german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Strengthening Drought Resilience in Ethiopia

PRA tools in participatory community planning for pastoralist lowlands of Ethiopia

Training Manual for Technical Implementation

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Table of Contents

List of figures

1. Introduction

This manual provides guidance to facilitators of participatory processes in the framework of community planning, steered by the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) with its directorate of Natural Resource Management. It was developed in the context of the ‚Afar Soil Rehabilitation Project' (ASRP) which is part of the Global Program on Soil Conservation and Rehabilitation for Food Security. One objective (Output 1) of ASRP is the improvement of pasture and agricultural resource management through self-organized rural resource users (TOR) which highlights the necessity to mobilize local communities to become major actors in community-led development activities. To safeguard the sustainable use of natural resources in the context of the implemented measures, it is of utmost importance that the interventions are based on participatory planning processes which involve all relevant partners including Woreda administration, Kebelle administration and Afar clans.

The major objectives of this manual are twofold:

- To highlight the importance of participatory community planning and the major role of bottom-up-processes for the sustainable implementation of project activities.
- To build methodological and social capacities among external facilitators for the proper application of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods so that perceptions, experience and knowledge of rural communities become the core of local planning.

2. Participation: forms, actors, practices

Why and what kind of participation?

Many actors involved in pastoral development call for a greater participation of groups and individuals in planning and decision making so that governments can be better held accountable. In an ideal case, participatory procedures enable a close interaction between citizens and political decision makers so that planning proposals can be developed which are needs-oriented and supported by the majority of the population. Participation in the field of development cooperation is geared towards:

- Program/project is in line with the potentials and needs of local actors
- Local knowledge and experiences are taken into account by external development professionals
- Local and external stakeholders clarify and share responsibilities
- Creation of joint commitment for the achievement of sustainable impacts and ownership of the project among all involved stakeholders

The interpretation of the term 'participation' and associated participatory practices can differ significantly between actors. With its rising popularity in recent decades, 'participation' has become a vague buzzword which has been reframed and instrumentalized by all kinds of stakeholders against the background of their own interests. Very often perceptions on the meaning of 'participation' differ between actors involved in participatory processes. Therefore, it needs to be clarified by planners and facilitators what kind of community participation is desired and feasible.

Arnstein's ladder of participation (Fig.1) represents a useful typology that indicates different degrees of intentionality of those who initiate participatory processes. Along the spectrum, control over decisions and resources shifts from governmental authorities to citizens. Tokenism, participation understood as consultation and information, had and still has wide currency in efforts of development organizations and governmental stakeholders. But far from an empowerment of citizens, tokenism serves merely to legitimize decisions (e.g. the building of a dam or establishment of irrigation scheme) already taken by powerful actors.
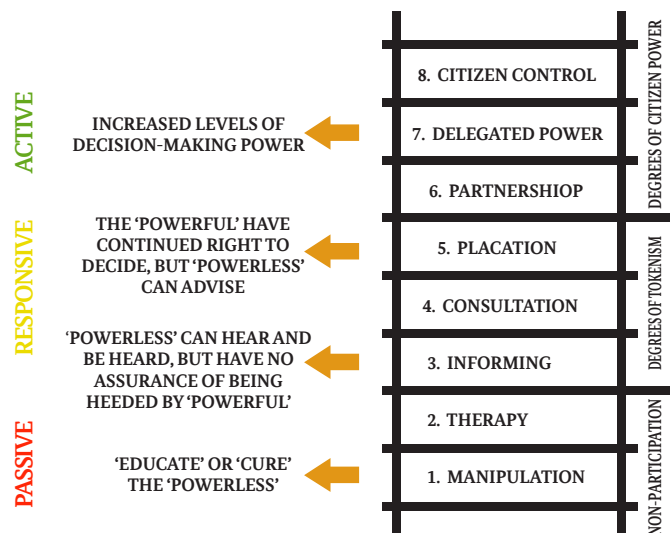
Figure 1: Ladder of participation (adapted from Arnstein, 1969)

Who participates in what?

Participation has to be understood as an inherently political process rather than a technique alone. It constitutes a terrain of contestation in which relations of power between different actors, each with their own 'projects' and claims to represent the 'community', shape and reshape the boundaries of action. It is crucial to ask who initiates the planning process, who selects participants, who participates in what and who is excluded. Often, more powerful elite groups and individuals appropriate the process and push their own interests, claiming to represent the view of 'the people', but actually excluding other stakeholders within the community. In theory, a deep (in all stages of an intervention) and wide (including all stakeholders) participation might be the ideal situation for participatory planning, but in practice, this is often impossible. An optimum participation would aim at a balance between depth and width in relation to the purpose at hand. Pragmatism often dictates in the end who participates in the planning workshop or meeting. Nevertheless, the identification of stakeholder groups which should be represented deserves major attention. The selection of participants who represent the whole social spectrum of the community requires an in-depth understanding of the socio-political and economic heterogeneity of pastoralists settling in the area and an intense engagement to mobilize the respective people.

Most common biases in the selection of participants are (Geilfus, 2008):
- access bias – limiting interviews to the most easily accessible individuals (e.g., those living close to the highway);
- hierarchical bias – speaking only to leaders and those who hold positions of power within the community;
- gender bias – settling for the non-participation of women[1];
diversity bias – failing to take into account that the different groups that exist within the community are represented (e.g. majority and minority clans);
- seasonal bias – at certain times of the year certain categories of people are unavailable (moving pastoralists, migrant workers);
- working hours bias – many people in the community are unavailable during a working day and working hours;
- project bias – limiting interviews to people who are already involved with the project and institution.

Self-exclusion, as active choice for non-participation, has also to be considered. Certain groups might not take part in the planning session due to unsuitable timing and duration. Other might not want to participate as they don't like to speak up publicly or because of previous experiences there is 'participation fatigue'. Being consulted many times with decisions finally taken by others, people often don't expect anything beneficial coming out from meetings with/assessments by governmental officials. Against this background, it is key that an agency is transparent on what it can and can't do from the outset.

[1] *It is helpful to interact with women in smaller groups, preferably facilitated by a female moderator.*

3. Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in community planning

3.1 Objectives and principles

PPA methods want to reveal the inner view of local communities, the diversity of local perceptions, opinions and knowledge. PRA is a process in which members of the community analyse their needs, identify possible solutions and develop, implement and evaluate a plan of action. Often relative proportions, scores or rankings are all that is needed for decision making and planning of activities. The methods/tools are geared to empower local people to do their own appraisals and analysis, to gain voice and take their own action.

Major principles of PRA are:

- Methodological Triangulation: Combination of different methods to validate and enrich data
- Reversal of roles and power relations:
    - Development professionals as facilitator who want to learn from local groups
    - Valuation of available local knowledge
- Learning in groups: different perspectives by different groups (gender, wealth, etc.)
- On site analysis and presentation
- Visual Sharing: sharing of results among participants for discussion and negotiation
- Optimal ignorance: avoiding unnecessary data collection
- Focus on visual methods
    - 'Democracy of the ground': What is expressed can be seen, touched, moved/altered by all
    - and stays on the ground.
- Sequencing: ordering of tools which complement each other

Pastoralists are regarded as 'experts' while development professionals/ researchers learn from, with and by local people. The group-visual processes enhance collective discussion, learning processes and the collective ownership of the outcomes. Results of the participatory events are shared between the core planning team and the participants through visualisation, presentations and discussions.

The wise selection and sequencing of tools is of major importance. It is better to work with only few gender-sensitive tools which suit the concrete purpose of the participatory community planning (in the context of ASRP this could be: identification of opportunities and constraints for an improved resource management to adapt to climate change), instead of using lots of tools mechanically but without focus. Therefore, the tools presented in this manual have been selected for their suitability in the context of ASRP. They constitute:

1. **Tools for a situation analysis:** spatial and seasonal distribution and importance of natural resources, gender-specific land use pattern and management problems (availability, accessibility, etc.), institutional set-up and conflicts
2. **Tools for development of interventions:** identification and prioritisation of problems, opportunities and capacities, and causal links to come up with concrete community-based intervention strategies and activities for an improved resource management which equally involve men and women.

PRA tools can be used in diverse fields, one of them participatory community planning.

Outline of a Participatory Community Development process

- selection of the community and formation of the Core planning team;
- logistical preparations and preliminary site visit;
- development of activity plan for the planning process: tools, objectives, topics, possible results, necessary material, responsibilities within the team, approx. time needed;
- the planning process:
  - data collection, synthesis and analysis;
  - ranking of problems and solutions and presentation of results;
  - development of a community action plan by community planning team;
- follow-up and implementation of the action plan and
- participatory monitoring and evaluation.

3.2 Behaviour and biases

Ultimately it is not so much the techniques/tools that are of key importance for the quality of the process but the social relationship between the development professionals and rural inhabitants. It is essential that the attitude of the core planning team members is characterized by genuine respect and curiosity. There have been many abuses of PRA tools in the past where methods have been used exploitatively and without real interest in pastoral knowledge and perceptions. Therefore, behaviour and attitudes are more important than the correct use of any particular method!
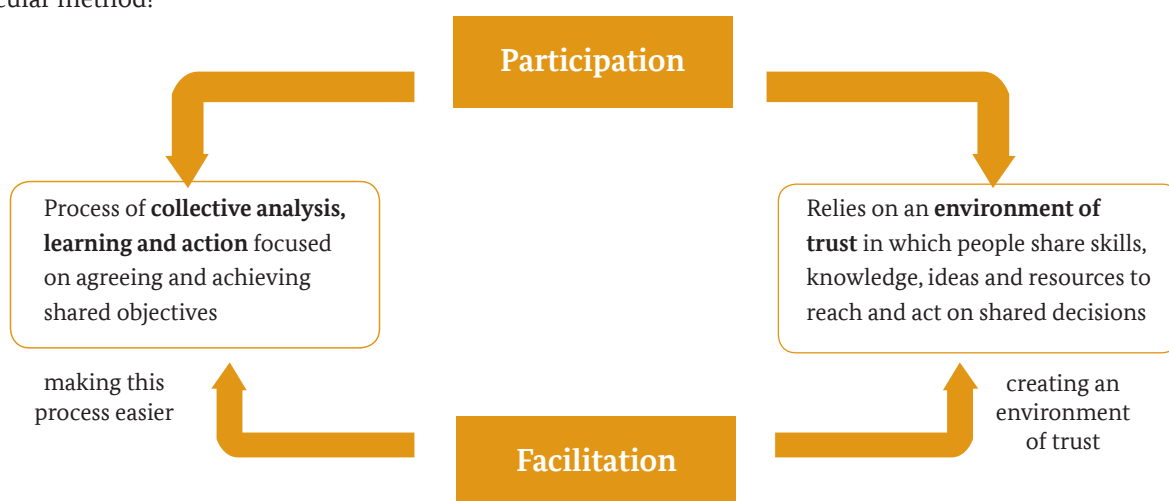

Participation

Process of **collective analysis, learning and action** focused on agreeing and achieving shared objectives

Relies on an **environment of trust** in which people share skills, knowledge, ideas and resources to reach and act on shared decisions

making this process easier

creating an environment of trust

Facilitation

Figure 2: The role of facilitation

Precept...	indicating
Introduce yourself...	be honest, transparent, relate as a person
They can do it...	have confidence in people's abilities
Unlearn...	critically reflect on how you see things
Ask them...	ask people their realities, priorities, advice
Don't rush...	be patient, take time
Sit down, listen and learn...	don't dominate
Facilitate...	don't lecture, criticise or teach
Embrace error...	learn from what goes wrong or does not work
Hand over the stick...	or chalk or pen, anything that empowers
Shut up...	Keep quiet and tolerate silence

Figure 3: Precepts for facilitators (adapted from Chambers, 2008)

The reflexivity of the facilitators, understood as a self-critical awareness on their own position and subjectivity, is of major importance in the process. This refers to the capacity to critically reflect on one's own mindset (ideas, attitudes, beliefs and predispositions). Facilitators need to be sensitive to the fact that their behaviour and ideas can frame and/or distort the perceptions and statements of pastoralists. They should avoid to impose their own ideas and interpretations on group discussions during participatory community planning, leaving space for local knowledge and perceptions, even if these diverge substantially from one's own understanding. PRA is not about bringing 'superior' modern knowledge or technology to local communities! It is about facilitating the group process.

3.3 Roles and tasks of the core planning team

Participatory community planning workshops take mostly 3-5 days (in a row or split), depending on the purpose. A multi-disciplinary external planning team (e.g. development agent, NRM expert, etc.) supports the local population in their analysis of their situation and in the planning of future activities to overcome identified problems. A core planning team consists of a facilitator, a note-taker and a team leader. The facilitator and note-taker should be familiar with the Afar language as the majority of the pastoral population doesn't speak Amharic. The note-taker and facilitator are responsible to the team leader who has the overall responsibility for the coordination and successful implementation of the planning process.

The team leader: coordination and responsibility

- Is responsible for organisational and logistical matters and overall implementation
- Introduces the team to the community and liaises with local authorities
- Co-ordinates the participatory events
- Assists the sub-teams if they have any problems
- Facilitates the summarising and documentation process of the sub-teams

The facilitator: moderation, motivation, sensitivity

- Introduces the PRA tools to participants and facilitates the process
- Acts as a catalyst between the individual participants: encourages and motivates people
- Integrates quiet people/ women and makes sure that all are able to express their opinions
- Makes sure that group keeps to the topic but is flexible in handling additional information
- Repeats in own words what people say in order to confirm that there is a good understanding of the discussion
- Takes care of time management

The note-taker: Preparation, documentation, observation[2]

- Is responsible that necessary material is available
- Observes process from the background and writes down important information like key statements, conflicts, atmosphere, body language (Formats to assist note-takers have been developed in the participatory field guide)
- Notes who is talking: Do some people dominate the process? Do women talk?
- Takes care that participants copy document their visualization from the ground on paper
- Ensures that the copy resembles the original, has a legend, a date, place and names of people who participated in the event

[2] If is advisable to split these tasks between two people: one for note-taking of consensual statements and results which have not been visualized and documentation and another person who observes the process and makes respective notes

3.4 Methodological toolbox

3.4.1 Semi-structured and focus group interviews

Among all PRA tools qualitative interviewing constitutes the **core skill** and is at the same time the most challenging as it takes time and lots of practice to learn. Interviewing skills like self-critical awareness (positionality), interested listening and careful observation are important for facilitators in order to elicit local perspectives either, with or without help of different forms of visualization. The value of all the tools described in this manual depend on strong skills in qualitative interviewing!

> **Guideline for sensitive interviewing** (adapted, Pretty et al. 1995)
>
> 1. Use a Checklist or Interview Guide
> 2. Be sensitive and respectful to everyone involved
> 3. Use Visualisation methods to enhance participation and dialogue
> 4. Listen and learn
> 5. Ask open-ended questions using: Who? What? Why? How? Where? When?
> 6. Probe responses carefully
> 7. Differentiate responses: Facts, opinions/perceptions, rumours
> 8. Cross-check through triangulation
> 9. Record responses and information as complete as possible

Key characteristics of qualitative interviews (like semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews/ discussions, narrative interviews) are openness and flexibility. Interviews resemble more a natural conversation with only little interventions of the interviewers who have an interest to learn and understand the subjective viewpoints, perceptions of the interviewees. Guiding questions are prepared in advance so that responses of various respondents remain comparable. But the order of the questions is not defined and questions will be adapted during the course of the interview. Checklist can also be adapted during the planning process based on answers in previous interviews.

Asking open questions at the end of a visualized session is of major importance in order to:

1. avoid misunderstandings of the discussions which take place in the process of visualisation
2. check on the perspectives of people who remained silent during the exercises
3. touch on points which haven't been mentioned during the group exercise
4. interviewing the outcome of the visualisation exercise

3.4.2 Resource mapping

The Resource Map is a good tool to begin with as it provides an orientation for further discussions. Due to the seasonality of pastoral resources it is recommended to do the mapping at different times of the year.

Objective

The development of a resource map helps to get a picture on resources, related problems and activities. The map depicts subjective local perceptions on resources (which, where, how used, conflicts, other problems) that play a role for them. It is not about spatial accuracy. Not all resources in the area might be relevant for the local population. In pastoral areas it is important also to map herd movements (mobility)[3] and to pay attention to the seasonality of resources.

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[3]It is advisable to ask people to draw a separate mobility map indicating livestock movements in ‚normal' years and in drought years. Movements should differentiate between camel and cattle. Key topographical features should be drawn in advance.

Procedure

- Let participants decide on a suitable location for the event (space, shade, easily accessible).
- Ask people to identify important resources (e.g. grazing and browsing areas, agricultural areas, forests, settlements, wells, elas, rivers, etc.): What resources are most useful and important for you in this area? The facilitator can place the first element on the ground for orientation (e.g. a rock indicating the settlement) to initiate the mapping process.
- Ask people to indicate resource related problems on the map (e.g. gullies, degraded grazing areas, conflict areas, etc.). Unless people stop drawing, they should not be interrupted.
- When the map is completed, facilitators should ask the participants to describe it. This should initiate a group discussion about resources and land use in the community. Facilitators should prepare guiding questions in advance.
- The result of the mapping exercise should be photographed and transferred to paper and/or GIS by participants. A legend of symbols used by participants should be part of the map. If people are not able to write, this needs to be done by the facilitator.
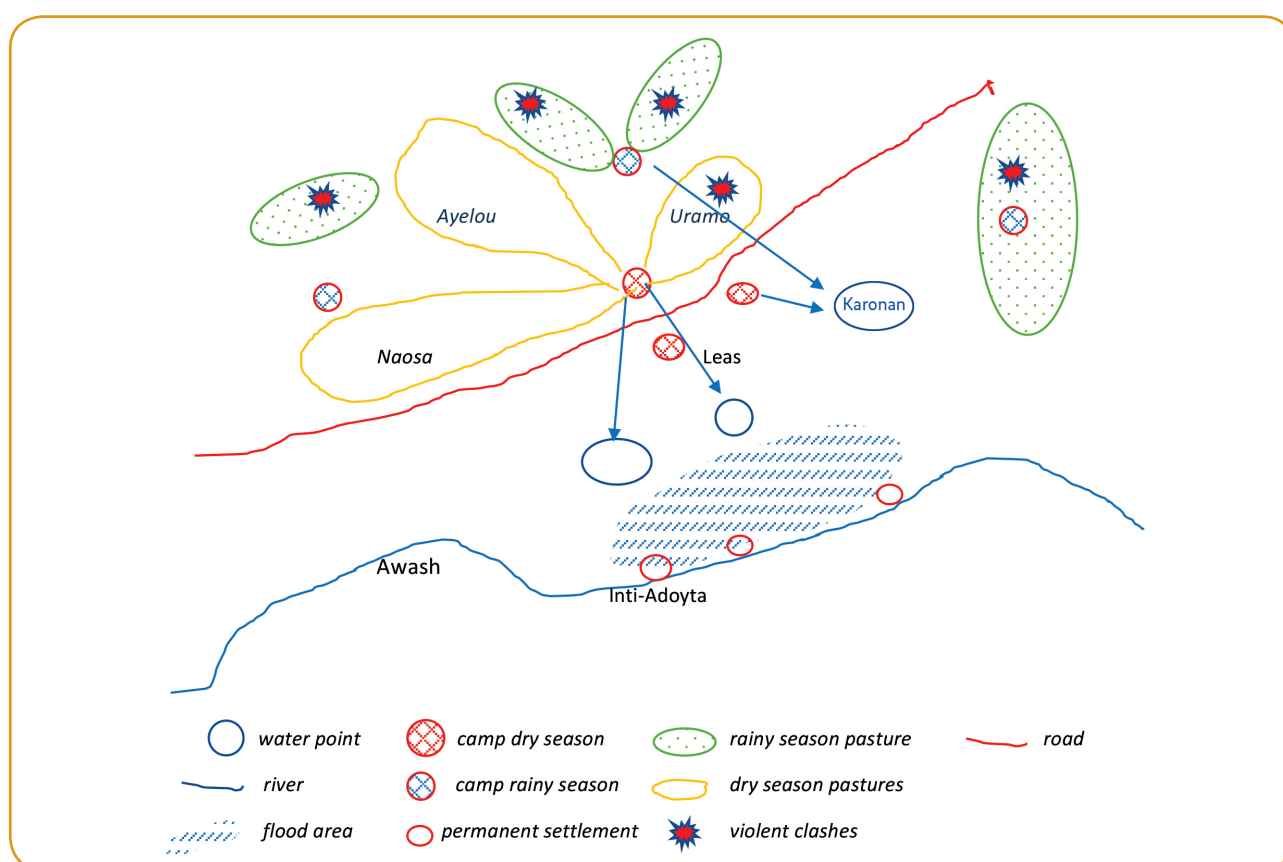

Figure 4: Resource map men, Leas, Gewane Woreda, Ethiopia 2005 (own source)

Participants

Large mixed groups who combine their knowledge or groups which may have different perceptions which resources are important, e.g. men/women, pastoralists/agro-pastoralists.

1-2 hours

Material needed

The drawing of maps on paper sheets might be difficult with people who are not used to pens. A better option is often to use natural materials like sticks, stones, leaves, etc. in order to indicate certain spatial phenomena on the ground. Drone pictures or orthophotos can also be used as a reference point for discussion and mapping.

3.4.3 Seasonal diagram

Objective

A seasonal calendar explores seasonal changes of various topics. It reveals complex interconnections between natural seasonal cycles, food security, mobility/absence of part of the community, prices of livestock, income, diseases, gender-specific workload, expenditures, etc. and it explores opportunities and constraints in terms of time. It depends of the planning purpose which factors are considered.

Procedure

1. Find a large open space for the group.

2. Ask the participants to draw a matrix (on ground or paper), indicating each month along one axis by a symbol.

3. It usually easiest to start the calendar by asking about rainfall patterns. Choose a symbol for rain and put/draw it next to the column which participants will now use to illustrate the rainfall. Ask the group to put stones under each month of the calendar to represent relative amounts of rainfall (more stones meaning more rainfall).

4. Move to the next topic and ask people during which month the food is usually scare. Discuss the reasons why it is scarce and make sure that the different kind of food donations that people receive are discussed and that this information is shown in the calendar.

5. Go on like this, topic by topic. Facilitate by asking questions like: Which could be the most appropriate season for additional activities for men and women? What time constraints do exist and for what reason? Other topics could be:

   • Income (cash and kind) for women/men

   • Expenditure for men/women

   • Water availability for human consumption

   • Livestock forage availability

   • Credit availability

   • Agricultural work load for women/men

   • Non-agricultural work load for women/men

Additional issues will be added according to the interests of the participants.

6. After the calendar is finished ask the group which linkages they see among the different topics of the calendar. Encourage the group to discuss what they see on the calendar.

7. Make sure that your copy of the seasonal calendar has a key explaining the different items and symbols used on the map.

Material needed

If drawing on the ground: stones, sticks and other available material to produce symbols and a large documentation sheet for copying the seasonal calendar

if drawing on a paper: Big sheet of paper, pencils, and different coloured markers

2 hours

The following figure 6 is the documentation of a drawing exercise done on the ground with a group of mostly illiterate Afar pastoralists. Symbols were used which were easy to understand for everybody. A key indicated the meaning of the symbols.

	Rainfall	Water quality	Malaria	Conflict	Milk production	Income availability	Sale of livestock
Gilal		☹	high	⚡⚡		○	low
Dadaa	☁	☹	high	⚡	medium	○ ○	medium
Sughum	☁ ☁	☺	low	⚡⚡⚡	high	○ ○ ○	good
Hagay		☹	low	⚡	high	○ ○ ○	good
Karma	☁ ☁	☺	low	⚡⚡⚡	high	○ ○ ○	good
Key		☺ good ☹ bad					

Figure 5: Seasonal calendar, Leas, Gewane Woreda, 2005 (own source)

3.4.4 Stakeholder analysis: Venn diagram

Objective

Venn-Diagrams are a simple and useful way to gain an overview of the institutional and social set-up and capacities. Participants reflect on the **relative importance and effectiveness of institutions** within and outside of their community for the key issue at stake. **Institutional linkages and constraints** become evident during the discussion. **Weak or lacking interactions as well as alliances and conflicts** will be identified. The tool reveals perspectives on current institutional capacities, indicating which people have access to which institutions and which institutions can support development processes. The Venn diagram can also be used to discuss a preferred institutional set-up focussing on questions on how to resolve existing conflicts, fill institutional gaps and encourage linkages.

Procedure

- Explain the purpose of Venn diagram to the participants
- Ask them to identify all institutions (customary, governmental, private, etc.) or individuals important for the issue at stake, e.g. the management of natural resources. This refers to external as well as internal institutions/individuals.
- Ask participants about the relative **importance of each institution in making decisions** that influence their livelihood. Different-sized circles represent the difference in importance (big: very important, medium: less important, small: unimportant).
- Let the community represent themselves as a circle in the middle. Ask about important customary institutions/individuals and arrange these in contact/within the community circle.
- Ask them to arrange the other institutions around the community circle. The distance between the circles indicates **degree of interaction**. Conflicts or non-interaction may also be indicated.

Participants

8-12, mixed groups, As perceptions may differ within the community it is important to do the exercise with different groups.

🕐 1-2 hours

Material needed

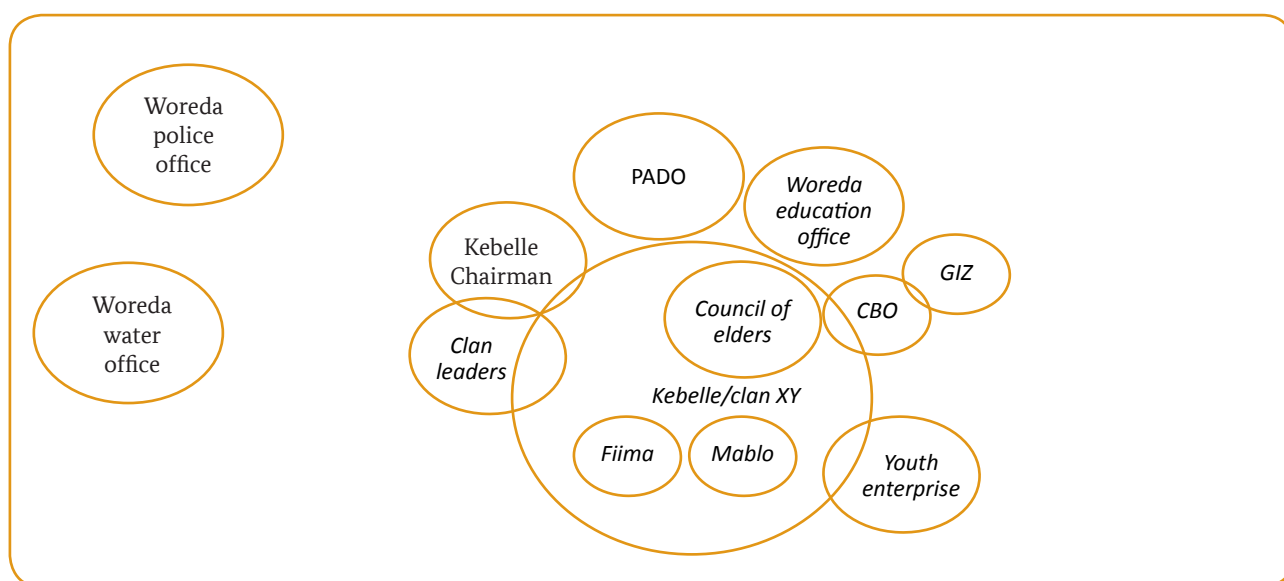Large paper sheet, markers, natural material also possible

Figure 6: Venn Diagram, own draft

The distance between the circles in the diagram above would indicate that there is a communication problem/ conflict with the Woreda water office which, given the size of the circle, is an important institution with decision power. Another major result would be the good interactions with PADO and the Woreda education office.

3.4.5 Scoring and ranking: Prioritizing problems and solutions

These tools deal with the prioritisation and decision-making processes about various subjects - problems, potentials, solutions, needs, etc. – and are important for the development of the community action plan. The most common exercises will be described below: simple ranking, preference ranking and matrix scoring. Ranking and scoring are particularly valuable for illustrating how radically different or similar each group perceptions can be. It is important to remind participants that not the final matrix is the most important outcome, but the discussion and sharing of knowledge during the creation of the matrix. **'Interviewing the matrix'** is the commonly used term for this.

Simple ranking/Proportional piling

Objective

This tool facilitates local decision-making on perceived priorities concerning problems, needs, project ideas, visions. Different priorities of different social groups are revealed and can be discussed. It can be done to understand the relative value of trees species, fodder grasses, rangelands, etc. Which item out of several is perceived as most important, pressing, favourable? In the following example participants first discussed and identified priority problems in their community and then each distributed 10 stones on the various topics: more stones indicating the severity of the problem. The discussion revealed that 'diseases' referred mostly to Malaria and water-borne diseases and that 'water problem' referred to water pollution. Interviewing the matrix is a must, especially when terms used in the ranking are vague. The discussion also revealed the reasons for problems identified, e.g. lack of pastures was mainly caused by the spread of Prosopis Juliflora.
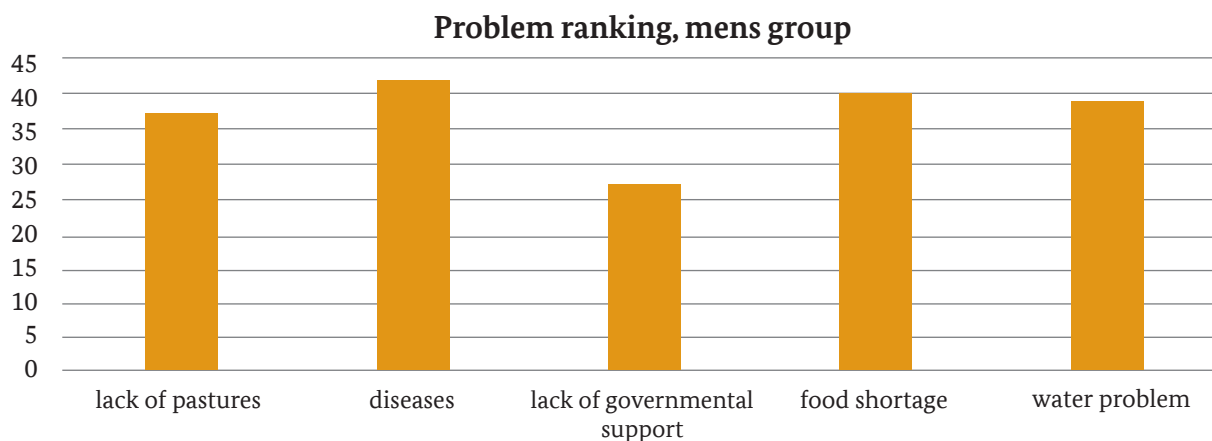
Problem ranking, mens group

Figure 7: Problem ranking, Leas, Gewane Woreda, Ethiopia 2005 (own source)

Preference ranking

Objective

In contrast to simple ranking, preference ranking reveals **reasons for local decisions on preferences.** Each item it compared directly against the others, until they are ranked from highest to lowest. The most important factor which needs to be well documented is the discussion among participants (during and after the exercise) in order to understand their decisions. The facilitator needs to facilitate this process in asking why people prefer certain topics and should cross-check the results (interviewing the matrix).

Procedure

- Explain the purpose of the exercise and the key question.
- Participants should be asked to select not more than 6 issues they want prioritise.
- Ask people to compare two items and decide which problem is more pressing and needs to be resolved first. People need to explain the reasons for their decision!
- The note-taker needs to document the discussion.
- Count how many times each problem occurs, compare the scores and make a ranking. Cross-check at the end and ask the participants if the result of the ranking reflects their perception.

Problem	*Drought*	*Animal disease*	*Human disease*	*Shortage of water*	*Land degradation*
Drought		drought	drought	drought	drought
Animal disease			Human disease	Shortage of water	Land degradation
Human disease				Human disease	Human disease
Water shortage					Shortage of water
Land degradation					

Problems	Frequency	Rank
Drought	4	1
Animal disease	0	5
Human disease	3	2
Water shortage	2	3
Land degradation	1	4

Figure 8: Pair-wise comparison of problems (results from PRA Training Afar, 2020)

Matrix scoring and ranking: Evaluation of alternatives Objective

In matrix ranking a number of options are ranked by applying different criteria. The discussion elicits **criteria that people use when choosing between different alternatives**. It is a good tool to identify preferred activities, resources or varieties (cropping, livestock) and the reason for these preferences.

For example, different tree species can be evaluated according to criteria such as suitability as firewood, for building, as fruit trees, as medicine, soil improvement, etc. Different livestock species could be evaluated in terms of criteria such as capital required to buy and maintain, susceptibility to disease, adaptability to drought, labour intensity and financial returns, etc.. Participants would select those factors that play the major role when evaluating the usefulness of different species. This information is also important for development agents, organizations when planning strategic innovative interventions.

Procedure

- Explain the purpose of the exercise and the key question.
- Start to talk about the different items you want to compare (land use options, crop varieties, fodder sources, animal breeds, problems, solutions, etc.). Make sure that all participants have the same understanding of each alternative.
- Ask participants which criteria should be taken into account. You can propose criteria, but participants should be encouraged to come up with their own. If you did a preference ranking in advance, people will have identified the criteria already. Once people have agreed on certain criteria, these must be written on a card accompanied by an agreed symbol.
- Prepare a grid together with the participants and lay down the cards in form of a matrix (alternative objects in a row at the top; list of criteria in the column to the left side)
- Explain the evaluation mechanism (for example: 5: highest rank, 1: lowest rank) and go object by object, criteria to criteria. Let participants take over the process; they will do the scoring on their own, provided that they understood the underlying criteria well. Do not influence their evaluation.
- The note taker will document the different explanations, discussions and the scores.
- At the end, sum up the total scores together with them and discuss the overall result on their priorities.

Criteria/ Species	Mupane	Muphondo	Mupanda	Mususu	Mipwezha
Early shooting of leaves	7	4	5	2	2
Leaves can be eaten	1	0	0	19	0
Good taste/salty	7	4	5	2	2
High water content	0	0	13	0	7
Overall rank	1	4	3	2	5

Figure 9: Matrix ranking, example from Zimbabwe (Scoones 1994)

In Fig. 9 farmers evaluated different species in terms of their browsing suitability. For each criterion 20 stones were distributed by the farmers. The overall rank doesn't correspond to the scoring which can be contributed to different weighing between the factors.

3.4.6 Problem/objective tree: Identification of causal links

Drawing a problem tree can follow a brainstorming and ranking exercise during which major problems are identified and prioritised. The tree focuses on one of these problems, usually the one given highest priority by the local people. The trunk of the tree represents a problem which the local people consider important. The roots of the tree indicate the causes of the problem and the branches its effects.

Objective

The development of a problem tree/objectives tree enables participants to identify and analyse causes and effects of major problems and potential solutions. It is the tool that links the problem analysis with the development of intervention strategies.

Procedure

1. The core problem needs to be identified by participants (refer to results of previous ranking exercise) and visualized in the middle of a paper/on the wall/on the ground.

2. Ask participants to reflect on direct causes and effects of the problem and write down all statements in negative terms. It is important to review the sequence of cause and effects to make sure that they are clear and logical. It is important to ensure that there is agreement among the participants. If there is more than one cause to an effect, you can place them side by side. For non-literate groups, ask participants to draw a symbol that stands for each cause or effect and repeatedly go through the diagram so that participants remember the meaning of the symbols.

3. The problem tree should be converted into an objective tree in order to move towards the strategy discussion. An objectives tree is developed by reversing the negative statements that form the problem tree into positive ones. For example, a cause such as "lack of knowledge" would become a means such as "increased knowledge". The objectives tree demonstrates the means-ends relationship between objectives.

4. The final step is to select a preferred strategy for the intervention. It may not be possible to overcome all causes of the problem so that participants need to decide … taking into account available resources. This is the most difficult step which needs good facilitation in order to come up with a strategy which is feasible, balances different interests within the community and pays special attention to gender-specific capacities and constraints. Typical questions that should be asked are: can/should we tackle all the problems identified or should we select just a few? Which interventions are more likely to bring about the desired results? What would be more beneficial? Are these interventions sustainable in a long-term? Are the financial means available? Do we have the technical capacity to implement the actions?
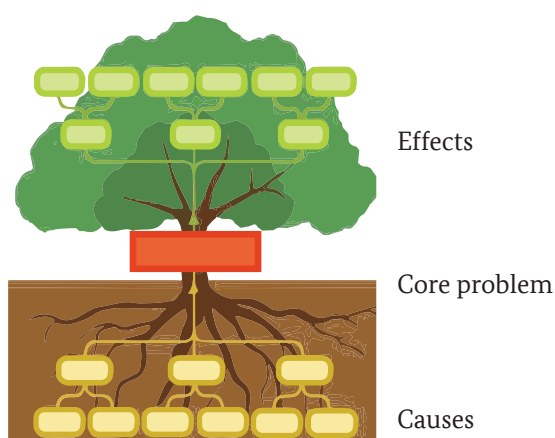

Figure 10: Problem tree

This is a rather complex tool which needs often 2-3 hours.

Material

Large paper, pens with different colours, chalk

3.5 Feedback meeting and development of a community action plan

In the feedback meeting PRA results will be presented by selected members of the community to the community in order to discuss, validate, and correct the output of the PRA exercise. Feedback meetings should finalize participatory planning sessions and lead towards the development of a community action plan (CAP), a road map for implementing community change by identifying and specifying what will be done, by whom, how and until when. The CAP describes what the community wants to accomplish, what activities are required when and what resources (money, people and material) are needed. The development of a CAP translates the situation and capacity analysis of PRA into a logical framework, the reference frame for the community action planning process which allows pastoralists to implement, monitor and evaluate activities of identified intervention strategies/microprojects.

Steps for completing the community action plan

1. Review and analyse community information. By the time an action plan is ready to be developed, there has been a substantial amount of valuable information collected or compiled that have led you to the decision to focus on a particular issue and strategy. Use the results in the community action plan.

2. With engagement from your partners and community stakeholders, including residents, review and analyze feedback from community input. Information gathered from the community is very significant and can provide some clues and priorities for what needs to be addressed in the plan.

3. Choose a group of people to work together on writing the action plan. The writing of the plan can be limited to one or two main people. The process of developing the plan can be a collaborative/partnership effort but the writer(s) can translate the action planning notes into a written plan. Too many writers can result in a fragmented plan.

4. Prioritize issues from assessment and community input. The most important issues are those identified by community residents and the plan should reflect their priorities.

5. Identify environmental changes or policies that would address issues. These are policy and environmental change strategies aimed at producing a healthy change in the community. There are "tried and tested" interventions to choose from; however, it is important to think through what would be most appropriate and doable for the group who will be carrying out the plan.

6. Identify barriers to successfully implementing the changes and/or policies. Part of deciding on what interventions would be most effective and doable is to examine the barriers. For example, crucial barriers to overcome in making an intervention effective may be cultural and language differences between community residents and the group carrying out the action plan. In this case, it will be necessary for the people carrying out the plan to make sure that their strategies are right for the specific cultures and language groups in their neighbourhoods.

7. Identify necessary resources related to achieving the environmental changes. A key task is to identify the abilities, assets, capacity, duties and responsibilities of individuals who will implement the community action plan and the community resources and assets needed.

8. Choose individuals and community partners who will implement the plan. The community action plan requires many people and organizations to contribute their unique assets and resources. It is important to lay out clearly who is responsible for which tasks and activities in the plan.

9. Consider a timeline for conducting activities. Time is a valuable resource so it is important to state clearly and realistically partner contributions to the various parts of the plan. Creating a timeline provides everyone working on the community action plan with a clear idea of what activities should be done and when to expect activities to be accomplished.

10. Include monitoring and evaluation activities. It is essential to know how your action plan progresses as you carry out the strategies and activities—this is where evaluation fits in. Provide a description of the methods that will be used for the CAP. Ensure that you are implementing your evaluation plan outlined in your evaluation matrix and incorporate that into your CAP.

Definitions of Terms

- Goals: General statements of what the group expects to achieve after a reasonable time. A goal can have one or more associated objectives.
- Objectives: Goals and objectives are related in that objectives should be clear statements of what seems possible to achieve during the project. Program objectives are specific, measurable milestones along the way to achieving your action goals. You may have more than one objective per goal.
- Activities: Specific actions that lead to reaching your goals and objectives.
- Resources: What resources are available and needed to implement the proposed activities (human, financial, physical, social and environmental)
- Key indicators: Indicator is a specific, observable and measurable characteristic that can be used to show changes or progress

Goal	Objectives	Activities	Resources needed	Key indicators	Responsibility	Timeline

Figure 11: Table format, example

3.6 Limits and risks

High dependence on communicative capacity of facilitator

- Need for awareness on culturally appropriate communication and skills concerning qualitative interviewing
- Difficult to do well: PRA results are not automatically good as with any other work it may be carried out in a biased, sloppy and uncritical way.
- If facilitator and note-taker can't speak local language there is a risk that much gets lost and distorted during the translation. Local Afar who also know the local 'communication' codes should ideally form part of the Core planning team. If translators are hired they should be involved in the planning and discussing of fieldwork.

Risk that powerful groups/individuals dominate the process

- In order not to increase inequities development professionals need to be aware of the local power relations and the social heterogeneity within the community (different clans, wealth groups, men/women)

Exclusion of certain social groups

- Risk that perspectives of women or people who are often absent (like mobile pastoralists) are overlooked in the planning process
- It is necessary to repeat certain PRA activities at different times of the year.

Risk of superficial data

- Interviewing the matrix and maps is of major importance to probe the visualized outcomes of the tools. The maps and diagrams are often regarded as the end in themselves, instead of seeing them as impulse for people's discussion and reflection.

Imposition of alien concepts

- Tools often don't fit to the socio-cultural context or the communication culture. Drawing of boundaries for example might create resistance in a pastoral context.
- need for creativity (adaptation of tools in the field or creation of new methods)

Time consuming

- This often inhibits the participation of women
- Benefits should outweigh the costs

Weakness in follow-up

- Different agendas of local people and donors/government
- Conflicting time-frames
- Lip service to participation
- Risk that pastoralists perception to be left out from development will be reinforced.

Literature

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Annex 1:
Roles and functions of core planning team

Guidelines: Roles and functions of the core planning team	
Result	The team has supported and facilitated the work process of the participants in order to achieve results that are a commonly shared product of different local views, sorts of knowledge and perceptions of reality. The planning session is comprehensively documented in order to inform staff and participants about facts, ideas, arguments and considerations that have influenced the work process and its results.
Method	• Participatory planning approach • Participatory teamwork approach
Guiding questions	• How can we organise ourselves in order to achieve the most valid results? • How can we facilitate a motivating, creative but at the same time focussed work process and informative documentation at the end?
Hints	• Keep in mind that a participatory planning session is a demanding, sometimes exhausting and challenging exercise for the team as well as for participants from the community • Time management, respectful facilitation and focussed note-taking is essential for achieving valid results

Staff	• Team leader:
	     • Preparation and communication with relevant stakeholders
	     • Supply of material
	     • Organisation of meals, transports
	     • Financial administration (petty cash, allowances)
	 • Facilitator:
	     • Facilitation of different methods and group discussions
	     • Responsible for methodological decisions
	 • Note-taker:
	     • Management of the required material during the sessions
	     • Responsible for documentation
	     • Management of prepared sheets and visualisations
	     • Always available to take over facilitation if necessary

	Material	• large brown paper • 25 black markers, 15 in three different colours • camera for documentation of results, GPS, drone pictures • natural material depending on the tool
	To be prepared	• Team contract: Roles must be distributed in advance • Material must be organized • Checklists must have been prepared for the different exercises • Preliminary visit to community!
	Documentation	• Photographs; note-taking during the workshop, tape recorder • Systematisation and editing afterwards