative analyst and presenter
Aim	Extraction of information	Generating local analysis
Local people's awareness of investigators	High	Low
Degree of eye contact	High	Low
The medium and materials chosen by:	Investigators	Local people
Information flow	Sequential	Cumulative
Accessibility and stability of information to others	Low and transient	High and semi-permanent
Responsibility for cross-checking with:	Team members	Local people and team members
Ownership of information	Appropriated by investigators	Shared; can be owned by local people

*Source: Robert Chambers (1992)*

the major advantages and disadvantages of each method if they try it first hand. This is best accomplished by setting up exercises in which they can practise themselves and/or analyse diagrams produced by people in different settings. By making a map or model, constructing a seasonal calendar or creating a diagram of institutional relationships, they will understand what no amount of explanation by you could accomplish.

This experiential learning can be done in the workshop so that participants have adequate practice before visiting the field. No amount of workshop experience, however, can substitute for observing local people creating their own diagrams. You should emphasise the switch that the

participants will need to make to 'hand over the stick' in the field and help local people to conduct their own analyses using these visual methods.

#### **5.4.1 FROM THE VERBAL TO THE VISUAL**

There are important contrasts between visual and verbal modes of communication (Box 5.4). In the training setting, it is important that you discuss these differences so that the trainees will understand the importance of trying out different forms of communication. Although you can do this before an exercise, you might find that comparing visual and verbal communication will be more meaningful if it is carried out as part of the debriefing after one or more visual exercises.

## 5 TRAINING IN PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN THE WORKSHOP

Literacy skills are not necessary for the construction of complex diagrams, as those who cannot read are usually visually literate. Visualisations, therefore, allow those who have not learnt to read and write and who are often politically weaker and poorer to be drawn into the process of analysis and discussion. It has often been the case that this involvement of such groups for the first time in productive dialogue is revealing for professionals who had not realised poor and non-literate people 'knew so much'.

Participants will initially find it hard to get started with visualisation analyses.\* The tendency is for them always to slip towards the verbal, as it seems less risky and they are more familiar with it. Practice in the workshop and thorough debriefing discussions on potential obstacles (see Exercise 31 on Group Problem Solving) will help to prepare the trainees for the field-work. The training exercises for participatory diagramming in the workshop include:

88. Map Your Neighbourhood
89. Mapping your Town or City
90. Mental Map Analyses
91. Transect Walks
92. Seasonal Calendars and Daily Routine Diagrams
93. Venn Diagram of Your Organisation
94. Flow Diagrams on Systems and Impact
95. Comparative Diagrams Analysis.

### 5.4.2 DEBRIEFING AFTER DIAGRAMMING

Many new issues will arise during these exercises on participatory diagramming

\* For a longer discussion of visualisation and diagramming methods, see Chapter Six of this guide and Chapter Five of *A User's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action* (1995, IIED Participatory Methodology Series).

and participants will need time to consider them. The value of good debriefing sessions cannot be overstated. There is a danger that time for reflection will be reduced or even omitted because the exercises themselves run over time. It is always better to stop the exercises early, even if people have not completed them, to ensure adequate time for reflection and discussion. They may complain about this – people generally like to complete something they start and are rarely happy having to stop part-way through – but this is where you must assert your authority as trainer. The point is not to create the perfect diagram, but to consider the potential applications and limitations of the methods.

During the debriefing, you might want to ask some of the following questions:

- What did this exercise tell you about your own perceptions?
- How well did your team members work in your group (roles and responsibilities)?
- If drawing on paper, did people 'hand over the pen', or did certain people dominate? If so, why?
- How well were you able to integrate new or conflicting ideas of the different group members into the diagram?
- How much time is required for a useful visualisation? How would this vary according to mix and number of informants?
- If you were working with local people, how would the process have been different?

### 5.4.3 GUIDELINES FOR DIAGRAMMING

The purpose of all workshop training is to prepare the participants for using participatory approaches in the real world. At the end of every major workshop session on

diagramming, you can help by encouraging participants to consider the implications of using these methods in the field. After working in small groups, they can present to plenary and you can conclude by summarising the comments, then adding any of those listed below that might have been missed.

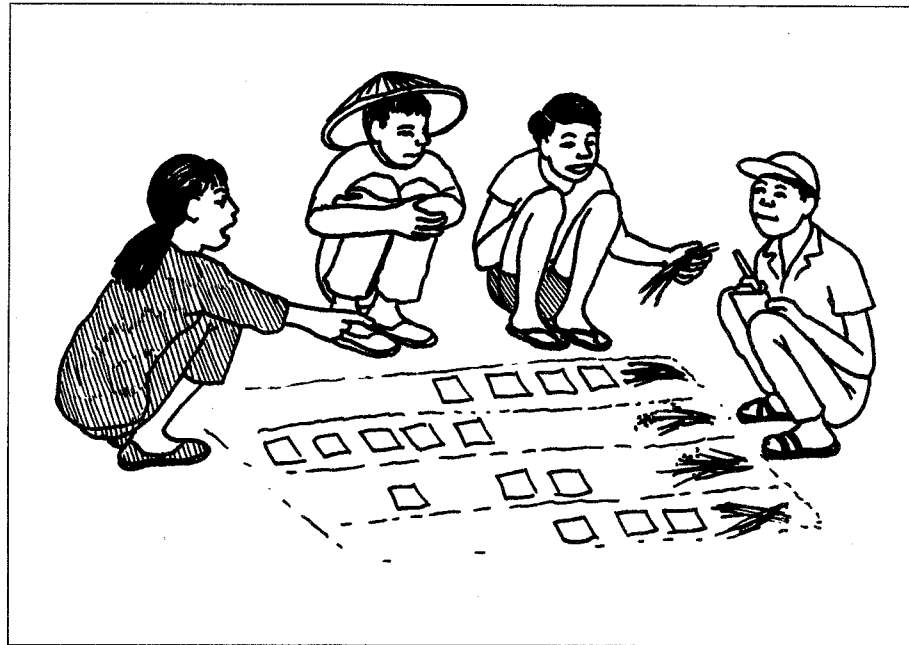
Encourage participants to think about the four important phases of diagramming in the field: preparation, starting, during and after.

#### 1. PREPARATION:

- If working with others in a team, then discuss clearly how the roles will be divided: asking questions, note-taking, observing, etc.
- Take materials to the field, such as chalk, pens, paper, scissors, gum; but wherever possible make use of local materials.
- If possible find out something about the people who will be involved. Ensure that you involve a range of different people, possibly by using the same method with different groups. The informants tell you something by drawing the diagram, and what they draw, and omit, tells you something about the informants.
- Choose a time suitable for the people who will be involved and agree on the duration.

#### 2. STARTING:

- Don't panic or worry about feeling nervous. Just get started.
- Explain why you are there: that you have come to their community to learn. Be honest about why you are there.



- Ensure that you follow protocol and introductions at all meetings – it is common for this to be dropped during later stages of field-work.
- Begin with a non-sensitive visualisation method, such as mapping/modelling or historical profiles/time lines.
- Getting started often appears difficult – but remember, it is more likely to be the doubts of facilitators rather than the abilities of local people that inhibit participatory diagramming. Use simple starting questions such as: *“I do not know this area very well. I see the tree we are sitting under and the road through the village, but can you show me what the rest of the community looks like?”*; or *“You showed us many different crops in your fields. If this pile of stones represents your crops, can you show us how much of your fields is planted with each crop?”*



## 5 TRAINING IN PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN THE WORKSHOP

- A demonstration can help when a method appears to need lengthy explanation; for example, show with stones the proportions of vegetables you grow in your own garden.

### 3. DURING:

- Ensure that the symbols of power during diagramming – the stick or pen – are handed over to those not immediately inclined to be involved. Do not dominate the process yourself. Be patient and don't interrupt. It's their diagram.

- Use local materials for diagramming on the ground.

- Interview the diagram. Ask what is represented; has it changed in the past?; ask probing questions to explore details omitted.

- Don't assume that all symbols are understood by all those present, particularly if people are joining during the process. If necessary, clarify symbols with those who put them on the diagram.

- Ensure that someone is taking notes on the various discussions that occur in parallel around the diagram.

- Be aware of those people who dominate the process, and those who remain on the margins. Look for ways of bringing those on the margin into the process, or divide the team so as to begin a parallel analysis with them.

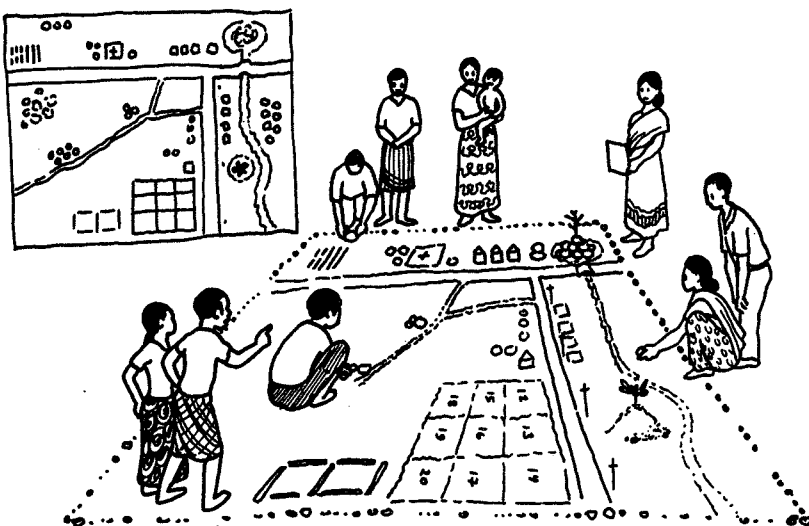
- Use prompting questions when people appear at a loss as to what to do next; eg., "Where do you get your drinking water from?" if no sources have been marked on a map – this is much better than telling people to put on all wells, rivers, taps etc.

- Ensure the diagram does not just represent a snapshot of the current conditions by discussing the past and the future; where appropriate, repeat the diagram for several times of the day, month, year, or century.

- Make sure a copy of the diagram is made (by the team or by local people) if the original is on the ground. Ensure the scale is not distorted during transfer. Don't simplify if it means losing detail. Also, don't be over-elaborate. Check the copy with those who created the original diagram. If possible, take a photograph of the diagram.

### 4. AFTER:

- Cross-check by repeating the diagram with different social groups: women and men; old, young and children; worse off and better off, landless and landed, agriculturalists and pastoralists, etc.

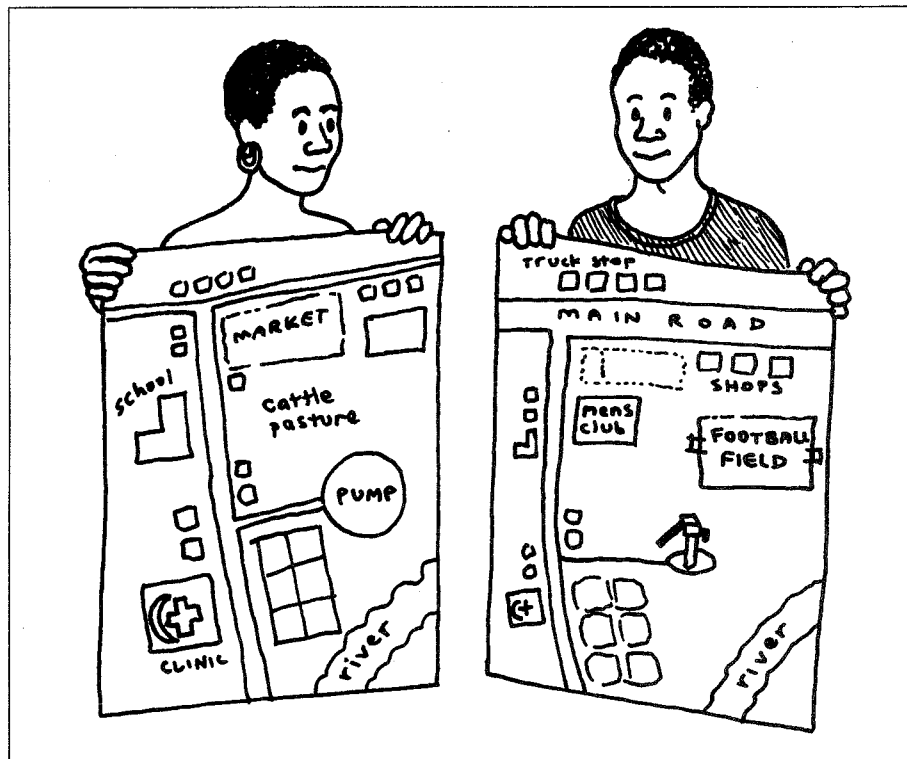


- Analyse what the process (discussion and diagram) has thrown up, identifying ambiguous and unclear issues. Use this to plan the next step of the fieldwork. Remember that this should be done with local people.

Participatory diagramming methods can quickly involve a large number of local people in the appraisal and analysis of their own livelihood concerns. Visualisations often contain a large amount of valuable information in a concentrated form and are generally easy to comprehend, even by non-literate people. Diagrams drawn by people reveal something about the people who constructed them as well as about the area in question: women, for example, may emphasise a school and hospital by making them large on a map, whilst men may emphasise the truck stop and local meeting places. However, it is essential for you as a trainer to emphasise that diagrams are not an end in themselves. There is always a danger that trainees will be satisfied with the production of a diagram, and so forget to use it to probe the issues with those who are involved in producing the diagram.

#### 5.4.4 STRUCTURING A DIAGRAMMING TRAINING SESSION

There are many ways to design a training session on diagramming. Much will depend on the time you have to spend on practice and discussions of the core concepts, principles and methods and on the experience of your group. The programme shown in Box 5.5 lays out a series of buzz sessions, plenary discussions and small group exercises that emphasise various aspects of diagramming. It is an active programme, with formal lecturing limited to a brief introductory overview and concluding case study, with supporting slides and over-



heads. If all exercises are used, then it will require between a half and one full day to complete.

#### 5.5 RANKING AND SCORING EXERCISES (NOS 96–101, PART II)

Ranking and scoring methods can be used to explore people's perceptions, elicit their criteria and understand their choices regarding a wide range of subjects, from resource allocation and selection to wealth and well-being assessment. There are many exercises that can be carried out in a workshop setting or in the field; here are described three of the most common: 1. preference or pairwise ranking; 2. matrix scoring; and 3. wealth ranking and well-being analysis.

In the field, use of ranking and scoring methods often shifts attention away from

**Box 5.5 Sample structure: a diagramming training session**

1. Plenary brainstorming session:
  - *What are the pros and cons of drawing on paper versus drawing on the ground? [use Box 5.4]*
2. Introduction to diagramming: contrasting the verbal and the visual; key concepts, principles and methods with slides and/or overheads.
3. Individual neighbourhood maps: to show that maps do not need to be made by a cartographer to provide valid and important information. Follow with group work on mapping their own town or city if there is time.
  - *Map Your Neighbourhood (no 88)*
  - *Mapping Your Town or City (no 89)*
4. 'Mental maps': the importance of analysing and understanding difference (due to age, gender, wealth, status, and so on) and the impact those differences have on shaping our perceptions and priorities.
  - *Mental Maps Analysis (no 90) - comparison of maps made by different groups (men, women and children; rich and poor) of same place; different groups have different constructions of their localities*
5. Mapping, modelling and transects. This can involve substantial time outside conducting a transect through a community, interviewing people and producing detailed maps or models of important resources or issues.
  - *Practical exercise developing maps/models of the local compound/campus/community in small groups (with 'key informants') using local materials (rocks, sticks, stones, seeds, leaves)*
  - *Comparison of the group maps/models and group process*
  - *Discussion of strengths, weaknesses and possible applications of the methods*
6. Network, systems and Venn diagrams to examine cause-effect relationships, linkages and influences, inputs-outputs, impacts, etc. This will require time for sub-group discussions and for the development of diagrams.
  - *Practical exercises in small groups (possibly a different diagram for each group) eg Venn Diagram of Your Organisation (no 93), or Systems and Impact-Flow Diagrams (no 94)*
  - *Comparison of results and group process*
  - *Discussion of strengths, weaknesses and possible applications*
7. Seasonal calendars, historical time lines, and daily activity patterns. This will require time for sub-group discussions and for the development of diagrams.
  - *Practical exercises in small groups (possibly a different diagram for each group), eg Seasonal Calendars (no 92)*
  - *Comparison of results and group process*
  - *Discussion of strengths, weaknesses and possible applications*
8. Discussion of diagramming and use of a sequence of diagramming methods
  - *Case study (with slides, if possible) of use of a variety of diagramming techniques sequentially and concurrently*
9. Debriefing session on use of participatory diagramming, mapping and modelling for research and development (see 5.4.3 above)

the interactions between outside investigators and local people, and towards the analyses themselves. By drawing eye contact away from people and towards the matrices and diagrams being constructed on the ground, these methods allow tensions to be diffused and concern to be drawn away from otherwise restrictive differences in status, style or speech among the local people or between the outsiders and the local people. In addition, vigorous debate is often generated among all those involved and can lead to exciting and unexpected results. Ranking and scoring methods are particularly valuable for illustrating to both the outside agents and local analysts how radically different each group's perceptions and beliefs can be, and what similarities exist.

With these methods, as with all visual methods, it is important that you remind participants that it is not the final matrix that is important, but the discussion that occurs as it is being created and the knowledge that is shared. It is as common to talk of "*interviewing the matrix*" as it is to talk of "*interviewing the farmer*". In short, it is not the final product, but the *process* involved in creating it that counts. To be truly beneficial, that process must inevitably include sensitive and perceptive interviewing, whether people are using visual techniques or not.

Some of the most useful games and exercises (see Part II) for learning about people's preferences and priorities include:

96. Line Game
97. Preference Ranking
98. Matrix Ranking and Scoring
99. Calculating Well-being or Wealth Ranking
100. Wealth Ranking: Further Practice
101. Role Play of Wealth Ranking Interview.

In a workshop setting, these methods can help illustrate the diverse range of perceptions of the trainees themselves. This can reveal how participatory development can be strengthened by bringing these different perspectives and insights to bear on a particular issue. They will also help to illustrate how and why different people – old/young, worse-off/better-off, women/men, local people/outside agents – have different criteria for making decisions and judgments about the choice of technologies, the management of resources, the use and perceived value of government or NGO services, and so on.

As with most methods, practice in the workshop is necessary before they are used in the field. Ranking and scoring exercises are amongst the more difficult, yet most powerful participatory methods available. Practising them first is essential to help clear up methodological questions.

A well-planned practical session will provide the participants with a solid understanding of the main issues and applications of these methods, and give them more confidence to use them in their fieldwork.

#### **5.5.1 PREFERENCE RANKING AND MATRIX SCORING**

Both preference ranking and matrix scoring follow a similar process: semi-structured interviews are first conducted to identify people's options and criteria. Next, a matrix is developed by them in which the items or alternatives are compared and contrasted. In preference ranking, each individual item is compared directly against the others until they are ranked from highest (best) to lowest (worst), while with matrix scoring the items are compared against selected criteria which the people use for judging them.

5 TRAINING IN PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN THE WORKSHOP

Adopt- Type	Adopt- Type	Adopt- Type	Adopt- Type	Adopt- Type	Adopt- Type	Adopt- Type
1	X	X			X	
2		X	X			
3		X		X		
4			X	X		X
5	X		X	X	X	X
6		X	X			



■ *Preference ranking* (sometimes called pairwise ranking) is probably the easiest to use and to learn. It is usually used when trying to:

- determine the main preferences and priorities of individuals or groups for a set of items (such as trees species, government services, seed varieties, soil and water conservation measures);
- compare the priorities of different groups against one another (men and women, young and old, rich and poor, etc).

A preference matrix has two identical lists of items or alternatives, one across the top (x-axis) and the other down the left side (y-axis). Each open box or cell in the matrix represents a paired comparison of two items or alternatives.

■ The primary objectives of *matrix scoring* are to:

- elicit the criteria that different people use when choosing between different alternatives;
- explore the trade-offs made during the process of choosing;
- highlight the criteria that are high (best) and low (worst) for any particular item.

Matrix scoring can also be used to explore differences between groups. With matrix scoring, the items or alternatives will be listed across the top (x-axis) and down the left side (y-axis) will be a list of criteria. These criteria are the judgements people make when evaluating and analysing the qualities or merits of the items being discussed (trees, services, varieties, measures, etc). It is important that you remind participants that summing the numbers of each column in a matrix can give misleading information, as it implies an equal weighting for each criterion. What counts is not so much the final scores, but the process of discussion and debate that occurs as the matrix is being created.

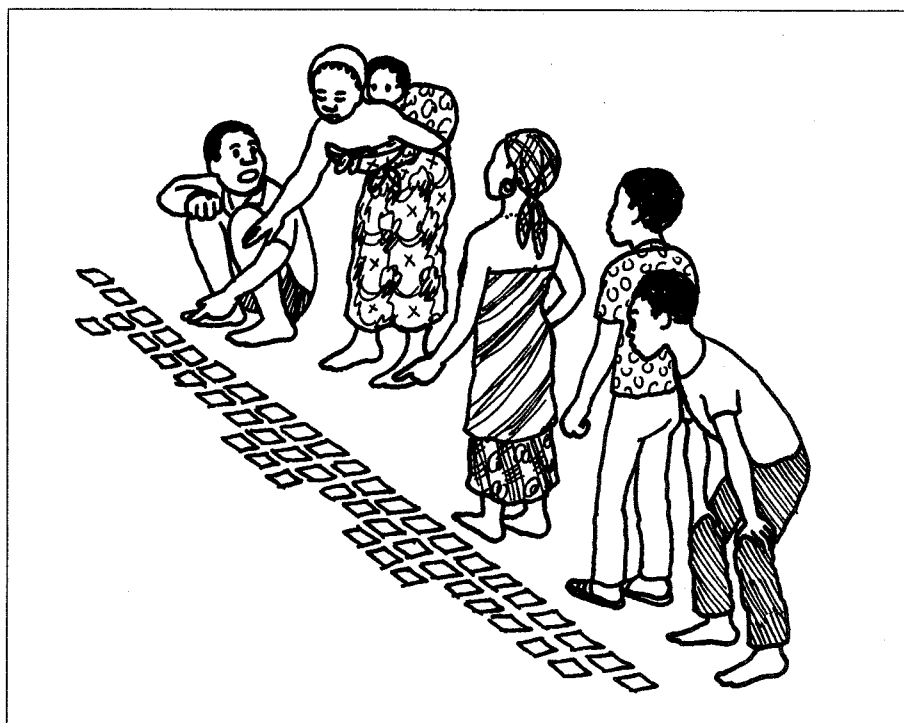
Discuss with your trainees the variations. One way to add more detail to the analysis would be to ask them to rank the various criteria. You could do a preference ranking of the criteria before beginning the actual direct matrix scoring. This allows you to interpret the matrix in more detail, as the highest priority or most preferred criteria would be listed at the top and the lowest priority or least preferred ones at the bottom of the y-axis. Either way, final sums will be less significant than the scores or ranks given for each criterion.

### 5.5.2 WEALTH AND WELL-BEING RANKING

There are various participatory methods for analysing a group or community's relative well-being or wealth, based on local perceptions and criteria. In the workshop, social mapping for well-being analysis can be practised as part of the mapping session described earlier (Section 5.3). In this section, the focus is on wealth ranking by card sorting. This is useful for identifying different socio-economic groups and investigating the impact of a specific intervention on those different groups.

Wealth ranking by card sorting is best used for contrasting a manageable number of households (or social units). Normally, this is limited to no more than 100 households. It is recommended that wealth ranking by card sorting be carried out with at least three informants or groups of informants for every 100 households, even if some social mapping is being done in the community.

In the workshop, wealth ranking by card sorting can be simulated for a smaller community (see Exercise 101). Before introducing the actual exercise, it will help to have a buzz session on why it is important to be able to identify specific groups within a community (the poor, the landless, female-headed households, farmers with land under a certain size, etc) and how participants currently go about finding them. Most answers will indicate that *observation* or *direct questioning* are used. You can then ask them to identify what criteria we (researchers and development agents) use to measure wealth or well-being in a community. These indicators will range from income levels to clothing and the type of housing. You can conclude this introduction to the method by asking: "*How do local people measure wealth or well-being? How and why is this different to our measures?*"



After introductory discussions, there are several options for learning about the procedure for wealth ranking by pile sorting. Exercises 99, 100 and 101 in Part II give details of three exercises for the workshop setting. To conclude a session on wealth or well-being ranking, a buzz group session can focus on the following questions:

- What are the strengths and limitations of wealth ranking and well-being analysis?
- What are the difficulties with collecting such apparently sensitive information?
- How can you be sure that households of all wealth and well-being categories have participated in the other exercises (mapping, seasonal calendars, systems diagrams, etc) if this method is not used to identify specific groups within the community?

**Box 5.6 Sample structure: a ranking and scoring training session**

1. Use the Line Game (no 96) to introduce the idea of categorising and classifying information and items according to various criteria in a light-hearted way.
2. Plenary brainstorming session on criteria
  - Choose a theme (such as tree varieties, health facilities, soil and water conservation measures) and compare local criteria used in choosing these versus scientists'/development agents' criteria
  - Key questions: *"Why are these criteria different?"* and *"whose criteria count?"*
3. Introduction to ranking and scoring techniques – the range of possible options; key concepts, principles and methods with slides and overheads
4. Matrix scoring and ranking of relevant issues, topics or items of interest in small groups
  - Practical exercise (no 98) to generate list of issues, topics or items, and criteria on which to compare and contrast them (each group analyses issues in a matrix using their own criteria, then ranks or scores them according to their own rules)
  - Comparison of results and group process
  - Discussion of strengths, weaknesses and possible applications
5. Plenary brainstorming session on wealth and well-being analysis:
  - Compare local criteria for well-being and wealth with those of scientists/development agents
  - Key questions: *"Why are these criteria different?"* and *"whose criteria count?"*
6. Introduction to wealth and well-being analysis: key concepts, principles and methods with slides and/or overheads. Highlight importance of technique for identifying specific groups (finding the poor, landless, female-headed households, etc) and stratifying a community.
  - Practical exercise (nos 99–101) to do well-being ranking of set number of households in either a real or imaginary village (this exercise, if done, requires substantial preparation and often the involvement of local 'key informants' who can do the actual categorising and classifying)
  - Comparison of results and group process
  - Discussion of strengths, weaknesses and possible applications
7. Discussion of matrix scoring and well-being analysis, and use in sequences
  - Case study (with slides, if possible) of use of variety of ranking and scoring techniques sequentially and concurrently
8. Debriefing session on use of ranking and scoring for research and development.

In this way, the participants will be able to think through the advantages and disadvantages of the method and consider its application in their work.

### **5.5.3 STRUCTURING A RANKING AND SCORING TRAINING SESSION**

There are many ways to design a training session for ranking and scoring methods. The programme will depend on the time you have to spend on discussions of the core concepts, principles and methods, and on the prior experience of your group. The participatory programme shown in Box 5.6 suggests a series of buzz sessions, plenary discussions and small group exercises. Formal lecturing is limited to a brief introductory overview and concluding case study, with supporting slides and overheads. This programme outlined in Box 5.6 needs a half to one full day to complete, if all exercises are used.

### **5.6 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST: PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN THE WORKSHOP**

- *Have you decided which exercises might be dropped from the planned schedule if an exercise takes longer than planned?*
  - *Have you decided how many and what size groups of trainees will be needed for each exercise?*
  - *Have you decided how sub-groups will be formed for each exercise?*
  - *Have you allowed sufficient time in the programme for feedback?*
  - *Have you prepared any hand-outs on methods, guidelines for SSI, steps in wealth ranking, etc that you might need?*
  - *Have you prepared your debriefing questions for each session?*
- 
- *Have you planned your programme to include sessions on semi-structured interviewing, diagramming, and ranking and scoring?*
  - *Have you included exercises or discussions that address each of the seven components of SSI?*
  - *Have you planned the use of exercises, so as to limit the use of lecturing?*
  - *Have you thought through the sequencing of different training methods on one topic so that they build on each other?*





## **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

No matter how well your workshop proceeds and how much the participants learn, the most important learning takes place during the fieldwork. At best, a training workshop can simulate the realities which the trainees will face in the field. At worst, it can be so far removed from local conditions and constraints that the participants discover they have no idea what to do once the fieldwork begins. You need, therefore, to prepare your training programme carefully in order to ensure a smooth transition from the workshop setting to the field.

Fieldwork is hard work. But it can also be very rewarding for everyone involved. For you as a facilitator, the field phase of an intensive training will probably be both exhausting and exhilarating. Despite the difficulties, however, the rewards will be many, including watching your trainees take on more responsibility for the investigation and analysis, and beginning to relax and enjoy the process.

This chapter discusses essential steps in planning and facilitating the fieldwork, forming cohesive field teams, getting the process started and keeping it going, and ensuring the use of key methods in sequence. Suggestions are given for troubleshooting, turning field notes into understandable reports, and avoiding pitfalls that you, as a trainer, might fall into. Guidelines are also given on how to deal with training trainers.

## **6.2 PREPARING FOR THE FIELD**

Preparing thoroughly for fieldwork is vital, as this is often the most important part of the learning process for trainees. This is where they will practice new methods and make mistakes. Good forward planning will ensure that their learning is not disrupted by other factors. If you are training

for your own institution, then you should do the planning. If you have been commissioned by another institution, then you should give them a detailed checklist of issues to be acted on before the workshop starts. This period before the workshop is essential for creating the conditions for success. Before the workshop starts, you should then check thoroughly what has and what has not been arranged. If certain key issues have been overlooked, then there may still be time to fill the gaps. Box 6.1 contains a checklist for preparing for the field.

Uncertainties will never be completely removed nor avoided, but thorough preparation always increases the capacity to cope. Flexibility is essential and decisions must sometimes be made quickly. Unplanned events, such as vehicle breakdowns, heavy rains, illness, ceremonies and political events, require new courses of action. If you make clear to participants that these are new opportunities, then all can act positively and creatively. Examples of dealing with changing opportunities (Box 6.2) and local hostilities (Box 6.3) illustrate how others have responded to new challenges and so made the most of their field experience.

### **6.2.1 THE HOST COMMUNITY**

Fieldwork, which involves teams descending on and disrupting life in a community, may not always be a desirable part of the training. This is particularly true if follow-up activities in the village sites or communities cannot be guaranteed or are not possible. If the training is to occur as a one-off exercise in a community, then the expectations raised will be dashed as community members realise that their intense involvement in the fieldwork has been for nothing.

### **6.1 Introduction**

#### **6.2 Preparing for the Field**

##### **6.2.1 The Host Community**

##### **6.2.2 Selecting Field Teams**

##### **6.2.3 Trainer's Tasks and Pitfalls**

#### **6.3 Getting Started in the Field**

##### **6.3.1 The Shift to Visualisation and Participation**

##### **6.3.2 Emphasising Sequences of Methods**

##### **6.3.3 Dealing with Senior Visitors**

#### **6.4 Review, Feedback and Presentation**

##### **6.4.1 Fieldwork Feedback and Presentations**

##### **6.4.2 Processing Information and Writing-up**

##### **6.4.3 The Process Matrix**

##### **6.4.4 Assessing Participants' Progress**

#### **6.5 Trainer's Checklist: Training in the Field**

**Box 6.1 Checklist: Preparing for the field****THE HOST COMMUNITY**

- Does the community know when you will be arriving and how long you will be staying? Have all sectors of the community approved your stay?
- Are the fieldwork dates convenient for all the local people? Are they busy all day in the fields? When is market day? Are there important political events or cultural ceremonies that will draw people away?
- Do they know why you are coming?
- If it is just for training, then do they know there is no guaranteed follow-up? Will they still be interested in accommodating the teams?
- If it is part of the on-going activities of the trainees' institution(s), then do they have the resources to follow up plans developed in the village?
- When is it most convenient for women and for men to be involved in discussions (morning, afternoon, evening)?

**ACCOMMODATION**

- Are you planning to stay in the village(s)?
- If so, have full discussions been held on practical arrangements in the community?
- If not, how close to the community will you be staying?
- Is there electricity in the village? (If so, you may be able to show slides/videos to local people in the evenings.)

**FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

- What arrangements have been made to feed the team whilst in the village?
- Will you buy food there? Will you take it with you?
- Who will go to market to buy food and drink? Who will do the cooking?

**TRANSPORTATION**

- How will the team get to the village sites?
- Do you have sufficient vehicles/petrol allocations?

**MATERIALS**

- Do you have a full supply of charts, paper, pens etc for the visualisations?
- Do you have small notebooks for each participant?

This raises ethical questions about doing training in the field and practising on local people, and is very likely to create problems at the local village, jeopardising the possibility for working there in future.

It may be preferable to be trained in a classroom setting and to practise methods with other participants at that session.

When participants return to their work, they can then try to introduce and experiment with the new methods in the course of their normal work. This avoids the problem of trainees feeling uneasy about 'experimenting' on people they do not know and will not be working with in the future. However, this approach can make it diffi-

## 6 THE CHALLENGES OF TRAINING IN THE FIELD

### Box 6.2 A case of a flexible process

The more sub-groups there are and the larger the area they are covering, the more difficult it is to coordinate team feedback sessions or plan lunch breaks. On the first day, the young women's group did a very successful sequence of exercises focusing on vegetable production. Starting with some observation in the garden a matrix of vegetables was made, followed by a pie diagram on garden use. This led into a discussion on seed sources and a matrix was developed to discuss that. By this time lunchtime was nearing and the women were asked if they would be able to meet after lunch again. However, they were keen to continue with the seasonal calendar on labour they had started so the sub-group decided to delay lunch. Although this was not appreciated by the other sub-groups, the team had agreed beforehand that everybody would adopt the villagers' pace.

The team tried for over two hours to encourage a group of young women to draw their village and many attempts were made. However, they could not decide on the correct location of compounds or the correct orientation of the map. Finally the team moved them gently onto a wealth ranking exercise, starting with some of the identified compounds. While this was developing, one of the young women who had made one of the first attempts, turned her back on the others and started mapping again. One of the team members went to encourage her, probing about the items she drew. When the wealth ranking finished, the young woman proudly showed the others her completed map. The team had been patient, pursued a different exercise and been flexible enough to split up when it was necessary.

cult to control the quality of work, as the participants are not trained in the reality of field situations.

Communities themselves can benefit from the process of a field-based training. It may be possible to limit raising expectations or to ensure that follow-up is carried out to some extent. But such training does pose dilemmas that should be discussed openly with the trainees. Rural people are usually hospitable and polite and sometimes have difficulty in saying no to outsiders. In some cases those who agree to certain things will not be those who invest their precious time doing participatory activities with no clear benefit. Good practitioners and sensitive participants will avoid such basic errors. Good preparation will limit such dangers, such as working only in communities in which follow-up is guaranteed. Always think about the needs of the community, be absolutely honest, and state why you are there and what you can give.

### 6.2.2 SELECTING FIELD TEAMS

In general, most fieldwork during training workshops is conducted by interdisciplinary teams of 3–8 people. If you are training more than eight, then there will be at least two field teams and team selection will be necessary. You can opt for self-selection of the teams or choose them yourself. Either way it will be important to ensure well-balanced groups. Make use of the following criteria to make suitable groups, and ask the group to add any criteria they might feel are relevant (see also section 3.1.3):

- *Language* – who speaks the local language and/or dialect? These people may have to act as translators, if they are in the minority;
- *Gender* – ensure a balanced mix of men and women

**Box 6.3 A case of dealing with local conflicts**

After two full days of fieldwork in a remote mountainous area, the 30 trainees and three facilitators returned to the training centre of the host NGO to review their findings. Because of cultural restrictions, the trainees had been working in teams of between 4 and 6 people, with the men and women limiting their interviews and interactions to villagers of their own gender. Most of the work had gone smoothly and a great deal of valuable information had been collected. However, the women's teams reported that some local men had tried to interfere with the women's meetings, as they did not want their women speaking with 'outsiders'. Despite agreeing during advance meetings that women would be permitted to interview local women, a small but vocal minority of village men did everything in their power to prevent those encounters. They went so far as to misrepresent the NGO's intentions to the local religious leader. Everyone knew that if nothing was done the fieldwork would be brought to an end.

Several representatives of the training group, including two village men and the facilitator from the local NGO, met with some of the antagonistic men and the religious leader. During the meeting the representatives described the participatory process and assured the men that if the approach was offensive or threatening to their local cultural or religious values they themselves would reject it. They also encouraged the men to ask any questions that they might have and to feel free to join the teams themselves. In this way, the men's fears were allayed and they gave assurances that no further interferences would occur. For his part, the religious leader announced at evening prayer that the local men should actively participate in the fieldwork and encourage their women to do the same. Once these obstacles were removed, the women's work went smoothly. Throughout the exercise, men and women did not interact in public. However, during the community meetings at the end of the field investigations, which were also segregated, the women's findings were presented to the men and the men's findings to the women. Both groups expressed surprise at how similar and how valuable were the other group's insights and priorities. They also voiced their appreciation for the sensitive way the fieldwork had been conducted.

- *Professional experience* – mix people from different disciplines, eg social and biological sciences, health and agriculture, etc;

- *Hierarchy* – consider the normal working relationships of participants, and try to divide participants into groups with a mix of different statuses – if differences are too great, put similar people together into groups;



- *Experience with participatory methods* – appoint any participants with previous experience, as resource people;
- *Knowledge of the field site* – try to spread those who know the field sites through the groups to act as resource people;
- *Personality* – consider some of the criteria for roles within groups (Chapter 3), and try to ensure a mix of roles to enhance team performance, for example not too many leaders in one group.

Field teams may be selected by the trainer or by the group itself. If the group members want to form their own teams, they can use the Group Self-Select exercise (Exercise 24, Part II). If you are selecting teams, then you might need to ask the help of certain resource people who know the participants better than you do. Then you can use the Postcard or Jigsaw Puzzle (Exercise 35) to create the teams. In both cases, the Problem Solving Exercise (Exercise 31) and Saboteur (Exercise 28) to produce team contracts should greatly contribute to team preparation before the field.

Another task that can create a shared understanding of the aims of the fieldwork is to ask each field team to formulate its own objectives. These can include learning objectives related to understanding the principles of participatory learning and action, but can also entail different aspects of understanding local livelihoods (see Box 6.4). These objectives can then be used during the daily review meetings in the field to assess and redirect the work. They will be helpful for final evaluations to assess what has been accomplished, and to discuss what was not realised and why this was the case. Formulating team objectives before setting out will make trainees aware that they will also need to do this

#### **Box 6.4 Team fieldwork objectives**

##### **GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

To learn to use PRA methods to collect relevant data for future activities.

##### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

1. To discover which criteria are used to determine different forms of land use management.
2. To discover the different types of local organisations and how they operate.
3. To discover development action initiated entirely by local people.

*Source: Patecore/IIED (1993)*

for any participatory fieldwork that they will undertake in their regular work after the training workshop is over.

Once in the field, the group of trainees may wish to work in several different ways. Sometimes teams will decide to stay together to pursue a particular theme over some time. In other cases, it may be necessary to change the composition of teams to encourage as much interaction among the trainees as possible. If, in future, trainees plan to use participatory approaches in their own work, they will have to consider how they will organise their own field team. For this reason, it can be very effective to encourage discussion among the trainees themselves on the question of team composition.

#### **6.2.3 TRAINER'S TASKS AND PITFALLS**

For the trainees, the fieldwork is a period of practice, mistakes and correction that reinforces the learning points identified during earlier phases of the workshop. During fieldwork, you as the trainer are a guardian of the process, pointing trainees to issues

developed in the workshop phase of the training. To help you do this well, it is important to define for yourself what your primary tasks are for the fieldwork. Tasks that are of particular importance during the fieldwork are outlined in Box 6.5.

There are dangers for trainers, too, particularly when they are encouraging groups to achieve a goal. Trainers sometimes strive towards a good outcome and, in the process, try to control events too much. This

can be counterproductive, as groups cannot be forced to perform in a particular manner or at the exact moment that you think is ideal. For trainers, it is just as important to *hand over the stick* as it is for participants. By handing over the role of trainer and monitor to the participants, they will take increasing responsibility for their own learning process and are likely to benefit more in the long term (see 'Decline of the trainer' process, Chapter 1).

#### **Box 6.5 Trainer's fieldwork tasks**

1. Reinforce the principles of participatory learning and action or of specific methods, whenever the need or opportunity arises.
2. Provide information on the process or methods when necessary, such as what to do with that first card in wealth ranking or how to begin eliciting criteria for matrices.
3. Remind participants about effective interviewing skills, especially probing. Always refer back to learning experiences earlier in the workshop. For example, remind them of the interviewing guidelines that they might have written in their field notebooks.
4. Facilitate discussions in the review meetings, picking up on incidents that occurred during the day. These incidents will vary for each field exercise and for each team.
5. Monitor continually that logistical arrangements operate smoothly, although this could be a task for one of the participants.
6. Remember that you are responsible for all participants. Some trainees work very quickly, others more slowly. Some find certain exercises easy, others find them hard. This may mean frustration for you as a trainer, the group as a whole and any individuals who are finding the work difficult. The trainer's role is to create an effective learning environment that encourages sharing of experience and skills. If this environment can be created, then frustrations disappear or can be used creatively. Moving between sub-groups while in the field helps provide support for all participants on the course.
7. Reshuffle groups to match people up, for example match people who work at a similar pace, or combine people who are finding things difficult with those who are good at sharing experience and skills. When the fieldwork starts, the training role should not only be yours; hopefully participants will help each other if the right atmosphere is created.

## 6 THE CHALLENGES OF TRAINING IN THE FIELD

### 6.3 GETTING STARTED IN THE FIELD

#### 6.3.1 THE SHIFT TO VISUALISATION AND PARTICIPATION

You have a crucial role to play just after arrival at the field site. This is when participants generally feel most nervous. They may have been through extensive practice in the workshop, developed detailed interview checklists and agreed team contracts, but may still feel uncomfortable or unclear about using unfamiliar methods.

In many cases, such nervousness arises out of a belief that local people are not capable of participating in these 'complex' analyses. The trainees will need to get used to new roles – *listening rather than telling* the villagers something, *creating learning situations rather than dictating* terms and conditions, *facilitating rather than control-*

*ling* the research and/or development process. Tension can also stem from insecurity due to inadequate preparation for the fieldwork, or problems related to group dynamics. Try to address these issues before the fieldwork starts by planning sufficient time for the preparation (see *Group Problem Solving and Team Contract* (Exercise 31, Part II).

What has become very clear from past field-based training exercises is the importance of starting immediately with a diagramming-based method. If this is not done in the first discussions with local people, then experience shows that it becomes progressively more difficult to encourage participants to leave their pen and paper alone, and to switch off the familiar interviewing. If the teams do use visualisations from the start, then this generates enthusiasm and interest, and helps to keep everyone experimenting and learning.

Here are tips for starting the fieldwork off smoothly:

- Discuss the panic factor in advance. Use the Group Problem Solving Exercise (Exercise 31) and/or role plays in workshop.
- Ask each team to decide in advance the issue, method and local informants they hope to start with. Think about possible sequences of methods that can be used before leaving for the field.
- Encourage the team to begin with a concrete activity that requires group inputs, has been practised before and is almost certain to lead to a concrete output. A mapping exercise is a good starter. It usually proves a good way of getting people involved, shifting the control away from the team to local women and men who make and explain the map(s), and can be a lot of fun.



- *Organise a D-I-Y session* to start off the fieldwork. This will involve the team in trying their hand at everyday local activities. This breaks the ice and clearly establishes new roles, with local people as teachers and professionals as the learners. Tasks might include ploughing, plastering, food preparation, fetching water or fuelwood, weeding, transplanting rice, and so on. This will require careful preparation with local people ahead of time.

- *Tell the team to relax.* Tell them that practice is the best way to learn and that they do not have to learn everything in the first few minutes.

Once fieldwork has started, you may encounter problems in keeping the process going. Enthusiasm might decrease, especially if the team is beset with unexpected problems, such as vehicle breakdowns, illness, bad weather and so on. Team members may also feel tired and that they have done enough work and collected enough information. The example in Box 6.6 illustrates how one trainer managed to encourage a team to keep going and the rewards they reaped as a result.

Whenever you feel that the trainees are uneasy about the diagramming, explain that visualisation of the issues being discussed produces more trustworthy information, chiefly because local people are able to analyse their conditions themselves and reproduce them for all to see,\* cross-checking amongst themselves as they discuss. This process stimulates a sequence of adjustments and improvements, both

by the person or persons constructing and by those watching. As a result, the final product is often quite different to the first attempt.

#### **Box 6.6 Keeping the process going in the field**

Three field teams of four participants had been in the field interviewing farmers on transect walks, producing systems diagrams and various wealth rankings since 0900. All returned for packed lunches to the prearranged site at the veterinary hospital by 1400. At 1430, the trainer convened a group review in the shade of a large tree. As much of the discussion focused on issues of substance, the participants were also encouraged to consider the key learning points arising out of the use of methods.

The review meeting ended at 1545, and the trainer asked the team whether it would be better to return to the training centre for further analysis and discussion, or to return to the field for another hour or more. Following a mixed reaction, with some participants keen to end the day's work, the trainer encouraged the team to return to the field, as it was a natural reaction to opt for home rather than for more work. All agreed, and in the next two hours groups of farmers and participants produced two new systems diagrams, a decision tree, a seed sources flow diagram and a potato seed-multiplication flow diagram. It also happened to be a pleasant time to be in the field, as farmers were able to spare more time as their day's work was almost over. The next day, following the mid-day review, the team returned to the field with no hesitation or prompting. *The lesson:* if in doubt, go back for more.

\* See *A User's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action* for detailed discussion of criteria and conditions for trustworthiness.



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Another aspect of visualisation that should be emphasised is the benefits for local people. An encounter between a team of facilitators and a group of local people may be a rare local opportunity, when both women and men are encouraged to think about their own livelihoods and conditions in a systematic way (Box 6.7). Very often it is also an exceptional occasion for certain local groups (men/women, young/old, landed/landless, etc) to come together for joint analysis.

There are several strategies that you can follow to ensure the field team hands over the role of analyst to the local people to let them construct diagrams themselves.

1. Stress the idea of *handing over the stick*, both from 'us' to 'them' and between villagers. A good way of getting started is to set the example and pass a stick to one of the local people and ask them to begin the drawing. The stick is the symbol of authority, and whoever holds it dominates discussions. Keep reminding the team not to hold a stick and encourage them to monitor each other. This idea can be introduced earlier during a

mapping or matrix scoring exercise in the workshop (Chapter 5). During the debriefing of this exercise you can ask "Who held the stick?", thus introducing the phrase. It will then serve as a swift reminder during the fieldwork about turning over control of the process to local women and men.

2. There is a strong tendency for literate fieldworkers to forget that using locally-defined symbols, categories and criteria is a way of handing over control of the process to local people, as they are able to create representations that make sense to them rather than to outsiders. This should be stressed regularly during the fieldwork. Sometimes a team new to the use of participatory methods will get carried away in their enthusiasm for their work and, without realising it, impose their own criteria on an activity that is supposed to be controlled by local people (Box 6.8).

Whenever you notice trainees suggesting a particular piece of information to local people, or choosing the symbols or criteria, ask them whose information is being represented. If the participants can monitor themselves using *Whose Symbols?* (Box 6.9), they are well on their way to remembering the basic principle of participatory learning and action: *listen and be reflective*. Ask: Whose symbols? Whose analysis? Whose information? Whose knowledge counts?

3. Ask the participants to ensure that all diagrams drawn by local people on paper have a legend that indicates: "Drawn by ... [Name(s) of local analyst(s)]" and "Facilitated by ... [Names of participatory team members]". They can also add: "Materials used for the analysis ... [eg. pen and paper, straw, plant material, stones, seeds, stickers etc]". When these diagrams are brought back to the workshop, they can be exhibited so that all participants can see them and ask questions. Team members who

**Box 6.7 Local benefits of field-based training sessions**

Although a training session does not usually aim to identify a concrete local action plan, it is possible for local people still to benefit from being involved in the trainees' learning experience. During several training sessions in one country, men and women remarked at the village meetings that the fieldwork had been one of the few occasions when the young men of the village had joined in a collective activity. There was usually too much discord and disagreement for this to take place. Similarly, at a series of meetings in another country, groups of old and young men and women from several neighbouring communities presented, debated and discussed the preparation of detailed village plans amongst themselves at the end of a series of lengthy participatory analyses. They said they had learned from the sharing of so many perspectives and appreciated the fact that everyone had contributed to the process.

**Box 6.8 Whose criteria?**

During a field-based training, a mixed group of elderly people were expressing their preferences for various local and exotic tree species. The investigators, who included a number of foresters, already had a certain combination of trees in mind that they thought would be most appropriate for the local nursery. Without realising it, the team allowed their own preferences to cloud their judgement. As a matrix scoring was developed, the outside team began putting down their own criteria rather than those of the local people. The facilitator let the team proceed for some time, until one of investigators, who had been assigned the role of recorder/observer, realised who was actually controlling the process and pointed out the error to his colleagues. After some confused looks and rapid exchanges among team members, the investigators apologised to the group, explained the process to them a second time, then began using the local criteria to conduct the scoring. Afterwards, at the evening review session, the investigators expressed appreciation to the team member who had brought it to their attention. The experience confirmed the value of working in an interdisciplinary team with well-defined roles and responsibilities.

**Box 6.9 Whose symbols?**

In one exercise, the field team had drawn a matrix, labelling each column with their own written headings, but no symbols. They realised the omission when the women started using stones to score and, of course, could not easily remember which column represented what item. The facilitator pointed out to the team that there was nothing on the matrix that the women could understand. So the team asked the women to find things to symbolise what each column was about – which they did quickly and with imagination. It was one of those moments when rapid learning took place: the women could not have participated in the same way without those symbols and the team realised this.

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present diagrams drawn by local people are the best converters of their more reluctant colleagues. This kind of peer pressure can introduce a bit of healthy competition into the training and lead to these practices becoming standard procedure.

4. During the community feedback meeting, encourage the teams to invite local people to present the findings to one another and to the teams. Letting the people present and assess their own information stresses the importance of *handing over the stick* and *role reversals*: the trainees become the listeners and assessors; the informants become the analysts and advisors. This is most easily done in the village, where an exhibition of all diagrams and maps prepared during the fieldwork can be placed on walls, fences or ropes and exhibited for all to see. People can walk around and look at the various diagrams, and discuss them before the formal meeting begins. During the meeting, the diagrams can

be used to illustrate certain points or reinforce arguments. It is not uncommon for local men and women to feel confident enough to challenge particular conclusions and make changes on the diagrams.

If possible, invite local people to make presentations in special briefing workshops attended by researchers, policy-makers and bureaucrats. These kind of exhibitions and presentations can have a wider impact by giving local people an important role and challenging any sceptical notions about their capacities and their own roles in research and development. Variations of this approach have now been used successfully in many diverse countries.

5. Make a video during the fieldwork of local people producing the maps, models, diagrams, etc. The video can be played back for the teams and villagers to analyse. Body language, questioning styles, 'holding the stick' etc. can all be seen and commented on. Ideally the playback should be in the community, so adequate preparations need to be made to provide electricity and monitors. This also works well if photographs are taken and can be developed quickly. The photographs can also be used in the final reports and reproduced in other official documents. Local people rarely express any objections to the use of cameras and videos, as long as they are used sensitively and unobtrusively and the final images are shared.

6. During the daily write-up, suggest that the participants write-up the *Process* separately from the *Key Findings*. This requires them to reflect on how the interview was conducted, who held the stick, whether special techniques or statements were particularly helpful, what forms of conflict were evident, whose ideas and opinions dominated, whose remained hidden, etc.

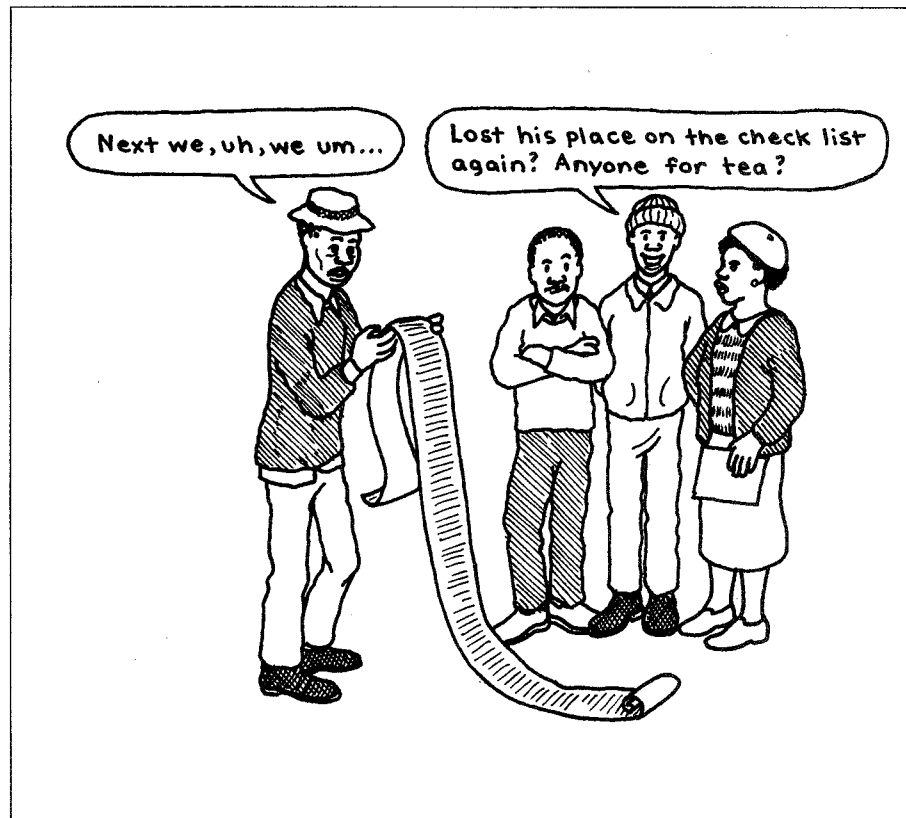


### 6.3.2 EMPHASISING SEQUENCES OF METHODS

A great deal of the strength of participatory learning and action is derived from the way in which the process and outputs of one method can lead into another. This continuity enhances reliability of the discussions and allows for further probing of key issues. Doing a series of exercises with the same people allows for the development of openness and familiarity. As new women and men are involved, which is necessary to understand a range of perspectives, a period of explanation, warming up and confidence building is required. However, sequencing can also have drawbacks that you must watch out for, especially when trainees become so comfortable with certain local people that they choose not to seek out others. Besides introducing biases in results, this could place a heavy burden on the local analysts' time.

Sequences are an aspect that cannot usually be dealt with adequately in the workshop, where exercises are not sequential but take place within a different session. One way to duplicate the sequencing of methods in the field is to take participants through a detailed case study or simulation, although this can take a considerable amount of time to prepare. An alternative is to use a series of slides and/or overhead transparencies to guide people through a real example and to discuss how and why various methods were applied sequentially.

One possible constraint to the use of sequences is a very rigid attitude to the field guide or checklist. Some field teams can become obsessed with dealing with each and every issue on their checklist before allowing exercises to flow and different issues to be discussed. It will not always be easy for you, the trainer, to encourage trainees to use their checklist



flexibly, while giving them enough structure to overcome the initial panic that can set in at the start of fieldwork (see 6.3).

There are several strategies you can use to emphasise the value and encourage the use of sequences of methods.

1. When preparing for the fieldwork, introduce the checklist as a temporary and ever-changing list of issues. You could even describe the checklist as an aid to refer to if they get stuck and not something they must use at all times. After preparing their checklist, use the *Matching Issue and Method* (Exercise 77, Part II) thus encouraging them to think of one issue linked to several methods. Ensure that the teams revise their checklist each day.

2. Refer to the *But Why?* probing exercise (Exercise 85, Part II) when you notice lack of flexibility during the fieldwork or during a review meeting. Ask them to reflect on the value of not stopping after the first answer.
3. Refer to the *Spider Diagram* (Exercise 76, Part II). Ask them to formulate new issues that have arisen which were not on their original checklist.

Box 6.10 contains an example of how a sequence of methods was used by researchers to construct a typology of potato farmers in Punjab, Pakistan. The sequence was spread over four days of fieldwork. It begins with a range of resource and social maps constructed by men, women and children. From these, the names of all the potato growers and other farmers were elicited. This then meant that several pile sortings and wealth rankings could be conducted, which led to the eventual development of the typology. This was then used as a sample frame for the selection of farmers with whom to construct systems diagrams. This was to explore the particular difficulties of farmers in each of the different classes.

### 6.3.3 DEALING WITH SENIOR VISITORS

It is rare for senior officials or staff to attend training courses from start to finish. However, they often do wish to participate for short periods. This can be very beneficial and/or extremely disruptive. When senior officials attend opening and closing ceremonies or listen to presentations, their presence can be a strong endorsement of the new approach and can be a major incentive for others to overcome any reservations. If senior staff are able to participate fully, then other work demands will still probably compete for their time. Be ready for them to be delayed regularly. They may

also take longer to let go of status and hierarchy, and so are more likely to dominate certain discussions. John Devavaram of the Indian NGO, SPEECH, describes how a senior official during a training:

*"... was very much hesitant to get involved in the workshop process and asked for a separate chair, when all the other participants were on the ground. We later highlighted the key components of participatory learning and action in the process review, emphasising the way our behaviour and attitudes prevent people from acting on their own. To my surprise, this was very well received by him and in the next small group modelling exercise, he was the only one who encouraged the people to construct a three-dimensional model of the dam. Also, back on the floor, he shared his learning with other members, mentioning that this was the first time in his 30 years of working service he had realised that people could provide such detailed information on a Government project."*

To ensure continued institutional support for the use of participatory approaches after the training workshop ends, it is essential that senior staff should be involved in the training at some point. Some ways to encourage the positive involvement of senior staff include the following:

- Recommend *attendance at key points* during the workshop, such as when fieldwork results are being fed back or when active workshop exercises are planned.
- Organise a *debriefing session run by trainees* after the training. This can involve them in describing the process, critical findings and main conclusions, using the diagrams and charts prepared during the fieldwork.

**Box 6.10 Developing a typology of potato growers**

Using the names of potato growers obtained from the mapping exercises, the team asked a group of farmers to add any missing names and to then rank them according to size of potato holdings. The farmers produced three piles representing large, middle and small growers. The team explored movement between classes by asking “*is there anyone who moves from the middle to large class, or anyone from small to middle?*”. They then created new piles, including one for non-growers who sometimes grow. The frequency of cultivation of potatoes was written on each card (eg. two years in 10; or 4–5 years in 10). Another farmer was asked to do a wealth ranking and was guided using different sized paper circles for different wealth classes (big for rich and small for poor etc.). The other farmers present helped him. From the various *potato holding rankings*, six groups were identified as follows:

- A. *Large potato growers:* with more than six acres of potatoes (8 farmers).
- B. *Middle, sometimes large:* farmers with 4–6 acres of potatoes, but in 2–4 years out of ten having more than six acres (11 farmers).
- C. *Middle never large:* farmers with 4–6 acres of potatoes (8 farmers).
- D. *Small growers:* with less than 4 acres of potatoes (3 farmers).
- E. *Non-growers, sometimes small:* They grow potatoes once or twice in a ten-year period (4 farmers).
- F. *Never growing:* They never grow potatoes (13 farmers).

The reasons for never growing potatoes were explained by one non-potato grower. His land was very clayey and needed hard work. Production costs and risks are high. The wealth ranking revealed that land holding is the main criteria for wealth, supplemented by off-farm opportunities. There are five different categories of people:

- 1. *Rich:* having more than 12 acres of land
- 2. *Middle class:* having up to 12 acres
- 3. *Poor:* having less than 10 acres
- 4. *Very poor:* have no land and are tenants/contractors
- 5. *The poorest:* have no land or house (only one man found in this category)

Interestingly, the rich farmers were not always large potato growers, and similarly some of the poor farmers were large potato growers. The exercise helped the team understand who grows potatoes and why, and the changing patterns of cultivation. It also produced a sample frame for the ensuing participatory analyses, ensuring that a full range of farmers of different wealth statuses was selected.

Source: IIED/PSPDP (1992). *Participatory Rural Appraisal for Farmer Participatory Research in Punjab, Pakistan*. IIED, London.

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- Hold a *one-day workshop* that brings together representatives from the local community in which the fieldwork took place, the trainees, and relevant senior staff and other authorities. Allow the local people to make their presentations and the trainees to describe the core concepts and methods. Then give the senior staff time to ask questions and consider the implications of the approach.

- Organise a *meeting after the field reports have been prepared and circulated* to senior officials (perhaps 2–3 weeks after the training). Invite certain key trainees and local people to meet with the interested officials to discuss the conclusions and follow-up. This can lead to important discussions about follow-up in the community and in the relevant institutions.

### 6.4 REVIEW, FEEDBACK AND PRESENTATION

Information collection, analysis and preparation is a continuous and iterative process during participatory learning and



action. There is a regular need to review the process and assess information collected before planning the next stage. As a trainer, you should aim to facilitate this process at various stages during a field-based training course.

As the fieldwork develops, review sessions are important moments of reflection and are an opportunity for participants to get new inspiration and ideas. Review sessions are a vital way for you, as a trainer, to get feedback. You will not be able to follow each team but do try to sit in on some sessions of the different field teams. It is important to try not to intervene too much, but let people learn through their mistakes. You could encourage the teams to do their own reflection and feedback on process after each field session, as a preparation for the feedback with all the field teams. Here are a few suggestions for effective review sessions:

- *Hold regular review meetings*, both in the morning and afternoon/evening, with the whole group to discuss individual feelings and group dynamics as well as substantial findings. These can contribute greatly to the development of group norms for behaviour. Encourage participants to record their reactions and reflections in a field diary. Documenting the process of learning is vital for reflection at a later stage.

- *Reflect during review meetings* on how individuals felt before and after they had started a particular exercise or sequence of exercises. Ask the team:

*"What were you thinking about?"*

*"What were you finding difficult despite thorough planning and preparation?"*

*"How did you deal with any problems?"*

*"What ideas can you suggest for dealing with this problem?"*

- Encourage the groups to appoint a 'process observer' to report on the group dynamics for each new discussion with local people; try using Look Who's Talking (Exercise 36, Part II).

- Try one-minute *role plays of problems* encountered in the field during the reflection sessions.

#### 6.4.1 FIELDWORK FEEDBACK AND PRESENTATIONS

An essential part of participatory learning and action is presenting findings and proposals for action or research. Feedback sessions may take place in the workshop with the field team or in the field with villagers. There is no right or wrong way to organise a presentation and feedback session. A number of key issues to consider when planning such sessions include:

- *How?* What is the appropriate presentation style to encourage group analysis and reflection on information collected? There are three options: (1) *verbal*; (2) *written*; and (3) *visual presentations*. Each has its own pros and cons. Written presentations may clearly exclude non-literate commentators from participating in feedback. Good verbal presentations can be very effective, but very few people are able to present well. Visual presentations, particularly of diagrams developed by the team with villagers, may be the most effective form of presentation for group analysis and discussion in many situations. But of course not all the information can be portrayed visually and such information must also be included in the discussions. When several groups have information to report it will be time-consuming to have each present their findings separately. Sometimes a better way to encourage discussions using visualised material is to ask each group to present their exhibition. Others can then ask questions to those who are presenting, probing for details and implications.

- *Who?* Who presents and has a chance to analyse the information collected is a key issue. Information can be interpreted in many ways and it is important that diverse local perspectives are heard during presentations. It is good to encourage local women and men to present the findings of their joint analysis back to the field team and other villagers to initiate discussion. Breaking up into smaller discussion groups may offer the opportunity for more detailed and freer reflection. For instance, women or younger people may not speak out in gatherings dominated by older men.

- *Where?* The place where feedback and presentation takes place may influence the subsequent discussion. For example, meeting in the compound of a particular person might make it difficult for some people to attend. A village hall might be more appropriate if you wish to encourage everyone to attend.

- *When?* Allowing time for feedback in the field is a key component of the participatory processes. This allows villagers to have a chance to comment on the information and the analysis presented by the field team or other villagers. It is important to ensure that the feedback meeting takes place at a time of day which suits as many local people as possible.

If more than one site has been selected during the training, then presentations by participants of their findings to colleagues are also useful to:

- practise presentation skills;
- illustrate differences in methods and sequences used;
- describe innovations in methods;
- discuss issues of substance.



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But presentations can be time-consuming and boring if participants are not concise. If the presentation is to convince non-participants of the value of participatory methods, particularly if they are senior, then the trainer should follow the tips in Box 6.11.

### 6.4.2 PROCESSING INFORMATION AND WRITING-UP

Producing a field study report is often an important objective for a training workshop, but can be the most difficult part of the workshop. While trainers try to focus on shifting attitudes and ensuring the participants are familiar with the methods,

#### Box 6.11

##### Tips for good presentations

- Give plenty of *time for preparation* and allocation of roles within the group;
- Strictly *limit the time for each presentation*;
- Emphasise that presenters should *focus almost entirely on lessons learnt*, rather than details of substance;
- Appoint a *time-keeper* from within the presenting team to give a signal when the time has elapsed;
- Give *questions to guide the presentation*; such as *"What was the difference between this method or finding and what you have done in the past?"*; *"How can these findings be used for planning?"* etc;
- Use *'process matrices'* (see 6.4.3) as a way of organising presentations according to sequences of process;
- Use *exhibitions*, rather than formal presentations.

they must also cope with the need to ensure some written output by the end. Good follow-up to the work done in the community and in the training requires, thorough, and *timely*, documentation. It is easy to concentrate on the intensive field-based training while forgetting to document the process and the findings. People always seem to find the time to do the fieldwork, yet are almost always 'too busy' to write it up properly.

Although training should not focus unduly on the presentation of findings nor be evaluated on that basis, the report will be an important resource for follow-up for several reasons:

- it provides baseline information on which future activities will be built and performance can be monitored;
- a detailed report can convince other governmental and non-governmental organisations of the value of becoming involved in a community or area, or adopting a new approach;
- if good quality reports are made within the same institution, then inter-village comparisons and analyses of regional trends and changes become possible;
- it contributes to maintaining a good institutional memory.

Inevitably, towards the end of a training session, there is rarely enough time to do everything. A focus on report production often means overemphasising writing-up at the expense of a good discussion on participatory methods and analysis of the findings. This is a major dilemma in most field-based training courses which emphasise both learning and information generation. As a result, much valuable information remains hidden in the trainees' notebooks

and memories, while those participants with less experience in report-writing and group analysis can also be left at a disadvantage. Analytical skills are essential and it is often incorrectly assumed that all participants of training courses have them. Likewise, writing skills are needed for accurate and complete reporting. A five-step process for writing-up is shown in Box 6.12.

There is no single correct way of facilitating the writing-up. But there are several ways to make this process as enjoyable and productive as possible.

- *Analysis and writing-up should be a continuous process.* Make sure enough time is scheduled for this each day of the fieldwork and it is not left to a last minute rush. If participants are too tired to think and write, then you can suggest that they finalise any copies of diagrams which are not yet completed.

- Prepare a *pro-forma* or framework for documenting the process and key findings of each discussion that the participants fill in each day, one for each diagram or discussion. If you read these as they are filled in, then you can ask participants to add further important information that has been left out or is too brief. An example of a structure used to draw out the key information from each exercise is shown in Box 6.13. You can also discuss with the participants before leaving for the fieldwork what they feel is important to document, and develop a *pro-forma* together.

- Hold *regular feedback meetings* during which information gathered is also information shared. They are critical opportunities for participants to reflect on the lessons learned about the process of participatory learning and action. Care may have to be taken to ensure that certain extroverted individuals do not dominate. Ensure that checklists are revised

#### **Box 6.12 A five-stage process for report writing**

##### **Step 1:** *Collect information by objective.*

This can best begin in the field when the team is preparing their feedback session for the village. Write out each objective on a large sheet of paper. Then brainstorm all the important things that have been learned under each objective and write them down. If possible, do this on cards.

##### **Step 2:** *Organise the information.* If the information is on cards, you can group different subjects together (see *Delphi Technique*, Exercise 75, Part II). Once all the information is grouped by subject, then you can write an outline for the final report from the cards you have organised.

##### **Step 3:** *Analyse the information.* As a team, decide which information is the most important. What was surprising about what you learned in the field? Which parts do you want to treat in greater detail in the report because of their importance? What are the implications of what you have learned for future activities with the village or by your organisation? These key issues should be noted since they will be used to write a concluding section of the report.

##### **Step 4:** *Write-up the information in a report.* This can be divided up so that each person writes a section.

##### **Step 5:** *Review the report.* All the members of the team should read the report to make sure that the information is correct from their perspective and that nothing of importance has been left out. One person can edit the report to make sure that there is no duplication between sections and to incorporate the diagrams into the text.

*Source: Karen Schoonmaker Freudenberger, pers. comm.*

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and the pro-forma process sheets have been completed.

- After extensive feedback on the process and findings, trainers can help groups with a structure for the report. They can either provide a structure for the writing-up or facilitate a *discussion* in which the team decides on this. Team members can then divide up the writing tasks themselves.

**6.4.3 THE PROCESS MATRIX**

The Process Matrix is another useful method for encouraging trainees to reflect on their experience. This framework can help them systematically compare and contrast the work of the various field teams over the entire course of the fieldwork. The following sequence can be used for creating and using the matrix.

1. Prepare a large chalkboard or sheets of flip-chart paper (at least 1m x 3m) before the plenary discussion.
2. Write some (or all) of the following headings across the top of the matrix (feel free to add your own):
  - "Team Name/Meeting" (village/group, no. of men and women, location of meeting)
  - "Process" (sequence of presentations; roles and responsibilities)
  - "Key Issues Discussed"
  - "Planning Outcome and Follow-up"
  - "Particular Successes and Failures"
3. Write the names of the field teams or communities in which they worked down the left side of the matrix, with horizontal lines separating them. In this way, a matrix will be formed with the headings across the top, the team names down the side, and the rest of the sheet open.

<b>Box 6.13 Sample pro-forma for write-up of field exercises</b>	
Title ( <i>method and issues discussed</i> ):	Date, Place and Time ( <i>length</i> ) of Discussion:
.....	.....
.....	.....
Drawn by .....	
Facilitated by .....	
Recorded/redrawn by .....	
Materials used .....	
Process: .....	
.....	
.....	
Key Findings: .....	
.....	
.....	

4. Give the field teams 20–30 minutes to discuss these headings in relation to their own experiences. A representative of each team should then fill in the matrix for their respective group. Make sure they write clearly and in large letters so people may read it from a distance.
5. Once the matrix is completed, ask the teams to reflect on what they notice. You can point out how different teams used different sequences or combinations of methods for investigating various issues. The process matrix will usually highlight the importance of teamwork, the commonality of certain key issues (such as human health and access to health care, female education, afforestation) and the specificity of others. It can also identify specific and unexpected successes or failures from which many learning points can be drawn. Particular successes might include the creation of awareness of the need for strong village and women's organisations, and men's acceptance and appreciation of women's participation in the process. Particular problems might include language difficulties (some meetings require multiple translations) and late arrival of local people.
6. The completed process matrix should help the trainees realise how much they have achieved in a relatively short amount of time. It can also help you to see if the training has met its original objectives.

#### 6.4.4 ASSESSING PARTICIPANTS' PROGRESS

It is essential that you spend time finding out how well participants have progressed during the fieldwork. You will not have been able to accompany them all the time in the field, so you might consider reflecting on the following questions:

- Have they developed any bad habits?
- Have they come up with innovations?

- To what extent will they continue after the workshop with good habits?

You might be able to find out these things by asking participants directly. But it is more likely that bad habits will be unknown to individuals. You will, therefore, need to conduct some further workshop exercises and role plays. During these, you can observe participants and give feedback later. As this stage occurs after the fieldwork, the best option is to focus on what participants learned in the workshop, and how they will use the methods in their work. Koos Neefjes of Oxfam/UK describes how this was done in a training workshop:

*"We put the participants in selected teams of trainers and interviewers, and asked them to construct a matrix with criteria and options of all the participatory methods. It took some hours, but it was well worth it. The trainers observed how the interviewers conducted their interviews, and were able to comment on their behaviour, communicating to them through notes passed to them discreetly. Afterwards the roles were reversed, but this task focused on the production of systems and flow diagrams based on what participants had learned in the field.*

*Both were very useful for the trainers to see how skills had developed and what participants had learned in the fieldwork, in terms of facilitation skills and understanding local livelihoods. Also the different field teams had the chance to discuss their fieldwork with other groups without going into lengthy and boring descriptions."*

Another approach is to ask participants to write down the lessons learnt each day during the fieldwork about the principles

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and practice of participatory approaches, and how they relate to their own communications skills. These can then be shared, if appropriate, with the entire group, or just used by yourself to assess what issues they are increasingly becoming aware of.

### 6.5 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST: TRAINING IN THE FIELD

- *Have you made full preparations for the field (see Box 6.1)?*
- *Has there been close dialogue with the communities hosting the field work?*
- *What arrangements have been made for accommodation? for food and beverages? for transport?*
- *Have you reached a clear and commonly agreed division of tasks with other co-trainers for the fieldwork?*
- *How will the interdisciplinary teams for the field be selected: self-selecting or pre-selected?*
- *Have you thought about how to help participants make the transition in the field from the verbal to the visual?*
- *Are participants prepared to sequence methods?*
- *Are you expecting senior visitors in the workshop or the field? How will you deal with their presence without it disrupting existing teams?*
- *Have arrangements been made to ensure all findings are presented back to villagers? Who will make the presentations?*
- *How will the writing-up process be managed? Will all the participants be involved? Who will get copies of the reports afterwards? Who will use the information?*
- *How will you assess whether participants have made any progress during the workshop?*



## **7.1 LAYING THE GROUNDWORK**

We have covered most of the elements needed for a training programme. These now need to be combined to meet the specific needs of the institution and participants for whom you are running the programme. In this chapter we describe how training needs analysis, combined with in-depth institutional analysis, is a way to help design your training programme. This is followed by suggestions for logistical arrangements, planning the course content and structure, evaluations and revisions for the future. A trainer's checklist completes the chapter.

### **7.1.1 TYPES OF TRAINING WORKSHOPS**

There are several different types of courses that can be used for training in participatory approaches. Each has different objectives and it is critical not to confuse them. The clearer you are about the realistic objectives, the clearer the participants will be about what they should have learnt. Each requires careful design and a different approach to preparation and follow-up. The courses may vary in length from half a day to 15 days, or be a series of lectures spread over a longer period. Sample programmes of each of these types of courses can be found in section 7.3.2.

Types of training workshops include the following:

#### **● LECTURE/SERIES OF SESSIONS:**

A series of one to two-hour lectures or sessions spread over a term, such as in a college, university or any training institute.

#### **● BRIEF EXPOSURE/ORIENTATION:**

A brief half to one-day session, where participants are exposed to a range of methods, achievements and methodological issues. There may be time to practise one or two

methods. If this is their first exposure to participatory approaches, then the participants are not likely to be effective practitioners at the end. However, they should know enough to want to explore the methods and principles further, perhaps even trying them out on a limited scale. It should be emphasised that this does not constitute a full 'training' in the methods.

#### **● LONGER EXPOSURE/ORIENTATION:**

A short two to five-day course, where participants can gain a good grasp of basic principles, core concepts and basic methods, but will not necessarily be in a position to be strong practitioners. Participants have the opportunity for reflection on methods and processes, and so can make adaptations to their own needs. This can have a focus on training methodologies if the aim is to train trainers.

#### **● FIELD-BASED TRAINING:**

This type of course can take 7–14 days, and includes a significant field component. It aims to expose participants to a range of methods and to allow them to test and evaluate them in a field setting. Participants can be expected to develop reasonable field proficiency in methods, principles, and necessary behaviour and attitudes.

#### **● TRAINING OF TRAINERS:**

This requires more time and extended exposure. Working together with experienced trainers is one of the most effective ways of learning (see Chapter 2). Field-based training of trainer courses are possible if all the participants have had prior experience as practitioners with the methods and theory of participatory approaches to development.

These training approaches are not mutually exclusive. They can be used in sequence as part of a training strategy for an organ-

<b>7.1 Laying the Groundwork</b>
<b>7.1.1 Types of Training Workshops</b>
<b>7.1.2 Assessing Training Needs</b>
<b>7.2 Logistical Arrangements</b>
<b>7.2.1 The Learning Group</b>
<b>7.2.2 Facilities and Accommodation</b>
<b>7.2.3 Field Sites and Transport</b>
<b>7.2.4 Documentation and Follow-up</b>
<b>7.3 Planning the Content and Structure</b>
<b>7.3.1 Design Considerations</b>
<b>7.3.2 The First Session</b>
<b>7.3.3 Sample Programmes</b>
<b>7.4 Evaluations and Revisions</b>
<b>7.5 Trainer's Checklist: Organising Workshops</b>

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isation. Different types of courses may be appropriate for different groups of people. Exposure courses may be appropriate for relatively senior personnel who are unlikely to use the approach in the field, but need to know its purpose in order to encourage its use. Field-based training is appropriate for field practitioners who are likely to use a participatory approach in their work. Training of trainers courses are appropriate for seasoned practitioners, or for those with a specific staff development role. They should help to reinforce the capacity within an organisation to continue to provide other types of courses without external support. Training of trainers courses tend to involve fewer people, but specifically those who are likely to have a key role in future training activities.

### 7.1.2 ASSESSING TRAINING NEEDS

The impact of a training event will depend largely on its institutional and organisational context. As described in Chapter 1,



the general objective of a course in participatory approaches is *to establish a learning approach that encourages self-development*. But this may conflict with the culture and structure of organisations involved in the course or workshop. For example, organisations want participatory approaches and systems without acknowledging that existing structures make it very difficult to adopt participatory approaches. The problem is that training alone will not convert a conventional, technically-oriented, bureaucratised institution into a more people-centred strategic organisation.

Institutional constraints must be borne in mind during the planning and execution of the course, as they may well make your training task particularly difficult. Box 7.1 summarises some of the most important of these constraints. Organisations which operate under some of these constraints become introspective and resistant to new ideas over time.

Before any training begins, the most important step is for you to find a way of understanding the training needs of the relevant institutions and individuals, and the constraints present in the particular institutional setting. Although it might be a tempting option, and certainly it involves less work, a predesigned training programme is rarely going to fit the specific needs of a new institution or group of trainees. And the best way to adapt and finely-tune a programme is to find out as much as you can about institutional context beforehand. The more the content and style is tailored to meet particular needs, the more likely it is that you will bring about some permanent organisational changes.

A full training needs analysis of an organisation is an elaborate process and is beyond the scope of this guide (see Lynton and Pareek, 1990). However, if you

### Box 7.1 Common organisational constraints

- Institutions are frequently organised on authoritarian rather than participatory management styles.
- Management positions are often held on basis of seniority or research ability rather than management skills.
- Creative innovation is rarely tolerated, for which disincentives are more common than incentives.
- Institutional learning is difficult with a rapid turnover of staff.
- Staff development is frequently in the form of refresher training where new facts are transmitted, rather than personal development encouraged.
- Status divisions may be rigidly followed, eg researcher versus extension worker, social versus natural scientist, and limit sharing of perspectives and generation of new ideas.
- Group work is frequently only seen in terms of meetings that actually stifle innovation rather than enhance it.
- Participatory approaches are seen as being too demanding and challenging in terms of personal commitment and human resource investments, and therefore, too professionally risky.
- Institutional focus is on *product*, measurable results, rather than on *process*, the manner and means of achieving those results.
- Lack of training to strengthen capacity leads to disillusionment and frustration of those organisations keen to use more widely the new participatory approaches.

Sources: Ray Ison (1990); John Thompson (1995)

are in a position to be involved in the training needs analysis, then Box 7.2 outlines major steps required. This can be conducted by a small group within the organisation, or in a comprehensive fashion with all staff involved.

However, in practice, trainers are often called in after an organisation has already analysed its own needs. This analysis might have been conducted in a participatory manner or decided on by a single person. Try to find out who made the analysis and how. You will have to use this

### Box 7.2 Steps in Participatory Training Needs Analysis

1. Clarify staff job descriptions, which includes analysing the overall duties and specific tasks related to the job.
2. Ask postholders to formulate suggestions for improving their job descriptions.
3. Ask postholders to identify their own knowledge about, attitudes towards and skills in participatory development approaches.
4. Ask postholders to identify existing gaps in knowledge about, attitudes towards and skills in participatory development approaches.
5. Ask postholders to identify organisational constraints related to use of participatory approaches and ways to minimise them.
6. Together determine priorities in training needs to fill gaps and in ways to overcome key organisational constraints.

Source: Zeneta Peixoto Franca, pers. comm.



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analysis as the basis for planning your training session and strategy. But it is still essential to build up your own assessment through observation and discussion. You might want to conduct some semi-structured interviews with diverse individuals and groups, such as managers, secretaries, researchers and drivers. You could consider doing a transect walk through buildings and speaking with those you meet. Try to read as much secondary data as possible – reports, past training reviews, written policies, personnel evaluations, etc. The more

### Box 7.3 Basic questions for planning of training

- What is the 'problem' to be addressed by training?
- How did this come about?
- Will training be (part of) the answer?
- What do I need to do to make this workshop successful?
- How will I know if success is realised?
- How does this workshop fit in with a Training Strategy?

Source: adapted from Williams et al (1994)

information and opinions, the easier you will find it to design a course to meet those particular needs. Ask yourself six basic questions (Box 7.3).

The stages outlined below provide further suggestions for the analysis which will help you ensure maximum benefit from the training:

1. The first stage is to *determine the nature of the problem*. It may be that a training course in participatory methods cannot solve the problem. There may be structural problems in an institution, or wider policies that affect behaviour and planning styles. They may be due to attitudes of individuals inside or outside the institution. Ask yourself, why is this institution asking for a course?



2. Find out more about the *organisational style and history*, and try to pinpoint important weaknesses. Ask those who have worked there for a long time about the history of previous approaches and attempts to resolve problems by training. Inquire about staff incentives for doing particular types of work.

3. Identify individuals for specific training by asking: *who would benefit most, or who could have the widest impact with what has been learnt?* Consult a range of people in the institution or in the commissioning agency. This is the opportunity to ensure that participants are drawn from a wide range of institutions and contexts. If one particular organisation, such as a ministry or an agricultural university, is the principal client for the training, and it is known that they currently have poor linkages with NGOs in the field, then this is the time for trainers to apply pressure to ensure that participants from NGOs are invited too. Evidence strongly suggests that participants brought together in this way learn greatly from each other, and can establish permanent working linkages.
4. *Assess the expectations of the participants.* What have they heard about the course? By finding out these perceptions, either directly or indirectly, you can respond to them when planning the workshop. Remember, not all the expectations of everyone can be met. You can tell the participants that you consulted widely before designing the programme, and have tried to include as many perspectives as possible, but not all of them.
5. Provide other people who are helping to organise the course with any necessary information. *Logistical arrangements* will need to be made, and responsibilities allocated. Make sure that everyone agrees on the division of responsibilities. You all depend on each other for a successful training. See section 7.2 for detailed suggestions about such arrangements.
6. *Formulate a Training Strategy*, including the sequence of training appropriate for the particular setting. This must go beyond a single training event. Training strategies should

consider the development of participants over at least two to three years. Make it clear to the organisation who requested the training that a one-off session will not have a lasting impact. Defining a training strategy should not be done by an outsider alone, but with the organisation for whom it applies. Only then will the organisation feel it has a stake in making the training work, and realise that one session alone will not be enough.

The most important information for you will be the participants' expectations. Expectations and objectives for the course should, ideally, match closely. It is also important to establish some dialogue with the participants as early on as possible. Let participants have materials to read before the workshop, and let them know what to expect. Find out where there may be resistance. If possible, ensure that senior staff in the institution are committed not only to letting the course happen, but also to it having a lasting effect. The importance of this cannot be underestimated. So much training effort is wasted because there is too little support from the relevant, usually powerful, people, who could provide incentives for the participants to change their practice when they return from the course.

Ideally, you should include a session during the training course to discuss what the institutional implications would be of the change in practice towards a more participatory style. Even during a one-day course a quick brainstorm session at the end of the day would be helpful in two ways. First, it will make participants appreciate that participatory approaches are not a toolbox but actually have far-reaching implications for other jobs. Second, a brainstorm will help deal with the unspoken concerns that some participants will have about how

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this fits into their everyday lives. By asking them to reflect on what obstacles they expect when they return to their desks, it draws their minds out of the training context and back to reality.

Trainers who promise quick results to clients, or clients who commission a training to occur as soon as possible, generally waste time and money as well as miss opportunities. Such courses can only be partially effective, as trainers will not have had the time to understand enough about the institutional context. They also will have had no opportunity to identify areas of follow-up needed after the course. A standardised programme is cheaper, but is more likely to miss key aspects of trainees' needs. The tailor-made programme should fit the organisation, the trainees' job and capabilities and their learning styles.

After the training needs analysis and discussions with key individuals, you will need to determine the objectives for the training. These will include your objectives as a trainer, the objectives of the participants, and the objectives of the institution at large. To these may be added those of the funding agency, which may have entirely different aims. Where possible, even for general objectives, try to formulate objectives which summarise your expectations about the benefits of the training course. This will make monitoring and evaluation of the learning impact more clear for yourself, the participants and other key staff after the event (see also section 2.2.1).

### 7.2 LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

To ensure a smooth and continuous learning process, the basic arrangements should be thoroughly organised in advance. If this is not the case, then you may find that participants will focus their energy on complaining about the arrangements rather

than pursuing their personal development. Logistical arrangements will have to be organised for four aspects of the training:

- the learning group;
- facilities and accommodation;
- field sites and transport (if field-based training);
- documentation and follow-up.

The next sections deal in more detail with each of these areas. It might seem like a lengthy list, but remember that thinking through these issues beforehand can save you many headaches during the workshop and lay the basis of an effective training course. For more details, see Section 2.2.

#### 7.2.1 THE LEARNING GROUP

It is important to think carefully about the participants. What disciplines will be represented? Which departments of the organisation? How many women will attend or have any been invited? How motivated will the participants be, and how ready to learn? Have they been exposed to interactive training and learning before? When was the last time they were in a workshop or classroom? How much practical experience do they possess?

##### A. HOW MANY TRAINEES? AND WHAT MIX?

- For a field-based workshop: 16–24 people works well, although 25–30 is manageable.
- For lectures and one-day sessions: anything up to 70 can be dealt with, depending on the facilities. Beware though that after about 35–40 interactive training becomes much more difficult.
- Ideally half the participants should be women, half men, to reflect the reality of a local community. In some cultures, this will not be possible. It may be necessary, for example, to have women only workshops.

- Wherever possible, it is extremely useful to involve local people, possibly from the field-work area, in the full training as trainees or as resource people (this usually requires more preparation, but it can benefit everyone).

- As many trainees as possible should have a good working knowledge of the local culture(s), language(s) and issues.

**B. WHAT SHOULD THE TRAINING FOCUS BE?**

- *Research focus:* ideally half should be physical scientists, half social scientists, with a mix of extensionists and local people.

- *Development focus:* ideally half should be local people and practitioners, half should be policy-makers and higher-level officials (government and NGO).

**C. WHEN WILL PARTICIPANTS KNOW ABOUT THE COURSE?**

- Arrange for all invitations to be sent out well in advance, together with workshop agendas.

- Arrange for travel permits, tickets etc to be sent.

- Ensure that all participants know what is expected of them, including the timings of the workshop and if expenses or *per diems* will be paid.

**D. WILL TRANSLATORS BE NEEDED?**

- If field translators are needed, then they should be present for the whole workshop. If they come just for the fieldwork, then they will not feel part of the team. They will also not have been exposed to the principles, concepts and methods in the early part of the workshop. Translators must be treated as complete equals for successful fieldwork.

**7.2.2 FACILITIES AND ACCOMMODATION**

**A. WHAT WILL THE WORKSHOP OR CLASSROOM FACILITIES BE LIKE?**

- How many rooms are available?

- What size are the rooms? Are there obstructing pillars, bad ventilation, inadequate lighting arrangements, etc?

- How close is the location to the offices of the participants? If this is too close, they will always be disappearing to their desks, which will affect the concentration and dedication of everyone.

- What sort of chairs and tables are available? Are they fixed in place or movable? Can you mix up the format to suit your training style?

- Is a slide projector, video player, overhead projector available? What about electricity supplies?

- Are flipcharts, newsprint, pens and paper available?

**B. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS NEED TO BE MADE FOR ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD DURING WORKSHOP?**

- Accommodation should be close to workshop facilities and provided for everyone throughout the training. If participants are allowed to go home, this can disrupt the workshop process as some will inevitably be late each morning.

- The food should be of sufficient quality to satisfy the participants. Try to ensure it will vary, and not be the same every day. Check whether any participants have special dietary needs. The biggest rebellions in workshops are often over food.

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### 7.2.3 FIELD SITES AND TRANSPORT

#### A. HOW WILL THE SITES BE SELECTED AND HOW WILL LOCAL PEOPLE BE INFORMED?

- *Communication:* Local leaders should be contacted well in advance to ask their permission, and briefed about the purpose of the fieldwork. It can be very useful to give a short presentation for village representatives (do not forget the marginalised groups) in order to explain the objective of the exercise and allow them to decide whether or not they wish to participate.

- *Representativeness:* Sites should be culturally and ecologically representative of the working area.

- *Local accommodation:* Where feasible, arrangements should be made for trainees to stay in or near the local community. This may be impossible for large groups. However, even a single night in the community can be an eye-opening experience.

- *Sites should be relatively accessible*, but not just outside the gates of the training centre (make every effort to avoid "rural development tourism"). Generally, a good rule to follow is to find a site within 30 minutes' drive of the training facility. That way trainees will be on the road for no more than 1 hour a day if you cannot find accommodation at the field site itself.

- *Food and drink for fieldwork:* the team should either bring food or money to purchase it locally and hire someone to prepare it. There should be enough food to share with those local people who go out of their way to assist the trainees.

- *Meetings:* Mutually acceptable times and dates should be found for meetings with the individual groups and the community, including initial introductions and final feedback.

#### B. WHAT TRANSPORT WILL BE NEEDED FOR THE FIELD WORK?

- Sufficient number of cars to seat all participants and trainers (plus any supplies). When available, local transport may be used, although this can be unreliable and sometimes even dangerous. Ensure that you have transport in the field at all times, for emergencies and any travel to and from outlying areas in the field site.

- Drivers for each vehicle.

- Petrol allocations or money for petrol; check if fuel is available.

- Spare tires, parts and tools for repairs.

### 7.2.4 DOCUMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

There are many different kinds of documented outputs that could come from a workshop. These include:

- materials for use by participants during and after the workshop;
- reports for the client/donor/commissioning organisation;
- case study material from the studied villages/communities;
- action plans;
- summaries to senior officials;
- methodological notes for other trainers and practitioners.

If one of the course objectives is to produce a field case study report, some prior planning needs to go into ensuring that this actually happens. Consider some of the following questions:

*Why is a report needed?*

*Who is the report for?*

*What type of format/presentation is appropriate?*

What language should it be in?

Who will write it?

Who will edit and compile it?

Who will produce and distribute it?

How much time will all this take?

Who pays?

Are there any strategic deadlines to keep in mind for production (eg annual meetings, evaluations)?

#### A. WHAT ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR REPORT WRITING?

● *Time*: Sufficient time and resources should be set aside for reflecting on the workshop process and the fieldwork, and for writing up the results.

● *Commitment*: Trainees should be briefed on the importance of good documentation and be informed that they will be expected to complete a final field report before leaving the training site.

● *Photos*: In order to save time and energy, photos can be taken of the diagrams produced during the fieldwork rather than have them redrawn by trainees. The photos can be photocopied and used in the report.

● *Process*: The purpose of training is to expose people to the core concepts, key methods and potential applications of participatory inquiry. Encourage trainees to track the process of their fieldwork (eg, team–community dynamics, sequencing of methods, unexpected discoveries) and include it in the report (see 6.4.2).

● *Ownership*: Original copies of all relevant diagrams and maps produced during the fieldwork should be seen as the rightful property of the local people and therefore should be returned to them at the end of the training.

### 7.3 PLANNING THE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

#### 7.3.1 DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Having decided upon the objectives and thought through the logistics, the next stage is to plan the content of the course. Begin by listing the key points you wish to cover, aiming to keep the material as relevant to the working environment of the participants as possible. Divide these into what the trainees *Must Know*, *Should Know* and *Could Know*. Build your plan around the first of these, and add the others later. Indicate the objectives of the training and the benefits for the trainees.

Now consider how you are going to achieve the objectives. Select your sequence of presentations, exercises, games and reviews, and give them approximate timings. Plan in such a way that trainees can make small sequential steps in learning. Reinforce and repeat. Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992) put it like this:

*“Over-full, hurried programmes occur when trainers promise quick results to client organisations. To do this is unprofessional, and harms the image of training. It is always better to select a few vital topics, and to help participants understand them fully and master the associated skills. An experiential approach to learning will provide participants with ideas and skills which will improve both their operational ability and their self-confidence.*

*It takes repetition to let insights sink in, to weave them into a network, and to practise necessary skills.”*

Build on each step by demonstrating and having the trainees practise or analyse. Observe and correct errors; allow them to discover for themselves benefits and

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shortcomings of the new skills they are learning. Attitudinal change usually follows behavioural change, and so exercises and practice are essential to encourage long-term attitude change. Design considerations important for every workshop or course are shown in Box 7.4.

### 7.3.2 THE FIRST SESSION

The first session is one of the most important of the workshop. You may well be feeling apprehensive. The participants will be feeling uncertain about what to expect and might be nervous. They may be thinking of their desks, and all the work

piling up. For some participants, it may be their first time in a classroom since they were at school or college. For others, they will be thinking of another training course they attended that was boring. You must capture their attention and get them fully engaged right from the start. Remember also that it is what happens prior to the formal beginning of the workshop that sets a framework for success or failure. You should know who your participants will be, and that everyone knows something in advance about the workshop. You should have a sense of the organisational constraints and strengths.

#### Box 7.4 Design considerations

■ *Only plan what can be planned*

Group development and learning can be facilitated, but not regulated. Leave room in your planning to make continual changes and adjustments.

■ *Don't plan further ahead than what can be overseen*

Planning ahead in minute-to-minute detail for more than the first day is unnecessary. The group process can develop in unexpected ways, the programme can run behind schedule, or an interim evaluation can indicate that priorities have changed. However, it is still necessary for you to think ahead and make an overall plan for what each session of each day will aim to do. This broad outline can be presented to the participants.

■ *Plan as much as possible with the involvement of the participants*

If the trainees can be made aware of the purposes, direction and possibilities of the course, then they can become involved in decisions about the programme. After all, it is their learning experience.

■ *Move from the general to the particular – then back to the general*

At first the materials should be general and impersonal, gradually concentrating on personal behaviour and areas likely to be problematic for the participants. Towards the end, you will need to draw back to the wider principles to give participants the chance to switch back to the daily work outside the training context.

■ *Stay close to reality*

The more realistic the exercises, the more likely it is that learning will be integrated into the participants' future behaviour. Always rewrite even the most successful role plays and exercises to suit their particular needs.

■ *Always consider participants' energy levels*

Provide variety and regular, well-timed breaks. Participants will enjoy themselves more if there is a variety of roles, subject matter and types of learning situations.

Source: adapted from Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992)

When participants arrive, you should act as if *you are a host*. A good host greets the guests warmly, introduces them to one another, and tries to make sure that everyone has a pleasant time. Acting like this as a trainer will break the ice, and get people smiling and relaxed before you start.

You might not be able to avoid a formal opening. Although this is not the style in which the training will continue, it might be a necessary part of the workshop. The participants may feel pleased that the workshop is sufficiently important for the opening to be formal. It might give them a sense of urgency and commitment towards living up to the expectations the organisation has regarding the workshop. If journalists from local newspapers or radio stations are present, then this can be a support also, as it impresses on senior staff the importance of the training session and any follow-up.

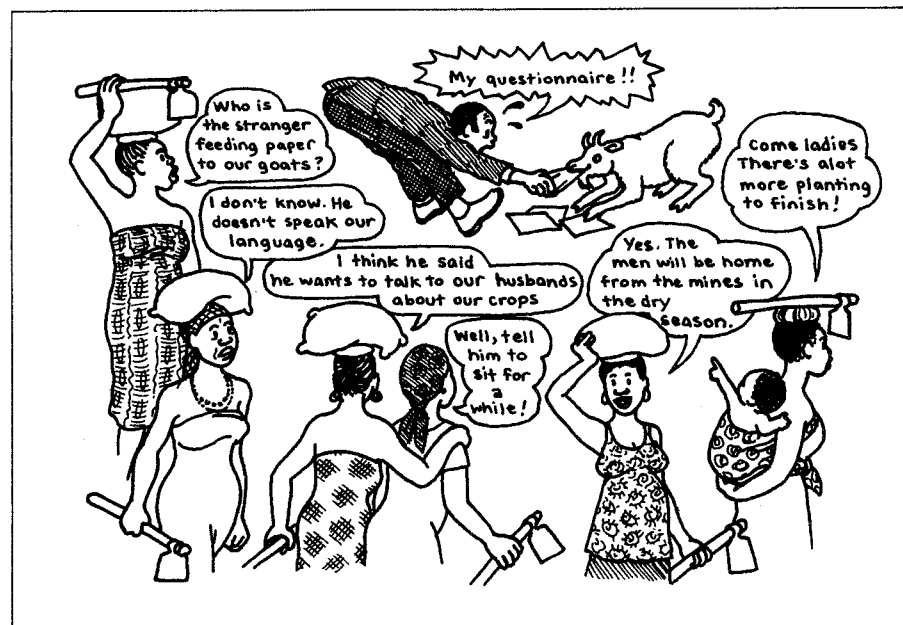
After the formal opening, you can take over and develop the training session in your own style. First, ensure that all the 'housekeeping' is sorted out at the start. Participants will be unhappy and unable to learn if they are expecting *per diems* but will not get them; if their rooms are inadequate; if the food is bad; if they could not find their accommodation; and if they do not know how long each day will last.

The best way to engage their attention for the tasks ahead is by setting them a concrete task as a way of introduction (see 3.3.1 for suggestions for exercises). Starting off with a participatory exercise will set the tone for the rest of the training. Dealing with their fears and expectations early on will make them aware that you are sensitive to their needs. You might wish to reflect on your respective responsibilities by agreeing on a set of ground rules creating the conditions that make it easy for

everyone to learn. These are just a few tips for how you can deal with the important, tone-setting first session. In the sample programmes below other ideas are given for how you can structure your training programme.

### 7.3.3 SAMPLE PROGRAMMES

Everything contained in this guide should now come together for the running of your course. A great deal will depend upon the time you have available. Sample programmes are shown that describe sessions for 2 hours, one day, one week and two weeks. These are only meant to show what can be achieved and are not blueprints for programmes. To plan your own sessions, use the form contained at the end of Chapter 2 that sets out time, topic, method, format, predicted energy level of participants, responsibility and logistical requirements. When designing your programme, also remember the design considerations in Box 7.4.





## 7 ORGANISING WORKSHOPS FOR TRAINING, ORIENTATION AND EXPOSURE

### I. Indicative programme for a 2-hour session

- 1400
- Who We Are, or other introductions exercise
  - Introduction to objectives of session
  - Introduction to principles and methods of PRA
  - Use of short exercises to make particular points (eg Whose Watch; Seeing the Ks and Hs; Rucksack)
- 1430
- Buzz groups to discuss data collection needs and problems
  - Plenary presentations of subgroup work
- 1500
- Presentation of case study (use slides/transparencies)
  - General discussion on key issues
- 1530
- Group comparative analysis of diagrams (hand-outs)
  - Presentation of key findings and discussion
- 1555
- Summary of key issues covered
- 1600
- Conclusion

### II. Indicative programme for a one-day session

- Before:
- Arrange informal seating
- 0900
- Agree programme contract, discuss how long people can stay
  - Introductions and expectations exercise. Or, if group too large, do Who We Are, or Hopes and Fears on board
- 0915
- Identify and make use of experience in group: ask who has experience of participatory methods
- 0930
- Introduction to principles and methods (use slides/transparencies)
- 1030
- Break
- 1045
- Fruit Salad as energiser and group former
  - Matrix scoring exercise in small groups with large sheets of paper or chalk on ground

- Presentation of findings or roving exhibition
  - Discussions and evaluation
- 1200
- Maps and models, analysis of diagrams (hand-outs)
  - Presentation of slides
  - Buzz groups on differences between paper and ground for diagrams
- 1300
- Lunch
- 1400
- Jigsaw Puzzle to energise and form new groups
  - Semi-Structured Interviewing – presentation on key issues
  - Fact–Opinion–Rumour exercise
  - Saboteur game in threes
  - But Why? game
- 1545
- Break
- 1600
- Presentation on issues of institutionalising methods
  - Discussion on difficulties participants likely to face
- 1630
- Participants write brief plan of action based on findings
- 1645
- Evaluation exercise

### III. Indicative programme for a one-week course

#### DAY 1

- 0900
- Orientation/Overview of Programme
- 0930
- Self-Introductions; with Self-Portrait, current area of specialisation, what I expect to learn from the training; what I can contribute to the training
- 1045
- Fruit Salad
- 1100
- Buzz Session 1: Diagramming of 'participation' in small groups
- 1145
- Recapitulation of Buzz Session points
- 1200
- Overview: Participatory Appraisal – Past Results, Present Trends & Future Prospects
- 1230
- Lunch
- 1345
- Case presentation on PRA

- 1400 ▪ Panel presentation: local experiences with PRA – four 10-minute presentations by participants
- 1500 ▪ Question & Answer Session
- 1545 ▪ Circle Square Game
- 1600 ▪ Semi-Structured Interviews; SSI Photo Game; and Saboteur
- 1645 ▪ Plenary Review & Reflection
- 1700 ▪ End Day

**DAY 2**

- 0900 ▪ Review of Day 2 Programme & Open Discussion
- 1000 ▪ Neighbourhood Maps
- 1015 ▪ Key PRA Concepts & Methods: Visualisation & Spatial Analysis (slides & overheads)
- 1030 ▪ Maps and Transects – small group assignment: mapping of area around the institution with local people
- 1145 ▪ Maps, Models & Transects – Group Presentations
- 1220 ▪ Maps, Models & Transects – Strengths & Limitations
- 1230 ▪ Lunch and Video
- 1400 ▪ Key PRA Concepts & Methods: Introductions & Practical Exercises – Visualisation & Preference Analysis – Matrix Scoring & Ranking (slides & overheads)
- 1415 ▪ Matrix Scoring & Ranking – Small Group Exercises
- 1545 ▪ Matrix Scoring & Ranking – Group Presentations & Debriefing
- 1630 ▪ Open Plenary Session
- 1730 ▪ Video

**DAY 3**

- 0900 ▪ Key PRA Concepts & Methods: Introductions & Practical Exercises – Visualisation and Temporal & Systems Analysis – Historical, Seasonal & Daily Diagramming/Systems, Impact & Flow Diagramming

- 1510 ▪ Temporal & Systems Analysis – Small Group Exercises (begin)
- 1545 ▪ Temporal & Systems Analysis – Small Group Exercises (end)
- 1600 ▪ Roving Exhibition & Debriefing
- 1620 ▪ Energising Exercise & Group Formation
- 1630 ▪ Key PRA Concepts & Methods: Introductions & Practical Exercises – Visualisation & Institutional Analysis
- 1645 ▪ Visualisation & Institution & Systems Analysis – Small Group Exercises
- 1715 ▪ Roving Exhibition & Debriefing
- 1730 ▪ Open Plenary Session; group presentations for Day 4
  - Revision of checklist
  - Reassignment of roles & responsibilities
- 2030 ▪ End Day/Facilitators & Organisers Prepare for Day 4

**DAY 4**

- 0730 ▪ Review of Day 3 Programme
- 0745 ▪ Fieldwork Preparations: secondary data review & checklist development; team assignments: roles & responsibilities; team contract
- 0845 ▪ Coffee; Logistical arrangements
- 0930 ▪ Travel to Fieldsite(s)
- 1030 ▪ Fieldwork: introductory meeting with farmers/local people; fieldwork (begin)
- 1530 ▪ Field Teams Return
- 1645 ▪ Reflection & Review: plenary discussion; process matrix (for comparing field processes)
- 1730 ▪ End Day/Facilitators & Organisers Prepare for Day 5

**DAY 5**

- 0900 ▪ Review of Day 5 Programme
- 0915 ▪ Final Discussion on Fieldwork & Process
- 0945 ▪ Future Applications: 'Individual Action Plans' (begin)
- 1045 ▪ Future Applications: 'Individual Action Plans' (end)

**7 ORGANISING WORKSHOPS FOR TRAINING, ORIENTATION AND EXPOSURE**

- 1115 ■ Sharing of Individual Action Plans
- 1200 ■ Energising Exercise & Group Formation
- 1215 ■ Institutionalisation of Participatory Approaches in participants' institution: plenary brainstorming discussion; 'Margolis Wheel' (for reflecting on constraints and opportunities)
- 1300 ■ Lunch
- 1400 ■ Institutionalisation of Participatory Approaches: review findings of Margolis Wheel; group work (by Division/Department/Subject)
- 1545 ■ Group presentations and plenary discussion
- 1645 ■ Energising Exercise
- 1700 ■ Workshop Evaluation: instant evaluation and open evaluation
- 1730 ■ Close/Participants Depart/Facilitators' Review of Workshop



**IV. Indicative programme for a two-week field-based course**

**DAY 1: WORKSHOP**

- 1600 ■ Opening (formal)
- 1615 ■ Programme presentation, housekeeping and review of material/hand-outs that participants received
- 1640 ■ Introductions & Two Good Things
- 1705 ■ Explanation of evaluation methods (Mood Meter and Suggestions Chart)
- 1710 ■ Fruit Salad
- 1720 ■ Review of history of the organisation

- 1805 ■ Group discussions on the organisation and the participatory approach
  - Q1: What do you see as your role in the organisation?
  - Q2: What methods have you used for incorporating local people's views in your activities?
  - Q3: What constraints to working in a participatory manner have you faced?
- 1830 ■ Plenary of sub-group presentations
- 1900 ■ Dinner
- 2000 ■ Overview of concepts and principles (overheads and slides)
- 2045 ■ Video
- 2110 ■ End of day

**DAY 2: WORKSHOP**

- 0900 ■ Questions & answers on PRA
- 0910 ■ Neighbourhood Maps exercise
- 0920 ■ Mental Maps
- 0930 ■ Slides on mapping
- 0940 ■ Tea Blend (variation of Fruit Salad)
- 0950 ■ Transect walk combined with (in new groups)
- 1025 ■ Mapping/Modelling
- 1055 ■ Group map/model presentations
- 1130 ■ Semi-Structured Interviews: overview
- 1135 ■ SSI Photo exercise
- 1200 ■ Group SSI presentations
- 1225 ■ Interviewing skills: probing, judging, observing & recording
- 1230 ■ Fact–Opinion–Rumour exercise
- 1240 ■ Lunch
- 1330 ■ Saboteur exercise
- 1350 ■ Slide set on use of methods in sequence and in parallel by different teams.
- 1410 ■ Investigating Wealth & Well-being: group discussions
  - Q1: What methods have you used for finding the poor?
  - Q2: How did you use them?
  - Q3: What problems/constraints did you experience in using these methods to find the poor?

- 1430 ▪ Plenary on Investigating Wealth & Well-being
- 1500 ▪ Break
- 1515 ▪ Wealth Ranking (slides and overheads, description of process, questions and answers)
- 1600 ▪ Numbers Game
- 1610 ▪ Matrix Scoring overview and case study (slides and overheads)
- 1650 ▪ Matrix Scoring exercise
- 1750 ▪ Matrix Scoring: group presentations
- 1825 ▪ End of day

**DAY 3: WORKSHOP**

- 0900 ▪ Review of concepts & methods covered
- 0920 ▪ Seasonality Analysis, Historical Trends & Systems Diagramming overview
- 0940 ▪ Vegetable Stew (variation of Fruit Salad)
- 0950 ▪ Diagramming exercise – sub-groups work on diagram of their choice
- 1020 ▪ Diagramming: group presentations
- 1045 ▪ Institutional Analysis: group discussions
  - Q1: How are local institutions formed in villages?
  - Q2: How do the activities of formal and informal institutions differ in villages?
  - Q3: What is the relationship between NGOs and government institutions in villages?
- 1125 ▪ Institutional Analysis: plenary session
- 1155 ▪ Venn Diagrams overview (slides and overheads)
- 1200 ▪ Venn Diagrams exercise
- 1230 ▪ Venn Diagrams: group presentations
- 1240 ▪ Lunch
- 1330 ▪ Addressing analysis of social difference (importance of gender, age, class, etc)
- 1345 ▪ Jigsaw Puzzle
- 1400 ▪ Introduction to field sites (by someone who knows the area well)
- 1410 ▪ Fieldwork logistics
- 1425 ▪ Preparation of Presenting Back, & Community Development Plans

- 1450 ▪ Community Development Plans: plenary session on basic structure of plan
- 1500 ▪ Community Development Plans & Checklists: group discussions
- 1600 ▪ Checklists & methods: group discussions
- 1630 ▪ Finalising team roles & responsibilities
- 1700 ▪ Knotty Problem
- 1710 ▪ Problem-Solving exercise
- 1750 ▪ Team Contracts
- 1835 ▪ Dinner
- 2000 ▪ Final preparation of first day's checklists & team contracts
- 2130 ▪ Team presentations & discussions of checklists & contracts

**DAY 4: FIELDWORK**

- 0815 ▪ Leave for field
- 0915 ▪ Arrive in villages
- 0925 ▪ Introductory meetings
- 0940 ▪ Small group interviews & exercises begin
- 1645 ▪ Interviews & exercises end. Arrange to meet next day.
- 1830 ▪ Reflection & Review of findings and team dynamics; checklist revision and prepare next day (issues, methods, process, roles)
- 2030 ▪ Dinner

**DAY 5: FIELDWORK**

- 0800 ▪ Leave for field
- 0900 ▪ Arrive in villages/begin fieldwork
- 1600 ▪ End fieldwork
- 1800 ▪ Reflection & Review (begin)
- 1715 ▪ Tea (work continues)
- 1730 ▪ Additional exercises if pre-arranged
- 2000 ▪ Dinner
- 2100 ▪ Reflection & Review (continue)
- 2115 ▪ Wealth ranking calculations & cross-checking
- 2300 ▪ End of day

**DAY 6: FREE DAY**
**DAY 7: FIELDWORK**

- 0730 ▪ Leave for villages
- 0830 ▪ Arrive in villages/fieldwork begins

## 7 ORGANISING WORKSHOPS FOR TRAINING, ORIENTATION AND EXPOSURE

- 1530 ▪ Lunch & break
- 1600 ▪ Review of fieldwork: discuss attitudes & behaviour, body language, roles & responsibilities, methodological applications
- 1730 ▪ Review of day's fieldwork continues
- 1845 ▪ End of day

### DAY 8: VILLAGE MEETING

- 0830 ▪ Teams prepare for village meetings: review materials & findings, prepare sequence of presentations, assign roles & responsibilities
- 1100 ▪ Teams practise presentations to own team members
- 1330 ▪ Lunch
- 1400 ▪ Teams leave for villages
- 1430 ▪ Set up 'exhibition' of diagrams and charts
- 1530 ▪ Presentation begins – either by local people or by team
- 1730 ▪ Presentation ends and cross-checking information with people begins
- 1830 ▪ Cross-checking session ends
- 1840 ▪ Team returns to base
- 2000 ▪ Dinner

### DAY 9: REFLECTION & REPORT WRITING

- 0815 ▪ Facilitators meeting
- 0830 ▪ Informal review of village meetings
- 0900 ▪ Process matrix
- 1150 ▪ Team presentations using process matrix
- 1315 ▪ Discussion about follow-up
- 1330 ▪ Lunch
- 1430 ▪ Writing-up of process diagrams
- 1515 ▪ Discussions on report structure
- 1620 ▪ Documenting the field experience – rapid report writing
- 2030 ▪ Dinner
- 2130 ▪ Report writing continued
- 2330 ▪ End of day

### DAY 10: REPORT WRITING

- 0830 ▪ Rapid report writing
- 0900 ▪ Preparations by facilitators of Action Plan and Methods Matrix Frameworks

- 1230 ▪ Plenary review of progress
- 1300 ▪ Lunch
- 1400 ▪ Report writing & diagram preparation (continued)
- 1530 ▪ Plenary review of progress
- 1800 ▪ Report consolidation
- 2000 ▪ Dinner
- 2100 ▪ Report editing

### DAY 11: REFLECTION & EVALUATION

- 0900 ▪ Action Plans for Participants
- 1130 ▪ Margolis Wheel
- 1200 ▪ Debriefing
- 1230 ▪ Lunch
- 1330 ▪ Instant Evaluation & Likes/Dislikes
- 1415 ▪ Individual participatory feedback with Self-Portraits
- 1525 ▪ Revolving Commentaries
- 1610 ▪ Imaginary Gift & Closing
- 1615 ▪ End of workshop

### 7.4 EVALUATIONS AND REVISIONS

When it is all over for the participants, you as a trainer still have more to do. Don't relax until you have conducted an evaluation of the programme, and worked out where you would change things in the light of new experience. Chapter 2 (2.4.4) sets out in more detail how you can learn from comments made by the participants. Some of these will have been made directly to the trainers or have arisen out of the evaluations exercises (nos 63–73).

Some comments will seem reasonable and fair, others may appear entirely unfair to you. All are useful, as they give you an indication of changing perceptions of the trainees. Later you may be able to evaluate the success of the programme by observing longer-term changes of attitude or behaviour in the participants as they return to their posts. This will be difficult if you are not situated in their institution, but can

**Box 7.5 Key points for evaluating training workshops**

1. Evaluation should be done on a daily basis and at end-of-course assessments.
2. Daily evaluations allow trainees to express their feelings and make suggestions for changes.
3. Evaluation of training may be conducted at different levels:
  - the reaction level of participants;
  - classroom level, ie change in behaviour;
  - on-the-job level;
  - organisational level.
4. Participant reactions can tell you how satisfied they are with their training, what they feel they have learned, how the course may be improved, etc.
5. Reactions can be generated through active group methods (Exercises 63–73) and individual exercises.
6. Learning achieved in the classroom can be assessed via observation of behaviour, review of proposed action plans, and before-and-after attitude comparisons.
7. Learning transferred to the job can be assessed by studying implementation of action plans, by presentations by participants at later stages on what they learnt, in post-course discussions with supervisors.
8. Impact of learning on organisational effectiveness may be measured through participatory evaluations by local people, and hard data related to quantitative project objectives.

be done by corresponding afterwards with participants and senior staff, or making visits. To improve your training skills and make your future sessions more effective, it is important to learn from what went well and what went wrong. Box 7.5 outlines some key points that will help you think about evaluation while you are planning the workshop programme.

Evaluation of the reaction of participants has been described in section 2.4.4. This is a relatively easy part of evaluation. However, this type of immediate assessment is not a good indicator for judging the long-term learning impact. It is more difficult to assess the impact of training in terms of changed behaviour, subsequent on-the-job performance, and organisational change. By assessing changed behaviour of the learning group during the classroom and fieldwork sessions, we can find out not only what they feel, think, or believe as a result of the training, but what they now do differently.



## 7 ORGANISING WORKSHOPS FOR TRAINING, ORIENTATION AND EXPOSURE

Assessing changed behaviour can be accomplished by judging the way trainees fulfil any assignments given in the training setting, from case study analysis, to documentation, to interaction with local women and men. If you ask them to write up action plans (see 7.2.4), this will tell you about the extent to which they have internalised the training and how committed they are to continuing with what they have learnt. Another way is to assess before-and-after attitudes. For example, if you are conducting a field-based training, then it

might be helpful to do a two-phased role play about communication skills. Before the fieldwork, during a session on SSI, the group can perform a perfect interview (see Exercise 86, Part II). After their fieldwork, ask the group to perform this type of interview again and in the debriefing ask them to reflect on the differences with the pre-fieldwork role play. Or you can ask them to revise their team contracts in the light of their fieldwork experiences.

What you assess in terms of changed behaviour only gives an indication of how the new learning may influence working modes. Assessing the impact on actual job performance will need to be carried out by the trainees themselves and their superiors. Monitoring the implementation of the action plans is one relatively easy way to judge this. It might be possible to set a date, within six months of the course, to organise a presentation of the implemented action plans to date. Other ways require supervisors to get more directly involved in the learning experience that their staff have gone through, thus emphasising their responsibility towards the development of trainees. This will require commitment by management to a pre-course discussion about the expected learning benefits. These benefits can then be reviewed to assess whether training goals were realised.

Training is only one of many components that shape and influence the organisational learning process. For it to have a lasting impact, training in participatory approaches must be part of a wider programme of human resource development. Box 7.6 highlights several conditions necessary for training to have a lasting effect. It will not only need to focus on preparing staff to use certain field methods, but also to improve their communication and analytical skills. It will need to encourage a relaxed and

### **Box 7.6 Conditions for sustained impact of training**

- Training must be supported by an explicit mandate supporting participatory development from the top of the organisation, which is communicated to all levels.
- Training is a process and requires sufficient time for effectiveness.
- Someone from inside the organisation must have the responsibility for the training, whether or not an external trainer is coming in.
- After the event, training must be back-stopped by strong and qualified staff who are respected within the organisation.
- Training of trainers is a crucial element for achieving long-term integration of participatory approaches.
- Training must be supported by timely and adequate allocation of financial resources.

*Sources: adapted from Williams et al, 1993; Lynton and Pareek, 1990*

open learning environment in which staff from different levels in the institutional hierarchy can work together constructively. Finally, it will have to remain flexible and open to new ideas and new procedures, and adapt to changing conditions within the institution as well as outside it.

### **7.5 TRAINER'S CHECKLIST: ORGANISING WORKSHOPS**

- *Do you understand thoroughly what objective your training is expected to achieve?*
- *Do you understand which institutional constraints might make the training ineffective?*
- *Have you formulated the general and specific objectives as precisely as possible?*
- *Do you know the backgrounds of the participants?*
- *Do you know what they are expecting to learn in the workshop?*
- *Have you ensured that proper arrangements are made for the facilities and accommodation during the workshop?*
- *Have the field sites been chosen with the agreement of local people?*
- *Is there clarity about the nature of the follow-up likely in the field site?*
- *Have transport, accommodation and food arrangements been made for the fieldwork?*
- *Have you and the requesting organisation agreed what type of documentation will be expected at the end of the workshop?*
- *Have you designed your workshop programme adequately and made possible contingency plans?*
- *Have you thought carefully about how best to plan the first session?*
- *Have you carefully planned the type and timing of evaluation as part of the training?*
- *Have you tried to fulfil as many conditions for sustained impact of the training as possible?*







## 1: PAIRED INTERVIEWING

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To discover what participants want to get from the session, workshop or training course and learn a little about their personalities
  - To help evaluate a course at the end of the training
  - To help participants relax at the beginning of a course

👁️ **MATERIALS** Paper, pens

🕒 **TIME** 20-45 minutes (depends on number of participants)

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Split participants into pairs. Ask each participant to interview their partner by focusing on questions such as:
    - "What is your name? What is your background and experience?"
    - "Why are you attending this course? What do you hope to get from it?"
    - "Do you have any past experience of participatory methods in the field?"
    - "Name two good things that happened to you in the past year."
  2. After five minutes of interviewing each other, participants then report to plenary about their partner, summarising the main information in one minute.

### “ **COMMENTS**

The key to the exercise is that participants do not report on themselves – in this way they do not become nervous while waiting for their turn. In addition, the exercise is neutral to seniority: neighbouring participants interview each other – you as the trainer may find only later that a junior officer is reporting on a director or vice versa. If expectations have been discussed, the trainer can write these down on flipchart paper, which can then be stuck to the wall during the workshop. Participants are then able to use the list to monitor whether their expectations have been met or have changed.

With a large group (over 20), the principal problem lies in limiting the length of each response. If each person takes 2 or 3 minutes to report back, many people will be bored and you are using precious time. If you explain this to participants, then they will take more responsibility for sticking to time. You can also ask them to limit the reporting back to name, experience and two good things that happened last year. If you know or suspect that many participants have been told to attend the training, do not know what it is about and therefore are unlikely to have clear expectations, then talking about expectations will be irrelevant and difficult. Instead focus on other questions such as the two good things that happened to them.





You may find that this exercise is also valuable for evaluations. To use it for that purpose, change the questions that the pairs ask of each other to:

- "To what extent did the course meet my (your) expectations?"
- "What did you find most valuable?"
- "What did you find least valuable?"
- "How would you like to see the course changed before it is run again?"

So one good experience this year was your election to the village water committee. And the second?



## 2: EXPECTATIONS AND GROUND RULES IN WRITING

-  **OBJECTIVE** ■ To elaborate in detail what participants want and do not want from the session or workshop
-  **MATERIALS** Up to five small pieces of paper (about 4 × 6 cm) for each participant, pens, wall charts, tape or adhesive
-  **TIME** 15–45 minutes
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Prepare wall charts labelled “Content”, “Format”, “Practical details”.
  2. On each small sheet of paper, ask participants to write one thing which they do or do not want from the session. This can relate to content, format, or practical details (no smoking, everyone helping with cooking, etc.).
  3. The participants then stick their slips of paper onto the appropriate chart, clustering all the slips relating to a specific item or idea. For example, all slips relating to arrangements for food would be in one place on the “Practical details” chart. In a large group, it would be advisable to have the charts broken down further – perhaps “Discussion format”, “Decision-making format”, etc.
  4. When the expectations have been gathered and sorted in this fashion, they can be discussed and a consensus can be reached if necessary about which are the basic ground rules. It provides an opportunity for you to respond to those expectations which are or are not likely to be met.

**“ COMMENTS** This provides a visible record of what people do and do not want from the meeting. It makes it easier to determine just how much consensus exists beforehand, and to work towards a higher level of agreement. It is also helpful to refer back to these charts during the evaluation at the end of the session, to see the extent to which people’s expectations have or have not been met. One option is to give each participant a number of small stickers (for example three) which they can then stick next to those expectations which were realised for them.

A less structured method for getting written comments on expectations would be to use a “Graffiti Feedback Board” (Exercise 66). For this you can prepare two charts: “Expectations” and “Fears”.

### 3: FIRST NAME INTRODUCTIONS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To start proceedings on an informal note
  - To introduce each participant

👁️ **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Each participant is asked to introduce themselves in turn by simply adding an adjective before their name that begins with the same letter. For example:
    - "I am lucky Lucy!"*
    - "I am serious Surinder!"*
    - "I am jolly Jenny!"*
    - "I am glorious Gloria!"*
  2. This can be done when seated, but becomes more fun and active if the participants stand in a circle. Ask each person to accompany their name with a movement or gesture (jumping, shrugging shoulders, twirling) while stepping into the circle. When they step back it is the next person's turn.

“ **COMMENTS** There is no need to debrief after this exercise. This exercise can serve as a reference point for the remainder of the training session or course, as participants will remember amusing adjectives. Most importantly, an atmosphere of informality is established. The physical movement relaxes participants and puts them at ease with others.

*Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*



## 4: HOPES AND FEARS

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To allow participants to express, share, and reduce the misconceptions they may have brought with them to a training programme

🗨️ **MATERIAL** Flipcharts or notepaper

🕒 **TIME** 25 minutes

📝 **PROCEDURE** In some workshops, participants may come from a large geographical area, may know very little about the proposed programme, may not know each other, or may not know what is expected of them. In these cases, it may be appropriate to create a forum for exchanging and discussing some preconceptions.

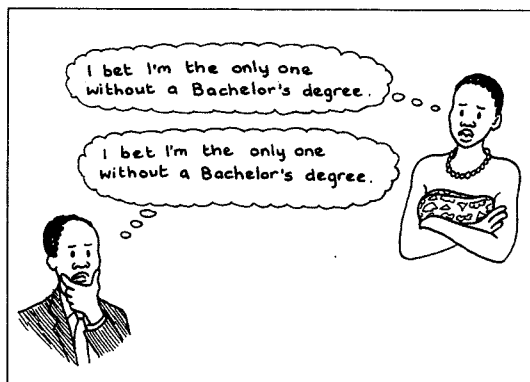
1. Divide the participants into small groups of 4–6 people. Give a flipchart or notepaper to each group.
2. Have each group select someone to record the information. Ask them to respond quickly to the question, *“What fears, concerns, or preconceived notions did you have before coming here today?”*
3. After gathering responses quickly, ask the reporters to present their lists to the entire group. This will present excellent opportunities for the trainer to empathise with trainee needs, as well as provide reassurance by using the items to indicate how the seminar does/does not relate to those concerns.

“ **COMMENTS** Use the following questions to help in the debriefing.

1. *“What were some of the fears, concerns or preconceived notions expressed in each group?”* Past examples include the following:


- *“Will I be the oldest (youngest) person?”*
- *“Will I be the only man (woman)?”*
- *“Will I act appropriately at my first professional seminar?”*
- *“I’m sure everyone will be more experienced than I am.”*
- *“What will I get out of the programme?”*
- *“What kind of questions should I ask?”*
- *“What will the room/programme/trainers, etc. be like?”*
- *“Will we receive the promised per diem?”*


2. *“What can I/we the trainer(s) do to reduce your concerns?”* Possibilities include explaining the dress ‘code’, defining all acronyms used, having copies of any overheads to be used, speaking slowly and so on.





Source: John Newstrom and Edward Scannell (1980)


## 5: SELF-PORTRAITS

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To create a relaxed atmosphere and allow each participant to introduce aspects of themselves
  - To break the ice for a group that know each other well already

 **MATERIALS** One sheet of paper and one pen per participant






 **TIME** 10 minutes of portrait drawing, plus 10 minutes for roving exhibition

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask participants to draw a self-portrait on a piece of paper. They can choose whatever style they like – artistic, cartoon, abstract. Ask them to write their names on the portrait.
  2. Ask them to write down at the bottom of the paper the three 'stepping stones' (important events) that led them to this workshop. (See Exercise 7 for more details).
  3. Collect the portraits and display them on boards or on the wall.
  4. Give participants the opportunity to view the exhibition ('roving exhibition').

 **COMMENTS** This exercise usually causes much amusement. It is a good leveller and icebreaker. It is good for learning new names and remembering old ones, as participants come to associate something visual with both the stepping stones and the name.


If those in the group already know each other (for instance, if they are from the same institution) one variation is to tell participants not to write their names on the portraits. During the exhibition participants then guess the person behind each portrait. This can become a formal competition, with each person writing down their guesses on a sheet of paper, which is then collected and scored by the facilitator.

## 6: SOMETHING FROM HOME

-  **OBJECTIVE** ■ To speed up the process of becoming acquainted
-  **MATERIALS** None
-  **TIME** Dependent on size of group
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. The trainer explains the purpose of the exercise and introduces it by saying something like: *"Try to concentrate for a moment on your home. It may help to shut your eyes. Then choose some item, whether it is an object or a piece of furniture, or something intangible (a view, a smell, a taste, a feeling) that represents 'home' for you. Think about it, and prepare to describe it to this group."*
  2. Then group members describe their chosen 'items'. As the trainer you may intervene to help them to express themselves clearly, and to deal with questions from others.
-  **COMMENTS**
- This is a non-threatening exercise, creating a pleasant atmosphere. It is especially suitable for participants who have just arrived after a long journey, and who do not yet feel at home in their new surroundings. It should be followed by exercises that draw their attention to the present situation.
- This could be time-consuming for a large group, if each individual is to be given a reasonable opportunity to describe their 'item'. A variation is to divide the group into sub-groups of 5–10 people and ask the groups to do it amongst themselves.


Source: Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992)


## 7: STEPPING STONES

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To frame introductions in a historical perspective
  - To learn where the various participants have come from and to hear what is important to them

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** Dependent on size of group

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask participants to work in pairs, interviewing each other. Each should choose 3–4 key important events, or 'stepping stones' in their lives that are significant to bringing them to this point (and to the workshop). Stepping stones may be:
    - *Childhood experience*
    - *Influence of parents, relatives, friends*
    - *Formal training experience*
    - *Key events, meetings, reading, realisations*
    - *Changes in career, job experience*
    - *Or any other key event or stepping stone.*
  2. Start them off by giving an example of your own stepping stones. By mentioning something funny or irrelevant you can show that this is not too serious.
  3. Participants can then feed back their chosen stepping stones to the group. This can be done in a number of ways – directly to the group, by paired introductions or visually by displaying the stepping stones for group inspection.

 **COMMENTS** This exercise can take some time, especially if the group is large (20 or more). You may have to remind people to keep to the main 'stepping stones' and limit other details.








## 8: SYMBOLIC INTRODUCTIONS

- ✓ OBJECTIVES**
- To introduce the participants to each other
  - To get participants talking to each other in sub-groups
  - To get the sub-groups motivated by involving them immediately in a successful task
  - To create a sense of belonging
  - To show that you as a trainer want to learn from them also
- 👁 MATERIAL** Objects lying around in or near the room that can be used as symbols which do not need preparation
- 🕒 TIME** 20–30 minutes, depending on the size of the group (3 minutes introduction amongst themselves, 10 minutes to decide on and find the object, 3 minutes plenary introduction and explanation per group)
- 📋 PROCEDURE**
1. Ask participants to form groups of three and to find an object, perhaps outside, that they feel symbolises their country, region, or organisation.
  2. Ask them to bring the object back in 10 minutes and put it on a table.
  3. Ask them to introduce themselves and to explain why they chose this object as their symbol.
- “ COMMENTS**
- This exercise is useful for encouraging participants to open up and share feelings early in the workshop. Introductions are made while searching for and agreeing on a symbol. These symbol groups can be used for later exercises which require sub-group work. If you are not familiar with the region or country, hearing about the symbols is a good introduction to the local value system. Examples of objects might include a pile of sand, cactus, a local pipe, and a locally woven shawl.



Source: Jane Vella (1989)

## 9: DRAWING CONCEPTS

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To introduce the participants to each other and get them talking
  - To get sub-groups motivated by involving them immediately in an easy task
  - To create a common understanding about key concepts
-  **MATERIALS** Pen and paper
-  **TIME** 1 to 1½ hours
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the groups into sub-groups of 4–7 participants (using one of the group-forming exercises).
  2. Ask each group to construct a picture of a key concept. This concept should be the same for all groups and can depend on what you want to highlight. You should select something that everyone will have some view on, such as participation, sustainable development, extension, communication.
  3. The sub-groups are given 30 minutes to discuss and draw, after which a spokesperson presents their diagram. Alternatively, put up the diagrams in an exhibition and encourage everyone to walk around before the discussion.
-  **COMMENTS** You can ask the participants the following questions:
- *"What elements were common to all groups?"*
  - *"What elements were only represented in one group?"*
  - *"Why did these similarities and differences happen?"*
  - *"What disciplinary biases are apparent in the diagrams?"*
  - *"How do you think a villager might represent the same concept and what assumptions about him/her are you making?"*
- Be aware that the discussion should not end up with one single correct definition. Use these differences to emphasise how there are always different perspectives on issues.

*Source: Kamal Kar, pers. comm.*

## 10: THE SEED MIXER



### OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the participants to one another
- To get participants talking to each other one-on-one
- To create a relaxed but animated atmosphere and to establish an informal tone for the training



### MATERIALS

Enough seeds, beans, raisins, pebbles or beads for each participant to have the same number as there are people (for example, if there are 25 people, including the trainers, each person will require 25 seeds/beans). A few plastic or other cups or containers for any participants who do not have pockets.



### TIME

10–25 minutes, depending on the number of participants, and how much they talk to each other



### PROCEDURE

1. Give each person one bean for each person in the room (for example, if there are 25 people, including the trainer, who should also participate in this exercise, give each person 25 beans).
2. Ask them to place the beans in one pocket and leave a second pocket empty. If anyone does not have pockets, they can use two small cups or containers instead.
3. The participants are given a set amount of time (about 20 minutes) in which to introduce themselves to each of the other participants (this may include saying their name, the institution or project for whom they work, and a few things about themselves).
4. During each introduction, they should give the other person a bean and accept one from them. They should place the other person's bean in their empty pocket or cup.
5. At the end of this exercise, each person should be left with one bean in their first pocket (representing themselves) and a second pocket filled with beans for the total number of persons in the room minus one.





### COMMENTS

This is suitable for any number from 10 to 50 participants, but if there are more than 30 it is advisable to tell people to be very brief or the exercise will take too long. Trainers should take part. It is a good idea, about two-thirds of the way through the exercise, to warn that time is getting short. There is no need for a debriefing after this exercise. It is a very effective way for each person to have an informal, face-to-face encounter with everyone else in the training. It also creates an atmosphere of informality and conviviality.


*Source: Robert Chambers, pers. comm.*

## 11: NAME GAME

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To speed up the process of becoming acquainted
  - To help everyone learn the names of their fellow participants

 **MATERIALS** None, except chairs placed in circle with no tables in the middle, if possible

 **TIME** Dependent on size of groups

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Introduce and explain the exercise and start a round, in which everybody carefully says his/her (first) name. This is done slowly, so that the others have time to repeat the name for themselves and find a way to link that name to that person. Unusual names can be written on the board. Alternatively, each participant may be asked to provide a memory aid when introducing themselves, for example: *"My name is Frank and I always try to be!"*
  2. When the round is completed, the trainer then says *"My name is (.....)"*, points out another person (B), says B's name, and asks B to look for person C. For example: *"My name is Frank, your name is Bert. Bert, would you please find Clare?"* You should avoid looking at Clare as you do this and should ask the rest of the group not to help Bert by looking at Clare.
  3. Bert has to say his own name first, point out Clare, mention Clare's name and ask Clare to look for person D, at which point Bert should not look in D's direction.
  4. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

**COMMENTS** This is a simple but effective exercise and quite acceptable in new groups. It can be done as the first exercise when starting up as a group. Knowing and pronouncing names correctly is particularly important in mixed groups where many names will be unfamiliar, complex and could easily be mispronounced.

One variation is when everyone has taken their turn, ask participants to change chairs, to avoid associating names with the position of the people in the circle. Use the procedure again, until everyone seems to know all the names. Finally, ask participants to say all the names in the group in the order in which the participants are sitting. People who get stuck on the way are allowed to ask names.

*Source: Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992)*

**EXERCISES FOR  
INTRODUCTIONS AND  
ICE-BREAKING****12: WHO ARE WE?**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To introduce participants to each other in a lecture situation or when there are many participants (for example 30–100)
  - To involve participants in physical activity at the beginning of a lecture

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask people to raise their hands in response to various questions to tell us “*who are we?*” Ask who works for government agencies or NGOs; who is an agronomist, anthropologist or livestock expert; who has experience of participatory methods in the field; who is from this country/another country; and so on.
  2. Ask participants to look around for others they may want to talk to later.
  3. Then ask: “*Who has been left out?*”

“ **COMMENTS** Individual introductions often take too long in a large group, unless everyone is limited strictly to name and organisation. But even after this, few people remember details. This exercise gets everyone physically active early on, and most people find it interesting to know the mix of people present. There are usually a few laughs about those left out. Circulate a sheet with names, addresses etc., with one person responsible for seeing that it gets around, and have it typed and distributed by the end of the session.

*Source: Robert Chambers, pers. comm.*

**INTRODUCTIONS & ICEBREAKING**



## 13: FRUIT SALAD

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To get the group active and awake, especially good after lunch or to break a long passive session
  - To form sub-groups, each with an easily remembered name, for further group work



- 👁️ **MATERIALS**
- Chairs arranged in a circle; one fewer than total number of participants and trainers. If there are enough chairs then these could be set up ahead of time in another space, such as an adjoining room. If not, then ask participants to bring their chairs with them.

- 🕒 **TIME**
- 10 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Decide on the number of groups that are needed, as this will determine the number of fruits selected. Set up a closed circle of chairs, one fewer than the number of people who will join the exercise.
  2. Ask participants to sit in the chairs. The trainer begins the game by standing in the middle. Explain that this is an energising exercise which will require their (very!) active participation.
  3. Let the participants name as many fruits as you need sub-groups, for example four fruits if you need to form four sub-groups. Ask one person to choose a fruit, their neighbour another fruit, the next neighbour another, and so on until the desired number of sub-groups is reached. The next person in the circle takes the first fruit, the next the second, and so on until everyone including the trainer has a fruit name (such as apple, melon, orange, jackfruit, apple, melon, orange, etc.).

*(Continued on next page)*

## 13: FRUIT SALAD (continued)



### PROCEDURE

4. If necessary, you can then write the fruits on a large sheet of paper or on the board, especially if there are more than five fruits to remember.
5. Before you start, ask all the oranges to put up their hands, then the melons etc. This will just remind everyone once again of their fruit.
6. The person in the middle calls out the name of one fruit. All those participants who are that fruit must change chairs – no exceptions! The person in the middle will also try to get a seat, and should succeed as they have only half the distance to travel.
7. One person will be left in the middle, who then repeats the process by calling out another fruit. When “fruit salad” is called out, then everyone must change chairs.



### COMMENTS

This exercise can be a great deal of fun. Participants will be fully active in a couple of minutes of organised chaos. It does need someone to stop the game, and as the trainer, you should conclude by allowing yourself to be left in the middle. This is easiest after “fruit salad” has been called. Conclude the exercise and ask everyone to return to the workshop area.

Assign fruit names to tables and ask everyone to sit in their new groups. There is no debriefing. If group work is required at a later stage these fruit names can be used again (eg. “*All pineapples will work together on ...*”).

This game mixes hierarchies and relaxes participants. It also divides friends and colleagues into separate groups as they tend to sit together in the circle.

There are endless variations to ‘Fruit Salad’, including ‘Jungle’ or ‘Zoo’ (with animals from the jungle or zoo); ‘Vegetable Soup’ or ‘Meat Stew’ (types of vegetables or meats); ‘Cocktail’ (types of drink); ‘Agroforestry’ (tree types); ‘Ocean’ (fish); and ‘Rainbow’ (colours).

In order to double the number of groups from the game, adopt ‘Jungle’ or ‘Zoo’ and identify alternate males and females in blocks. All animals of a species move together, but when groups are formed, tigers and tigresses, lion and lionesses, form separate groups. In this way eight groups can be formed from four animals.

For very large numbers, have more than one circle playing the game simultaneously.

Another easier variation which requires no memorising is the ‘Mail Game’. The person in the middle announces “*I have a letter for those who [work for an NGO... live in the countryside... are wearing black shoes... etc.]*”. As in Fruit Salad, all those who fulfil the criteria change places. The person left in the middle chooses another criteria to whom he/she ‘delivers the letter’.

Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.

## 14: 'A's AND 'B's

**OBJECTIVE**

- To energise the group and change the focus of attention

**MATERIALS**

None

**TIME**

5–10 minutes

**PROCEDURE**

1. Clear the centre of the room or find an open space outside and invite everyone to stand there.
2. Ask everyone to look at everyone else and to silently choose one individual in the group who is their 'A' person and another who is their 'B' person. Tell them that there are no particular criteria on which to base their choices. Selections are entirely up to them.
3. Once everyone has made their choices, tell them to get as close to their respective 'A' person as possible, while getting as far away from their 'B' person as they can. People are encouraged to move quickly, but not to grab or hold anyone. You can also announce that the only rule to this game is "*No physical violence!*"
4. After a few minutes, participants are asked to stop and reverse the process: they chase their 'B' persons and avoid their 'A' persons.

**COMMENTS**

Almost invariably, this game will lead to the formation of clusters of people, or a long line or 'dragon' or 'snake' as one person chases after another. You can play a variation of this game by forming the group into a line or dragon to begin with and ask the front of the line to catch its tail. You can then stop the dragon, turn people in the other direction, and have the tail then try to catch the head.


Whether you use the 'A's and 'B's or the dragon version of this game, the result will be the same: a lot of laughing and smiling. The only objective is to provide a brief, amusing and energising break for the participants during the training. You might need to tell participants this, as they might be expecting the exercise to have an underlying 'moral'.

*Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*




**EXERCISES FOR  
ENERGISING AND  
FORMING GROUPS**


## 15: THE NUMBERS GAME

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To illustrate the power of non-verbal communication
  - To form new groups

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 10–15 minutes


-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Count the number of participants in advance. Calculate various combinations for sorting the participants into different size groups (for example, for a group of 50, 10 groups of five people).
  2. Clear the centre of the room or find an open space outside.
  3. Ask all participants to stand together and not to speak.
  4. Ask them to form X groups of Y people as fast as possible. You may add a sense of urgency to the mixing and forming by shouting encouragement and telling them to move quickly. Then ask them to form another combination of people. Continue to call combinations according to your prepared list.
  5. Conclude with the pre-planned number of groups you require for the next workshop session.

 **COMMENTS** Select different number combinations that mix participants into groups of various sizes. This forces individuals to leave certain groups and join others very quickly. This mixing and sorting can go on for some time, until the correct size groups have been formed. For example, if you have a group of 26 people and you want to form five groups for the next session, you will need to conclude the 'Numbers Game' with the participants in four groups of five and one group of six, or some similar combination. Hence, you can ask them to form themselves into the following combinations until you reach the required arrangement:

- 2 groups of 13
- 6 groups of 4 and 1 group of 2
- 6 groups of 3 and 2 groups of 4
- 3 groups of 7 and 1 group of 5
- 2 groups of 9 and 1 group of 8
- 4 groups of 5 and 1 group of 6: END


*Source: Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*


## 16: MOVE TO THE SPOT

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise participants
  - To encourage concentration and imagination
  - To encourage participants to take responsibility during the training

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 1–5 minutes

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Clear the centre of the room or find an open space outside.
  2. Each group member is instructed to choose and stand in an open spot.
  3. Instruct people to walk around and do one of the following:
    - *Say hello to all those wearing red*
    - *Look up as you walk*
    - *Walk backward*
    - *Hop (or skip or jump)*
    - *Make a sound or whistle*
    - *Keep one (or both!) eye(s) closed*
    - *In as much of a straight line as possible*
  4. When you say stop, everyone must run to their original spots. The person who reaches their place first is the next leader (as facilitator keep an eye out for this!) and can instruct the group to do whatever they wish.

 **COMMENTS** This can be an enjoyable game, as long as it does not go on for too long. It should probably be brought to an end after three or four people have had the chance to be the leader. The danger is that people will stick close to their spot.

*Source: adapted from Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*

**EXERCISES FOR  
ENERGISING AND  
FORMING GROUPS**

## 17: MOVE IF

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise the group
  - To break the ice
  - To form new groups

🔗 **MATERIALS** None, but can be done with a circle of chairs

🕒 **TIME** 3-5 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask all the participants to sit or stand in a circle.
  2. Explain the exercise and start it off yourself.
  3. Call out the name of a group of people: eg. cigarette smokers, car owners, spectacle wearers, people from a nearby city X, cricket lovers, etc. by saying "*Move if you are .....*" The people who belong to the category called out enter into the circle.
  4. Call out another category and tell people to move if they belong to it. The people in the middle either stay there or sit down if they do not belong to that category.
  5. Continue at a fast pace to keep people moving.

“ **COMMENTS** An active and fast moving game. A variation can involve issues relating to the workshop. For example:

- "*Move if you would like to begin earlier in the morning*"
- "*Move if you want more time working in small groups*"

A variation is to follow the 'Fruit Salad' format (see No.13), with one fewer chairs than there are participants. The person in the middle calls out "*Move if you have black shoes/glasses/earrings/a beard ...*", and those people must change seats. This leaves one person standing in the middle, who takes the next round. Alternatively, the facilitator remains in the middle throughout, and selects criteria that can divide individuals who tend to remain together. At the end groups can be formed by just getting the first five participants to form one group, the next five the next group and so on.

*Source: adapted from Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*

### ENERGISING & GROUP-FORMING

## 18: STREETS AND AVENUES

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To energise the group

👁️ **MATERIALS** None

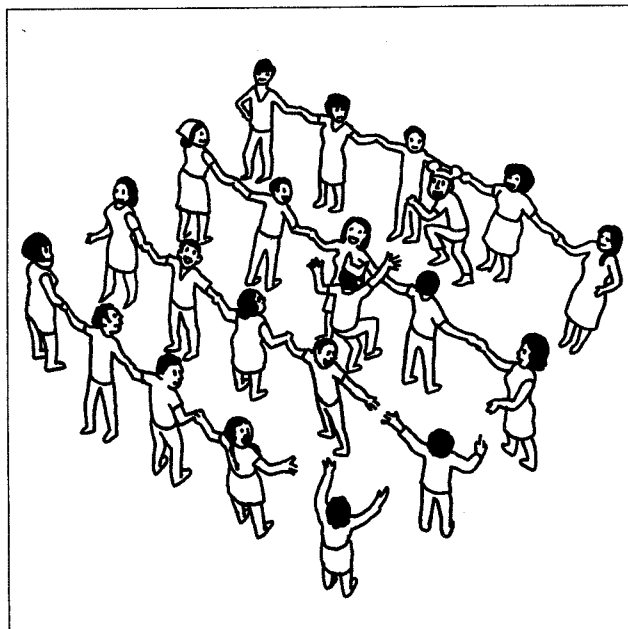
🕒 **TIME** 10 minutes

✍️ **PROCEDURE**

1. The group splits into four or five groups. Each group builds rows in the form of streets by grasping hands in one direction. The rows stand parallel to each other.
2. When you say "avenues", the participants make a quarter turn to the left and grasp the hands of the persons who are now beside them. An order for "streets" returns the group to their original position.
3. Ask for two volunteers to take on the role of a cat and a mouse. The cat has to catch the mouse. Keep giving orders for the formation of 'streets' and 'avenues' to try and keep the cat away from the mouse. Neither is allowed to break through a row.

“ **COMMENTS** Everyone has to react quickly so that the cat does not catch the mouse. This is an energising game so do let the participants know that this is all they should be expecting. This exercise might cause difficulties in cultural settings where touching each other is difficult, especially between men and women.

Source: UNICEF (1993)



**ENERGISING & GROUP-FORMING**

**EXERCISES FOR  
ENERGISING AND  
FORMING GROUPS**

## 19: ROBOTS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise the group
  - To demonstrate how difficult it is to manage two things at once

👁️ **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 15 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the participants into groups of three, in which one person is to be the robot controller, and the other two the robots. The controllers each manage two robots. They move a robot to the right by touching the right shoulder, and to the left by touching the left shoulder.
  2. Begin by telling the robots to walk in a specific direction.
  3. The controller must try to stop the robots crashing into obstacles such as tables, chairs and walls.
  4. After about 3 minutes ask the controllers to switch roles with one of the groups of robots. Repeat steps 2 and 3. After another 3 minutes ask the last group of robots that have not been controller yet to switch places with a controller.
  5. Ask participants what it felt like to be a controller trying to control two robots at once. Ask what it felt like to be a robot.

“ **COMMENTS** One variation is to pair one controller with one robot, and let each controller instruct the robot to do whatever they wish. This might include putting all the chairs in a corner, singing a song, reciting a poem, telling another person something etc. After about five minutes, change roles. This is essential so that no one gets frustrated about playing a particular role. The debriefing should again focus on what is good and bad about being a controller and a robot.

*Sources: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.; UNICEF (1993)*

## 20: FAMILY MEMBERS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise the group
  - To form sub-groups

🔗 **MATERIALS** Slips of paper with families and family member names on it, one for each participant

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Prepare cards with family names in groups of four or five: Mother Farmer, Father Farmer, Sister Farmer, Brother Farmer. Use names of, for example, different animals, birds, fruits, or professions such as Teacher family, Banker family, Fisher family.
  2. Give each participant one slip of paper, and ask everyone to walk around the room, exchanging names as they meet other people.
  3. Tell them that when you call out "*Family Reunion*", everyone should try to form a united 'family' group. Everyone will start shouting their family names in an effort to be done first.
  4. Ask the last group to form to act out briefly their family name.
  5. Start again.
  6. When you feel the group is energised and relaxed, stop and proceed with sub-group work, keeping the families together.

“ **COMMENTS** Another variation is using animal sounds. Prepare sufficient cards choosing animals that have recognisable and different sounds (ie. chicken, sheep, monkey, lion, dog). Ask participants to make the noise of their animal until "*family reunion*" is called and they are united as a 'family'.

If you need to select groups purposively, then write the names of participants on the back of the cards. Alternatively, keep a separate list of names and animals if you wish to re-use the cards.

*Source: adapted from Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*

**EXERCISES FOR  
ENERGISING AND  
FORMING GROUPS**

## 21: BREAKTHROUGH

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise the group
  - To illustrate the importance of coordination and communication

👉 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 15 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the participants into two groups of equal size and have them stand in two lines facing each other (about two metres apart).
  2. Group A is asked to break through Group B. No one is allowed to talk.
  3. When the breakthrough occurs, the two groups are told they have five to ten minutes to plan a second breakthrough or defence.
  4. Repeat the attempt.

- “ **COMMENTS**
- Ask the participants to reflect on the difference between the two breakthroughs. The first breakthrough usually occurs fairly early. The second is more difficult.
- Ask the participants to reflect on the importance of coordination and communication, and what can be achieved as a group compared with a set of individuals.

Source: UNICEF (1993)



**ENERGISING & GROUP-FORMING**

## 22: STATUE STOP



### OBJECTIVES

- To energise people
- To change focus of attention



### MATERIALS

None



### TIME

15–20 minutes



### PROCEDURE

1. Clear the centre of the room or find an open space outside.
2. Ask the participants to form two circles of people of equal numbers: one outward-facing inner circle surrounded by an outer circle facing inwards.
3. Each person in the outer circle has 5–10 seconds to create a 'statue' by using the person opposite them in the inner circle. The person in the inner circle allows the 'sculptor' to bend and twist their body into any shape they wish (as long as they do not hurt them). Once they are moved, the person in the inner circle must remain in that position – frozen like a statue – without speaking.
4. Tell them that when you call "time" or clap your hands, the outer circle moves round one person to the left and they begin sculpting again. The people in the inner circle are bent and twisted into new positions through this process.
5. This is repeated until a full circle has been completed.
6. After a complete rotation, the inner circle changes with the outer circle and the exercise is repeated.



### COMMENTS

This can be an extremely enjoyable game. However, in certain cultures it may not be appropriate for men and women to be in the same groups. In that case, you may be able to have two separate groups playing the game or one group observing the other as they do it.


You should remind participants that there is to be no violence and that all participants have the right not to be put in painful or offensive positions. Tell them to be respectful and at the same time have freedom to express themselves.

*Source: adapted from Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*





**EXERCISES FOR  
ENERGISING AND  
FORMING GROUPS**


## 23: COUNTDOWN

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise participants
  - To help reflect on the impact of simple, externally determined rules

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 5 minutes, perhaps several times over a period of two days

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask the participants to stand up and form a circle. This can be done anywhere, even in the classroom without moving any furniture, as no one will be asked to move.
  2. Tell the participants: *"We are going to do something very easy ... count to fifty. There are only a few rules. Do not say 'seven' or any number which is a multiple of seven. Instead clap your hands. After someone claps their hands the order of the numbering calling is reversed. If someone says seven or a multiple of seven, then we have to start again."*
  3. When, inevitably, someone accidentally says seven or a multiple of seven, or they forget to reverse the order of counting after someone claps, then start up the counting at another part of the circle.
  4. After a few minutes and a few laughs, stop the exercise and tell everyone that we'll try it again later.
  5. At another moment when people need some refreshing, get people to do the exercise again.
  6. Repeat this 3 or 4 times before the debriefing.


 **COMMENTS** In the debriefing, ask the group:


- *Why was the exercise so difficult?*
- *What is the relevance of this for your work?*

When you first give the instructions, the group says *"Oh no problem. Let's do it."* They soon realise, however, that something which everyone assumes they can do comfortably becomes amazingly complex when a few externally determined rules are changed. The key learning point is that when we interact with local people, we often impose rules which are unfamiliar to them, making it difficult for effective communication.


*Source: Mayling Simpson-Hebert, pers. comm.*


## 24: GROUP SELF-SELECT EXERCISE

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To form sub-groups based on the participants' own knowledge and criteria
  - To help people to feel more a part of the group they have chosen to be in

 **MATERIALS** Cards, pins and pin-boards, or sticky tape

 **TIME** 10–15 minutes


-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Brainstorm with the group the list of criteria for selecting groups. Criteria should not be judgemental but should reflect objective criteria (such as gender) or the diversity of skills. Clearly there are potentially many criteria that can be chosen. Ask them to reflect on the most relevant criteria otherwise the process becomes unwieldy.
  2. Each individual must then fill in a short résumé under each of the criteria chosen (gender, language, knowledge of area, professional training, interests, other skills to offer, etc.).
  3. If two groups are to be formed, choose two walls in the workshop room for group A and B. Ask people to place their résumé sheet on the wall where they feel best suited and where their skills will contribute to the group, so that two balanced teams emerge. If someone feels that their skills/gender etc. are already well represented they should move their résumé paper to the other wall. People can only move their own résumé. Participants can only move another person's card after consulting them. The rest of the group is encouraged to negotiate a balanced grouping.

 **COMMENTS** After a certain amount of moving back and forth, two groups emerge. Since participants have negotiated these groups themselves, fewer complaints arise. The criteria that any trainer would know about are included, along with unknown skills that arise when the résumés are completed. It is a useful moment to realise that everyone has something to offer. It can be a useful levelling mechanism for the group. Since it is only the individual who can move the sheet, people can choose to be with or separated from particular individuals. This exercise can help to enhance group dynamics. This exercise may be followed by the formation of a Group Contract through the Group Problem Solving Exercise (No.31, Part II).

*Source: Andrea Cornwall, pers. comm.*


**EXERCISES FOR  
ENERGISING AND  
FORMING GROUPS**

## 25: GROUP SCULPTURE


 **OBJECTIVE** ■ To illustrate, in a non-threatening manner, the interaction between group members on an individual issue or general subject

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 15–30 minutes

 **PROCEDURE**

1. Clear the centre of the room or find an open space outside.
2. You or a nominated person from the group can create a 'living sculpture' by using group members to illustrate a particular situation or problem.
3. This involves placing people in a pose or arrangement that reflects what appears to be happening (such as tension, sabotaging, excluding, colluding) between two or more people in the group. The 'sculptor' may arrange people to show some who are 'facilitators', 'saboteurs', 'outcasts', and so on.
4. The remaining group members can try to guess the theme or subject of the sculpture and the various roles people have been assigned.
5. You may allow other members of the group to set up their own group sculpture to indicate their own or someone else's perception (and position) of the events (such as the first sculpture may have been the project manager's view, while the second one may represent another team member's view or a farmer's perspective).
6. The group may find it useful to perform the exercise again indicating an 'ideal' group sculpture. The group discussion could follow based on "*How we see things*" versus "*How we would like to see things*".

 **COMMENTS** You should keep checking on the participants' feelings throughout this exercise. Let everyone know that anyone can step out from any position if they feel uncomfortable or if they feel they would gain more insight by observation rather than participation.

This can be a very useful exercise for getting the group to imagine and sculpt different scenarios or interactions between the team and local people or among team members themselves.



## 26: NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To generate ideas and produce group consensus through a structured problem-solving process
  - To draw on individual ideas and opinions, and combine them to arrive at collective judgements

👉 **MATERIALS** Three 7.5 × 12.5 cm cards for each group member, pin-boards

🕒 **TIME** 2–2½ hours

📝 **PROCEDURE** The procedure involves four steps:

1. **SILENT IDEA GENERATION**

The objective of this first step is to allow individuals time to generate possible solutions to a given problem. Pass out worksheets with the problem statement printed at the top, and ask group members to respond to the statement using short written phrases. By discouraging talking or moving around, you can encourage more serious thinking. Step 1 provides the time for members to respond to the problem with their own ideas.

2. **ROUND-ROBIN REPORTING OF IDEAS**

This step allows each member of the group to share his or her ideas. Ask someone to report one written thought and write it on a flipchart using the person's exact words. Then the next person is asked for one idea and the process is repeated. Ideas are taken in order around the table until everyone has shared as many as they wish. If anyone chooses to pass, then the facilitator simply goes on to the next person. When ideas written on the flipchart stimulate another idea with another participant, that person is encouraged to add the idea to his or her own worksheet and report it to the group.

Each idea is labelled with a letter of the alphabet. This labelling makes the ranking of solutions easier in the last step.

Try to discourage discussion of the ideas during this phase. The purpose of 'round-robin reporting' is to encourage everyone to present ideas, particularly for shy participants who may feel overwhelmed by the more talkative members.

3. **DISCUSSION FOR CLARIFICATION**

This step provides an opportunity for open discussion and clarification of all the generated ideas. Encourage group members to ask one another the meaning of words and phrases which appear on the worksheets. The discussion can and should convey the meaning, logic, or thought behind an idea.

*(Continued on next page)*

## 26: NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE (continued)



### PROCEDURE

#### 4. THE RANKING OF PROBLEMS/SOLUTIONS ACCORDING TO IMPORTANCE

The purpose of this final phase is to combine the ideas and opinions of individual members to determine the relative importance of the problems or solutions that have been identified. During this step, hand each group member five 3" × 5" cards and ask each person to record five items (one per card) of highest priority from those listed on the flipchart. They write one phrase and the identifying letter of the alphabet on each card. Then ask the group members to identify the item of highest importance and rank it as 5, the next highest importance as 4, and so on. The cards are collected and points are tallied on a master sheet.

5. The final outcome is, therefore, a set of independent judgements.




### COMMENTS


Individuals working in groups generate more ideas than when they work alone. Nominal groups, groups 'in name only' where people are brought together but not allowed to communicate, have been found to be more effective for idea generation than interacting groups, where people meet to discuss, brainstorm, and exchange information. Interacting groups tend to inhibit creative thinking.

It is important to note that ranking ideas in this non-threatening, private way makes it possible to generate a group judgement without social pressure to conform.


*Source: Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992),  
based on the work of André Delbecq*

## 27: GROUP PROFILES

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To develop a group profile of the roles that individual members commonly take
  - To encourage each group to develop its own strategy based on available roles and responsibilities

 **MATERIALS** Sheets of paper with the questions A–K (see below) in a list

 **TIME** 30 minutes

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Hand out one sheet to each person. Each person anonymously ticks just three of the eleven questions according to how he or she feels they perform in groups.
  2. Collect the sheets and then hand them back for each group to produce their own profile.
  3. The profile should contain a list of the roles which are well represented. It should also emphasise what is missing.
  4. Groups can present their profiles to each other, and seek advice on filling the gaps.

### GROUP PROFILES

*In groups, do you tend to:*

*Tick THREE boxes only*

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| A: stay quiet for a while and then join in? .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B: feel uneasy/uncomfortable and wish you were working alone? .....                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C: want to take over and structure the discussion? .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D: want to take a leadership role? .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E: encourage others to make contributions? .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F: come up with new ideas? .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G: interrupt others to ensure your point is made? .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H: remind the group about practical actions and achieving the set objectives? .....                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I: make everyone relaxed and promote harmony? .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J: get annoyed and frustrated when there is too much talk and<br>not enough decisions and action? ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K: mediate between those team members strongly disagreeing<br>with each other? .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### “ COMMENTS

This exercise relies on individuals honestly assessing their own normal roles, and on anonymity when the group considers what roles are present. It helps to generate an atmosphere of self-critical appraisal of group capacity.

The Group Profiles exercise can be followed by the Group Problem Solving and Team Contract Exercise (No.31).

*Source: Jules Pretty*

**EXERCISES  
FOR ENHANCING  
GROUP DYNAMICS**

## 28: SABOTEUR

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To show how communication and group work can be easily disrupted
  - To create a group strategy for recognising and dealing with sabotage
  - Also successful as an equaliser and as an energiser

👁 **MATERIALS** Groups of three chairs

🕒 **TIME** 15 minutes or longer, depending on the length of feedback

- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. The participants are divided into threes. Within each sub-group, they have to fill three roles – the speaker, the listener and the saboteur. The speaker and listener face each other to talk, while the saboteur can move. The speaker is asked to describe some aspect of their work or life to the listener. The saboteur is asked to try to sabotage (ie disrupt) this discussion in any non-violent manner.
  2. Roaming saboteurs can move between groups. These may be you, the trainer, plus any others who did not join groups when the full group was divided.
  3. After two minutes ask participants to change roles. Then again after two more minutes, as it is essential for all participants to have the opportunity to play all three roles. Everybody should know what it feels like to be a saboteur and to be sabotaged.



*(Continued on next page)*

## 28: SABOTEUR (continued)

### “ COMMENTS

Discussion after this exercise is essential. To establish a group strategy, it is necessary to get participants to reflect on how they felt:

- *"What was it like to be a saboteur or to be sabotaged?"*
- *"Did you find it easy or difficult to disrupt the conversation?"*

Then ask everyone to call out the different types of saboteur they experienced or have experienced in the past, and write these on a flipchart. Examples include: dominance, rigidity, interruptions (answers/questions), joking and not being serious, rudeness, silence, taking over with enthusiasm and physical distraction by fidgeting.

Then ask the participants to reflect on ways to deal with such sabotage, ie sabotaging saboteurs:

- *"How have you or could you deal with saboteurs?"*
- *"What are the ways groups can deal with saboteur individuals?"*

Write these strategies on another sheet. Examples include: ignore politely; polite/clear interruption; stop the discussion; talk it out (publicly or personally); acknowledge and postpone; divert attention – form sub-groups or set task; use saboteur for debate; ask others for help; allow it; walk away. These can be stuck to the wall for all to see and can be referred to during the rest of the workshop.

This exercise and discussion may be especially useful if there are particularly disruptive members of the group. Such an exercise may be an opportunity for them to reflect on their behaviour and for the group to develop ways of dealing with the disruption. It can also prepare the group well for potentially difficult interviewing situations in the field.

More important, however, it introduces the notion of sabotage to the whole group, as well as focusing on strategies to deal with it. During the rest of the workshop, it is likely that participants will self-regulate without any trainer input needed. Any group interruption will be greeted by calls of "sabotage".

*Sources: adapted from Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990); Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*



**EXERCISES  
FOR ENHANCING  
GROUP DYNAMICS**

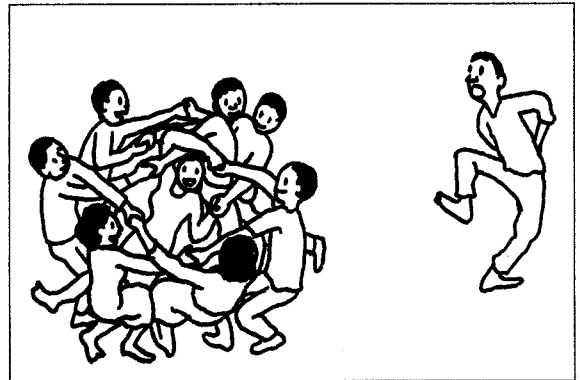
## 29: KNOTTY PROBLEM

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To demonstrate to participants that groups empowered to solve their own problems are much more successful than if instructed by outsiders
  - To energise the group

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 10–15 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Select one, two or three participants to act as managers. They are asked to leave the room while you instruct the rest of the group.
  2. Ask the remaining participants to hold hands in a circle and tie themselves into as entangled a knot as possible. They must not let go of each other's hands at any cost.
  3. Tell the participants to follow the managers' instructions literally and not make it easier for them by doing what they have not been told to do.
  4. Once the knot is complete, the managers are asked to return and to unravel the knot within three minutes, using verbal instructions only.
  5. Instruct the managers to hold their hands behind their back. They are not allowed to touch the group, only instruct them verbally.
  6. The first attempt is generally not successful and sometimes even produces a more complex knot. Now repeat the exercise with the managers participating in the knot. When the knot is ready, simply ask the participants to "get out of the knot yourselves".



“ **COMMENT** The second untying process is usually much quicker. Ask participants to comment on what relevance this has to the real world. You can raise various issues.

- "What does the game tell us about the role of 'outsiders/managers' and 'insiders' (in the knot)?"
- "What does the exercise tell us about the effectiveness of 'outsiders' and 'managers' in organising people?"
- "What does the game imply for facilitating participation in community development?"

Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.

## 30: TRUST WALK

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To illustrate the importance of trust in the way people build relationships
  - To give an opportunity for individuals to look at their leadership and rapport-building skills

👁️ **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 40 minutes


- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide participants into pairs by asking individuals to select someone they have not yet worked with.
  2. In each pair one person leads and the other follows, keeping their eyes closed. The leader takes the follower by placing one hand on their shoulder or under their elbow and guiding with a supportive hand.
  3. The exercise is carried out in *silence* (relaxation music is optional).
  4. The leader takes the follower around the area at the follower's pace, and guides them towards touching, feeling, holding, sensing any object or surface that is safely available (this may include objects and other people).
  5. As the trainer, you can introduce other noises, smells, objects for heightened sensitivity.
  6. After 10 minutes, partners swop roles.
  7. Feedback can be in plenary, or in new pairs.


“ **COMMENTS** After both trust walks, participants are asked how they felt in the two roles. During the debriefing, discuss issues such as trust, awareness, inner dialogue, sounds, smells, touch, feel, mental pictures, rapport building.

The chosen area must be safe and free of interruption from outsiders.


*Sources: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.; Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*


## 31: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING AND TEAM CONTRACT EXERCISE

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To give participatory field teams the opportunity to develop their own norms for group behaviour
  - To develop team contracts

 **MATERIALS** Prepared sheets with "What would you do if...?" questions

 **TIME** 45–90 minutes

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the group into small groups of up to five people. Ideally these should be the groups that are going to work in the field together.
  2. Hand out the prepared sheets of questions to the field teams. If you have more than one group, allocate specific questions to each group (see examples for four groups below). Ask them to consider what they would do if they encountered these problems in the field.
  3. When each group has considered their strategy for dealing with each problem, ask them to report back to plenary. When all the problems have been discussed, including comments from other sub-groups, ask each group to agree a team contract amongst themselves. This team contract is based on the discussions and will serve as a code of conduct for the field.
  4. After the team contracts have been made, encourage everyone to write theirs in the back of their field notebook. You can also ask them to share it with the other groups.

 **COMMENTS** The questions should contain a mix of problems relating to both group dynamics and difficulties related to using various participatory methods in the field. All of the 27 questions given as examples are problems that have arisen in real fieldwork.

The success of this exercise lies in anticipating problems related to fieldwork and dealing with them before they occur. In this way teams will know better what to do when such situations arise. Discussion is usually most animated amongst participants who have field experience, as they will illustrate problems and strategies with stories from their past.

Having the contract in their notebooks means that problematic team members can be encouraged simply to look at and stick to their contract, rather than be confronted directly with their behaviour. These 'rules' help to guide the teams through small crises as members ask each other to "Remember rule 9!" or simply say: "Team contract".

*(Continued on next page)*

## **31: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING AND TEAM CONTRACT EXERCISE (continued)**

### **Sample Questions for rural areas**

#### **GROUP 1: What would you do if...**

1. In a small group interview the informants are very silent, unresponsive and reluctant to answer your questions?
2. Part way through a small group interview, some farmers say they must leave to attend to other matters?
3. A member of your team is late again in the morning and the other team members are irritated?
4. A team member is over-enthusiastic and keeps interrupting the farmers when they are speaking?
5. On the final day of the fieldwork, important new information arises which contradicts an earlier key finding?
6. In the review meeting with farmers, the local leader tries to control the choice of research priorities?
7. You arrive in the community planning to begin with mapping and modelling, but the team is nervous and unsure how to start?

#### **GROUP 2: What would you do if...**

1. A farmer calls you over as you are walking back to the vehicle looking forward to having something to eat and drink?
2. In front of a group of farmers, one member of your team contradicts what one of the farmers has just said?
3. The majority of people in the village in which you have been working identify income generation, soil and water conservation, and rural roads as more important than the work your institution is focusing upon?
4. One team member is frequently giving negative criticism in team discussions?
5. You realise by the end of the second day that very few women have been interviewed, although they appear to be actively engaged in farming activities in the catchment?
6. One of your team members wishes to leave the day before you complete the fieldwork?
7. A very senior member of staff of your organisation wishes to attend the fieldwork to observe the participatory methods but, as she knows little of the attitudes required for good participation, you fear she will simply lecture the farmers?

*(Continued on next page)*

## **31: GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING AND TEAM CONTRACT EXERCISE (continued)**


### **GROUP 3: What would you do if...**

1. After the initial briefing of your team, during which they appeared to have a good grasp of the concepts and objectives, they do not seem to know how to begin using the methods on arrival in the village?
2. The information on fuelwood received from the women farmers largely contradicts that collected from the men?
3. One of your team members accuses another of making an offensive remark and refuses to work with that person?
4. Towards the end of the day you meet a farmer who knows a great deal about experimenting on crops, but some of your team members are too tired to interview that person and would rather return home?
5. One team member is not participating at all in the team discussions at the end of the day, during which the day's information is being analysed and the next day's checklist developed?
6. An official, who has accompanied your team to the community, misrepresents the purpose of the participatory work to the community?


### **GROUP 4: What would you do if...**


1. You have asked a group of farmers to create a model of their village but they do not seem to know how to begin?
2. One team member is taking a condescending and patronising attitude towards the farmers and tends to lecture rather than listen?
3. You return from your transect walk to find that the village map has been produced entirely by the other members of your team without active farmer involvement?
4. During the matrix ranking and scoring, the more articulate and better dressed male farmers dominate the discussions about local farming priorities?
5. The information you collect during the participatory analyses seems to contradict your secondary data sources?
6. Upon completion of your social mapping, you discover that none of the poorer farmers in the catchment have any of the technologies developed by your research station on their land?
7. One of the team wishes to work alone with farmers, and so is often late back to the group?


## 32: CHAIRS

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To show participants how to manage conflict by turning it into cooperation
  - To help them focus on the possible differences in the interpretation of instructions
  - To make participants aware of cultural differences in handling conflict

 **TIME** 30 – 45 minutes

 **MATERIALS** Three instructions (see below); copies of each for one third of the participants. A room without tables, but with a chair for each participant.

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Explain to the participants the relevance of this exercise by referring to its objectives. Then give each participant one set of instructions (either A, B or C), distributing equal numbers of the three different instructions. Tell them not to show their slip of paper to other participants, as this will defeat the purpose of the exercise.
    - A Put all the chairs in a circle. *You have 15 minutes to do this.*
    - B Put all the chairs near the door. *You have 15 minutes to do this.*
    - C Put all the chairs near the window. *You have 15 minutes to do this.*
  2. The trainer tells everyone to start the exercise, following the instructions they were given.

 **COMMENTS** The analysis focuses on aspects of non-aggressive conflict resolution. The instructions cannot be carried out unless people with identical instructions cooperate. The sub-groups cannot carry out their instructions unless they cooperate. Several solutions are possible:

1. Putting all the chairs in a circle, between the door and window;
2. Consecutively putting all chairs in a circle, then near the door, then near the window;
3. Disobeying part of the instructions, by putting one third of the chairs in a circle, one third near the door, one third near the window;
4. Renaming the situation, by hanging two newsprint sheets in the middle of the room, on one of which is written "Window", and on the other "Door";
5. Disobeying the instructions entirely.

This exercise has great scope for creative conflict resolution. Groups often burst into frantic action, use force and sometimes carry chairs with others desperately sitting on them to their corner. When some participants are trying to find a cooperative solution, others can be seen continuing to collect and defend their chairs. This in turn frustrates the cooperators, who forget their positive intentions and join the argument.

*(Continued on next page)*

## 32: CHAIRS (continued)

### “ COMMENTS

Relevant questions for the analysis include:

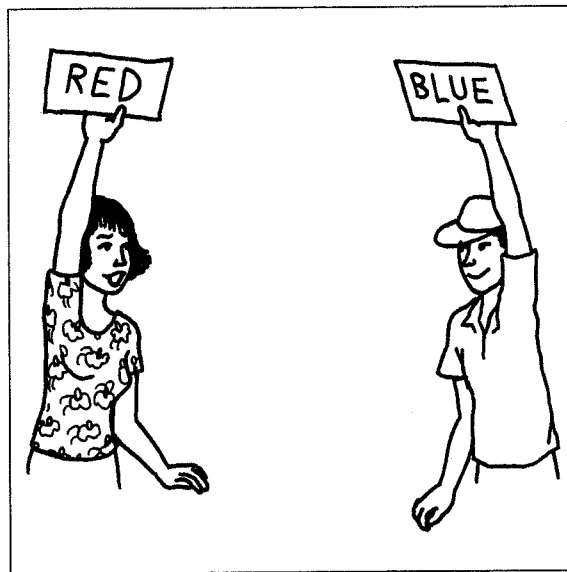
- *What did you experience when playing this game?*
- *Did you feel that the chair you were sitting on was yours, to do with as you pleased?*
- *How did you relate to people who wanted something else? Did you cooperate, persuade, argue, fight or give in?*
- *If you confronted others, then how did you do this?*
- *Did you follow instructions? Why did you interpret them as you did? Did you see them as an instruction to be carried out whatever the cost and to the exclusion of others? Why?*
- *In what way are your feelings about instructions influenced by your cultural background? Has culture influenced the way you behaved in this situation?*
- *How would you handle this assignment if you did it a second time?*
- *Can you relate what happened here to real life situations?*

Source: Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992)

### 33: GROUP STRATEGIES – THE PRISONER'S DILEMMA

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES** ■ To demonstrate that groups can evolve competitive or cooperative strategies, by exploring trust, the effects of betrayal of trust, the effects of competition and the process of developing cooperation

👁️ **MATERIALS** Pens, paper



🕒 **TIME** About 60 minutes

- 📖 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide participants into an even number of teams. Explain that the objective of the game is for each team to maximise its own score.
  2. The teams are paired (an A team and a B team playing opposite each other) and instructed not to communicate with the other team in any way, verbally or non-verbally, except when you tell them to. They can discuss amongst themselves to choose between Red strategy or Blue strategy. Red or blue is written on separate cards and each team gets one of each. Tell the teams how many points they will get in the situations outlined below (see 4).

*(Continued on next page)*



### **33: GROUP STRATEGIES – THE PRISONER'S DILEMMA (continued)**



#### **PROCEDURE**

3. Ten rounds are played, in which each team chooses between Red strategy or Blue strategy. Set a time limit of three minutes for each round. When the time for a round is up, they hold up the appropriate card for everyone to see the team decision.
4. At the end of each round, the scores for each team are identified and recorded based on:
  - Both groups choose red – *both score 2 points*
  - Both groups choose blue – *both score 1 points*
  - One chooses blue and other chooses red – *blue gets three and red 0*
5. At rounds four and eight, the teams are allowed to consult.
6. After the tenth round, a final score is calculated and a debriefing is held.



#### **COMMENTS**

The normal result is that both teams agree to choose red to get maximum group allocation, and then one or both plays blue. The double-crossers score three points and the one staying with red gets zero. Teams will thus try to get their double-crossing in first. There are two scenarios: (1) trust between the teams slowly decreases until each is determined to mislead and cheat; or (2) trust becomes enhanced and fixed by some form of mutual agreement.

At the end the trainer compares the scores of individual teams, the aggregate pair scores and the overall score. The maximum individual team score is 30 points; (if they choose blue every time and their paired team always chose red); the maximum aggregate pair score is 40 points (if each group chose red every time). Variations on this game include only having two teams, who send out representatives for negotiations at rounds four and eight, and announcing that the scores will be doubled at these stages.

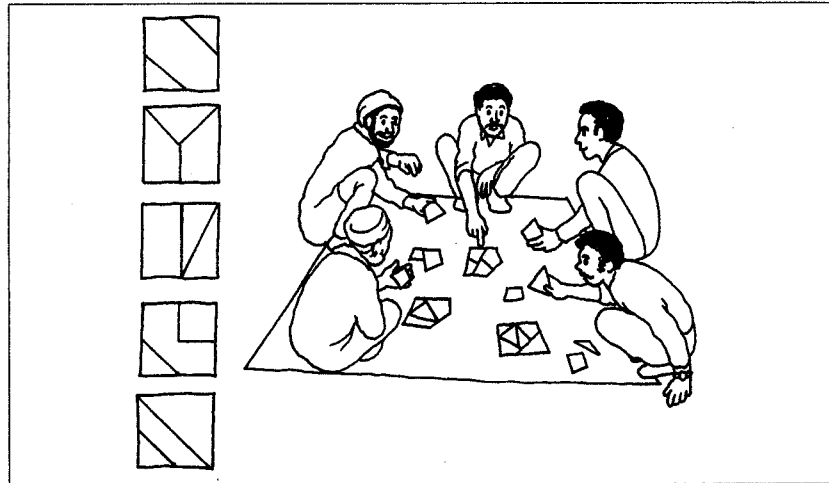
*Sources: Chris Elgood (1988); Anne Hope, Sally Timmel and Chris Hodzi (1984)  
(originally from Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training,  
Volume II, edited by J.W. Pfeiffer and J.E. Jones)*

## 34: COOPERATIVE SQUARES

- ✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To experience and analyse some of the elements of cooperation, for individuals to look at their own behaviour when working in a group

- 👁️ **MATERIALS** A table for each group of five people, and five envelopes containing pieces of card as indicated in the figure below

- 🕒 **TIME** About 1 hour (5 minutes introduction, 20 minutes task, 20–30 minutes evaluation)



- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Prepare the cards. For each group of five people you will need five envelopes labelled A, B, C, D and E, and five pieces of thin card 15 cm square. It helps if each group has a different colour and if the envelopes are labelled with the colour ("pink A, pink B, pink C", etc.). For each group, cut their five squares exactly as shown in the figure. All the cuts are either to a corner or to the middle of a side. It is essential that you measure and cut accurately. Label the pieces as indicated, and put the pieces into the corresponding envelopes.
  2. Start the exercise by explaining that this exercise allows us to look at what is essential for successful group cooperation. Ask the participants to form groups of five and to sit around a table. (It is possible to have one extra person to observe each group).

(Continued on next page)

## 34: COOPERATIVE SQUARES (continued)



### PROCEDURE

3. Then read the instructions to the whole group:

*"Each of you will have an envelope which has pieces of cardboard for forming squares. When I give the signal to begin, the task of each group is to form five squares of equal size. There are two important rules:*

1. *no one may speak or signal – the task must be done in silence*
2. *no one may take or ask for a piece from any other person, but they may give pieces to others."*

4. The task is completed when each individual has before her or him a perfect square of the same size as those in front of the other group members.



### COMMENTS

Looking at the diagram of the five squares, it seems very easy. But trainees usually end up with three or four squares and odd bits which just won't fit together. Participants come to realise that their individual desire to produce one square is secondary to the group task of completing five squares. Personal success does not always equal group success, and may actually be impeding the group goal. A good solution for one person may in fact obstruct a good one for the group as a whole.

Within the rules of the game, each group can make its own rules. For example, all the members might decide (without talking or gesturing!) to give all their pieces to the fifth. That person then does not have to wait for the others to give one piece at a time – but it is limiting as it is not possible to use the others' help.


It is important to spend some time on feedback from this exercise. The trainer may elicit responses from the groups by asking:


- *"What happened? Was the task achieved quickly? Why not?"*
- *"Did the group cooperate? Would increased cooperation have speeded things up?"*
- *"What roles did different people in the group play?"*
- *"Did anyone feel frustrated? How did they deal with this?"*
- *"Did anyone break the rules? How?"*
- *"What did the observers notice?"*

This may be a good point to discuss the roles played by different group members (see Chapter 3).


*Source: Anne Hope, Sally Timmel and Chris Hodzi (1984)  
(originally from Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training,  
Volume I, edited by J.W.Pfeiffer and J.E.Jones)*


## 35: POSTCARD OR JIGSAW PUZZLE

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To energise participants and form a number of cohesive sub-groups from a large group
  - To analyse how groups organise themselves

 **MATERIALS** A number of pictures, eg. postcards of animals, as many as the number of desired groups.

 **TIME** 5–10 minutes

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Prepare the pictures. These are cut up in complex or jigsaw-shaped pieces, as many as the number of people per group. For a group of 20 that needs to be broken up into four sub-groups, four pictures are necessary and each picture should be cut into five pieces (ie.  $4 \times 5 = 20$ ). If groups are large, then pieces will be small so make sure to use distinct pictures to make the task easier. If groups are small, then the pieces will be large, so similar pictures will make the task more interesting.
  2. The 20 pieces are shuffled up and one piece handed to each participant.
  3. The group is then asked to find their teams by joining the shapes together to form a picture, without speaking to each other.
  4. Once the pictures are formed, you can continue with whatever sub-group activity you had planned. You can collect the pieces for reuse but you might find that teams will want to keep them as their team identity.

 **COMMENTS** If the jigsaw puzzle is to be used to form the groups for fieldwork, then the pictures can be used to structure the groups according to criteria that might be important. Determine who should go in each group the night before the game is to be played. Write the names of each participant on the pieces according to which group they are to work in. This is also useful to practise names as you can hand out each piece yourself to the right person. Choose pictures that the teams may identify with during fieldwork, such as of animals – the lion group, the elephant group, etc. But be cautious about any beliefs or aversions that participants might hold – they may not want to be part of a group with a particular animal name. If used for this purpose, the pieces cannot usually be reused as groups often stick their picture together as their group symbol.

A variation is not to instruct participants to be silent – sometimes the animation and excitement of forming the pictures helps to create an active atmosphere for the next session of the workshop.

*(Continued on next page)*

### 35: POSTCARD OR JIGSAW PUZZLE (continued)

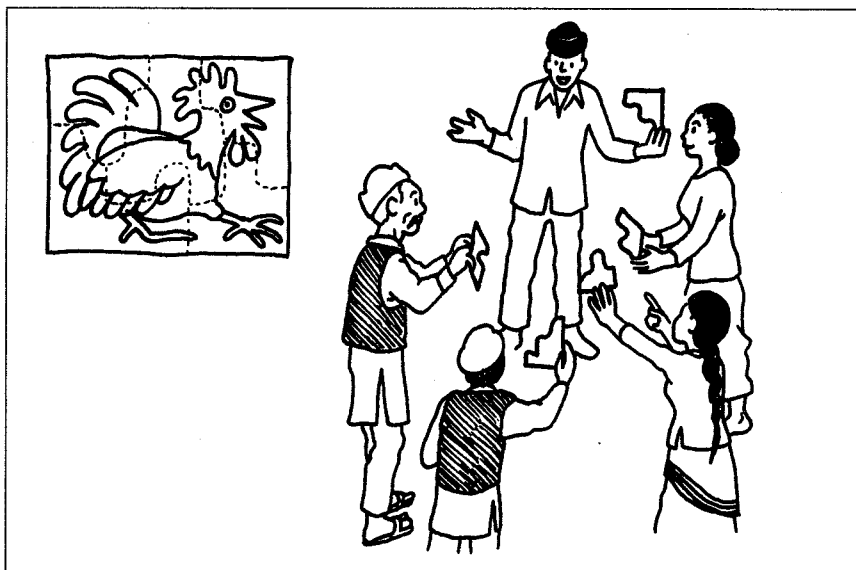
#### “ COMMENTS

This game may serve simply as a way of moving participants around and forming new sub-groups. However, during the debriefing, the trainer can also analyse how the different groups organised themselves:

- “How did the different members meet up?”
- “What were the constraints of non-verbal communication?”
- “Was there an organiser of the group?”
- “How many people were simply waiting to be joined by others?”
- “Did anyone just sit and shout out the names of their picture (or animal) and expect everyone else to come to join them?”

Remember that with only five to six people per picture, the group forming happens very quickly. One way to make the group forming more difficult and lengthy is to select double-sided pictures (eg. two pictures for a group of 30 people). The picture forming is more protracted and there is then the opportunity to draw out the types of people in groups during the feedback. Ask the participants what different sorts of behaviour or types of people were revealed. These might include a natural chairperson or leader; someone who moves around collecting others together; someone who sits and waits for others to come to them. For more details of roles, see Chapter 3, particularly Box 3.7.

*Source: adapted from Anne Hope, Sally Timmel and Chris Hodzi (1984)*



## 36: LOOK WHO'S TALKING



### OBJECTIVES

- To analyse group discussion dynamics
- To highlight dominance and isolation within a discussion group



### MATERIALS

Paper and pen



### TIME

As long as a particular discussion (or part of it) takes



### PROCEDURE

1. In a group interview or discussion setting, appoint someone as an observer. The observer sits outside the group in a position where they can see everyone. All members of the group – informants and interviewers – are mapped on a piece of paper, according to where they are sitting.
2. Each time someone speaks, a circle is drawn around their name.



### COMMENTS

After the discussion, the pattern produced is analysed. Various questions can be posed for the debriefing:

- *"Where do the main speakers sit?"*
- *"Are they male or female?"*
- *"Was the fact that they spoke a great deal 'bad', or were they acting as facilitators?"*
- *"Where do the non-speakers sit?"*

This exercise can be used in the workshop with participants or in the field to analyse group discussion. Various alternatives are possible:

- Mapping of directions of conversation by drawing lines or arrows between the people on the diagram to show who is speaking to whom.
- Calculating the actual time each individual spoke on each occasion and recording this. Also using codes to indicate whether the contribution finished voluntarily or with an interruption. This can produce a dramatic picture of dominance within groups.

This method can be used during group discussions in the field. Simply appoint a recorder and analyse the findings directly after the meeting.

**EXERCISES  
FOR ENHANCING  
GROUP DYNAMICS**

## 37: ROPE SQUARE

### ✓ OBJECTIVES

- To explore how a group works as a group on a difficult task
- To illustrate how people adopt different roles in a group

### 🔗 MATERIALS

A piece of rope that is tied so that it forms a circle, sufficiently long so that half the total group can hold onto it with both hands

### 🕒 TIME

20–30 minutes, depending how long you debrief

### 📋 PROCEDURE

1. Divide the group into two – the silent observers and the square-formers.
2. Lay the rope in a circle on the floor in the middle of the room.
3. Ask the square-forming group to stand in a circle around the rope. The observers should stand back and watch in silence.
4. Ask the square-forming group to pick up the rope circle with both hands.
5. Ask the square-forming group to close their eyes and walk around in a circle a couple of times so that they become somewhat disorientated.
6. Then ask the group to form a perfect square with the rope (without looking!).
7. The other group should observe the dynamics, without commenting.
8. Change the roles of the groups, and then debrief.

### “ COMMENTS


This is potentially a very powerful exercise, revealing a lot about the different types of actors within a group, including leaders, saboteurs, etc. (see Chapter Three). There are almost always too many leaders. Use the discussion to draw these points out:

- *"Who felt frustrated?"*
- *"Were the instructions given by other group members clear?"*
- *"How did you respond to contradictory orders or requests?"*
- *"Who took the lead? Why? When?"*
- *"Who played a bridging role?"*
- *"Who kept quiet?"*
- *"Who cross-checked and evaluated orders from others?"*

The intention is not to make the evaluation personal, but to point out the range of qualities of members of a group and how they interact successfully and unsuccessfully in completing a difficult task. A variation is to ensure that participants do not speak. This makes it more difficult.


*Source: Sam Joseph, pers. comm.*

## 38: MY CORNER


 **OBJECTIVE** ■ To highlight that individual and group objectives and goals can be combined

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 5 minutes

 **PROCEDURE**

1. Ask the group to form a circle holding hands.
2. Ask everyone to choose a corner of the room that is 'theirs' but not to tell anyone.
3. Explain that the objective of the exercise is to ensure that you visit 'your corner'. The circle must not be broken in the process.
4. Discussion and debriefing.

 **COMMENTS** What often happens in this exercise is that individuals doggedly try to persuade everyone to go to their corner and their corner only.

As most participants assume they are to visit and stay in their own corner, groups rarely decide collectively to go to everybody's corner in turn, thus satisfying every individual's objective through group cooperation.

*Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*



**EXERCISES  
FOR ENHANCING  
GROUP DYNAMICS**

## 39: GROUP ROLES



### OBJECTIVE

- To generate group discussion on how group dynamics are affected by the characteristics of individual group members



### MATERIALS

Small cards and a prepared overhead or flipchart



### TIME

20 minutes



### PROCEDURE

1. Break people into groups. This exercise works best in small groups, especially among those who are about to engage in an activity together (for example groups before fieldwork).

2. Present an overhead projection slide or flipchart with five (or more or less) different 'character types' identified by letters (A-E) or numbers (1-5).

The overhead/flipchart might look something like this:

*A. I like to lead a group from the start.*

*B. I like to sit back and wait for someone to take the lead; only when I know others' positions will I try to influence events.*

*C. I don't like to make direct contributions to group discussions, but prefer to do things quietly, building alliances with others.*

*D. I am easy going and let others run the show. Only when things go against my wishes will I intervene.*

*E. I prefer not to take the lead, but rather to carry out practical tasks that the group decides upon together.*

3. Ask everyone to choose the characteristic that describes their behaviour in groups most of the time (of course, different circumstances require different responses, so emphasise that this relates to the most common behaviour).

4. Ask everyone to write on a small card the letter that best describes their most common behaviour. Keep this private.


5. Collect all the cards together, maintaining privacy. Shuffle them up and lay them out face down on the floor. Get the group to turn them over and discuss the composition of the group in terms of balances of roles and inputs. This discussion should remain anonymous (unless someone wants to talk explicitly about themselves).



### COMMENTS


The discussion about the group composition can be enormously helpful in encouraging a group to realise the variety of individual perceptions about group roles among a relatively small number of people. Everyone is different, and groups work best when the multiple strengths of the group are drawn on collectively. This realisation can help prevent unproductive conflicts from arising in subsequent group work. As participants now expect certain types of behaviour, they can appreciate others' approaches to group work better.

## 40: EXCLUDING NUMBERS


-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To identify various roles played by individuals in the group
  - To explore issues of indecision and exclusion amongst a large group

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 20 minutes

 **PROCEDURE** This is a variation on the Numbers Game (No. 15)

1. The trainer nominates a caller, and no other person is allowed to speak.
2. The caller then shouts out number combinations, such as twos, threes, fives. This may produce the correct number of groups of the desired size, or lead to the exclusion of individuals.
3. The stranded individual can either leave the exercise and sit down, or join a group so making the total incorrect.
4. The caller continues to call out the desired group sizes until the same person leaves or someone else decides to move or leave.
5. The exercise continues until only two people are left.

 **COMMENTS** Participants are asked to explore how they felt when they were excluded:

- *Did you sit down immediately?*
- *How difficult was it to join a formed group, and so disrupt it?*

Participants are asked how they felt in stable groups:

- *How did you feel when someone tried to join you?*

This exercise is helpful to trainers in the identifying of roles played by individuals in the group – who are the victims? Who never gives up? One variation is for the trainer to join in, and stand still the whole time, never leaving to sit down.

*Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*



## 41: MATCHES

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To make everyone consider the value of their contribution
  - To encourage a listening attitude in discussion

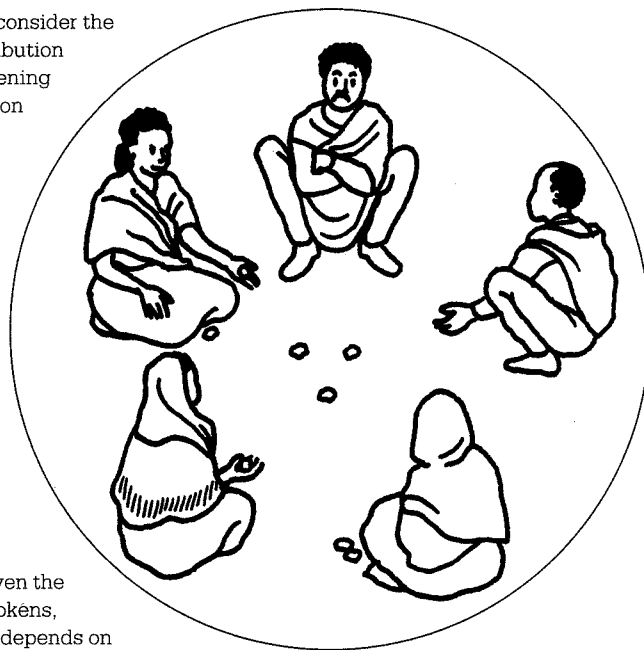
- 👁️ **MATERIALS**
- Three to six tokens (such as matches or coins) for each participant

- 🕒 **TIME**
- Variable, but should be specified in advance

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Each person is given the same number of tokens, the total of which depends on the time limit.
  2. Every time someone speaks to the group they put one of their tokens in the centre.
  3. If they have no more tokens, they cannot speak.

- “ **COMMENTS**
- As every remark is equally valuable – perhaps one third of the speaker's total contribution – speakers must first evaluate their contribution and consider whether it is worth it in terms of its intrinsic value and relevance. Knowing that every speaker has made that evaluation, others are more likely to listen, though there is a danger that others will be so busy deciding whether to speak that they won't listen at all.

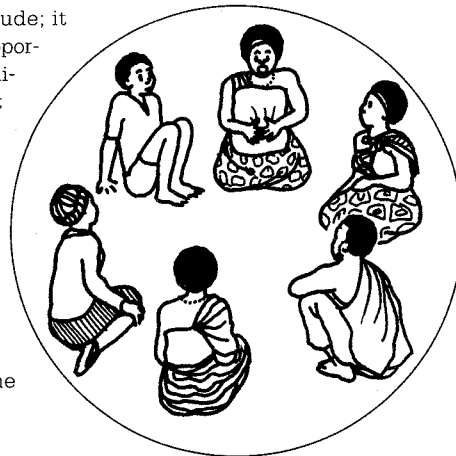
An alternative to putting the matches in the centre is for each speaker to give the match to the person they are speaking to.



## 42: THE PILLOW GAME

- ✓ OBJECTIVES**
- To make a discussion more orderly and to encourage listening
  - To uncover the roles played by people in a discussion
- 👁️ MATERIALS** A soft object that can be passed or thrown around, such as a cushion, pillow, rolled-up pullover, or ball of newspaper
- 🕒 TIME** As long as the discussion takes
- 📝 PROCEDURE**
1. The group sits or stands in a circle to hold a discussion. Tell the participants that they can speak only if they are holding the pillow; otherwise they should remain silent and listen to what is being said.
  2. When an individual has finished talking they can pass the pillow on – either to someone with their hand raised who is requesting to speak, or to someone else.
  3. Participants may place the pillow in the centre of the circle on the floor, from where it can be picked up by anyone in the group. This may exclude the shyer people. If someone receives the pillow and doesn't want to speak, they can just pass it on.
- “ COMMENTS**
- After the exercise, discuss what it felt like to hold the object, to receive it unasked and to receive it when requested. Those who were given the pillow without asking might have felt uncomfortable and have felt forced to participate.

The game encourages a listening attitude; it allows quieter members of a group the opportunity to speak. It also makes more dominant members conscious of the amount they are speaking since they are holding the pillow. Once the procedures are learnt and become automatic, many groups find this a very useful way of organising group discussions. It dispenses with the need for an authoritative chairperson as the rules are built in. It often helps with later plenary sessions, when participants will refer back to the pillow game to ensure that everyone has the chance to speak.



One variation is to allow participants to turn their back on a speaker if they are bored with them, or find what they are saying irrelevant. This is a very direct act, which serves to stimulate discussion during the feedback session.

*Source: adapted from Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*

## 43: WATCH IT

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To enable participants to observe non-verbal behaviour more effectively

👁️ **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 20 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Participants are asked to form pairs who work together.
  2. **A** assumes any position they wish. **B** observes it and tries to memorise it – body posture, position of arms and legs, position of hands and feet, tilt of head. Then **B** turns around.
  3. **A** changes one detail in his/her position. **B** turns around again, and tries to detect what has been changed.
  4. **A** and **B** swop roles.
  5. Repeat several times.
  6. The trainer should emphasise that initially **A** and **B** should make changes which are easy to detect, but that subsequently the changes made should be more subtle and difficult to detect.






“ **COMMENTS** The plenary discussion can focus on questions such as:

- *What is easy and what is difficult to spot, and why?*
- *What is required to be a good observer?*

Most people pay most attention to legs, and facial expressions. They are far less observant of total body posture, and tend not to notice whether a person sits straight or is slouched. Yet posture is particularly important in judging someone else's attitudes and feelings.

*Source: Frank Oomkes and Richard Thomas (1992)*

## 44: NON-VERBAL CIRCLES

-  **OBJECTIVE** ■ To sensitise participants to how non-verbal behaviour can indicate dominance, submissiveness, and friendliness
-  **MATERIALS** None, but participants can use chairs, sticks, etc. to improvise
-  **TIME** 15–20 minutes
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask groups of five to ten people to stand in circles facing inwards. One person is appointed scorer, who also takes part.
  2. The first competition is for each group to show and perform as many non-verbal actions that demonstrate dominance as they can. One person does the action, and then all in the group must repeat it for it to count in the score.
  3. Continue until one or two groups are running out of ideas.
  4. Quickly ask the scores, and invite each group to choose its best non-verbal.
  5. In turn, the groups stand up and show the others their best one.
  6. Repeat for submissiveness.
  7. Repeat for 'being nice to people'.
-  **COMMENTS** This exercise is most effective when combined with a discussion on the importance of non-verbal behaviour. An energiser and group-former, for example Fruit Salad, can help as a lead-in. A round-up discussion can elicit observations about types of postures and gestures. This exercise does not usually show how important eyes are in indicating what a person is feeling and thinking, which can be demonstrated by hiding behind dark glasses.

*Source: Robert Chambers, pers. comm.*

## 45: VOTING DEBATE

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To illustrate how a range of factors influence the decision to agree or disagree with a particular line of argument
  - To demonstrate how easy it is to argue a point with many people physically backing you up
- 👁️ **MATERIALS** Two chairs
- 🕒 **TIME** 10 minutes
- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask for two volunteers to conduct a public debate on a specific, pre-determined issue. (This could relate to a previous theoretical discussion, such as *PRA is always a positive process*.) You can also ask them to choose a topic that is of importance to both of them. You may have to ask one to play the devil's advocate.
  2. Sit them in the two chairs facing each other.
  3. All the remaining participants are asked to stand to one side in a 'neutral zone', level with the gap between the two chairs. As the debate develops, they should walk and stand behind the person who has made a statement they agree with. If in the course of the discussion/debate they change their mind or disagree with something said, then they should walk to stand behind the other debater.

“ **COMMENTS** This exercise very powerfully demonstrates the ebb and flow in any discussion. It is particularly effective if discussions during past sessions have kept stagnating on a particular issue about which the group disagrees. This issue can then be taken as the focus for the debate. As the debate takes place under controlled conditions, emotions tend to be less fiery and arguments are clearer. Discussing the issue in this manner releases tensions.

For the debriefing ask the debaters various questions:

- *How did you feel when everyone was standing behind you?*
- *How did you feel when everyone was standing behind the other debater?*

Ask the other participants:

- *What made you move? Was it the quality of the debate, or was it key errors made by one person?*
- *What role did body language play in your decision to move?*

Variations include allowing other participants to replace a seated debater if they would like to throw in new ideas. This makes the experience less confrontational for the debaters and slowly draws in other views.

Another variation is called *Han-ji, Na-ji* ("yes sir" and "no sir", respectively in Sanskrit-based languages), whereby the two debaters actively try to find allies in the group by asking them tricky or polemic questions, jokes, etc.

Sources: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.; UNICEF (1993)

**46: FOLDING PAPER GAME**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To demonstrate that it is easy for even simple instructions to be misinterpreted by the recipient, especially if ambiguous words are used, or the recipient does not (or cannot) ask for clarification

- 👁️ **MATERIALS** Several sheets of paper (square sheets are most interesting, as ingenious participants could choose to fold it from corner to corner, thus creating a triangle)

- 🕒 **TIME** 5–10 minutes



- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. Select four participants (or ask for volunteers) and ask them to stand in the front of the room, facing the remaining group.
  2. Give each of the four a sheet of paper and these two rules: 1. each person must close their eyes during the exercise; and 2. they may not ask any questions.
  3. Instruct them to fold their paper in half and then to tear off the bottom right corner of the paper. Tell them to fold the paper in half again and then to tear off the upper right hand corner. Tell them to fold the paper in half again and then to tear off the lower left hand corner.
  4. Instruct them to open their eyes and display the unfolded paper to each other and the audience.

- “ **COMMENTS** There is a great probability that they will not all be the same. Use the following questions to start the debriefing:

- "What words in the instructions could be interpreted in different ways?"
- "How could the directions have been clearer to reduce the ambiguity?"
- "How can we encourage people ask for clarification when they do not understand something?"

Source: John Scannell and Edward Newstrom (1983)



**EXERCISES TO  
IMPROVE LISTENING  
AND OBSERVATION**

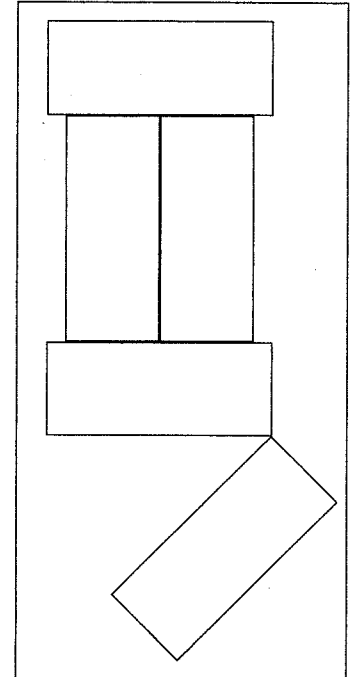
## 47: DRAWING BRICKS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To show how difficult it is to transmit information using only words
  - To compare the ease of one- and two-way communication

👁️ **MATERIALS** Two sheets of paper with the figure (right) drawn out

🕒 **TIME** 10–15 minutes

- ✍️ **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask for one volunteer. Sit that person with her/his back to the rest of the group.
  2. Give the volunteer the sheet with the figure on it and make sure no one else in the group can see it.
  3. The volunteer is then asked to explain verbally to the group what s/he sees, giving only verbal instructions on how to draw the figure. The rest of the group are asked to draw what they are told by the volunteer. The volunteer is not allowed to gesture, turn around, etc.
  4. In the first phase of the game, the rest of the group are not allowed to ask questions; they must draw the diagram in silence. When the volunteer has finished the instructions, hand the second sheet to him/her. It is the same picture but the others will not know this.
  5. The group is asked to start a new sheet of paper and the exercise is repeated, but this time the group can ask questions and the volunteer is allowed to answer verbally (s/he is still not allowed to use her/his hands, etc.). At the end, the various diagrams are compared with the original.



“ **COMMENTS**






If time is short, this exercise can stop after the first phase as a demonstration of the difficulties of one-way communication. Debriefing should concentrate on discussion of the relative ease of one and two-way communication and the difficulties of only verbal compared to a combination of verbal and non-verbal communication. The following questions can be discussed:

- "At what point did the rest of the group get confused?"
- "What assumptions was the volunteer making?"
- "What would have made it easier for the group to understand (analogies such as bricks, geographic directions)?"

This diagram is good because, if described clearly it can be drawn accurately. If other diagrams are used they should not be too difficult. They should be quite structured and it should be possible for the volunteer to make analogies with the object.

### IMPROVING LISTENING & OBSERVATION

## 48: EMPATHETIC LISTENING

-  **OBJECTIVE** ■ To develop the skills of active and empathetic listening
-  **MATERIALS** Newspaper or magazine articles as needed
-  **TIME** 30–40 minutes
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Select a topic of a controversial nature from a magazine or local newspaper (politics, labour, management or any other topic in good taste).
  2. Divide participants into groups of three. Each trio selects a Speaker, Listener and Referee. The selected topic is discussed by the Speaker who, without interruption, explains his/her feelings on that topic. After the Speaker has finished, the Listener summarises (without notes) what was said on the subject. Following this segment, Speaker and Referee can correct or amplify any item stated by the Listener. The Referee is the only person allowed to use notes.
  3. After an 8–10-minute discussion, select a new topic and reverse roles, using the same procedure. After 8–10 minutes, another new topic and role reversals are used, thus allowing each person to act in each of the three roles.
-  **COMMENTS** Use the following questions to debrief:
- *"In your role as Speaker, did you sense any difficulties or experience any awkward moments?"*
  - *"How about as Listener or Referee?"*
  - *"Did you observe any barriers that obstructed effective listening?"*
  - *"In your role as Listener, why was it difficult to summarise and paraphrase the Speaker's comments?"*
  - *"What is the value of taking notes?"*
  - *"How does this exercise relate to data collection and interviewing in the field?"*

One variation is to discuss a personal topic telling the Listeners not to indicate any approval or disapproval either by frowning or nodding their heads. In this version, the focus is on showing the value of a non-judging listening attitude and that a continually 'wagging head' Listener is not always experienced as pleasant. In the debriefing, ask them how it felt to limit their gestures. Usually, they will say they found it difficult. When asking the Speakers their thoughts on having a non-committal Listener, they will generally indicate that it was actually all right.

Sources: Edward Scannell and John Newstrom (1983); Alan Margolis, pers. comm.

**EXERCISES TO  
IMPROVE LISTENING  
AND OBSERVATION**

## 49: NODDERS AND SHAKERS

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To illustrate how incoherent body language affects verbal communication

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide trainees into pairs by asking them to join with someone they have not yet worked with.
  2. One person from each pair is the 'shaker' (ie. only shakes head from side to side); the other person is the 'nodder' (ie. only nods head up and down).
  3. Ask pairs to conduct a brief conversation. After one minute, get partners to swop roles; the shakers become the nodders and vice versa.
  4. Feedback can be in pairs or conducted in the plenary.

“ **COMMENTS** Use the following questions to debrief:

- "Did you feel you were being listened to?"
- "Were you distracted by the nodding and/or shaking?"
- "Could you report back what was said?"
- "How did your incongruous body language affect your own verbal communication?"

A variation is to work in threes, with one person in the role of observer.

Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.

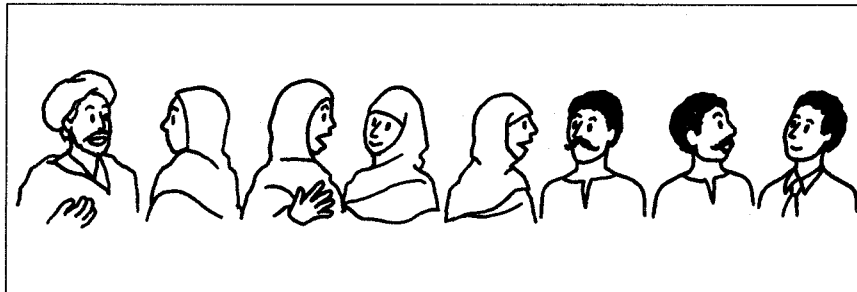
### IMPROVING LISTENING & OBSERVATION

**50: WAYWARD WHISPERS AND STORY SEQUENCES**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To demonstrate that information transmitted loses much of its content when passed through 'channels'

🗨️ **MATERIAL** A brief article from a magazine or newspaper, or a prepared story

🕒 **TIME** 10–12 minutes



- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Select any recent article (2–3 paragraphs only) that is not currently in the news.
  2. Divide the group into teams of 4 or 5 people each. Tell them to number themselves so that each person is identified in the sequence.
  3. Ask the No. 1s to stay in the room and all others to leave the room. Tell the No. 1s that you are going to read them a story; they should not take notes, but merely listen to it.
  4. After you have read the story (with no questions allowed), ask the No. 2s to return to their tables, where the No. 1s will repeat the story to them. Then the No. 3s are brought in and hear the story from the No. 2s while the No. 1s observe. Continue the sequence until all have participated.
  5. At random have some of the number 5s repeat what they heard.
  6. Start the debriefing by reading the original story again, now with everyone in the room.

*(Continued on next page)*

## 50: WAYWARD WHISPERS & STORY SEQUENCES (continued)

### “ COMMENTS

This exercise often causes amazement when the group hears what remains of the original story. The following questions can lead the discussion to highlight the objective of this exercise:

- *"Of the initial story, how much was lost in each transmission? How much was added in each version?"*
- *"What errors or differences were observed as the story passed among the group members?"*
- *"How could we have increased both the facts and the understanding of the story? How do we get feedback in real world incidents?"*

A shorter variation of Wayward Whispers (also known as Chinese whispers) is illustrated below. All participants stand in a line or circle. Whisper one or two sentences to the person on your left. He or she should whisper exactly the same words to the person on their left. In this way, the sentences are passed around the circle until the last person says what he or she has heard. The second and third questions above can be used for the debriefing.

During a training in Pakistan, a group of 30 men and women were asked to sit in separate lines in the old workroom, one line of men and one of women. One person at the end of each line was given the same message and told to pass it to the person sitting next to them: *"Participatory learning involves role reversals, appropriate imprecision and working in interdisciplinary teams."* After passing the statement from person to person, it came out something like, *"Participatory learning involves discipline"* in one line and *"Participatory is appropriate"* in the other.

Everyone laughed at the final results, but some complained that the message was too complicated and asked that we try it again, this time using a single line of women and men. The second message was, *"Pakistan has defeated England in cricket!"* Even this easy message became distorted as it was passed down the line, ending up as *"Pakistan has won in cricket."*

The facilitator used the outcome to explain that the point of the exercise was to illustrate how messages can become scrambled and confused as they are passed along chains of commands, such as from a head office to a regional office to a local office and from extensionist or field officer to local people, and back again. It is far better to go to the source and exchange ideas and information directly.













## 51: LEARNING BY ASSOCIATION




















- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To impress upon trainers, supervisors, etc. the importance of presenting new material to trainees in an organised manner to maximise the efficiency of the learning process
  - To emphasise that learning is by association

📄 **MATERIALS** Pre-printed sets of instructions

🕒 **TIME** 10–15 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Inform trainees that they are about to learn a totally new symbolic system for counting that will replace the traditional numeric system (1–10).
  2. Divide the class into two groups, A and B, and provide each group with a different set of instructions.
  3. Provide group A with a sheet of paper on which are printed ten codes for numbers 1–10, and tell them that they have a very limited time to memorise the new system.
  4. Provide group B with a sheet of paper on which the codes for numbers 1–10 are shown in conjunction with the spatial figure from which they are drawn (plus X = 10). Tell them that they have a very limited time to memorise the new system.
  5. Provide two minutes to each group to learn their system, then quiz them by asking them to write down the codes for a set of numbers that you read off.
  6. Collect the scores and compare the two groups. Show participants the two different coded sheets.

Group A	
1 = 	6 = 
2 = 	7 = 
3 = 	8 = 
4 = 	9 = 
5 = 	10 = 

Group B					
					
					
					
					

“ **COMMENTS** For the debriefing, you can ask the following questions:

- “Which group scores the highest? Why?”
- “What implications does this demonstration of rote versus concept learning, or unstructured versus systematic learning, have for you in your job?”

Source: Edward Scannell and John Newstrom (1983)

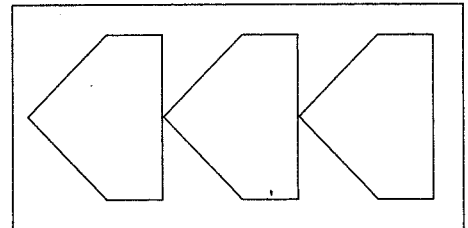
## 52: SEEING THE K'S OR H'S

✓ **OBJECTIVES** ■ To demonstrate how recent events influence the way we see the world

🔗 **MATERIALS** Flipchart/chalk board

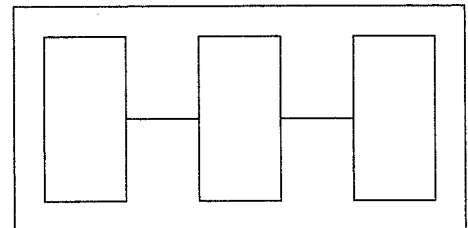
🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

📌 **PROCEDURE** 1. Exhibit this diagram on a flipchart or chalk board. ▶



2. Ask your group: "What do you see?". The chances are you will get responses like "arrows", "three houses on their side"; "increasing importance to the left"; "go to the left"; etc.

3. When you get the response "two Ks", immediately highlight the two Ks and go on with the exercise by exhibiting the second diagram. ▶



4. Then ask them: "Now what do you see?". Very likely, you will get the response "two H's" immediately. Now ask the group "Would you have seen the H's if someone had not first pointed out the K's?"

“ **COMMENTS** It is best to prepare the diagrams beforehand, as the process of drawing them can reveal the K's and H's too soon.

Ask the following questions:

- "Why did you see the H's more easily than the K's?" (You were conditioned by what had just happened: the eye sees, but the mind evaluates).
- "In your work with people, in what ways is your eye seeing one thing and your mind another?"
- "In your work, have there been occasions when what has recently happened has influenced the way you observed or reacted?"

Source: Edward Scannell and John Newstrom (1983)

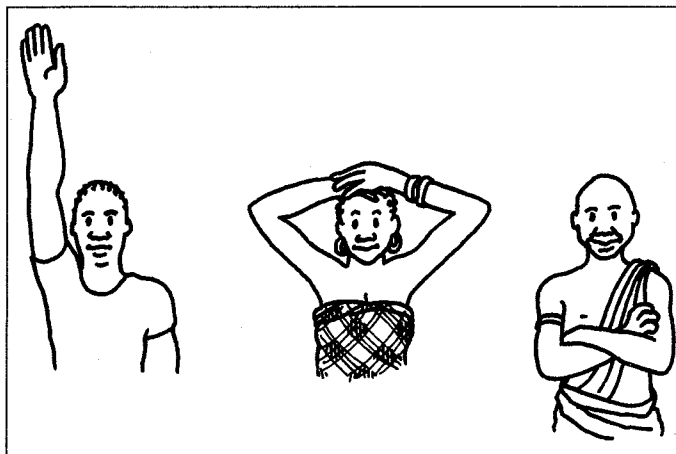
**53: FACT, OPINION, RUMOUR (FOR)**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To encourage a differentiation between facts, opinions and rumours
  - To encourage the judging of responses by informants during fieldwork

👁️ **MATERIALS** Prepared paragraphs of text to read out or distribute

🕒 **TIME** 10–15 minutes

- 📖 **PROCEDURE**
1. Start by discussing the difficulties of judging information as it comes from informants. Ask participants how they judge the validity or reliability of information in a plenary brainstorm. Then define three ways of categorising information, namely as fact, opinion or rumour. Ask participants to define these words or, if your time is limited, then present the following definitions:
    - *Fact*: a commonly agreed time and place specific truth
    - *Opinion*: a person's or a group's view on a topic
    - *Rumour*: unsubstantiated information from an unknown source
  2. Read out a paragraph and ask participants to judge each phrase by making a physical signal with their arms. When the phrase or statement is:
    - *Fact*: raise one arm
    - *Opinion*: put hands on head
    - *Rumour*: cross arms in front of body



(Continued on next page)



**53: FACT, OPINION, RUMOUR (FOR) (continued)****Sample Text**

"You'd like to know a bit about our village? Well, there are 420 households (F), two shops and the best mosque (O) in the region. Most farmers do not have enough (O/F) land. They grow millet and groundnuts (F), and maize as a second crop. Fruit is very important (F). For some it is their main source of food in winter (F). But now more people are selling bananas and watermelon (F). The price is high, and because of the lack of rain (R) this year it will stay high (O). But we have to overcome our traditions of sharing fruit. They say (R) it happened with little trouble in Kerewan, but in Sinchu Madado (R) there were problems between the old and young men."

**“ COMMENTS**

As an alternative, a prepared, written paragraph is distributed to participants in groups or to individuals. They are asked to mark the sections they believe to be fact, opinion and rumour. Compare the way each sentence was judged.

This exercise can be a useful reference point for further field training. Participants can cross-check with each other and begin to categorise and judge information they receive in the field. Discussion on this game can also dwell on how a participatory field team might investigate 'facts' further: *What topic needs cross-checking from which source? When does information become a fact?* or how rumours and opinions might be further investigated. One conclusion should be that judging information is subjective, as each listener will interpret the information based on their own preconceived ideas or prior experiences which might not be relevant in this situation.

*Source: adapted from Sam Joseph, pers. comm.*

## 54: SWOPOVERS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To encourage observation of group dynamics
  - To mix up participants ready for formation of new groups

👁️ **MATERIALS** Pieces of numbered paper, one for each participant

🕒 **TIME** 5–15 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Participants sit in a circle. Say *"I will give you a piece of paper with a number on it. Please do not reveal your number to anyone else."*
  2. Distribute the pieces of paper, and then give the following instructions: *"I will call out two numbers; for example, 5 and 9. The people with those numbers have to look round and identify each other and then swop seats. I will try to spot who they are and take one of their seats as soon as they get up. The player who loses his/her seat will go into the middle and call out the next two numbers"*.
  3. Call out two numbers and go through the process of seat-swopping.
  4. Form new groups after the mixing up of participants.

💬 **COMMENT** Make sure you announce the highest number to the group.

**55: PLAYING DETECTIVE**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To illustrate the importance of astutely observing an environment; the degree to which we make inferences from limited data; and the difference between observation and inference

🔗 **MATERIAL** None

🕒 **TIME** 15–20 minutes



- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. This exercise is best used at the very beginning of a seminar or programme before the trainees have had a substantial opportunity to gather much data. The trainer simply asks the participants (either through direct group discussion or through previous individual responses on paper) to state all the things they know about the trainer. These are listed on flipcharts, chalk board, etc.
  2. After these are collected, the trainer then asks the group to generate what they have deduced about the trainer thus far. These are recorded on a separate list. The trainer then asks the group to comment on the items produced.

*(Continued on next page)*

## 55: PLAYING DETECTIVE (continued)

### “ COMMENTS

This exercise can be an important element of preparing participants for the field and can be linked to training for semi-structured interviewing. It makes them more aware of the powers and dangers of observation. During the debriefing, ask the participants the following questions:

- *"Are any of the inferences really more like facts?"*
- *"Are any of the facts more like inferences?"*
- *"Why did the observations (and inferences) differ among group members?"*
- *"Why are first impressions often inaccurate?"*
- *"How can we improve upon our observation and inference skills?"*

The trainer should then direct the group toward a series of points such as the following:

- *The group knew a lot more about the trainer than any one person did (ie. more facts were already available than there were first believed to be).*
- *Careful attention to our surroundings can help us learn to acquire (or recognise) more data than we might otherwise have.*
- *We often infer a lot about people from very limited first impressions; these inferences may not be valid until examined.*
- *We often act upon our inferences, but believe we are acting on the basis of facts.*
- *The processes of making accurate observations and astute inferences are quite different, and should be consciously separated in our minds.*

One variation is to pick up a simple object, such as a pen or a biscuit, and ask the participants to freely associate about the object. They will come up with a mixture of facts and inferences, which can be listed on a flipchart. These can then be discussed using the questions and learning points mentioned above.

*Source: John Newstrom and Edward Scannell (1980)*

## 56: THE COAT OR RUCKSACK

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To demonstrate the pitfalls of communication without verbal or visual feedback

🔗 **MATERIALS** A coat or a rucksack

🕒 **TIME** 5–10 minutes

- ✍️ **PROCEDURE**
1. Lay a jacket or rucksack on a table. Ask for a volunteer and tell them you do not know what the object is or what to do with it.
  2. The volunteer's task is to train you in its use, but without looking at you. The volunteer should face the participants with you standing behind him or her.
  3. Your task is to deliberately misinterpret the instructions. For example, hold the pocket when told to take the collar, or insert your arm up the sleeve or shoulder strap in a reverse direction, ending up with the coat or rucksack on upside-down, twisted, stuck on your head etc. This creates much amusement.
  4. Ask the volunteer to turn around to see the results of their advice. Ask how the process could be made better.
  5. Next have the volunteer and you facing each other, with the former able to give verbal and physical instructions and corrections. Repeat the exercise with this feedback.



“ **COMMENTS** You may want to ask the following questions during the debriefing:

- *"Why did the volunteer initially have a difficult time with the task of training?"* (Because of assumptions about prior knowledge and common vocabulary, because of limited patience with slow learners on a simple task, or because of one-way communication.)
- *"What are the benefits of demonstration?"* (Adds the sense of sight, and that words take on additional meaning.)
- *"What are the benefits of feedback?"* (Can gauge progress and understanding and satisfaction of trainees.)

There is a danger of the volunteer not wishing to perform in front of the class. You may wish to use another trainer as the volunteer, or brief a participant in advance.

Source: John Newstrom and Edward Scannell (1980)

**57: WHICH WATCH? WHOSE SHOE?**

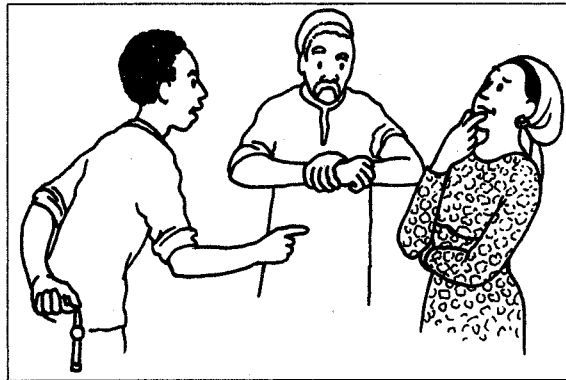
✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To demonstrate that people are often not observant about things they see regularly

👁️ **MATERIAL** A non-digital watch or participants' shoes

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

📝 **PROCEDURE** **A: The Watch**

1. Ask someone in the group if you may borrow their watch for a moment. (Caution: make certain it is a non-digital type.)
2. Tell that person (after receiving the watch) that you would like to test his or her powers of observation, and ask the entire group to play along with the individual whose watch you are using, by covering their own watches.
3. Tell the individual to assume that the watch was lost and you found it. But, before you return it, you want to make certain the watch can be identified as being theirs. Some questions include: "What's the brand name?" "What colour is the face?" "Is there anything else printed on the face?" "Does it have Roman or Arabic numerals?" "How many numerals are shown?" "Does the watch have the date and/or day on it?" "Is there a second hand?"
4. If the group is silently responding as the volunteer attempts to answer the questions, then the key learning point is more easily made: that most people cannot totally and accurately describe their own timepiece even if they look at it dozens of times a day.



(Continued on next page)

**57: WHICH WATCH? WHOSE SHOE? (continued)**** PROCEDURE B: The Shoe**

1. Ask participants to tuck their feet under the table or chair and not to look at them.
2. Ask them to sketch quickly the main features of their shoes, indicating colour, way it is fastened, size and shape of heel, stitching, etc. Allow them up to five minutes before asking them to look at their shoes.
3. The point is easily made that observing items used daily is not a well-developed skill in most people.

**“ COMMENTS** You may want to ask the group:

- "Why aren't we more observant?" (Time pressure? lack of concern? Taking things for granted? Something else?)
- "Have you seen incidents where people have overlooked commonplace things and problems may have resulted?"
- "What is the value of observing the apparently 'ordinary' in a participatory context?"

Source: Edward Scannell and John Newstrom (1983)

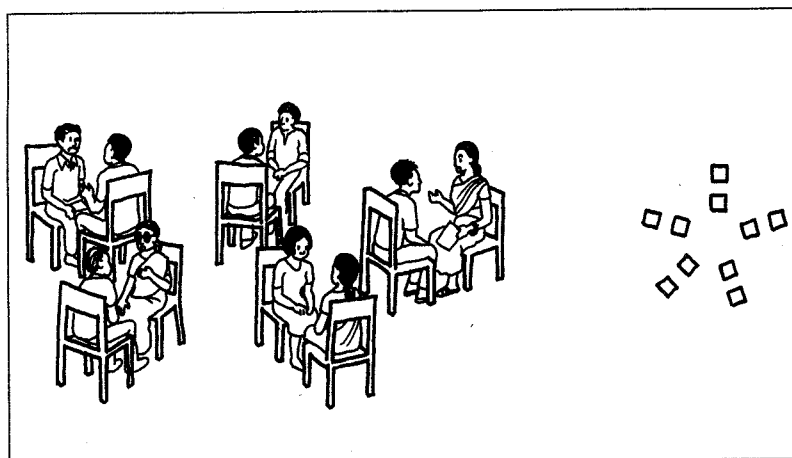
**58: THE MARGOLIS WHEEL**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To give individuals the opportunity to discuss real problems they face or will face and to generate potential solutions
  - To emphasise equality in power and authority within the group
  - To encourage participants to share problems and actively seek experiences and suggestions from each other
  - To highlight that we all have relevant and valuable experiences

- 👁️ **MATERIALS**
- Two sets of five or six chairs arranged in two concentric circles, the inside ones facing the outside
  - A watch or electronic timer to time each round
  - Object to make a noise, eg. cup and spoon, bell

- 🕒 **TIME** 45 minutes


- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask participants to reflect on particular problems they will face or have faced. This can be focused on a recent session, and could include:
    - Problems in training others in participatory methods;
    - Problems/difficulties likely to be faced when returning to your own institution.



*(Continued on next page)*



**58: THE MARGOLIS WHEEL (continued)**

-  **PROCEDURE**
2. Then ask participants to sit in any seat. Instruct them that those sitting in the inside circle will be the consultants or solution-suggesters. Those sitting on the outside facing in will be the clients or problem-presenters. Explain that each pair has three minutes to discuss problems and potential solutions.
  3. After 3 minutes, the outside circle rotates by one chair, bringing a new client to face each consultant.
  4. Give another 3 minutes for discussion. This continues for all 5 or 6 people in the circles.
  5. Then give 2 minutes for all clients and consultants to write down a summary of problems and solutions.
  6. After this is complete the clients and consultants change circles and reverse roles. The exercise is repeated. If there are more than 10–12 participants (ie. more than one set of circles), then arrange for the consultants to switch circles after the first round so that a new source of potential solutions can be brought to each circle.

**“ COMMENTS**

Inform participants that they may discuss private as well as public problems. You could give an example from your own experience to demonstrate this. No one but the consultant will get to hear of them, as there is no presentation after the exercise.

However, this exercise is best used when there has been prior discussion of problems and constraints. For example, participants may have been with colleagues from the same institution, programme or department discussing what should happen after the workshop. Break the discussion by using the Margolis Wheel, as this will permit participants to discuss private as well as public problems.

This exercise almost always generates highly animated discussion. It is important that individuals do write down a summary of the problems and potential solutions. These can then be used in a follow-up discussion, such as in the elaboration of detailed implementation or action plans.

An extra learning point can be made if participants are asked to choose one problem to present to each consultant. During the debriefing you can discuss how the problem presented initially changed as the client became more aware of the real issues after each consultation.

*Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.*

**59: JOHARI'S WINDOW**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To increase self-awareness
  - To share personal feelings and ideas

👉 **MATERIALS** Pencil, paper and a model of Johari's Window (see below)

🕒 **TIME** 20–30 minutes

- ✍️ **PROCEDURE**
1. Present the Johari Window, clarifying the contents of each of the four windows:

<p><b>Open Knowledge</b>  <i>Things that others know about me (eg. my name, what my face looks like)</i></p>	<p><b>Blindness</b>  <i>Things that others know about me which I don't know (eg. what my back looks like)</i></p>
<p><b>Hidden Knowledge</b>  <i>Things I know but others don't know about me (eg. my secret wish, my bank account number)</i></p>	<p><b>Knowledge that will be revealed</b>  <i>Things no one knows about me (eg. where I will live ten years from now)</i></p>

2. Ask the group members to draw their own Johari Window, filling in several examples in each box.
3. Ask the participants to discuss some of their examples.

“ **COMMENTS** The window on the top right is good for getting feedback from other people about how we sound, what impressions we make, etc.

This exercise can also be used to explore differences between professionals' and rural people's knowledge (see below), and the inherent biases and preconceptions about the value of each. Much indigenous knowledge and practices are in the window on the top right. Much so-called scientific knowledge comes in the bottom left window.

<p><i>What we know and what they know</i></p>	<p><i>What they know and what we do not</i></p>
<p><i>What we know and they do not</i></p>	<p><i>What we do not know and they do not know</i></p>

Sources: Chris Roche, pers. comm.; Anne Hope, Sally Timmel and Chris Hodzi (1984) originally from *Group Processes: An Introduction to Group Dynamics* (1970) by Joseph Luft

## 60: BEANS IN A JAR

**OBJECTIVE**

- To show how we are influenced by group behaviour to change our opinions about something we can observe for ourselves

**MATERIALS**

A jar full of small distinct objects, such as beans or marbles. Do not make the jar too large or the objects too small or else you will spend half your evening counting the contents. If the objects are too large it becomes too easy.

**TIME**

1 to 2 minutes at three or four moments during the training

**PROCEDURE**

1. Show a jar full of beans to the participants and ask them to guess how many are in the jar, writing it on a piece of paper. They are allowed to hold the jar but not to open it.
2. Collect the pieces of paper and explain that you will calculate the average and they will be allowed to guess on several other occasions.
3. Make a frequency graph on which you indicate what people guessed and show the average.
4. On the next day (or session) show the participants the graph and ask them to guess again, now that they know the average and have seen the frequency distribution.
5. Collect the second round of guesses, draw them on a new graph and calculate the new average.
6. Repeat Steps 4 and 5 several times.
7. Reveal the real number of beans in the jar when you debrief.

**COMMENTS**

After revealing the real number of beans, you can ask the group to consider how and why they think groups behave differently from individuals:

- *What are the implications of these differences for participatory learning and action?*
- *How were individuals influenced by seeing the choices made by their colleagues?*
- *Did anyone guess correctly, but then change their mind?*

**IMPROVING ANALYSIS**

## 61: MAP REVERSALS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To highlight how we have very specific and rigid perspectives
  - To show how difficult it is to change our perspectives and behaviour

- 👉 **MATERIALS** Map of the country in which the training is being held, without any writing on it (on a flipchart and one copy for each participant).

- 🕒 **TIME** 15 minutes, depending on length of feedback

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Put up the map with the south pointing up and ask the group what they see.
  2. Distribute copies of the map to each participant and ask them to indicate the main cities of the country on it, giving them the names. Tell them they have one minute to do this.
  3. Discuss the difficulties they encountered.

- “ **COMMENTS** Some debriefing questions could be:
- *Why do we think a map is upside down?* (Have been taught a particular perspective)
  - *What is wrong with holding a map upside down?* (Nothing – it depends on what you have learnt/been taught)
  - *What did you feel when you had to keep your map upside down?* (Irritation, confusion, tried to tilt head or turn map slightly)
  - *What is the relevance of this for development work and in interaction with rural or urban people?*

This can be used with other mapping and diagramming exercises to emphasise the significance of multiple perspectives and the legitimacy of multiple perceptions of reality. *What are the implications of these multiple perspectives and perceptions for participatory learning and action?*

Source: Kamal Kar, pers. comm.

## 62: HANDCLASP

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To show how difficult it is to change ingrained behaviour
  - To show how forced change may cause discomfort and therefore resistance

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask all the participants to clasp their hands. Each person will have a specific position for their fingers.
  2. Now ask them to clasp their hands again, this time putting their fingers in a different position, shifting it one position along.

- “ **COMMENTS**
- For the debriefing you can ask them:
- *How did it feel to have your hands in a different position? (Weird, unpleasant, etc.)*
  - *"People resist change." Do you agree? What is the relevance of this for your daily work? (Many of your trainees are probably involved in trying to change the behaviour of farmers, health workers, extension workers.)*

The main learning point to make is that we all resist change and that therefore we should not expect changes to happen automatically or that a new type of behaviour will be sustained.



## 63: SCORING INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To provide feedback of individuals' perceptions of the value of their own contributions to group performance

📄 **MATERIALS** Paper, pens

🕒 **TIME** 5 minutes



📋 **PROCEDURE**

1. This can take place during any other activity, game or workshop session. Tell everyone they are going to evaluate their contribution to the group. Ask each individual to select a rating, from 0 to 5, for the question:

*"To what extent does the group listen to the contribution that I make to the discussion?"*

2. Each person writes their rating on a piece of paper, which group they belong to, but not their names.
3. You collect the papers, calculate an average value for each group and tell them the average, and perhaps also the range.

“ **COMMENTS** This exercise makes use of the behaviour that other games or activities have already aroused. Individuals who give a high rating (those who have monopolised the discussion) may be surprised or even shocked by average values below their score, as this means that some of their colleagues obviously feel they are not getting a fair chance. This should result in a modification of their behaviour.

*Source: Chris Elgood (1988)*

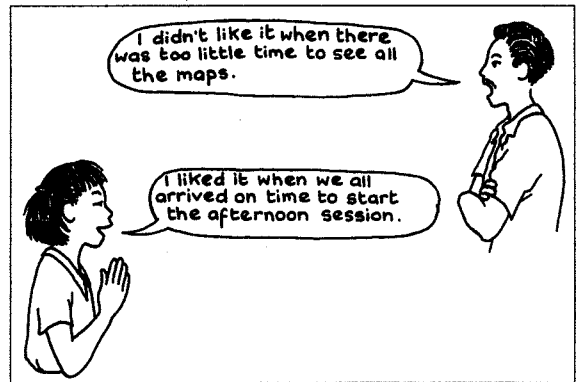
## 64: RESENTS AND APPRECIATES

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To get feedback on a training session or day
  - To encourage open reflection by the participants

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 10–20 minutes (depending on size of group)

- 📋 **PROCEDURE**
1. There are two parts to this exercise. Arrange participants in a circle or hollow U, so that all have eye contact with each other. In turn each participant completes the sentence:  
*"I didn't like it when..."*
  2. This may refer to anything that happened during the session or day. Each person may choose to say nothing or complete the sentence as many times as necessary. No one should pass judgement or comment on what others have said.
  3. After everybody has answered this question, the procedure is repeated for what they appreciated. This time complete the sentence:  
*"I liked it when..."*



“ **COMMENTS** The exercise finishes with the *likes*, so participants finish on a positive note. You should begin the round and be as honest as you expect the participants to be. You can also end by asking participants to mention one good thing they felt they had personally contributed to the group. This helps to build self-esteem.

A variation is to have coloured cards on which the likes and dislikes are written. These are then pinned to a board or stuck to a piece of paper anonymously for all to see. A separate piece can be allocated for “suggestions”, and participants asked to comment on what they would like to see changed.

An alternative that is shorter, but more reflective, is to ask participants simply to write down their dislikes and likes for their own interest. In this way the reflection element is achieved, but not the feedback to you and the group.

Sources: Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990); Alan Margolis, pers. comm.

## EVALUATION

## 65: THE MOOD METER

**✓ OBJECTIVE** ■ To monitor participants' changes in mood during the course of the workshop

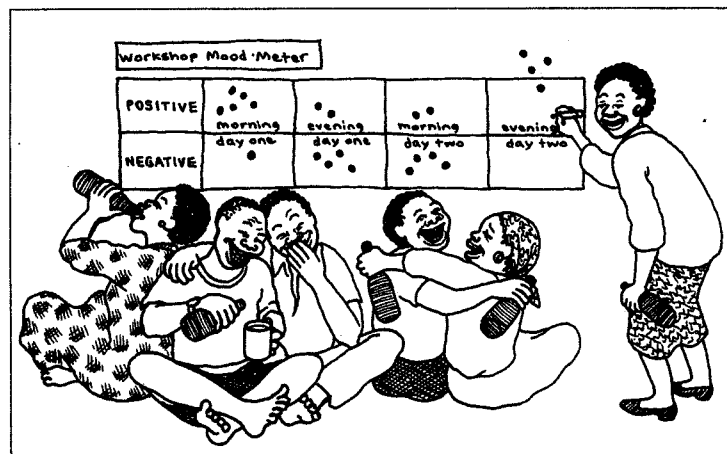
**🔗 MATERIAL** Large sheet of paper, stickers/pens

**🕒 TIME** 5 minutes each day

- 📝 PROCEDURE**
1. Prepare the mood meter sheet (this may be a flipchart sheet placed lengthwise, with a horizontal line drawn across the centre). Positive moods are indicated above the line and negative moods below. It can also be divided with horizontal lines to denote individual training sessions or parts of the day.
  2. Choose a fixed time each day when participants fill in the mood meter. At the beginning of the workshop, ask participants to assess how their mood fits into the range (from happy through average to unhappy) for that day (or session).
  3. Ask them to mark the point on the paper with a sticker or marker pen.

**“ COMMENTS** The meaning of the symbols should be clearly explained to the participants. Remember that the mood meter is just an instrument to detect possible success or dissatisfaction which should, if necessary, be probed using other evaluation methods.

It is important that the meter should be filled in at the same time every day, as it is difficult to compare morning and afternoon moods. One limitation of this method is that individuals influence each other to a certain extent when they fill in the mood meter. A specific use of the mood meter is at times of group crisis when the mood drops. The graph can be used to reflect on previous sessions when things were looking up. This can get the group to concentrate on positive aspects of group experience so far.



A variation is to use pieces of paper rather than stickers. Participants can then write comments on the paper to clarify moods indicated. It can be useful to let different groups use different symbols or different colours. In workshops or meetings with participants from different regions, this can show up sharp differences in perceptions. Take care not to break anonymity by making groups too small.

Sources: Maria A. Salas, pers. comm.;  
Chris Roche, pers. comm.; UNICEF  
(1993)

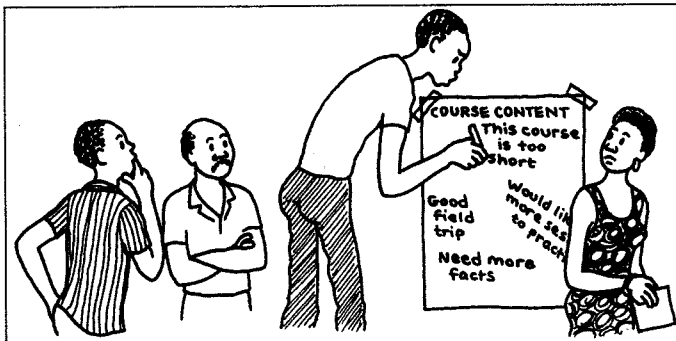


## 66: GRAFFITI FEEDBACK BOARDS

- ✓ OBJECTIVE** ■ To provide an anonymous outlet for participants' and trainees' reactions
- 👁 MATERIAL** Flipchart or similar medium on which to write
- 🕒 TIME** None for collecting the comments; varied amount of time for discussion
- 📋 PROCEDURE**
1. Prepare graffiti boards: poster boards, flipcharts, or chalk boards on which paper can be fixed.
  2. Ask participants to write down their observations, reactions, ideas, or emotions to you or the group. This can be done anonymously. Topics may be provided at the top: "I did not like...", "I liked...", "Suggestions for course content", "Suggestions for physical facilities".
  3. If graffiti boards are to be used for daily feedback, then you can ask for volunteers to analyse the cards and identify general trends. They should report their findings back to the group the next morning. This will give you an opportunity to use the feedback to indicate whether you are able to and how you plan to respond to any suggestions.
  4. You can place a blank board near the door and ask the participants to express their thoughts by adding to it, as they feel strongly about something positive or negative. In this way, you can provide an important and immediate outlet for their emotional and intellectual concerns.

**“ COMMENTS** It is essential not to leave evaluation until the end of a session or programme, or possibly at a future date. The motivation of participants to treat these seriously is decreased by the fact that changes will occur too late to improve the quality of the current session. It is important to monitor opinions from the first day, what the participants are appreciating or irritated by, in order to improve the learning atmosphere.

This method, like the Mood Meter (No.65), can appear unfair to trainers as criticism is made public and cannot be directly answered. However, the benefits of giving partici-



pants the opportunity to air their worries or concerns far outweighs this issue. It is very important to respond to any suggested changes to prove that the comments are being seriously considered. A problem shared and responded to may enable a participant to concentrate and learn better.

This exercise may not be effective in some cultures, particularly where there is no recognised norm for public criticism.

### EVALUATION

## 67: MONITORING REPRESENTATIVES

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To coordinate suggestions for improvement from the group to the facilitators
  - To encourage frank feedback from everybody
  - To encourage participants to take responsibility for the workshop

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** Minimal for the group, 10–15 minutes per day for the representatives

- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask the group to select two or three representatives who will help the facilitator to improve the workshop as any problems arise.
  2. Encourage all participants to make any problems known to the representatives.
  3. Agree with the representatives that they will sit down at the end of each day and review the activities, suggesting possible areas of improvement to the facilitator.
  4. The next morning present a summary of what was discussed between you and the representatives, responding to any of the suggested changes.

“ **COMMENTS** This exercise encourages the flow of information from participants to the trainer/facilitator. It is an important safety device for concerns that may build up.

You can also rotate the representatives – ask the participants to elect new ones after a few days.

*Sources: Maria A. Salas, pers. comm.; Jane Vella (1989)*

### EVALUATION

**68: EVALUATION OF SESSION****OBJECTIVES**

- To provide feedback on specific participatory methods or sessions
- To learn how to evaluate and so in future learn better from experience
- To learn how to express feelings and make creative suggestions
- To improve the workshop

**MATERIALS**

Large pieces of paper, pens

**TIME**

Variable

**PROCEDURE**

1. Ask either the whole group, small groups or individuals to evaluate the event and report back. Suggest that they evaluate the content (what was covered) separately from the process (how it was covered).
2. Specific questions can be given to the groups for discussion. The results can be written down on pieces of paper and put on a wall chart, or summarised by you as they are given. Possible questions to ask are:
  - *"Things I liked"*
  - *"Things I did not like"*
  - *"Suggestions for improvement"*
  - *"The most important lesson I learnt"*
  - *"What I found most difficult"*
  - *"What main obstacle I anticipate in applying what I have just learnt"*

**COMMENTS**

This evaluation can be used for the whole workshop or for one particular part of it. Evaluation of a specific participatory tool should be quick and verbal in a buzz session, with the leader of the group taking notes, but not leading the evaluation. Evaluations of the workshop or session need a more reflective atmosphere. This can be done at the end, allowing the participants to reflect individually and then place their comments on the appropriate chart.

Various techniques for group decision-making can be used to assist evaluation sessions. These include the Buzz Sessions, Brainstorming (No. 74), Delphi Technique (No. 75), Graffiti Feedback Boards (No. 66), and so on. The exercise used for paired introductions (No. 1) can also be used for evaluations.

**EVALUATION**

## 69: EVALUATION WHEEL

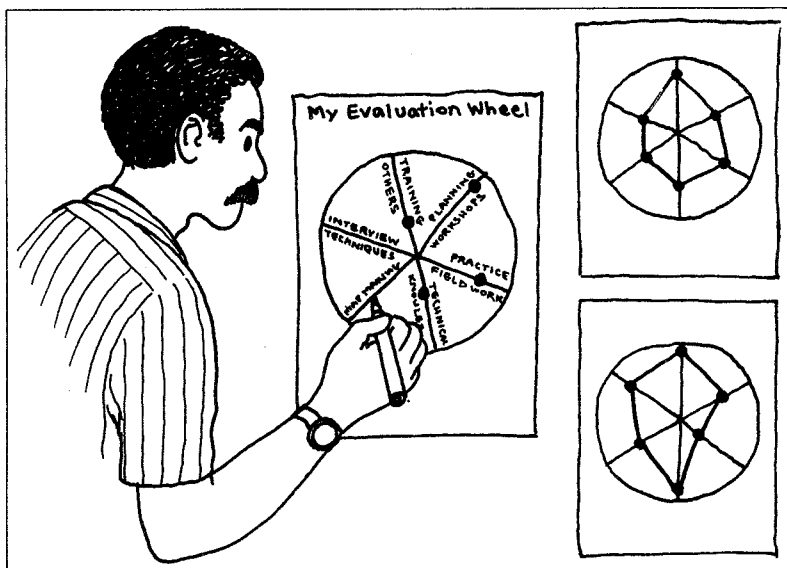
✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To evaluate different aspects of a training course

👁️ **MATERIALS** Paper, pen

🕒 **TIME** 30 minutes

- 📖 **PROCEDURE**
1. The full group should begin by deciding on the criteria for evaluating the course. The expectations lists developed at the beginning of the workshop can be a useful starting point. The number of criteria can vary, but there should not be too many.
  2. Ask each individual to draw a wheel with the same number of spokes as criteria chosen. The spokes should be marked with the various criteria. The spokes represent a scale with low or zero at the centre and high or 10 at the edge. Individuals should assess the course (or whatever is to be evaluated) according to the various criteria and score each criterion by marking the spoke at the right point along the scale.

“ **COMMENTS** If individuals carry out the wheel evaluation on overhead transparencies with a standard sized wheel, the participants' evaluations can be overlaid to see the degree of consensus in the evaluation by individuals.



Source: Jennifer  
Rietbergen-McCracken,  
pers. comm.

### EVALUATION

## 70: HOPES AND FEARS SCORING

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To evaluate the workshop or session in an unusual way
  - To build on the hopes and fears given by participants at the beginning

👁️ **MATERIALS** Large sheets of paper, pens, stickers or symbols

🕒 **TIME** 30 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Take the main hopes and fears given by the participants at the beginning of the workshop (drawn from Hopes and Fears [No. 4], or various expectations exercises [Nos 1, 2, 5]).
  2. Turn the negative criteria into positive (as in matrix scoring and ranking). Put these down the side of a matrix drawn up on a large sheet of paper.
  3. Add a face above each of the five columns, ranging from very happy at one end to very unhappy at the other.
  4. Ask participants to place one sticker or symbol per row, in which box they wish.

“ **COMMENTS** This exercise maintains anonymity for evaluation. It allows trainers and participants to see whether hopes and fears have been addressed or not. One variation is to give different symbols to different groups of people (such as senior staff and field staff), so that differences in the groups will be revealed.

*Source: Chris Roche, pers. comm.*

## 71: ROLE PLAY FOR CREATIVE EVALUATION

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To evaluate a session or workshop in a relaxed and creative way

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** Preparation: 30 minutes; conduct of play: 10–30 minutes

📄 **PROCEDURE**

1. Tell participants early in the workshop that you would like to ask them to engage in an innovative way of evaluating the workshop when it comes to the end.
2. Ask them to think about preparing a short play, role play or cartoon that would say something about what has been happening in the workshop.
3. Give participants time to prepare near the end of the workshop.
4. Open up a session for the role plays/short plays.

“ **COMMENTS** These are often funny pieces of cutting satire that tell trainers more about the workshop than any mood meter or formal evaluation form. The format allows participants to say things they could not say in a more formal way.

*Source: Chris Roche, pers. comm.*

## 72: PROBLEM HAT

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To give individuals the opportunity to discuss immediate problems they face anonymously and constructively
  - To emphasise equality in power and authority within the group
  - To encourage participants to share problems and actively seek experiences and suggestions from each other
  - To highlight that everyone has relevant and valuable experiences

- 👉 **MATERIALS**
- A hat, a bowl or any container
  - Slips of paper and pens

- 🕒 **TIME**                      Depends on size of the group (5 to think and write, 2 per problem)






- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask everyone to sit in a circle. Ask everyone, including yourself, to write on a slip of paper a particular problem they are facing and would like to resolve:  
*"I have difficulty with..."*  
If it concerns the behaviour about another participant, then ask them to not mention that person by name but to describe the problem in general terms.
  2. Ask them to fold the paper and put it in the hat. When everyone has put in their paper, pass around the hat and ask each person to take one slip of paper. If they draw out their own, then ask them to put it back and pick another.
  3. Give the group a few minutes to reflect on the problem. Then start with anyone, perhaps yourself to set the example, and ask them to read out the problem and to feed back briefly how they would suggest that the anonymous writer to deal with it.
  4. Continue around the circle, making sure that everyone just listens and does not comment on the suggestions.

- “ **COMMENTS**                      This is a simple and powerful way to deal with immediate problems. It can be used when tensions are running high to air the issues publicly. This creates the opportunity for those who might be responsible for some problems to reflect on their behaviour and change it.

*Source: adapted from Donna Brandes and Howard Phillips (1990)*

### EVALUATION

## 73: MENTAL GIFTS

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To show appreciation to the group using silence and creativity to convey feelings
  - To conclude the workshop on a positive note
-  **MATERIALS** None
-  **TIME** 10 minutes
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask everyone to sit in a circle, with no chairs in the middle. Tell them that at the end of the workshop, it is sometimes difficult to break the group feeling. This exercise is a goodbye gift from everyone to everyone that we can carry with us as we leave. Explain that the exercise requires imagination and silence.
  2. Start yourself by holding your hands with palms turned up. Using your hands mime the shape of an object (a box, a bottle of wine, a ball), and then 'bounce' it! Pass this 'object' to the person on your right. Explain that they can now give any present of their choosing to the next person.
  3. Continue around the circle, until you receive the last gift. You can end with a "Thank you" or "Bon Voyage".
-  **COMMENTS** This is a very calming and sharing exercise in which people reveal themselves to be amazingly creative. It does not require touching and is therefore suitable to many cultural contexts. However, you might feel more comfortable making two circles, for women and for men.

Source: Alan Margolis, pers. comm.

### EVALUATION





## **74: BRAINSTORMING FOR INTERVIEW GUIDE AND CHECKLIST PREPARATION**

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To develop quickly an unconstrained, non-evaluated list of issues, topics and questions using the collective insights of a group for later discussion, grouping, sorting, prioritisation
  - To help in team building

👁️ **MATERIALS** Flipcharts, small sheets of paper, cards

🕒 **TIME** 5–10 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask the group to appoint a recorder who will not participate, but merely record the ideas.
  2. Ask the group to think of issues, topics and questions that they want to tackle in the fieldwork (or in relation to any particular issue).
  3. Encourage the group to think adventurously. Everything must be included, even the most outlandish and wild idea.
  4. Encourage quantity rather than quality: the more ideas the better.
  5. There are two options for brainstorming:
    - a. People call out their ideas and the facilitator writes each idea up on a flipchart. No comments and evaluation can be made, it must remain a free flow of ideas.
    - b. Each member of the group writes down a series of issues, topics or questions on small bits of paper/card. These are then fed back by sticking them to the wall (see Delphi Technique, No. 75).
  6. Evaluate the ideas after the brainstorming session and agree on the final list of issues by using another method (for example Delphi Technique, No. 75).

“ **COMMENTS** People find it very difficult not to comment or evaluate when ideas are generated in a brainstorm. Emphasise that all judgements must be ruled out until after all ideas have been generated. However, it is very important that the ‘rules’ of brainstorming are clear before you start. Refer to Chapter 2, section 2.3.3 for more ideas on brainstorming.

## **75: DELPHI TECHNIQUE**



### **OBJECTIVES**

- To generate ideas, issues, questions
- To group, sort, rank, set priorities



### **MATERIALS**

Many small pieces of coloured paper/cards and means to stick them to the wall or board (masking tape, pins, gum, etc.)



### **TIME**

30 minutes or more



### **PROCEDURE**






1. Use the Brainstorming procedure (see No. 74) to generate issues, topics, questions as individuals or small groups. Each idea is placed on a card/paper (only one per card/paper).
2. The cards/papers are placed on the wall and grouped, either by one or a number of volunteers or by all of the participants. Exact duplicates may be removed, but all other cards/papers must remain, even the most outrageous.
3. The group must agree on how the cards are to be clustered, as this can form the basis for the sub-division of a checklist into theme areas.



### **COMMENTS**

This method is quite flexible and can be used for a variety of purposes, including developing and revising an interview checklist, comparing the strengths and weaknesses of various methods, preparing a team contract, and so on. Use your imagination and you will find it a good way to involve all of your trainees in almost any discussion. By asking one or two trainees to do the sorting and clustering of cards, you can encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning.

## 76: SPIDER DIAGRAM

-  **OBJECTIVE** ■ To generate ideas and link them together in a 'web' of interconnected issues/themes
-  **MATERIALS** Paper and pen, flipcharts, cards
-  **TIME** 15–30 minutes
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Start with a central issue, topic or question – for instance, the subject of the training course, such as *institutional implications of participatory research and development*, or *constraints for participatory planning*. Write this on a flipchart or whiteboard.
  2. Use the central starting point to throw up connected issues/topics/question. Write each issue down (possibly on a card and place it on the flipchart), drawing lines between the issues which are linked. Move on to identify and link other issues that relate to these.
  3. Continue until all possible connections are exhausted.
-  **COMMENTS** This can be done by an entire group, various small randomly mixed groups or by small focus groups (managers, field staff, researchers, etc.). If done in small groups, each will inevitably create its own unique spider diagram, which can then be compared and contrasted with those of the other groups. The differences and similarities can lead to important discussion points about disparate priorities and perceptions.

## 77: MATCHING ISSUE AND METHOD



### OBJECTIVES

- To encourage participants to think critically about the possible application of different methods
- To help teams plan their fieldwork
- To enhance group dynamics



### MATERIALS

Checklist of questions/issues, list of participatory methods discussed in the training course



### TIME

60–90 minutes



### PROCEDURE

1. Before going to the field each group must discuss how it plans to explore the issues highlighted in the checklist. This will happen at every stage in the fieldwork when new questions and issues come up. In a training situation many of the participatory methods introduced will be new to participants. To avoid people returning to safe and familiar methods, thereby abandoning the new methods, and to encourage a diverse use of a range of methods, a Matching Issue and Method session is very useful.
2. Divide the group into the sub-groups that are going to work together in the field.
3. Take the checklist developed in plenary (see Brainstorming [No. 74] and Delphi Technique [No. 75]) and divide the issues amongst the sub-groups. Ask the sub-groups to identify which method, or variation of it, would be effective for exploring each issue.
4. Beside each issue/topic/question on the checklist a series of possible methods can be noted (a coding system for the whole range of methods might be useful, such as MS = matrix scoring, SM = social mapping).
5. Ask each sub-group to present their findings, inviting other sub-groups to add their ideas and inspire each other.
6. Ask the participants to write the lists in their fieldbooks for quick reference at a later stage.




### COMMENTS

The session on linking issues to methods can be a very important turning point in the training course as it forces participants to start making the transition back to reality. After exposing them to a wide range of methods in a workshop they then explore how these might be used to answer real world questions. It is a good time to get participants to reflect on the rich variety of methods available and to realise that each issue, topic and question can be addressed by a variety of methods (triangulation). It is also the point to stress that methods are only useful if addressed to particular issues or questions. Too often methods can be seen as an end in themselves (after all they are fun to do, produce interesting information etc.), rather than as a means to generate joint analysis of key issues.


During the fieldwork, refer to the flipcharts on which the lists have been developed, adding new methods if they prove valuable for exploring particular issues.

## **78: SEQUENCES ANALYSIS**


 **OBJECTIVE** ■ To encourage the participants to use a range of participatory methods in sequence to address particular issues, topics or questions

 **MATERIALS** Pen and paper

 **TIME** 30 minutes

 **PROCEDURE**

1. Develop a flow diagram that describes a potential sequence of methods for investigating a particular issue or set of issues.
2. Explore the linkages between methods.
3. Discuss what type of information will be learnt from each exercise.
4. Discuss how the group can facilitate the fieldwork in terms of division of roles, revising interview guides, etc.

 **COMMENTS** Following the development of the checklist and the Matching Issue and Method (No. 77), it may be useful to get the group to reflect on the use of sequences of participatory methods. This process emphasises the flexibility and interaction of different participatory methods in a field setting. They should not be seen as isolated methods, but as the means to encourage a continuing learning process. Sequencing of methods can thus enhance learning. See Chapter 6 (6.3.2) for more detail on sequences.

## 79: INTERVIEW CONTEXT ANALYSIS



### OBJECTIVE

- To develop awareness of body language, seating arrangements etc., in different interview contexts



### MATERIALS

A series of (numbered) photographs of individual and group interviews, containing examples of both good and bad, sensitive and insensitive (Optional: set of identical slides)



### TIME

30 minutes



### PROCEDURE

Collect a set of ten photographs of various types of interviews being conducted:

1. Split the group into sub-groups of up to 5 people. Give each sub-group 4 or 5 photographs to examine.
2. Ask the group to look at them carefully, then answer the following questions:
  - *Is the overall impression of a good or bad interview?*
  - *What is good about the interviewers?*
  - *What seems to be helping the interview?*
  - *What should not have happened, or be happening, in the interview?*
3. Ask participants to list guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate interviewing approaches (dos and don'ts) for future interviewers. The participants should develop their own code of conduct for interviewing.
4. Each sub-group should present their guidelines back to the plenary. If you have a slide set identical to the photographs, ask each of the sub-groups to choose one (or two) photographs to present. While they are discussing, you can load the slides (give them the same numbers as the corresponding photograph for easy identification) in the projector. In this way, each of the sub-groups can share the details of the interview situation and add any observations.



### COMMENTS

The main learning point to bring across is that the setting of an interview has an important impact on what information is being discussed and to develop awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of specific contexts. If they have not picked up key issues in the photographs, then provoke further thought by asking: *Are people relaxed? Are all people actively involved? What are the seating arrangements? Is it a group or individual interview? Are observations being used to provoke discussion? Is everybody sitting in the shade? How far apart are they?*

Try to limit discussion about or assumptions on the topic being discussed in the interview. This cannot usually be inferred from photographs. If you know sufficient detail, then you can add a brief description of the interview as it really occurred, plus some elaboration of the guidelines developed by participants. Collect your own photographs to use for this exercise. It is best to include only pictures with interviews, and no other diagramming method, as this might distract from the notion of interviews in general.

## 80: PICTURE CAPTIONS

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To enhance awareness of non-verbal and verbal behaviour, especially the expression of dominance and submissiveness

🔗 **MATERIALS** ■ Photocopies of one or more photographs showing lecturing, dominance, submissiveness in a rural setting (one for each participant)  
■ Paper and pens

🕒 **TIME** 10 minutes

📝 **PROCEDURE**


1. Hand out the photocopies.
2. Invite participants to sit in pairs or threes, examine the picture, and then make up a caption. The caption can describe the scene, or be what one of those in the picture might be saying.
3. Ask participants to write up their captions on a large sheet of paper, or to post up their photocopies with the captions written in.
4. All then walk around and read what others have written. A few of the funniest and best can be read out.


“ **COMMENTS** A good source of photographs is annual reports, newsletters and magazines, particularly those from agencies that wish to give the impression they have been conducting participatory work for a long time. Very often, a picture which is intended to demonstrate participation and willingness of professionals to be in the field shows dominance in professionals and submission in farmers.

This is a useful exercise just before a break, as it gives participants the opportunity to read others' captions during the break.


*Source: Robert Chambers, pers. comm.*

## 81: HOUSE-TREE-DOG


 **OBJECTIVE** ■ To experience and reflect upon one-way and two-way communication and mutual understanding

 **MATERIALS** Large sheets of paper and marker pens

 **TIME** 10-30 minutes

 **PROCEDURE**

1. Divide the participants into pairs. Each pair receives a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker pen. The pairs sit at tables or on the floor, face to face, with the paper between them.
2. Instruct the participants to "hold the marker pen and, without talking, jointly draw a house, a tree and a dog".
3. When they have finished, ask them to sign, again jointly, the common picture with the name of a well-known artist.
4. Participants are allowed to talk when the drawing is finished.
5. When all the pairs have finished, each pair presents their picture to plenary and describes their experience in creating the picture.

 **COMMENTS** After the presentations, ask participants how they felt:

- "Did you find it easy to work together?"
- "Was there a leader in the pair? Did you change roles?"
- "Did you find it progressively easier to work together?"

An amusing extension of the exercise might be to exhibit the pictures, with participants walking around and guessing who created which picture.

Source: UNICEF (1993)

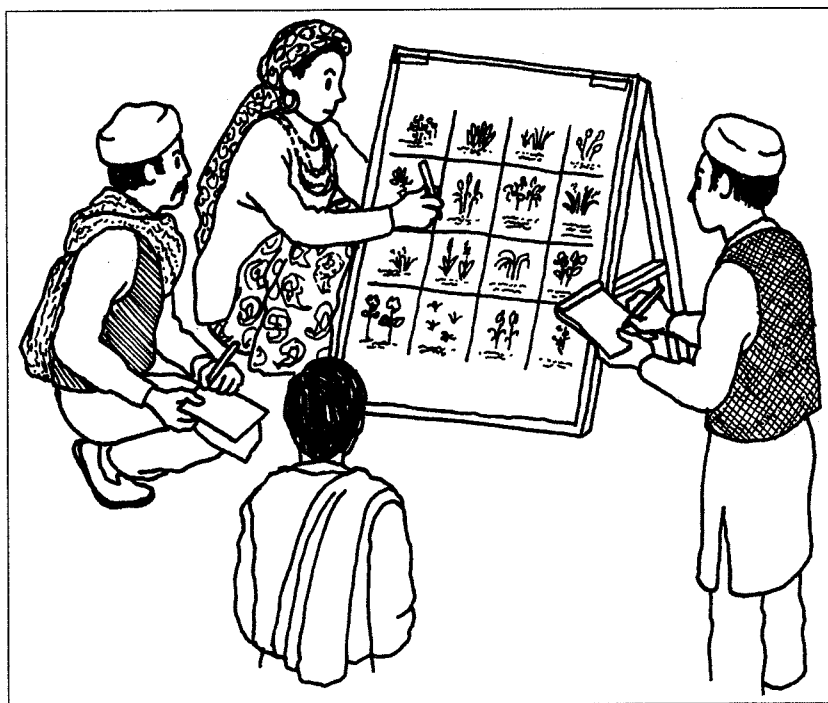


## 82: TRADITIONAL PRACTICES AND BELIEFS

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To encourage field staff to consider and acknowledge the validity and relevance of local knowledge, practices and beliefs

👁️ **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 30 minutes



- 👉 **PROCEDURE**
1. Early on in the workshop, ask participants to think about intriguing traditional practices, beliefs and myths they have come across during their fieldwork. These will be ones they may not be able to explain scientifically, but appear to have their own internal logic.
  2. Ask participants to list some intriguing practices and beliefs from their own respective cultures. You should contribute a number of examples of your own.

*(Continued on next page)*

## **82: TRADITIONAL PRACTICES AND BELIEFS (continued)**



### **PROCEDURE**

3. After at least one day, you may want to return to the list of practices and beliefs and discuss why it is important to learn about them. Use the listed practices and beliefs for a discussion on their scientific value. Ask: "*Are these any more 'scientific' or 'logical' than those of the local people?*" Point out how the beliefs and practices of scientists are often beyond rational explanation, yet, like local people's conventions, they have their own internal consistency and logic (ie. they appear to work).



### **COMMENTS**

This exercise can be slotted in at any time. It always provokes considerable discussion, and can provide a strong reference point for sustaining the importance of valuing local knowledge for the remainder of the training exercise, especially during the fieldwork.

Ask the following questions:

- *What are their origins? Can they be explained?*
- *Who holds these views: everyone in the community, men/women, young/old, rich/poor, educated/uneducated?*
- *Why are some universally accepted and others only by specific groups?*
- *What do these practices and concepts tell you about the people who hold them?*

The important point to make to participants is they should try not to judge these traditional practices and beliefs harshly. Technicians often find it hard to listen to informants, yet it is so essential if they are to learn about local realities. The participants should realise that in order to listen, they must believe that the informant has something of value to say. From their perspective (ie. the scientist or professional) certain practices or beliefs may appear odd, unlikely or impossible. Yet if people say they happen or simply believe them to be true, then they should be recorded as an element of local livelihoods and practices. Good listening can be encouraged by learning some tools and tricks that encourage a sympathetic understanding of the informant's view.

*Sources: Anil Gupta (1989); Jules Pretty (1990)*

## 83: TRICKY TRANSCRIPT

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To help the participants identify unsatisfactory interviewing techniques
  - To encourage them to avoid using such techniques

🔗 **MATERIALS** A prepared transcript of part of a simulated interview between an outside investigator and one or more local people (one copy for each of the participants)

🕒 **TIME** 25–35 minutes

- 👉 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide participants into sub-groups of 2 or 3.
  2. Give each sub-group 1 or 2 pages of the transcript (see next page for an extract).
  3. Ask them to read their page(s) and to identify one good and one bad question and why they think so.
  4. Ask for each sub-group's feedback (all participants will be able to locate the identified questions in their copy of the transcript) and ask the other sub-groups whether they agree or not.
  5. Ask the sub-groups to rephrase the bad question so it is better.
  6. You can add any new suggestions for good and bad questioning techniques to the flipchart of dos and don'ts from the Interview Context Analysis exercise (No. 79), or make a new flipchart.

“ **COMMENTS** If you wish, you can then write your own imaginary transcript. You can have fun with this exercise by recalling one of the worst interviews you yourself ever conducted, then using that as the inspiration for writing the dialogue. Remember to add closed questions (“*Do you have difficulty getting fertilisers here?*”), leading questions (eg. “*Would you grow sunflowers if the government raised the price?*”), ambiguous questions (eg. “*Why was Mr. X elected chairman of the self-help farmers’ organisation?*”) and rapid shifts from topic to topic and too many questions at one time (eg. “*Please tell me about the crops you grow here? Can you describe any changes in rainfall over the past ten years? Do your animals suffer from any serious diseases?*”). If prepared well, participants will be able to identify many types of insensitive questioning techniques. This exercise can serve as a reference point for the rest of the workshop and the fieldwork. A shorter and less comprehensive version of this exercise is *What’s Wrong with the Question?* (No. 84).

When asking the groups to rephrase bad questions, you will probably get a number of alternatives. This is a good opportunity to point out that there is no single correct way to phrase a question but that it depends on the context.

Source: Alice Welbourn, pers. comm.

(Continued on next page)

### **83: TRICKY TRANSCRIPT (continued)**

**Field Visit, December 1990: Old men's contact group, Googu Village, Bawku West District, Ghana**

- Q. What is the meaning of Googu?
- A. It is the name of their clan and the clan to which the founding ancestor belonged.
- Q. Over the past few years has the *harmattan* changed? Is it later or earlier? If there was a change, what has brought this about?
- A. There have been no rains, and this has caused the *harmattan* to delay. This time it should have been very cold; people would not even want to bathe. This time it still looks warm; this is because the rain still wants to fall since it hasn't rained enough.
- Q. Is the size of the population increasing or decreasing?
- A. It is always increasing.
- Q. If it increases, is this good for you?
- A. Well, yes.
- Q. Why is there this shortage of land?
- A. Because of the influx of people into the area.
- Q. Is the population only increasing because of the influx from outside, or is it also because of a higher birthrate?
- A. Well, the number of births is also increasing.
- Q. When there was no school here, where did your children go for schooling?
- \*A. Sepeliga.
- Q. How were the children able to go that far?
- A. If there was a car we'd go by vehicle; otherwise we'd walk.
- Q. Are there any traditional healers or herbalists in the village?
- A. Yes, there are.
- Q. What fees do they charge, and how does this compare to government services?
- A. The traditional healers charge less.
- Q. So do you find the traditional healers better than government health services?
- A. No, the hospital is good; much better. But sometimes you have to have someone lead you/help you. If there is someone there to help you it's OK, but otherwise you might not get treatment.
- Q. Do you mean you need someone to pay bribes, or someone very influential to help?
- A. No, it's not money; but you need an influential person to talk to the doctors to make sure you get assistance.
- Q. Most of you don't like to go to hospital. Is it because the drugs are expensive, or you need someone to lead you there?
- A. It is because they don't have influential people to help them. Other don't like the idea of going to hospital; some don't like the drugs and don't trust them. Sometimes if someone dies after taking medicine, others come to lose trust in those medicines. The herbalist comes to treat you at home. Whether you get well or die, at least you die at home.
- Q. For some traditional practices have there been any changes over time? Or is it still like the time of our grandfathers?
- A. It has changed. In the past, funerals took 12 days. Nowadays it may take seven.
- Q. Why, what has caused this change?
- A. If you do it for 12 days, other things may come in, and take longer. It takes a lot of food. It is expensive to do this.
- Q. Why did your fathers make it 12 days? Did they have more food, or was it that there wouldn't be any problems during this time?
- A. No. It was just because they had enough food that they made it 12 days.

Source: adapted from transcript of an interview carried out by workshop trainees, Ghana, 1990 (Sources: A. Welbourn, ACTIONAID)

## 84: WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE QUESTION?

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To illustrate to participants the details of ambiguous and leading questions
  - To encourage them to avoid using such unsatisfactory interviewing techniques

👁️ **MATERIALS** A prepared list of ambiguous and leading questions in random order

🕒 **TIME** 20–30 minutes

- ✍️ **PROCEDURE**
1. Ask participants if they understand what an ambiguous question is and what a leading question is, and reach agreement on this.
  2. Read out a range of questions from a transparency or a flipchart, or give out prepared sheets (examples below) and ask the group to identify what is wrong with each question. Answer in brackets is only for your easy use!


- *Is it true that it is difficult to get your cattle to the veterinary clinic?* (LEADING)
- *How do you get your medicine?* (AMBIGUOUS)
- *Wouldn't you prefer to grow improved potato varieties?* (LEADING)
- *What do you do as a local extension agent?* (AMBIGUOUS)
- *Isn't the new health post wonderful?* (LEADING)
- *Do you sow seeds in a straight row?* (LEADING)
- *How do you find the school?* (AMBIGUOUS)
- *Shouldn't you cover your water storage pot?* (LEADING)

3. Then ask them to rephrase it in a less ambiguous or more open-ended fashion.


“ **COMMENTS** This exercise usually leads to some debate about whether an ambiguous or a leading question is always inappropriate or is sometimes appropriate. This is a good opportunity to stress that there is no absolutely correct or incorrect question, and that it will depend on the stage of the interview, the topic and the context. In general, participants should become aware of the need to word their questions carefully.


Emphasise that leading questions lead the respondent to say yes or no, whereas an open-ended question that uses what? when? where? who? why? or how? opens up the conversation. There may, however, be occasions when closed questions are correct and necessary.

## 85: BUT WHY?

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To encourage participants to realise the value of probing during interviewing
  - To investigate cause and effect relationships in detail

 **MATERIALS** None

 **TIME** 20 minutes

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the group into sub-groups of three people.
  2. Give each group several simple questions derived from an observation, such as: *"Why have the crops suffered pest damage?"*; *"Why is your cow so thin?"*; *"Why is your sorghum so yellow?"*; *"Why do you think there is a gully in your field?"*; *"Why is the child crying?"*. Make sure that the same statement is given to at least two groups, which should be out of earshot of each other.
  3. Ask the sub-groups to divide responsibilities – one as interviewer, one as an informant and one as recorder of the interview. The responsibility of the interviewer is to find out the real cause of the observation, using sensitive probing questions. You may explain that probing is rather like peeling away the layers of an onion, and so the objective is to get towards the centre of the onion. Before starting, ask them to suggest a few good probing questions. If they have no ideas, give a few examples: *"But why?"* or *"Please tell me more about that"* or *"Anything else?"*.
  4. After ten minutes, ask groups to report briefly on what they have learned, ending with the final underlying reason for the initial statement. Ask those who used the same statement to feed back in succession. Ask the recorders to describe the interview and the major findings.
  5. Then ask them to comment on whether there were any leading questions, and whether they had any difficulties in recording the interview. Ask the informants to reflect on the process of being interviewed. How did they feel? Ask the interviewers to comment. How easy was the interview? To what extent did the key probes help?
  6. Make a list of all the probing questions used. This may be an opportunity to introduce the "Six Helpers": *What? When? Where? Who? Why? How?*

**COMMENTS** This exercise can be used to reinforce several learning points, including the importance of good team work, the challenge of conducting a sensitive interview, the importance of building rapport with people before starting an interview, and the value of asking open-ended, non-leading questions. It is interesting to find out how different groups with the same observational statement have explored widely different routes of investigation.

A variation of this exercise is to select a question that directly relates to something personal, so that the informants get to feel what it is like to answer questions about themselves and their own personal activities. Questions might include:

- *"Why are you wearing that particular type of shoe?"*
- *"Why are you working in your particular job?"*

## 86: ROLE PLAY OF GOOD AND BAD INTERVIEWS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To generate a discussion on the merits of adopting good interviewing technique
  - To summarise the main good and bad elements of semi-structured interviewing
  - To energise the group

👁️ **MATERIALS** None, although groups can find props around the training area

🕒 **TIME** 30–40 minutes

- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5 people.
  2. Ask half of the sub-groups to develop a 'bad' interview sketch and half to develop a 'good' interview sketch. Suggest that they reflect on all the dos and don'ts developed in earlier exercises as guidelines, and on the type of questions they can ask.
  3. After 15 minutes preparation, ask the 'bad' interview role plays to present their sketch first. These are much easier to do and provoke many laughs.
  4. After the 'bad' interview, ask the audience if there were still any good points. After the 'good' interview ask if there were any bad points.

“ **COMMENTS** The role play groups can concentrate on different types of interview. For instance, one group can role play an individual interview, another a group interview etc. In the discussion afterwards, highlight key points raised by the role plays and get participants to discuss their own experiences. You might need to tone down criticism of the attempted 'good' interviews by stressing how difficult it is to do a good interview. These role plays should become reference points for the group as the training progresses.



### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWING

## 87: STATUES IN INTERVIEWS

✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To illustrate the importance of interview context and body language on the messages given from outsiders to local people

🔗 **MATERIALS** None

🕒 **TIME** 10–15 minutes

📝 **PROCEDURE**

1. Ask for five volunteers to act as statues.
2. Position them as statues into a scene that shows some interview context, such as four people interviewing a poor farmer. Add elements of body language to show dominance.
3. Then ask half the remaining participants to change the scene however they feel is necessary to show a better example of an interview setting. They can physically move the statues or take them away altogether.
4. Then ask the other half to change the scene for the worse again.

“ **COMMENTS** This is a particularly powerful exercise as it is not dependent on actual role play. It focuses attention on body language and context.

A variation is to set up two scenes at the same time, one good and one bad, and have the participants change them both.

Ask in the debriefing:

- “What are essential for a good interview context?”
- “What must be avoided?”

*Source: Koos Neefjes, pers. comm.*





## 88: MAP YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD



### OBJECTIVES

- To give participants the opportunity to experience diagramming, and so understand some of the processes
- To give them the opportunity to appreciate issues of scale, symbols, direction and omission in diagramming



### MATERIALS

Pen and paper



### TIME

10 minutes



### PROCEDURE

1. Ask participants to think about where they live and then draw their neighbourhood. They should include major landmarks, resources of importance and transport routes.
2. After 5 minutes, stop the drawing and discuss what happened (see debriefing questions below).
3. Ask for all maps to be exhibited on the wall, so that all can observe the different styles and symbols.



### COMMENTS

This is a very short exercise that can be used as a very first introduction for a session on mapping. It brings across some very essential issues in a short time. To get things started at the beginning, you can suggest that you are travelling to their house, and need a map. But note this will inevitably bias what they draw, as it is for your purposes.

You can use the following questions to help in the debriefing:

- *Where did you put your house?* (in the middle, at the edge)
- *Did you use symbols alone, or did you add words?* (assumption that trainer is literate).
- *What happened when you came close to the edge of the paper?* (edge of the paper is a false boundary; scale gets distorted; elements omitted?)
- *What did you draw first?* (sometimes the house, sometimes the boundary)
- *Which direction is north on your map?* Ask them to add an arrow to indicate north. Many participants will smile and realise they have not put north to the top, in contrast to the widely applied professional convention; some individual mental maps will have north to the top, but probably only by chance.
- *Which of you have lived in your house for more than 5–10 years? How does your detailed knowledge compare with anyone who has only just moved to their neighbourhood?*

A variation is to ask participants to draw the neighbourhood in which they were living when aged 10.

## 89: MAPPING YOUR OWN TOWN OR CITY

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To demonstrate that we all have different mental maps of where we live or work depending greatly on who we are and what information we have
  - To practise mapping and modelling first hand

🔗 **MATERIALS** Pens and large sheets of paper; any other available materials

🕒 **TIME** 45–75 minutes



- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the participants into groups to produce map-models of the village, town or city in which the training is being conducted. The exact mix of groups and nature of the task will depend on the knowledge of participants present about the locality.
  2. If there is a wide range of knowledge based upon how long/often participants have lived in or visited the location in question, then divide them on this basis. The groups may comprise the most recent arrivals (eg. expatriates), those who have come to live there, those who were born and grew up there, and those who have never been there before the workshop. Each group will produce a different mental map according to their varying perceptions and knowledge.

*(Continued on next page)*

## **89: MAPPING YOUR OWN TOWN OR CITY (continued)**



### **PROCEDURE**

3. If there is not the range of knowledge, then introduce another variable by telling each group in private that you are from a particular institution which wants to conduct a project here, and so are chiefly interested in only certain issues (eg. World Health Organisation project on health; Ministry of Environment project on trees; project on food marketing; etc.). Each group will produce different maps by emphasising elements and issues they think are important to the outside project.
4. After all the groups are finished, or about 45 minutes (whichever is first!), conduct a roving exhibition so all participants get to see the various constructed maps. Ask each group to present their map, focusing on the process of creating it, rather than each detail.
5. Conclude with a buzz session to reflect on two questions:
  - "What did you learn?"
  - "What will you do differently next time?" (when you are in a village; when you are working with colleagues).



### **COMMENTS**

If the weather is reasonable, then encourage participants to produce map-models on the ground outside the workshop. They should make use of whatever resources are available. If this is not possible, then drawings on large sheets of paper will suffice. But remember that this might give the impression that pen and paper can be used freely for this exercise during the fieldwork.

When the map-models are completed, ask the whole group to begin at one exhibit to hear a brief presentation on substance and process. Then move as a group to the next. The trainer should use this exhibition to introduce important new issues for the field. These might include:

1. How a map-model is only a snapshot of the present. Suggest that useful historical information could be gathered if map-models of the past and the future (ideal and/or expected) were to be constructed in the field. Now that a map of the present and future ideal have been constructed, discussion can be turned to how to get to the future ideal. This is the "Story Without The Middle" – we know about the present and the desired future, but not yet how to get from one the other.
2. The power of the pen or stick. When drawing on paper, usually only one or two people do the drawing (often the 'artist' in the group is elected). When constructing map-models, all members of the group can participate. Remind everyone to watch "who holds the stick" during discussions and presentations.
3. The process of creating the map-model. What did you agree upon? What was difficult to represent? What was included? What was excluded? What was emphasised (eg. by size of symbol)? What was de-emphasised? Why? Use this reflection to explore issues of perception, bias, hidden/secret information.

Ask if participants have learnt anything from this exercise – often they will say this is the first time they had thought about or visualised many of the issues raised.

## 90: MENTAL MAP ANALYSIS



### OBJECTIVES

- To discover what different maps tell about the people who drew them
- To illustrate the great differences in perceptions held by different groups of people within communities or organisations
- To demonstrate the validity of these different views and the importance of acknowledging and understanding multiple perspectives and priorities within communities and organisations



### MATERIALS

Prepared maps copied onto coloured paper



### TIME

20 minutes – 1 hour, depending on the number of examples given for analysis



### PROCEDURE

1. Choose a selection of maps that were drawn by local people during actual field situations. These may be either resource maps or social maps prepared by different groups of people (young/old, rich/poor, men/women, etc.). These should be organised in advance and photocopied onto A4 paper. Make sure there are enough copies for all participants.
2. Hand out copies to participants arranged in buzz groups. Ask them to analyse the diagrams, then consider two questions:
  - *What do the maps reveal about the area or issues?*
  - *What do they tell you about the people who constructed them?*
3. Comments should be presented back to plenary, using the flipcharts to write down the main points.



### COMMENTS

Examples should be chosen that clearly show different views of the same reality. The following has been successfully used in this exercise.

#### **Example: Maps of a Village in Sierra Leone**

Shown overleaf are the perceptions of a village in Sierra Leone as drawn by a group of men and a group of women. The diagrams were drawn on the ground at separate times and locations, and have been copied onto paper.

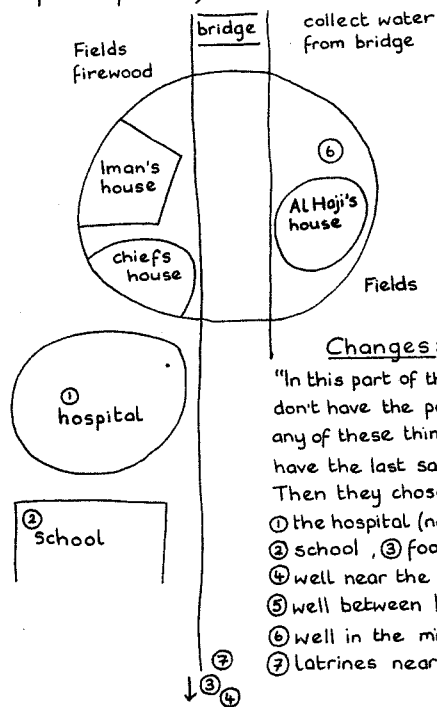
- The men put emphasis on the outside of the village and desired changes to be made where outsiders would see them when passing on the road. They emphasised the location of meeting places, such as cotton trees, the long dry log, the broken tractor.
- The women, by contrast, emphasised the village itself, though with less detail. They made the school and hospital of disproportionately large size. Women drew the boundary first, men drew the roads.

*Source: Alice Welbourn (1991)*

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**90: MENTAL MAP ANALYSIS (continued)**

fig. II Women's Map of their village and proposed changes. (see also fig. I for comparison)



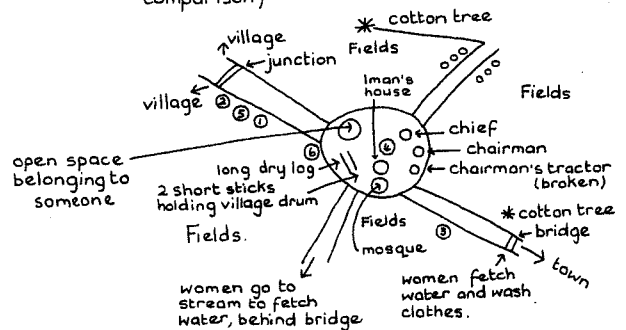
Changes:

"In this part of the country women don't have the power to decide where any of these things should be. The men have the last say."

Then they chose to place:

- ① the hospital (note its relative size)
- ② school, ③ football field
- ④ well near the football field
- ⑤ well between hospital and school
- ⑥ well in the middle of town
- ⑦ latrines near the school field for children.

fig. I. Men's Map of their village and proposed changes (see also fig. II for comparison)



Great Interest shown in details of roads + junctions.

Changes:

They want ① hospital and ② school along the left road (the "best place for them") and ③ + ④ wells (older men say 2 wells enough, others want well ⑤ near school. Also they want an administration hall.

## 91: TRANSECT WALKS

- ✓ **OBJECTIVE** ■ To demonstrate the importance of going in person (as a team) to observe and talk about things of local importance

- 👁️ **MATERIALS** Small notebooks, pens, large sheets of paper (optional)

- 🕒 **TIME** 1–3 hours, up to a whole day

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Identify the route for several teams to conduct transect walks. This may be close to where the workshop is being held (such as in the research station, in the neighbourhood of the hotel); further away (such as in a nearby village or community); or inside a building (if the workshop is in a large bureaucracy).
  2. If possible, arrange for local key informants to accompany the teams.
  3. Divide the participants into small teams (using an energiser/group forming exercise).
  4. Give the group time to plan their transect walk. Use the Group Problem Solving Exercise (No. 31) if you have time. Ensure the groups focus on what they are hoping to find out and which methods they will be using. It is better if the subject of the inquiry is precisely defined, as groups will be able to compare findings on their return.
  5. The groups conduct transect walks, returning by an agreed time to prepare the diagram and present their findings.

- “ **COMMENTS** During the debriefing, focus the discussion on both methodological issues and findings of the walks:

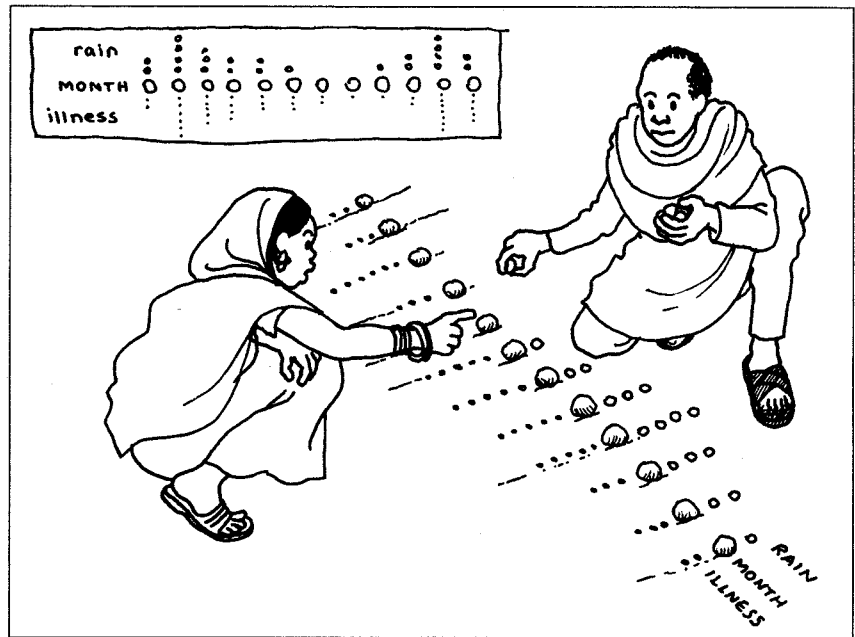
- *"What did you discover that was new?"*
- *"How did you feel talking to informants on their own territory?"*
- *"What methods did you use during the transect walk?"*

## 92: SEASONAL CALENDARS

**✓ OBJECTIVE** ■ To demonstrate ways to explore changes during the year

**👁 MATERIALS** Locally available materials (stones, sticks, seeds, beans), chalk, pens, etc.

**🕒 TIME** 20 minutes – 1 hour



- ✍ PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the participants into small groups of between 3 and 5 people by using a group-forming exercise (see Nos 13–25).
  2. Either you or the participants can select one or two 'key informants' from each of the groups. Although it is not essential, these informants may be interviewed about some specialised knowledge they have of the local area or a particular subject (eg. an agronomist may be asked to create calendars of cropping patterns or major crop pests and diseases; a public health officer may be requested to prepare calendars of major diseases).

*(Continued on next page)*

## 92: SEASONAL CALENDARS (continued)



### PROCEDURE

- The remaining members of each group are then asked to interview their key informant(s) about a theme that you assigned or they select. Then the informants are asked to make diagrams or set of diagrams to illustrate trends and changes in those activities and/or events over the course of a single day, a week, or a year (whatever is appropriate).

For example, if you have five working groups, each with their own key informants, they may be asked to create: (1) calendars of rainfall (days of rain/month, relative amount of rain over a year, inches of soil moisture/month, etc.) for a particular area, comparing the present with 20 years ago; (2) major crop production and price calendars (average) of area; (3) agricultural labour, and income and expenditure calendars for men and women in area; (4) daily activity diagrams for particular groups (young men, young women, older men, older women); and (5) daily activity calendars (before and after some intervention or introduction of a new technology)



### COMMENTS

After the diagrams have been completed (usually 20–30 minutes), ask each group to present its 'findings' to the others. Encourage the groups to concentrate their presentations on the process they went through (how they interviewed their key informants, the way the diagram developed, and so on), not just the final product. The important point to highlight in these presentations is the possible applications and limitations of these methods in real world situations.

After the group presentations, you may want to ask them to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages, and the analytical potential of visual representation of seasonality. Issues they should raise include:

- their use in the analysis of intra- and inter-household differences in daily activities (which can lead to the identification of constraints and appropriate times of day to schedule meetings with various groups);
- their value in identifying trends and changes over time;
- their utility in discovering correlations and connections between different seasonal patterns (such as precipitation and income and expenditure) which might help to understand causes and effects;
- their power in conveying useful information that everyone – literate and non-literate – can understand and assess;
- their value for monitoring the impact of interventions or projects.

A quick variation, which can also be used as an introduction, is to show the group how to establish quantitative information by conducting an *analysis of seasonality of conception*. Make a circle with 12 large cards, on which are written the names of the months of the year. Ask participants to line up behind the month of their birth. See if there is a pattern to the month of conception.



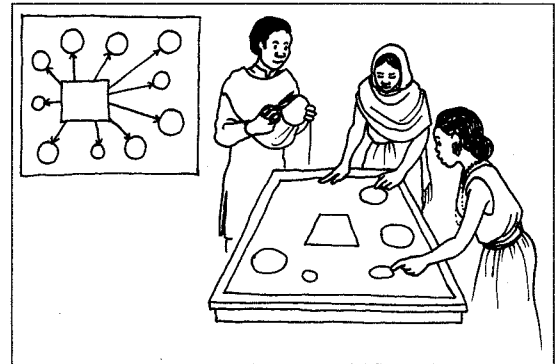
## 93: VENN DIAGRAM OF YOUR ORGANISATION

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To teach participants about the value of using visuals to understand institutional linkages and relationships
  - To reveal important linkages and constraints in the participants' own institution or organisation according to the perceptions of different groups of participants (senior management, junior management, department heads, field staff, etc.).

👁️ **MATERIALS** Pens, paper, scissors, tape or glue

🕒 **TIME** 45 minutes – 1 hour

- ✍️ **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide participants into groups to produce Venn diagrams of a known institution, usually the one to which the participants belong. Divide participants into groups either according to what they know about the institution or according to hierarchy or department.



2. Describe the process of Venn diagramming (you can use the examples below). Circles of different sizes are allocated to different institutions, groups, departments or programmes. These then overlap depending on the degree of contract in the real world. They are contained within a circle if they are part of that circle's institution. A large circle means an important institution.
3. Explain that there are two processes for Venn diagrams: cutting circles of paper and laying them on or against each other, or simply drawing on paper or on the ground. The former takes longer, but is better as changes can be made. The latter is quicker, but can become messy when changes need to be made.
4. Ask the groups to exhibit their Venn diagrams. Analyse key differences between the groups and the underlying causes.

“ **COMMENTS** This can be an extremely illuminating exercise for participants as certain aspects of their own institution and work may be revealed for the first time. It will also show the different perceptions of different groups. It may help to highlight contrasting perceptions of different roles, responsibilities and linkages, pointing to areas of conflict and dispute as well as pointing to ways of resolving these. Following the construction of a series of diagrams of the existing situation as seen by different actors, participants can discuss ways of resolving conflicts, filling institutional gaps, or encouraging linkages.

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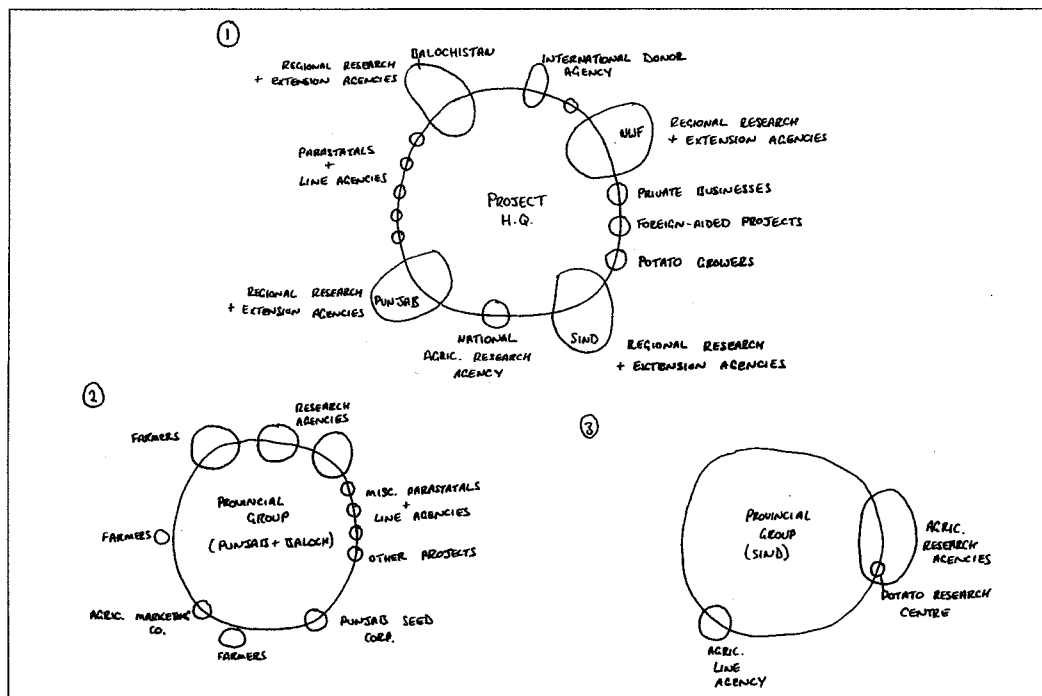
## 93: VENN DIAGRAM OF YOUR ORGANISATION (continued)

### COMMENTS


A shorter variation is to give each participant a copy of the Venn diagrams below and ask them to identify key differences. These examples are quite striking but also very complex. If participants feel frustrated about not understanding the context, then stop and summarise the main point: different people will have a different understanding of the same organisation depending on their role in the institution, and that this might cause communication difficulties.


### Example: Research Project in Pakistan

In the example of a potato project in Pakistan, participants from headquarters (national and expatriate) and from the regions produced very different pictures of their project and its linkages with other institutions. The staff at headquarters in Islamabad mapped a wide range of institutions with which they had regular contact. These included those at international level (such as donors), national level (other government agencies and NGOs), and at local level. The provincial staff closest to the 'centre' knew of more linkages than those from other provinces, but did not show international links. The most remote staff indicated a very simple picture of institutional relationships, clearly illustrating their marginalisation within the project.




## **94: FLOW DIAGRAMS FOR SYSTEMS AND IMPACT ANALYSIS**

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To illustrate how farm and livelihood systems can be shown on a diagram, leading to a better understanding of the complexities of linkages and relationships at the local level
  - To illustrate how the impact of an intervention or process can be represented on a diagram, leading to a better understanding of the anticipated and unexpected effects from local people's perspective
  - To describe the basic principles and procedures of flow diagrams

 **MATERIALS** Large sheets of paper, pens

 **TIME** 1–2 hours

 **PROCEDURE** First divide participants into groups (using a group-forming exercise).

### **For Systems Diagrams**

1. Ask them to consider a typical farming system in an area they know well. The first step is for them to identify and represent the components of the farming system.
2. Then ask them to show the linkages and flows between the different components (such as manure from livestock to fields, fuelwood from trees to homestead).
3. Next they should show the linkages that the farm has with markets, hospitals, seed stores, distant towns etc.
4. Discuss with the groups whether the system they have depicted has changed over time. What happens if certain linkages break down?

### **For Impact Diagram**

1. Ask the teams to select an activity or event, the impact of which they wish to explore. This may be the impact of a programme (such as an irrigation project), or of policy changes (such as structural adjustment programme), or of household changes (such as disabling illness in a family member). They could also consider the impact of the training on their lives or work.
2. Ask them to represent the impact on paper, and then identify the consequences of the activity or event. This could be both positive and negative. Ask them to link the consequences, using arrows to indicate the direction of flow.
3. Encourage them to think of primary, secondary and tertiary effects, grouping these into different sub-systems (see below).
4. Ask them to exhibit their flow diagrams and have a debriefing session.

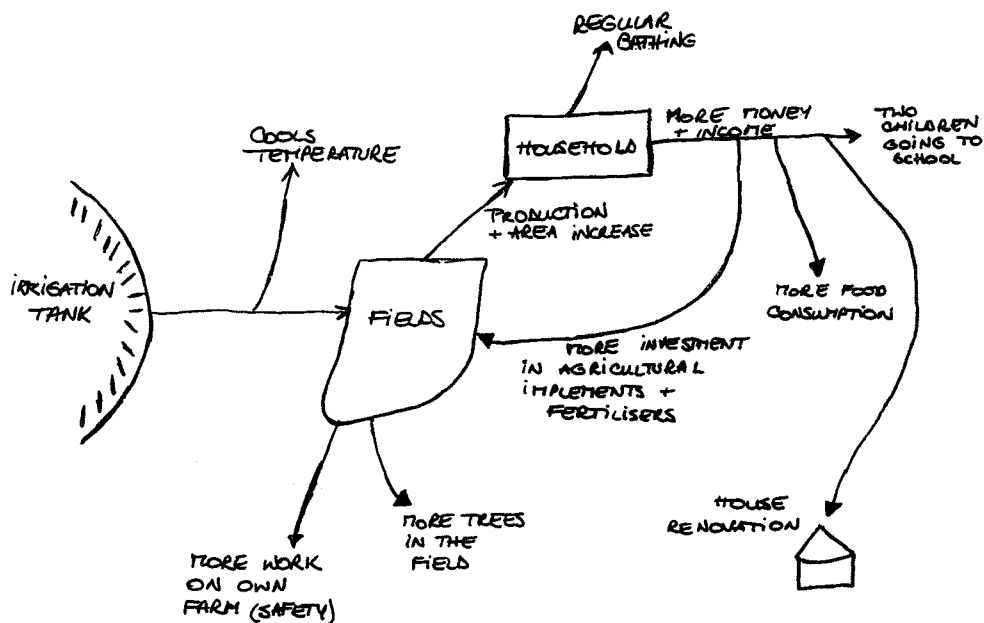
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## 94: FLOW DIAGRAMS FOR SYSTEMS AND IMPACT ANALYSIS (continued)

**COMMENTS** Show the results of the group work by having a roving exhibition, with all the participants visiting each group in turn. Use these presentations to allow participants to reflect on actual findings and on methodology:

- "How will the process differ in the field?"
- "What have you learned as a group from this exercise?"
- "What problems do you anticipate?"
- "What possible applications can you think of for your work?"

Impact diagram of irrigation tank in Gadechi Village, redrawn from original drawing by farmer



Source: Shah et al. (1991)

## 95: COMPARATIVE DIAGRAMS ANALYSIS

- ✓ OBJECTIVES**
- To illustrate the value of different types of diagrams for understanding local realities
  - To analyse what different diagrams tell about the people who drew them
  - To illustrate the great differences in perceptions held by different groups of people within communities or organisations
  - To demonstrate the validity of these different views and the importance of acknowledging and understanding multiple perspectives and priorities within communities and organisations

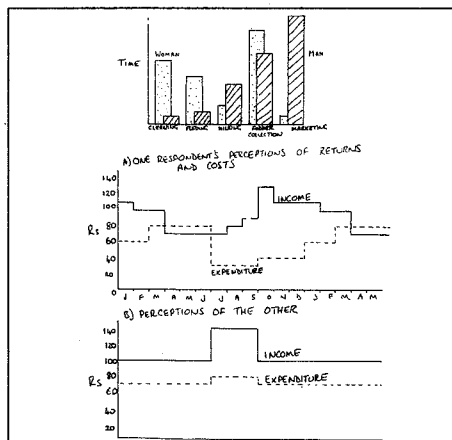
**👁️ MATERIALS** Sufficient copies of diagrams (seasonal calendars, pie diagrams, systems diagrams, etc.)

**🕒 TIME** 20 minutes – 1 hour, depending on the number of examples given for analysis

- 📄 PROCEDURE**
1. Choose a selection of diagrams that have been drawn by local people during actual field situations. These may include diagrams of the same theme or issue constructed by different groups of people (such as young/old, rich/poor, men/women, etc.). These should be organised in advance and photocopied onto A4 size paper. Make sure there are enough copies for all participants.
  2. Hand out copies to participants arranged in buzz groups. Ask them to analyse the diagrams, then consider two questions:
    - *What do the diagrams show about the issue or activity being investigated?*
    - *What do they tell you about the people who drew them?*
  3. Comments should be presented back to plenary, using the flipcharts to write down the main points.

**“ COMMENTS** Examples should be chosen that clearly show different views of the same situation. The following has been successfully used in this exercise.

### ▼ Example: Seasonal Calendar in India



Seasonal change in income and expenditure in a household owning ten milch buffaloes. The two patterns of income and expenditure were constructed by the man and woman separately. Introduce an element of competition by asking participants to guess who drew which.

The woman is responsible for management on the farm – fodder, milking and cleaning; the man mainly for marketing. As a result the man has a more detailed perception of month-by-month changes in income and expenditure compared with the woman. The income peak she has put on the graph coincides with the rainy season when fodder is abundant and milk production greater. She has equated high productivity with high income. However, milk prices fall at this time, and do not rise until after the rains stop.

Source: Robert Chambers, pers. comm.



## 96: LINE GAME

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To introduce the principle of ranking in a light-hearted way
  - To illustrate the way we commonly make judgements based on multiple, rather than single, criteria
  - To energise the participants

👁️ **MATERIALS** None





🕒 **TIME** 10–15 minutes

- 📝 **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the group into two with, say, up to 10–12 in each group. The game can be done with only one group if the total number is small.
  2. Ask one person from each of the two groups to choose a criterion to use to rank the rest of the participants. They should not reveal the criterion to the rest of the group until the end.
  3. This person then must get their group in a line using their chosen criterion. For instance if they have chosen height to order the group, the tallest person should be at one end and the shortest at the other.
  4. Each group must then guess what criterion the other group has been ranked by and judge whether they have been correctly ranked.

“ **COMMENTS** This game provides an amusing starting point for a discussion of ranking. Any number of criteria can be chosen for ranking a group, from the obvious (height; stomach size; length of hair) to the very obscure (distance of institution at which individual works from workshop; distance of each participant's country of origin from the equator).

The main learning point is that a single criterion can be used to rank a range of items (here people), but that it can be difficult to identify that criterion because we use multiple criteria to judge things. Another important issue that you could raise is that our personal assessment of others might well be incorrect if we do not confirm this with those we are ranking or assessing according to a particular criterion. This exercise can provide a light-hearted break before the discussion of other ranking methods.

## 97: PREFERENCE RANKING

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To describe the basic procedure of preference ranking
  - To highlight how criteria for choices are made by the informant
  - To highlight the importance of exploring the existence of key differences in preferences between informants
-  **MATERIALS** Paper and pens; flipcharts or overhead projector for workshop activity
-  **TIME** 1 hour
-  **PROCEDURE**
1. First divide the group into sub-groups of three or four. Ask them to allocate roles – interviewer, informant, recorder.
  2. Ask each group to select a topic to be discussed and ranked, for example trees, vegetables, fruits, lecturers, cars, cheese, football teams etc.
  3. Then ask them to choose a maximum of six items for the exercise. If too many are chosen, then the exercise becomes too lengthy.
  4. Ask the sub-groups to draw up a recording matrix, showing them an example on a flipchart or overhead projector. Also suggest that they find real things, such as tree leaves, wood, vegetables, fruit etc. to symbolise the items. Alternatively ask them to write the name of each item on six separate pieces of paper.
  5. The informant is then asked pair-by-pair which he/she prefers most. The question that forces the informant to make the choice is important. Farmers may be asked “Which of these two do you prefer to grow?”; but consumers would be asked “Which of these two do you prefer to eat?”. Once the choice is made, it can be recorded in the matrix (see below).
  6. The informant should then be asked why he/she has made the choice. In other words: “So what is good about the winner?” The team continue to probe until nothing further arises. Then ask “What is bad about the loser?” to find out all negative qualities. The sub-group should be reminded not to ask leading questions by suggesting criteria.
  7. The sub-groups should continue this process for all possible combinations. For six items, there will be 15 pair-wise comparisons. To keep the informant interested, suggest to the interviewer that they pick different pairs each time. For example, rather than comparing item A against B, A against C, and then against D, suggest that they compare A and B, then C and D, then E and F, then C and A and so on.
  8. Ask the recorders to record all the reasons that the informant gave about why the choices were made.
  9. Show the sub-groups how to complete a ranked list from most preferable to least, with favourable and unfavourable criteria listed by each item. For this, the frequency of occurrence of each item indicates the rank, ie highest frequency for most preferred.

*(Continued on next page)*

### RANKING & SCORING

**97: PREFERENCE RANKING (continued)**

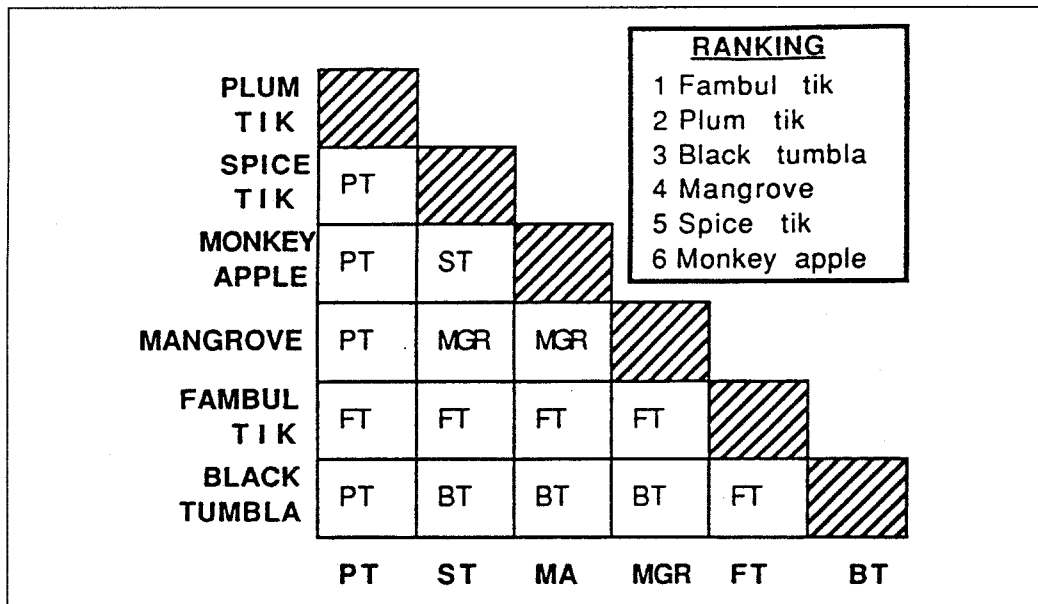
**“ COMMENTS**

At the end of the exercise it is useful to focus the debriefing on the following comments and questions:

- "Note that the criteria and preference lists varied greatly between informants. Why was this so?"
- "How would the criteria differ if you are not, for example, a consumer of fruit but a producer or a marketer?"
- "How could we use this exercise to make it relevant for your programme or project?"

For this to be a successful exercise in the workshop the sub-groups must choose items with which everyone is familiar. What has always worked is selecting fruit or vegetables (but it might be more relevant to ask sub-groups to decide on a topic of common interest). Ask the participants to imagine that you, the trainer, are the manager of a fruit and vegetable development project. You know the perceptions of the farmers already, but now a consumer survey needs to be conducted. Each participant is to be themselves, and not pretend to be a farmer etc.


To avoid confusion, this exercise works best if each step is explained and completed before the next step is started. If the entire procedure is explained at once, then you will probably end up explaining the different steps to all the sub-groups again as you walk around between the groups.




Source: Inglis (1991)




## 98: MATRIX RANKING AND SCORING

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To show participants how they can discover different perceptions about advantages and disadvantages of a particular issue amongst different social groups in a community
  - To describe the basic procedure of matrix ranking and scoring
  - To produce a scored and/or ranked list of criteria or qualities of some topic of interest

 **MATERIALS** Paper, pens, and any material such as fruit peelings, stones, bottle tops, paperclips, seeds, beans etc.

 **TIME** 1 hour

-  **PROCEDURE**
1. Divide the participants into groups of 4–5 people. They can divide responsibilities – one recorder, one or two interviewers, one or two informants; or everybody can be an informant.
  2. Ask the sub-groups to choose a topic which is important or of interest to them (tree species, paddy varieties, vegetables, local pubs, fertilisers etc.). If they are all to be informants, then they must choose a topic about which they all know something.
  3. Ask them to identify the 5 or 6 most important objects.
  4. Each sub-group must now elicit criteria on what is good and bad about each object. For each item in turn, they should ask themselves: “*What is good about it?*” and continue asking until there are no more replies. They should then ask “*What is bad about it?*”. Continue until 10–20 criteria are produced.
  5. Each group should then be asked to list all the criteria. At this point you can ask them to turn all negative criteria (for example, vulnerable to pests or expensive) into positive ones (for example, resistant to pests or cheap) so that all criteria are positive. Ask them to reflect on what would happen if they did not do this. (They should answer that the scoring would not be consistent: they would be giving a high score to a positive criterion in some cases and a high score to negative criteria in others.)
  6. Each sub-group is then asked to draw up a matrix with the objects across the top and the criteria down the side.

*(Continued on next page)*

## 98: MATRIX RANKING AND SCORING (continued)

### PROCEDURE

If everybody is an informant, ie. it is a group discussion, they must then decide how well each criterion is fulfilled by each object. If they are doing a matrix ranking with six objects, suggest using the following sequence of questions:

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

If they are doing a matrix scoring rather than a ranking, then explain that they can choose how many counters (stones, seeds, paperclips, etc.) to allocate as a maximum per cell or per row. They must then fill each box with the number they think represents the relative value of that item.

7. Remind them to record the rankings/scoring directly onto the matrix.
8. Ask the interviewer(s) to end with a question such as: "If you could only have one of these, then which would you choose?" "Which next?" etc. This can lead to new criteria and further discussion.

### COMMENTS

This exercise is one of the more lively ones in a training on participatory learning, and provokes much discussion about methodological pros and cons. As with preference ranking, this exercise works best if each step is explained and completed before the next step is started. If the entire procedure is explained at once, then you will probably end up explaining the different steps to all the sub-groups again as you walk around between the groups.

During the feedback, discussion should focus on as many issues as possible. These key findings can be summarised on a flipchart. Draw attention during the debriefing to the following issues:

- *If they worked as a group of informants, how did the decision-making process proceed?* The method works well with both individuals and groups, though groups have several advantages:
  - a wider range of experience is brought to bear
  - responses tend to be quicker;
  - if one person gets tired, others can take over;
  - more criteria are likely to be elicited, and more quickly;
  - disagreements which develop can be revealing, and identify issues for further investigation.

*(Continued on next page)*

## **98: MATRIX RANKING AND SCORING (continued)**

### **“ COMMENTS**


Groups often have the disadvantage that some people may dominate while others stay quiet and also that a consensus cannot be reached.


- *If it was an individual interview, whose criteria were included in the final matrix? It is tempting for interviewers to introduce their own criteria. This should be done only at the end, and the criteria should be clearly identified as different from those of the respondents.*
- *Whose symbols were used?*
- *What extra information did the final question (see 8 above) reveal?*
- *What limitations of matrix scoring did you find? For example:*
  - *it does not automatically handle weighting of the criteria;*
  - *it is subject to most of the usual biases and weaknesses of individual and group interviews;*
  - *it is only useful for comparing fairly similar items that are readily interchangeable.*
- *What particular strengths did you find? For example:*
  - *it is a quick way to discuss options in detail, usually taking no more than an hour;*
  - *it is an exercise from which participants themselves can learn something through the discussion and through making choices explicit;*
  - *it requires outsiders to listen, respect and record the knowledge, judgements and preferences of rural people according to their own criteria.*

The difference between matrix ranking and scoring should be made clear. This can be done during the explanation of the method. Another option is to do two consecutive exercises; either starting with the ranking and then doing a scoring, or starting with the scoring and making a ranking from that. Or you can ask one group to try the ranking and another to do the scoring. In discussions about the difference, participants should be clear of the extra information provided by matrix scoring – you can show them by deriving a ranking from a scoring example.

You will need to make participants realise the limitations of statistical analysis of the scores if the criteria are not weighted. This is most effective if you let them try to add the outcome and then challenge the outcome during the feedback session. Their final question (see 8 above) might well contradict their total scores.


## 99: CALCULATING WELL-BEING OR WEALTH RANKING

-  **OBJECTIVES**
- To describe the basic procedure of well-being ranking by pile sorting
  - To practise the calculations
  - To produce a ranked list of households according to well-being as perceived by (imaginary) informants

-  **MATERIALS**
- Version A**  
Prepared figures for transfer to overheads (see examples below); if possible copies for each participant.

- Version B**  
Sets of cards, one set for each sub-group (see examples below).

-  **TIME** 30–45 minutes

-  **PROCEDURE**
- Version A**
1. Give a general description of wealth or well-being ranking. Explain that it uses the perceptions of informants to rank households within a village or part of a village according to overall well-being. Mention that there are three basic steps: preparation, interviewing and calculation.
  2. Discuss the steps in preparation, if these have not already been covered in a case study. You could include a quick brainstorm about possible source lists of households, and possible biases in existing lists. Show overhead 1 on page 258 which shows a map of a village, copied from a map drawn on the ground by farmers. The map indicates that there are 35 households in the village.
  3. Show overhead 2. Explain that this is the outcome of two interviews. The first informant sorted the households into 5 piles according to well-being. The second informant created 4 piles. The numbers in each pile represent individual households.
  4. Explain that the first step is to give a value to each household for each interview, depending on the pile in which it was placed. So for example, in the first interview household 8 was put in the first pile. Five piles were created, so this pile is 5/5, which gives each household in that pile the value 1. Household 35 was placed in the 5th pile. Its value is therefore 1/5, or 0.2.

*(Continued on next page)*

## **99: CALCULATING WELL-BEING OR WEALTH RANKING (continued)**

### **PROCEDURE** Version A (continued)

5. Show overhead 3. Explain that this is a table of all the values from each of the interviews for each card. Demonstrate a calculation of the average score. Discuss unreliable values for households which have been placed in very different wealth piles by the informants (eg. household 35 in this example).
6. Explain how to divide the households into rough categories: by identifying big jumps in average scores, and not making more groups than the least number of piles made by any informant (4 in this example). Discuss the limitations of this rough grouping and emphasise that the groups indicate relative, not absolute wealth.

### **Version B**

1. Divide the group into sub-groups of up to 3 people to ensure everyone can participate. Provide each group with a set of prepared cards (see sample on next page).
2. Ask each group to calculate the overall ranking of the households from the information provided on the cards. If necessary, do each step.
3. Discuss the outcome, how many wealth groups were identified and how this was done, and any problems they encountered.

### **“ COMMENTS** The following issues are particularly important to discuss after a wealth ranking exercise:

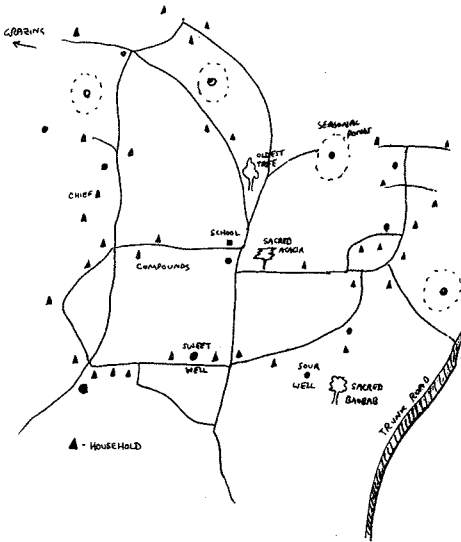
- *the notion of dealing with information that is perceived by interviewers as being sensitive/taboo; emphasise that it is based on relative, not absolute wealth categories;*
- *the use of overlays to make the outcome more focused to particular issues, so not only general perception of well-being criteria but specific criteria, such as membership of farmer's association or family member working abroad;*
- *advantages and disadvantages of individual vs. group interviews;*
- *the potential danger if the final information gets into the wrong hands, eg. of tax collectors.*

*Sources: Version A: IIED passim.; Barbara Grandin (1988), Version B: Irene Guijt and Jules Pretty inspired by Bara Gueye and Karen Schoonmaker Freudemberger (1991) and Jennifer Rietbergen-McCracken, pers. comm.*

## **RANKING & SCORING**

**99: CALCULATING WELL-BEING  
OR WEALTH RANKING (continued)**

**OVERHEAD 1**



**OVERHEAD 2**

INFORMANT 1: 5 PILES

(8, 14, 17, 20, 21) WEALTHY  
 (2, 9, 11, 23)  
 (28, 30, 13, 10, 3, 33, 16, 17)  
 (7, 31, 32, 25, 26, 4, 27)  
 (1, 5, 12, 15, 22, 24, 29, 34, 18, 35) POOR

INFORMANT 2: 4 PILES

(20, 14, 17, 23, 13, 35, 8, 23, 21) WEALTHY  
 (25, 31, 32, 2, 9, 11, 16, 28, 19, 34)  
 (10, 22, 18, 6, 30, 26, 33)  
 (1, 3, 7, 12, 24, 29, 5, 15, 4) POOR

**OVERHEAD 3**

HOUSEHOLD NO.	RANKING CONVERTED TO SCORE		AGGREGATE
1	0.2	0.25	0.45
2	0.8	0.75	1.55
3	0.4	0.25	0.65
4	0.4	0.25	0.65
5	0.1	0.25	0.45
6	-	0.5	-
7	0.4	0.25	0.65
8	1.0	1.0	2.00
9	0.8	0.75	1.55
10	0.4	0.5	1.1
11	0.8	0.75	1.55
12	0.2	-	-
13	0.6	1.0	1.6
14	1.0	1.0	2.0
15	0.2	0.25	0.45
16	0.6	0.75	1.35
17	1.0	-	2.00
18	0.2	0.5	0.70
19	0.6	0.75	1.35
20	1.0	-	2.00
21	1.0	1.0	2.00
22	0.2	0.5	0.7
23	0.8	1.0	1.8
24	0.2	0.25	0.45
25	0.4	0.75	1.15
26	0.4	0.5	0.9
27	0.4	1.0	1.4
28	0.6	0.75	1.35
29	0.2	0.25	0.45
30	0.4	0.5	1.1
31	0.4	0.75	1.15
32	0.4	0.75	1.15
33	0.4	0.5	1.1
34	0.2	0.75	0.95
35	0.2	1.0	1.2

**EXAMPLE OF PREPARED CARD**

No. of household - 32

Name of household head:  
Joe Fulani

1st ranking : Pile 3 of 5

2nd ranking : Pile 2 of 3

3rd ranking : Pile 3 of 4

**RANKING & SCORING**

## 100: WEALTH RANKING: FURTHER PRACTICE

- ✓ **OBJECTIVES**
- To provide further practice of wealth ranking by pile sorting
  - To show how to analyse and understand the results

👁️ **MATERIALS** Prepared overheads/flipcharts.

🕒 **TIME** 30 minutes

- 📄 **PROCEDURE**
1. First discuss the importance of understanding differences in wealth and well-being. Explain that wealth ranking by pile sorting uses the perceptions of informants to rank households within a community or village, or part of a village, according to overall wealth or well-being.
  2. In your presentation emphasise that this method requires careful preparation. You can use the example from Sudan below to illustrate the main steps:
    - the list of households is prepared;
    - the name of each head of household is written onto separate pieces of card or paper;
    - the informants are identified;
    - each interview begins with a discussion of the informant's perceptions of wealth;
    - the cards are sorted by the informant into piles or wealth classes;
    - these are reviewed and changes made accordingly;
    - finally the informant is asked to name the principal features of each household's livelihood strategy or what the difference is between those in group A compared to Group B, Group B compared to C, C to D, etc.

### **Example from Sudan**

This wealth ranking example comes from an RRA conducted in a village in Sudan. There were no lists of households available for Faki Hashim. The team of investigators had hoped to use the sugar ration lists held by shopkeepers. These contain all the households in the immediate neighbourhood, and had the apparent advantage that people would have an incentive to be on the list, unlike lists for tax or related purposes. But when the team came to collect the lists and elicit the help of a shopkeeper, the shop happened to be closed.

Instead a key informant, the supervisor of the government mango scheme and a lifelong resident of the village, was asked to name all the heads of households residing in the central quarter of the village. The name of each was written on a separate piece of paper. Although this may have produced a biased list through selective recollection of the informant, he did indicate that he was conducting a geographical sweep of the quarter to ensure none were omitted. The wealth ranking was then conducted on the 50 households.

*(Continued on next page)*

**100: WEALTH RANKING: FURTHER PRACTICE (continued)****PROCEDURE** Example from Sudan (continued)

The procedure of discussing terms for wealth and the placing of these cards into separate piles was conducted with three different informants. All three were in agreement over the features of household livelihoods that characterised their level of wealth. In general the most wealthy were thought to own agricultural land, livestock and vehicles, or be involved in commercial activity or be receiving remittances from overseas. Those of middling wealth were involved in farming, but mainly as sharecroppers, and might own a few livestock; and the poorest households were those relying solely upon agricultural labouring as a source of income.

The first informant was wealthy. He began with five piles, but after allocating all 50 cards he divided the pile for the richest into two. All changes then made were from richer to poorer piles. Finally he created an extra category for the very poorest, leaving seven piles in all. The second and third informants were both poor. Neither changed the number of piles from the starting five. Following the rankings, the first informant was asked to name the key components of each household's livelihood. This produced summaries such as merchant, lorry owner, land owner in agricultural scheme, government worker, and so on.

An extract from the results of the ranking are shown on the next page (households 1–16). The aggregate scores for each household were then broken into 5 classes: A for scores 2.5–3; B: 2.0–2.49; C: 1.5–1.99; D: 1.0–1.49; and E: less than 1.0. Households with major occupations are listed by class in the second figure.

The central results of this exercise were:

1. Clearly the majority of households rely on non-farm income sources. Very few rely solely upon farming. Those that do so are mainly in Class E.
2. The large number of merchants and owners of transport reflects the proximity and opportunities of Greater Khartoum.
3. There are some interesting comparisons to be made between the rankings of the three informants. Over some households they are in close agreement: all of 2, 8 and 13 are very poor, for example. But there are also some large disagreements, particularly between the rich and the two poor informants: household 44 was placed in the top pile by informant 1, but in the bottom piles by the other two. Perhaps informants 2 and 3 did not know of the two migrant sons sending remittances.

Source: Jules Pretty and Ian Scoones (1989)

**COMMENTS**

It is essential that you allow sufficient time to clarify each step. If necessary, go through the more complex steps again.

(Continued on next page)



**100: WEALTH RANKING: FURTHER PRACTICE (continued)**

FINAL RESULTS					
HOUSE-HOLDS	INFORMANTS' RANKINGS			AGGREGATE SCORE	WEALTH CLASS
	1	2	3		
1	0.72	0.4	—	—	—
2	0.29	0.2	0.2	0.69	E
3	1.00	0.8	0.6	2.40	B
4	0.43	0.6	0.4	1.43	D
5	0.72	0.8	1.0	2.52	A
6	0.43	0.2	0.4	1.03	D
7	0.57	0.2	0.2	0.97	E
8	0.29	0.2	0.2	0.69	E
9	1.00	0.2	0.6	1.80	C
10	1.00	0.8	1.0	2.80	A
11	0.86	0.6	0.6	2.26	B
12	0.72	0.4	0.2	1.32	D
13	0.14	0.2	0.2	0.69	E
14	0.43	0.2	0.2	0.83	E
15	0.72	0.8	0.2	1.72	C
16	0.86	0.8	1.0	2.66	A

**MAJOR OCCUPATIONS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE FIVE CLASSES**

<p><b>CLASS A (Wealthiest)</b> Merchant Lorry; pick-up; tractor; shop Flour mill; sorghum merchant Merchant Farmer; brick maker; 2 lorries Merchant; productive land Agricultural scheme Army colonel Big merchant Army major Medical laboratory owner Medical assistant</p> <p><b>CLASS B</b> Big merchant Butcher; lorry Merchant Lawyer; 2 lorries Son in Saudi Arabia Merchant; productive land; tailor</p>	<p><b>CLASS C</b> Supervisor of agric. scheme; owns land and 20 cows Shop; tractor; owns land Supervisor of scheme; owns land Agric. scheme; owns land Lorry; merchant Lorry and taxi Taxi Lorry and taxi; son is a doctor</p> <p><b>CLASS D</b> Retired army officer Civil servant with land Medical assistant Farmer and several lorries Cultivator in scheme; average farmer Lorry and pedlar Taxi</p>	<p>Lorry; good land; sons university graduates Taxi; shop Fodder shop Farmer; lorry and 2 migrant sons Agric. land; farmer and 2 migrant sons Lorry; official in university</p> <p><b>CLASS E (Poorest)</b> Small farmer Poor farmer Old man; small farmer Street sweeper Govt. worker; some livestock Lorry Not cultivating land; migrant sons Lorry</p>
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**RANKING & SCORING**

## **101: ROLE PLAY OF WEALTH AND WELL-BEING RANKING INTERVIEW**



### **OBJECTIVES**

- To show participants how the actual interview proceeds
- To show at what stage to probe for further information and to emphasize the need to cross-check



### **MATERIALS**

A set of ten cards with household names; a well-briefed informant (either participant or other trainer)



### **TIME**

15 minutes



### **PROCEDURE**

1. Fully brief the person who is going to play the informant. This person, possibly a participant, must have experience with wealth ranking for the exercise to proceed smoothly. They must be able to imagine a village of 10 households and describe realistic local criteria of well-being.
2. Set up an interview setting, on the floor or benches. If time allows, have a discussion with the 'informant' about local names for well-being, some local criteria and how families are organised. If time is short, explain to the participants that they should assume such a discussion has been held.
3. Take the set of cards and ask the informant to identify the names of local compounds (or whatever unit is appropriate). Write these on the cards and give each a random number, telling the participants and the informant what you are doing. Read them out and ask whether there are any other compounds.
4. Ask the informant to place the cards in different piles or rows according to relative well-being. Put down the first card, reading out the name on the card. Take the next card, read out the name and hand it to the informant. They could make some comments about that household or simply put it down in the correct place. Continue until all cards have been placed.
5. Ask the informant to check that they are in the correct place. Start with the richest (or poorest) group, and read out the names in each pile/row. The informant should pretend that there are one or two incorrectly placed and reposition them. This will emphasise the importance of cross-checking the information to the observing participants.
6. Then record the final piles, explaining to the participants how you are doing this and why you are doing it as soon as possible (to avoid results being disturbed by wind, animals, children, etc.).

*(Continued on next page)*

### **RANKING & SCORING**

## **101: ROLE PLAY OF WEALTH AND WELL-BEING RANKING INTERVIEW (continued)**



### **PROCEDURE**

7. Next discuss with the informant the difference between households in one pile and the next. Record these characteristics in the appropriate place, while explaining this to the participants.
8. Finally thank the informant, thus ending the interview, and ask the participants about any observations or questions.



### **COMMENTS**

The demonstration helps clarify the roles of the interviewer and the informant. It is important to allow the observing participants to discuss the procedure afterwards. During fieldwork there is much hesitation about using this method, partly because there are so many steps. For example, many newcomers to well-being ranking do not know what to do with the first card. The answer is of course, simply put it down and read the name. Also, many get stuck after all the cards have been put into piles. Cross-checking, recording and discussion of differences between groups should follow. If possible, have this demonstration in the local language. If the informant can think of typical perceptions of well-being there is often much laughter and recognition.

*Source: Irene Guijt, Karafa Manneh, Mary Martin and Terri Sarch (1992)*



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APPENDIX A:  
**RECOMMENDED  
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■ **The Association for Farming Systems Research–Extension (AFSR/E)**

is a global association made up of individuals and networks involved in farming systems research and development. The association produces the *Journal for Farming Systems Research–Extension*, the *AFSR/E Newsletter* and regional journals, and holds conferences and workshops regularly. Clive Lightfoot at ICLARM, PO Box 1501, Makati, Metro Manila 1299, The Philippines is charged with developing networking contacts.

■ **Clearinghouse on Development Communication (CDC)**

1815 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209, USA publishes *Development Communication Report*, which is available free of charge to readers in the South. The report covers applications of communication approaches to development problems.

■ **The Centre for International Development and the Environment at the World Resources Institute (CIDE/WRI)**

1709 New York Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20006, USA produces a range of publications on sustainable agriculture and community development approaches, including reports of its *From the Ground Up* programme in Africa.

■ **Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks (CIRAN)**

PO Box 90734, 2509 LS The Hague, The Netherlands, produces the *Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor*. The monitor is a publication for people who are interested in all aspects of indigenous knowledge and development. It is produced in collaboration with the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge for Agricultural Develop-

ment (CIKARD), 318 Curtiss Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 50011, USA; the Leiden Ethnosystems and Development Programme (LEAD); Institute of Cultural and Social Studies, University of Leiden, PO Box 9555, 2300 RB, Leiden, The Netherlands and various national and regional Indigenous Knowledge Resource Centres in Nigeria, The Philippines, Ghana, Kenya, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Mexico (contactable through CIKARD).

■ **Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)**

Postbus 380, 6700 Wageningen, The Netherlands was established to improve access to information on agricultural development for ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries. ACP nationals may request free subscriptions to the magazine *Spore* and free access to Question–Answer and Document Delivery Services.

■ **Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)**

of the United Nations, via delle Terme di Caracella, 00100, Rome, Italy. FAO's Office for External Relations publishes *DEEP – Development Education Exchange Papers*, a regular bulletin intended to promote the exchange of ideas between FAO and NGOs working in agricultural and rural development. It is produced in English, French and Spanish. Other publications on agriculture, forestry, and rural development are also available.

■ **Farm and Resource Management Institute (FARMI)**

Visayas State College of Agriculture, 6521-A Baybay, Leyte, Philippines publishes *On-farm Research Notes*, which reports on PRA and on-farm trial work being carried out in the Philippines.



APPENDIX B:  
**NETWORKS AND  
 SOURCES OF  
 PRA MATERIALS  
 FREE TO THIRD  
 WORLD READERS**

■ **Forests, Trees and People (FTP)**

*Newsletter* is a quarterly publication produced in English, French and Spanish which is distributed to people interested in community forestry activities. It forms part of the FTP programme's networking activities which are jointly run by the Community Forestry Unit, FAO, Rome, Italy; SILVA at 21 rue Paul Bert, 941300 Nogent-sur-Marne, France; and regional programmes in Cameroon, Ecuador and Thailand.

■ **Honey Bee** is a global network for documenting, testing and exchanging information about indigenous ecological and technological innovations. The *Honey Bee* newsletter is published in five languages and the network extends to 57 countries. Network membership for those in the South is based on exchange of material. The main contact point is Anil Gupta, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad 380015, India.

■ **Institute of Development Studies (IDS)** at the University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9RE, UK produces the *Discussion Papers* series and the *IDS Bulletin*. Topics cover a broad range of development issues.

■ **International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)**, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, UK. The Sustainable Agriculture Programme produces an informal journal, *PLA Notes (Notes on Participatory Learning and Action - formerly RRA Notes)*, which is available free to subscribers in the South. There is a small charge for back issues. The programme also produces the *Participatory Methodology Series* (of which this guide is one component) consisting of a range of training materials including training guides and audio-visual materials. Page i of this

guide gives more details. The *Gatekeeper Series* provides short briefing papers on policy issues, while the *Research Series* covers recent research related to sustainable agriculture. Both series are free to Third World readers. The Drylands Programme produces a French series, *Rélais MARP*, to provide practical information on participatory appraisal in West Africa. It also distributes a quarterly bulletin, *Haramata*, along with *Issues Papers* in English and French that deal with natural resource management issues in dryland areas, largely in Africa. This bulletin is free to those working for Southern organisations. The Human Settlements Programme produces a journal, *Environment and Urbanisation*, that covers a range of community development issues in urban settings.

■ **Information Centre for Low External Input Agriculture (ILEIA)**, PO Box 64, 3830 AB Leusden, The Netherlands produces the quarterly *ILEIA Newsletter* on a range of issues relating to sustainable agriculture and participatory technology development. Individuals and organisations in the South may request free subscriptions from ILEIA.

■ **International Rural Development Centre, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (IRDC)**, Box 7005, S-75007, Uppsala, Sweden, publish a series of issues papers targeted at policy-makers and implementors of rural development.

■ **Intermediate Technology (IT)** Publications produces several quarterly journals including *Appropriate Technology* and *Waterlines*. It also runs a *Books by Post* scheme, which increases access to a catalogue of recommended books on appropriate technology and development issues.

More information can be obtained from IT Publications, 103–105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HH, UK.

■ **Mysore Relief and Development Agency (MYRADA)**, 2 Service Road, Domlur Layout, Bangalore 560 071, India. MYRADA's *Participatory and Learning Methods (PALM)* series is a useful collection of papers, videos and training materials focusing on participatory methods for learning and analysis.

■ **Overseas Development Institute (ODI)**, Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS, UK produces a newsletter for the *Agricultural Administration (Research and Extension) Network*, which covers a range of methodological and institutional issues relating to participatory agricultural research and extension. Other ODI networks cover Social Forestry, Pastoral Development and Irrigation Management. Newsletters are available at low subscription rates or free on application.

■ **Oxfam**, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7DZ, UK produces a journal, *Development in Practice*, which examines methodological, institutional and development policy issues. *Baobab*, produced by the Arid Lands Information Network, Casier Postal 3, Dakar, Senegal is designed for field practitioners working in dryland areas and is produced in both English and French.

■ **Panos**, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD, UK produces *Panoscope* six times per year. This is aimed at stimulating debate on a wide range of development issues. *Panos Briefings* are intended for journalists reporting on environment and development issues. These publications are available free to Southern organisations on application.

■ **Popular Participation Programme (PPP)** at the Development Studies Unit, Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University, S-10691, Stockholm, Sweden produces a discussion paper series.

■ **Rodale Institute** publishes *International Ag-Sieve* newsletter, a summary of news about regenerative agriculture, six times a year. Subscriptions are available from Rodale Institute, 611 Siegfriedale Road, Kutztown, PA 19530, USA. *Entre nous* is published in French by Rodale International, BP A237, Thiès, Senegal and focuses on regenerative agriculture in West Africa.

■ **The Television Trust for the Environment (TVE)**, at Postbus 7, 3700 AA Zeist, The Netherlands, distributes the video *Participatory Research with Women Farmers*, produced by ICRISAT in India. It is available in French, Spanish and English and is free of charge for organisations in developing countries.

■ **World Neighbors**, 5116 Portland Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73112, USA publishes *World Neighbors in Action*, a newsletter with practical new ideas for agricultural development. It is free to applicants from the South.



PARTICIPATORY LEARNING AND ACTION  
A TRAINER'S GUIDE

Jules N Pretty, Irene Guijt, John Thompson, Ian Scoones

THIS GUIDE is designed for both experienced and new trainers who have an interest in training others in the use of participatory methods, whether they are researchers, practitioners, policymakers, villagers or trainers. The guide:

- provides a comprehensive background to the principles of adult learning;
- focuses on the facilitation skills necessary for effective training;
- describes group dynamics and how to build interdisciplinary teams;
- summarises the principles of participatory learning and action;
- describes in detail the process of training, both in the workshop and in the field;
- suggests how to organise workshops, from laying the groundwork to post-training evaluation;
- details 101 interactive training games and exercises.

*This guide is part of the **IIED PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY SERIES**. The series provides a range of materials on participatory learning and action methodologies for development, and is aimed at trainers and practitioners alike. The series has grown out of work conducted by IIED's **Sustainable Agriculture Programme**, whose staff have been actively involved in training and research since 1986.*

**IIED** Established in 1971, IIED—the International Institute for Environment and Development—is an independent, non-profit organisation which seeks to promote sustainable development through research, training, policy studies and public information. The Institute advises policy makers and supports and collaborates with Southern specialists and institutions working in similar areas. Focusing on the linkages between economic development, the environment and human needs, the Institute has research programmes in a number of areas critical to sustainable development.

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