



Joint Integrated Local Development Programme

Community Mobilization for Empowerment of Vulnerable Women and Men

Guidebook

Moldova 2012



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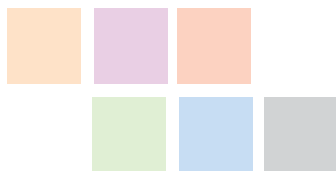
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About this Guide

This Guidebook has been produced as one of the outputs of the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP). The overall development objective of JILDP is to assist the Republic of Moldova to ensure that vulnerable groups in poor rural and urban areas take advantage of sustainable socio-economic development opportunities through adequate regional and local policies implemented by LPA and its partners in a rights-based, gender-sensitive manner.

To achieve its objective, one of the key aspects of the **programme** has been the mobilizing and empowerment of communities and providing selected settlements with better access to basic infrastructure (such as water and gas supply, waste management, roads, etc.) and improvement of social services (services for victims of violence), community crèches and kindergartens, assistance for the most vulnerable, business counselling, etc) all planned, established and managed with maximum involvement of the beneficiaries, thereby ensuring their ownership of these initiatives.

This Guidebook was originally drafted as a tool for the personnel and associates of the partner organizations contracted by UNDP and UN Women to implement the JILDP community mobilization activities. However, this current version has now been updated using the experience of the JILDP implementation in 2011–2012, and it is hoped that the contents will be useful for all those engaged in efforts related to Community Empowerment processes, including organizations at the national and international level from both the public and private sectors, elected and appointed officials of the Local Public Administrations, local NGOs and civil society groups, community mobilizers, and, of course, the community members themselves. In this way the Guide is expected to play a role in explaining and promoting the benefits of community mobilization across rural areas of Moldova.

More specifically, **the Guide sets out to assist practitioners** in the following ways:

- ☐ To strengthen their understanding of the key concepts related to gender and human rights considerations in local development planning, and to create a common vision of how the most vulnerable in Moldovan rural communities can be empowered through mobilization;
- ☐ To provide clear guidance on how a process of community mobilization can be facilitated step-by-step, including advice on what tools can be used and how;
- ☐ To demonstrate how, where, and when the process of community mobilization can be integrated and made complimentary to the planning and budgeting processes of the Local Public Administrations.

Users of this Guide may include:

- ☐ The staff and associates of NGOs engaged in community development in rural Moldova, including those specifically partnering with the Government and international agencies, such as UNDP and UN Women, to pilot and scale-up community mobilization efforts;

- ☐ Individual activists and community mobilizers, particularly those working directly with the most vulnerable groups in the communities;
- ☐ Elected and appointed officials in Local Public Administrations;
- ☐ Officials of public institutions tasked with local service provision and the implementation of decentralization policy;
- ☐ Staff and associates of national programmes and international organisations.

The Guide is made up of five Parts:

Part 1 – Understanding Empowerment: helps to explain the key concepts associated with empowerment, community mobilization, and the importance of mainstreaming gender and human rights concerns in local development processes in Moldova.

Part 2 – Getting Ready for Community Mobilization: explains the pre-conditions that are favourable to successful community mobilization and the practical considerations that need to be addressed before embarking on the mobilization process.

Part 3 – 10 Steps for Community Mobilization for Empowerment: is a step-by-step practical guide as to how a process of community mobilization for empowerment can be facilitated in the rural communities of Moldova. It contains an explanation of what a ‘full cycle’ of community mobilization involves, what might be the most suitable institutional arrangements for implementing the cycle, followed by a detailed description of the support and activities needed in each of the 10 Steps.

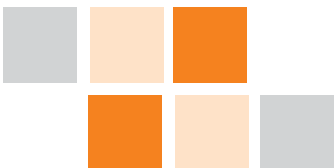
Part 4 – Case Study: although examples and illustrations are used throughout this Guide, this section provides a summarized account of the mobilization process in one particular community in Moldova.

Part 5 – A Toolkit for Mentors and Mobilizers: is a collection of methodologies and templates designed to assist practitioners during every step in the mobilization cycle. The instructions on how to use the tools are summarized and not definitive, so users are encouraged to seek support or training from more experienced practitioners before engaging in mobilization activities.

Users of the Guide should note that this is a ‘working document’ and they are strongly encouraged to provide feedback and stories about their experiences in community mobilization to UN Women at the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme, 21 Nicolae Iorga str, office 2, Chisinau, MD-2012, Moldova, Fax: (+373 22) 820 846, e-mail: anastasia.divinskaya@unwomen.org).



Understanding Empowerment



What are the key concepts and context of empowerment in Moldova?

1.1 Local Governance Based on Gender Equality and Human Rights

A **human rights-based approach (HRBA)**¹ to development is a framework that integrates the norms, principles, standards and goals of the international human rights system into the plans and processes of development. It is characterised by methods and activities that link the human rights system and its inherent notion of power and struggle with development. HRBA is able to recognise poverty as injustice and include marginalisation, discrimination, and exploitation as central causes of poverty. In HRBA poverty is never simply the fault of the individual, nor can its solution be purely personal. However, HRBA also refuses simply to place the burden of blame for poverty and injustice on abstract notions such as society or globalisation. Human rights claims always have a corresponding duty-bearer. A central dynamic of HRBA is thus about identifying the root causes of poverty, empowering rights-holders to claim their rights and enabling duty-bearers to meet their obligations.

In this way HRBA calls attention to a number of central features of poverty and development:²

- The re-emergence of the state and governance as a central element in development, through a focus on the interrelation between the state and its citizens in terms of duties and rights. HRBA draws attention to the basic obligation of the state to take

care of its most vulnerable citizens, including those not able to claim their rights for themselves.

- The acknowledgement that severe poverty is a human rights violation, and that poverty in itself is a root cause of a number of human rights violations. Looking at poverty through the lens of justice calls attention to the fact that poverty is something that often is imposed on people as an active act of discrimination and marginalisation. It also calls attention to what is *not* done. Sometimes the cruellest violations are through acts of omission.
- The growing recognition that poverty is about more than economic needs and that growth-centred development has to address more complex and fundamental causes of poverty and inequality, such as discrimination, exploitation and abuse. This also ensures that poverty is not merely seen as a fact of individual circumstances or capacities, but rather perceived as being rooted within the structures of power and inequity at the local, national and global levels.

Decentralization and Local Governance Reform in the Republic of Moldova is being carried out on the basis of a human rights-based approach, as well as with a view to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. Accordingly, all interventions in support of the decentralization process should ensure that a) the end result shall be improvement of applicable gender equality and human rights standards; b) access to improved human rights standards shall be

¹ Kirkemann Boesen, J., Martin, T. Applying a Rights-Based Approach. An Inspirational Guide for Civil Society". The Danish Institute for Human Rights. 2007. <http://humanrights.dk/files/pdf/Publikationer/applying%20a%20rights%20based%20approach.pdf>.

² Idem.

ensured to everyone in compliance with the underlying gender equality and human rights principles; c) improvement process shall be carried in compliance with the underlying gender equality and human rights principles.

Violations of the human rights of groups and individuals who are characterized as 'vulnerable' based on one or several **vulnerability criteria** are observed to strongly correlate.³ Therefore, understanding the real situation of the vulnerability of various groups allows for a better understanding of the possible and actual human rights violations, many of which are not captured and formally recognized. The thinking and analysis of the human rights-based approach in the development interventions refers to vulnerable groups and is based on certain criteria and de facto situations of these groups and segments in question.⁴ Thus, we need to have a clear understanding of how 'vulnerability' might be defined. (The paragraphs below are based on a **Vulnerability Study carried out by Serghei Ostaf in Moldova in 2010 for the JILDP**).

1.2 Vulnerability

Vulnerability is frequently linked to certain fault lines. These fault lines are those characteristics that formally divide society into criteria such as language, social status, income, and age. Fault lines might trigger vulnerability status for some groups depending on the real situation state of these groups. Generally, the characteristics of fault lines transform into vulnerability criteria and subsequently groups become characterized as vulnerable groups when we authoritatively find violations of these groups' rights and also in comparison with other groups. It is not always that fault lines transform into vulnerable criteria, yet depending on the exact social situation and the underlining causes, we can state that human rights of some vulnerable groups are violated and it is given the groups belonging to these particular criteria.

³ Forrester, S. Draft of "Guide to Community Mobilization for Empowerment, Moldova: Joint Integrated Local Development Programme", August 2011. http://descentralizare.gov.md/public/publications/934268_en_cme_guide_en.pdf.

⁴ Ostaf, S. "Vulnerability Study: Taxonomy and Possible Decentralization Policy Implications for Vulnerable Groups in Moldova". Moldova: Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP), 2011.

A Summary of Human Rights

Human rights, necessary for survival and dignified living include:

- The rights to life and liberty;
- The right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of the individual and his/her family;
- The right to social protection in times of need;
- The right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;
- The right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work;
- The rights to food and housing;
- The rights to privacy and to family life.

Human rights also cover those rights and freedoms necessary for human dignity, creativity and intellectual and spiritual development, for example:

- The right to education and to access to information;
- Freedoms of religion, opinion, speech, and expression;
- Freedom of association;
- The right to participate in the political process;
- The right to participate in cultural life.

They also include those rights necessary for liberty and physical security, for example:

- Freedom from slavery or servitude;
- The right to security of person (physical integrity);
- The right to be free from arbitrary arrest or imprisonment;
- Freedom from torture and from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Cross-cutting are the twin principles of the equal rights of women and men, and the prohibition of discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Source: Häusermann 1998:56

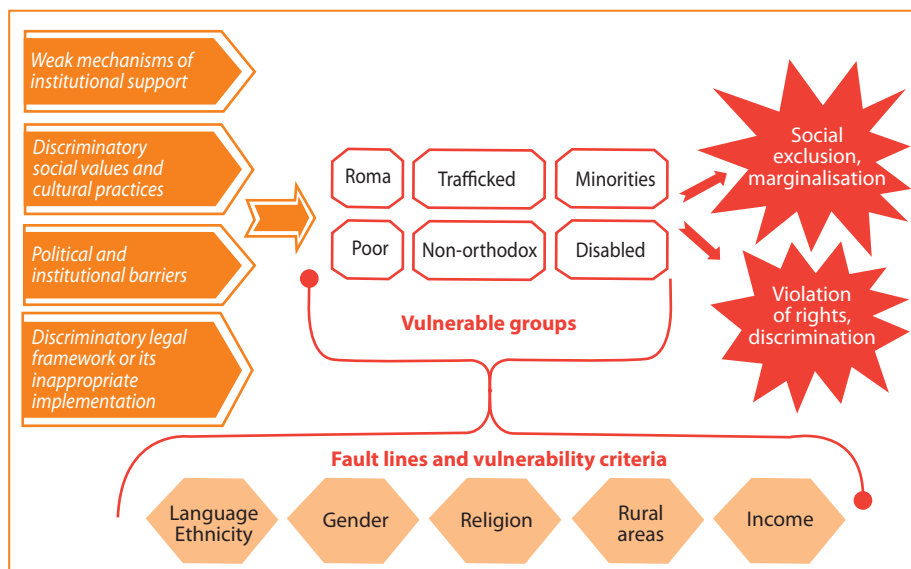


Chart 1: Relationship between social exclusion, vulnerable groups, vulnerability factors and causes

Vulnerability is not a commonly accepted concept. The concept has interlinks with the notion of social exclusion, poverty, discrimination and marginalization. Social exclusion is the result of interplay of some determining factors. The **social exclusion** represents the effect of series of the interrelated problems that are, in sequence, determined by some root causes, or interplay of factors. The interplay of the determining factors are associated and manifested along some specific lines and characteristics that make up the vulnerability characteristics. The link between social exclusion, vulnerability and causes is visualised in the graphic below.⁵

1.3 Gender Equality

Equality between women and men (gender equality⁶) refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men.⁷

Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.⁸

Gender mainstreaming⁹ is a globally accepted strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres. It is advocated that consequently women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.

In the context of Decentralization reform, mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of equality between women and men are central

⁷ Idem.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ OSAGI. "Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview". Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, United Nations, 2002. www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf.

⁵ Idem.

⁶ Concepts and Definitions, UN Women, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>.

to all decentralization activities - strategy development, capacity development of the central government, local public authorities (LPAs) and communities, research, dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, as well as planning, implementation and monitoring.

Gender analysis is an important tool for gender mainstreaming in decentralization reform and local development, which can ensure gender responsive policy planning and resource allocation as well as service access and delivery. Different communities and groups of men and women in Moldova have diverse needs (based on their different roles and responsibilities in society) and unequal access to opportunities and resources, including capacities and means by which they can support various local services financially. Gender analysis helps to examine differences in women's and men's lives, including those leading to social and economic inequity for women, and to apply this understanding to national, sectoral and local policy development and service delivery and to achieve positive change for women¹⁰ subject to discrimination based on gender, income, ethnic or religious identity, disability or other factors, which make them vulnerable. Thus, applying gender analysis at the very early stage and throughout the whole process of decentralization reform removes the possibility of policy planning and resource management being based on incorrect assumptions and stereotypes.

Women's empowerment¹¹ concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality.

Applying this approach in the context of decentralization implies targeted actions aimed at increased representation of women in the local governments, including though, but not

limited to, affirmative actions like quotas, and their increased impact on local decision making, enabling female local residents to engage in participatory planning and budgeting, encouragement of elected officials to respond to the concerns of disadvantaged groups of women.

1.4 Dynamics of Power

Understanding the dynamics of the power 'structures', that not only influence, but in many cases dominate local decision-making and perpetuate vulnerability, is crucial for any intervention aiming to empower those women and men most marginal to the centre of power. And to understand these 'structures' we first need to understand how power might be defined and manifested.

Power¹² can be defined as the degree of control over material, human, intellectual and financial resources exercised by different sections of society. The control of these resources becomes a source of individual and social power. Power is dynamic and relational, rather than absolute — it is exercised in the social, economic and political relations between individuals and groups. It is also unequally distributed — some individuals and groups having greater control over the sources of power and others having little or no control. The extent of power of an individual or group is correlated to how many different kinds of resources they can access and control.

Different degrees of power¹³ are sustained through social divisions, such as gender, age, class, ethnicity, and race; and through institutions, such as the family, religion, education, media, the law, etc. Our understanding of power would be incomplete, unless we recognise its partner, ideology. Ideology is a complex structure of beliefs, values, attitudes, and ways of perceiving and analyzing social reality. Ideologies are widely disseminated and enforced through social, economic, political and religious institutions and structures, such as the family, education system, religion, the

¹⁰ Srinivas, H. "Towards a Gender Analysis Framework to assist the application, adoption and use of Environmentally Sound Technologies". 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/gender/gender-ests.html>.

¹¹ OHCHR. "Important Concepts Underlying Gender Mainstreaming", Factsheet No 2. Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, United Nations, CH rev., August 2001. www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/factsheet2.pdf.

¹² Batliwala, S. "Empowerment of Women in South Asia: Concepts and Practices". New Delhi: Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education and FAO, 1993.

¹³ Idem.

media, the economy, and the state, with its various administrative, legislative and military apparatus. The economic, political, legal and judicial institutions and structures set up and mediated by the state tend to reinforce the dominant ideology and the power of the dominant groups within it, even though their stated objectives and policies may be superficially egalitarian. While ideology does a far more effective job of sustaining an unequal power structure than crude, overt coercion and domination, we should not forget that often it is always being reinforced by the threat of force, should anyone seek to rebel against the dominant system.

In addition to the different degrees of power, three **broad characteristics of power** can be cited: visible, invisible and hidden power. These three attributes can be briefly unpacked as follows:¹⁴

- ❑ Visible Power is that which is exercised through formal institutions and officials (prime minister, legislature, police, courts, mayors, LPAs) which shape the basic foundations of our societies;
- ❑ Invisible Power involves processes, practices, cultural norms and customs that shape people's understanding of their needs, roles, possibilities and actions in ways that deter effective action for change. Among marginal groups, socialization internalizes feelings of subordination, apathy, self-blame, powerlessness. Crucial information is concealed or is inaccessible;
- ❑ Hidden Power is the root cause as to why certain groups are excluded from decision-making by society and governmental rules, practices and institutions. These groups and their grievances are made invisible by intimidation, misinformation and cooption. Leaders of such groups are labelled trouble-makers or unrepresentative. Many issues, such as domestic violence, are relegated to the realm of the private and therefore not subject to government action.

¹⁴ VeneKlasen, L., with Miller, V. "A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation". Oklahoma City, OK, World Neighbors, 2002.

1.5 Participation

The capacity of citizens to elect public officials and to mandate them the right of representing their views goes hand in hand with other basic democratic principles, to safeguard sound and effective government, such as accountability and transparency. Nonetheless, voting is not the only form of citizen participation: public debates, public meetings, campaigns, citizens' polls, citizens' advisory committees, petitions, written notices, hotlines and 'video boxes', mailings, online forums, and score cards, are just a few examples of possible instruments either citizens or officials can use in order to enhance the public participation dimension of policy-making and its related processes. Citizens' participation brings government closer to the people. It enables citizens to set policy goals and priorities, oversee the actions of the politicians and administrators and hold them accountable for their actions, express points of view, share information and point to their needs and problems, get involved in the decision-making processes, identify additional resources, monitor and evaluate the outcomes of implementing policy, and many other actions.¹⁵

Thus, we can see that a participatory approach towards public policy can indeed foster a shift from 'government' to 'governance', whereby 'governance' implies a whole array of actors that are involved in the making and implementation of public policy. It is therefore understood that governance refers to new emerging institutional entities that have been transformed from established forms of governance, or that have evolved independently of the state, including different models of governing and coordination where public and private institutions and actors are involved. Decision-making by multiple actors helps to embrace the cornerstone characteristics of governance.¹⁶

Another important dimension to citizens' participation is that of how the relationships be-

¹⁵ Haruta, C., Radu, B. "Citizen Participation in the Decision Making Process at Local and County Levels in the Romanian Public Institutions". Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences, No. 31E, pp. 76-92, 2010. www.rtsa.ro/en/files/TRAS-31E-5-HARUTA,%20RADU.pdf.

¹⁶ Forrester, S., Sunar, I. "CSOs and Citizens' Participation". Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations (TACSO), Regional Office. July, 2011. www.tacso.org/doc/doc_manual_4.pdf.



Roma community activists Valentina Arap and Zinaida Arap at the seminar “Increased access to preschool education for Roma girls and boys”, Calarasi town, 17 September 2012

tween the different institutions and actors are shaped through the distribution of authority. Sherry Arnstein, an American sociologist, who published landmark research on the role of citizens’ participation in decision-making processes in 1969, focused on this issue in particular. Arnstein argued that citizens’ participation is a “categorical term for citizens’ power”, as it has to go beyond mere citizen observation and inactive participation, because the Public is not a passive actor, but an agent who has the power to change and influence how public affairs are managed. Thus, it becomes clear that citizens’ participation is not just part of a description of particular institutional arrangements for decision making, but an aspect of the authority that actually makes the decisions. Citizen participation is therefore, increasingly seen in the EU Member States and would-be Members as

“...it is very common for the Mayor of a community to attempt to hold **consultative meetings**, but such meetings are often dominated by the friends, relatives, political allies, and colleagues of the Mayor, and **are often not a good mechanism for citizens from a vulnerable group to articulate their concerns.**”

a fundamental element of good governance.¹⁷

The challenge for the Public Sector in Moldova, as can be seen in section 1.7 below, is that, there are many citizens, particularly in rural areas, who, for various reasons, are marginalised from the centres of power and unable to participate in an equal fashion in decision-making processes. For this reason, simple mechanisms for participation, such as consultative meetings between the LPA and community members, are not sufficient for empowerment. Indeed, in many cases, these participatory governance methods do the opposite of empowering the most disadvantaged and just reinforce the authority of those members of the community who are nearest to the centre of power. In other words, it is very common for the Mayor of a community to attempt to hold consultative meetings, but such meetings are often dominated by the friends, relatives, political allies, and colleagues of the Mayor, and are often not a good mechanism for citizens from a vulnerable group to articulate their concerns.

Thus, a complementary process to that of ‘participation’ is needed, one that will assist citizens from the most vulnerable and marginalised groups to become more unified and cohesive, and more capable of expressing their concerns, wishes and points of view. Such a complementary process will therefore help to shift the centre of power and ensure that the principle of equity is observed.

This complementary process is what we refer to as ‘community mobilization’.

1.6 Community Mobilization

Community Mobilization¹⁸ is a process through which action is stimulated by a community itself, or by others, that is planned, carried out and evaluated by a community’s individuals, groups and organizations on a participatory and sustained basis to improve overall standards of living in the community. It is a process which is defined by the fact that a group of people transcend their differences to meet on equal terms in order to facilitate a participa-

¹⁷ Idem.

¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_Mobilization

tory decision-making process. In other words it can be viewed as a process which begins a dialogue among members of the community to determine who, what, and how issues are decided, and also to provide an avenue for everyone to participate in decisions affecting their lives. As such, the process of community mobilization can be seen as a powerful tool in the empowerment of women and vulnerable groups, and as the means for communities to address violations of their rights.

In Part 3 of this Guide we will proceed step-by-step through the process of community mobilization for empowerment. The first few steps will explain the importance of ‘getting to know’ the community and understanding its needs, in particular of the most vulnerable members, and on how to start the process of forming groups within the community to represent the interests of the marginalized and vulnerable. These initial steps are underpinned by a number of key activities which help us to apply the concepts of gender equality and HRBA in practice.

These activities include:

- ❑ **Identification of the vulnerable groups** based on the taxonomy from the vulnerable study;

- ❑ For every group (depending on their size) gender equality and **human rights concerns will be assessed** in relation to basic community human rights, such as the right to an education, social protection, social services, participation, health services, access to basic infrastructure, access to community facilities and institutions, employment and employment services, and access to pensions, decent working conditions and places of worship;
- ❑ **Community Groups (CBOs/SHGs) will be formed**, representing and including women and men from the community considered most vulnerable (as per the taxonomy and findings of the assessment of gender equality and human rights concerns). These groups will then benefit from capacity building activities and be supported in analyzing, designing, and implementing initiatives to address their own prioritized needs;
- ❑ A **mechanism for monitoring and evaluating** should be developed at the community level, including ways to measure changes in the vulnerability factors in communities and their specific gender equality and human rights concerns.

Complementary Concepts	
Citizens Participation	Community Mobilization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integral part of good governance; • Mechanisms are mostly aligned to agendas set by public institutions and follow public planning cycles; • The main interaction is between citizens and the public administration; • Citizens may participate individually or as part of organized civil society; • Principles of equity and transparency are paramount. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complementary part of good governance; • The community members determine how, when and why they meet, and operate as a group independent of the public administration; • Citizens form groups and develop external relationships on the basis of a group identity and a unified voice; • Principles of equity and transparency are paramount.

1.7 Empowerment Challenges in Moldova

Local development is primarily the responsibility of local actors, both residents and those affiliated with non-local organizations—whether national or even international—who work locally as contributors to grassroots development processes. Both residents and workers affirm their responsibility through decision-making, mobilizing and managing the resources, organizing collective action, delivering services, and ensuring the accountability of officials and organizations that contribute to local development. Without such commitment to responsibility by local actors, the desired economic and social development will remain dependent on decision-making and management from above.¹⁹

In Moldova, the evidence on how the most vulnerable people are affected by the local development – and the extent to which they have been involved in shaping its implementation and results – indicates that such groups still face significant challenges at the local level. In this regard, it is clear that unless the decentralization reform includes specific measures to mainstream human rights, gender, and ensures meaningful participation of vulnerable groups progress will be minimal. Similarly, without such provisions, local plans, budgets and monitoring systems will not adequately reflect their interests or priorities in local governance.²⁰

As seen above, **empowerment** is the starting point for local development and its core element along with the local governance and local service provision. Empowerment is the process of enhancing the real possibility that an individual or a group, especially those frequently marginalized, socially excluded and discriminated, can make and express choices, and transform their choices into desired ac-

tions and outcomes. In order to be truly empowered individuals, households and communities need both **opportunities** for meaningful decisions and actions, the **capacity** to make meaningful choices and to act on them, or the ability to express them through institutions that are accessible to them so their voices can be heard.²¹

In Moldova certain social groups suffer human rights violations (particularly discrimination) and social exclusion, therefore such groups should be a primary objective for of mobilization activities. These groups are as follows:

Poor households make up 26% of society, with the majority concentrated in rural towns and rural areas, 5% of whom are living under extreme poverty. From 2008 absolute poverty increased for the first time in three years reaching 26.4%, compared to 25.8% in 2007, mainly due to its extension into rural zones and a drop in remittances from abroad. Poverty affects women-headed households more intensely, as well as those headed by persons with disabilities, Roma households and those with many children.

Persons with disabilities officially represent about 5% of the population, yet it is considered to be underreported, with the real figure estimated at over 10%. The situation of persons with disabilities in rural areas is the most pressing concern. In 2009 their number increased by 2.1 per cent over 2008. Though men comprise the majority of the disabled, women become invalids at a younger age. The disability concept that emphasizes the medical and health component rather than social integration notion has certain negative consequences: it impedes, or limits access, to the labour market for disabled persons with certain severe forms of disability, as well as for the family members caring for them (predominantly women). This also creates a framework of dependency. People with disabilities face an increased risk of persistent poverty, accounting for 22.4% compared to 17.5% of other households in this category. In over 80% of cases these are the mothers caring for their disabled children.

In Moldova, while women and girls of all ages rarely enjoy the same status and power or ac-

¹⁹ Helling, L., Serrano, R., Warren, D. "Linking Community Empowerment, Decentralized Governance, and Public Service Provision Through a Local Development Framework". September 2005. http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSCContentServer/WDSP/IB/2006/02/13/000090341_20060213112654/Rendered/PDF/351470LinkingOempowermentOSP00535web.pdf.

²⁰ UNCDF. Global Forum on Local Development: Pursuing the MDGs through Local Government. Session 7: "Empowering women: How can the local level be harnessed to promote gender equality?". October 2010. <http://uncdf.org/gfld/en/index.php?page=Background%20Papers>.

²¹ Helling, L., Serrano, R., Warren, D. Idem.



*Damian Tigan, Hagimus village,
Causeni district, February 2011*

cess to and control over resources as men and boys, certain groups of women face additional forms of discrimination and social exclusion based on grounds of age, ethnic or religious identity, disability, education level, marital status, or other factors.

Women from ethnic minorities, – particularly Roma, – women with disabilities, older women, single mothers and poor rural women are poorly represented in local decision-making, if represented at all. They have less access to quality education, health, other public services and facilities and are more vulnerable to poverty, violence, human trafficking and social exclusion.

Deficits in women's power and voices are at the heart of gender inequality in local development. The needs and status of vulnerable women and girls are accorded low priority in local development agendas, and little action is taken to address their needs.

Abandoned elderly

The poverty incidence in households of elderly people was over 37.2% in 2008, which is by over 10 percentage points higher than the national average. Allowances for the elderly total less than 70% of the subsistence minimum. There is an overall trend of abandonment of elderly people, especially in the rural areas. Once abandoned, the elderly experience heightened feelings of vulnerability due to limited resources preventing them from enjoying normal living standards. The health-care expenses for the elderly people further contribute to their vulnerability. Single old women own less property, receive smaller pensions, which translates into a significantly higher risk of poverty, especially in rural areas, than for men in the same age category. The number of elderly women over 60 is 1.5 times higher in Moldova than for men in that category (16.0 elderly women per 100 inhabitants against 11.2 elderly men per 100 inhabitants in 2007).

Children: many broken homes

Thirty-one percent of children under 15 years do not live with both parents, 7 percent do not live with either of their parents. The majority, or 79.5 percent, live in rural areas. Another figure: 37 percent of migrants from urban areas and 45 percent from rural areas left at least one child behind and 40 percent left two or more children behind.

Unemployed youth

Young people in Moldova suffer clear employment discrimination as there is a negative correlation between age and the risk of being unemployed. Those in the 15-24 age group face more than twice the risk of being unemployed than 25-34 age group. Youth unemployment is higher in rural areas. In the first quarter of 2009 youth unemployment (i.e. involving those in the 15-24 age groups) rose to 16% (in contrast, youth unemployment fell from 17% in 2006 to 14% in 2007). Unemployment also seriously affects young people with a good education and training background, because of their lack of the work experience. Only 22% of young people found a job immediately after graduation.

Ethnic minorities: Roma

In Moldova Roma represent one of the most discriminated and excluded ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups. Reports underscore inequalities in Roma's access to justice; difficulties in access to school education, housing, employment; racial profiling by police; and restricted access to other services. As a result of these and other factors, many Roma work in the parallel economy and/or emigrate.

According to a recent survey, 30% of Roma in Moldova live in various types of substandard housing, as against 7% for the population-at-large. Instances of forced evictions of Roma from housing are reported when extreme vulnerable Roma families attempt to rent housing in the centre of towns, villages or cities. International and regional monitoring bodies, as well as civil society, have highlighted a number of concerns, including reports of being denied emergency health care services in excluded Romani settlements (in one recent case the person concerned died), as well as negative stereotypes among health-care professionals who often subject Roma to unfair or arbitrary treatment. In addition, rates in health insurance coverage between Roma and non-Roma diverge considerably. Media broadcasts about Roma is dominated by negative stereotypes. Roma women experience greater risks of social exclusion and poverty than men from their community and ethnic majority women, especially in accessing employment, education and social services.

Linguistic minorities: Russians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians and Gagauz

In 2009, ethnic linguistic national minorities comprised 25% of the population, of whom 8% were Ukrainians, 6% - Russians, 4% - Gagauz, 2% - Bulgarians, 0,4% - Romani. At least 11% declared their native language as Russian, 6% - Ukrainian, 4% - Gagauz and 1.6% - Bulgarian.

The education system in Moldova is based on the one-language principle of education. School language education for minorities is carried out in Russian. Only 0.06% of all Ukrainian children study in Ukrainian as the language of instruction. Only 0.02% of all Bulgarian children study partially in Bulgarian. The Gagauzian school authorities have sought to widen possibilities for education in their mother



*Svetlana Farama, Joltai village,
Ciadir-Lunga district, February 2011*



*Roma family in Schinoasa village,
Tibirica commune,
Calarasi district, February 2011*

tongue, including expanding instruction in their language to four hours from the current two hours per week, in primary education. There are reported cases of discrimination in employment of those, whose first language is not state language.

Religious minorities

Non-Orthodox religious minorities (Seventh-day Adventists, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Judaists, Falun Gong followers) are periodically subject to discrimination and denial of some of their fundamental human rights.

The Ministry of Justice has repeatedly refused to register any Muslim community in Moldova. Muslims are also refused allocation of separate areas in cemeteries, and burial plots oriented towards the Kaaba. Jehovah's Witnesses reported numerous cases of religious restrictions on their activities, including eight cases of prosecution for objecting to performing military service in Transnistria. There are regular reports of assaults on Jehovah's Witnesses and other proselytizing Christian groups in rural areas of Moldova, including assaults by mayors and/or Orthodox priests. In 2009 a group of demonstrators led by Orthodox priests vandalized and disassembled a Judaic Hanukkah menorah that had been authorized and placed in the main park in Chisinau by members of the Jewish community. The authorities had not made any attempts to stop the vandals and replace the menorah. Various reports of other discriminatory acts against Seventh-day Adventists and followers of the Falun Gong movement also exist.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

LGBT continuously face discrimination in exercise of their right to freedom of assembly. The annual Gay Pride assembly in 2009 and in previous years was restricted and/or left unprotected by the Chisinau municipal authorities on no acceptable grounds. Allegations of denial in employment or providing medical services, as well as of regular police harassment, have been brought by LGBT organizations.

In general, information about vulnerable groups in Moldova, especially vulnerable women, such as rural women, single heads of the households, those belonging to the ethnic groups, particularly Roma, the disabled and elderly, remains scattered, and does not allow for in-depth analysis or the development of evidence-based local development policies.

1.8 Everyone's a Winner!

The process of governance and undertaking economic reforms in the face of severe resource constraints, while at the same time having to provide a quality services acceptable to citizens, is a huge and daunting task for locally-elected officials and administrators. Many Mayors and staff of LPAs simply feel overwhelmed. Thus, the idea that they should encourage more participation and share some decision-making responsibilities with newly formed groups within their communities is often seen as an additional burden to Mayors rather than as an opportunity. Or conversely, they regard external interventions, aiming to support activities, such as community mobilization, as indeed opportunities, but ones they need to closely manage. They therefore ignore the notion of empowerment and co-opt the structure created by the external agency.

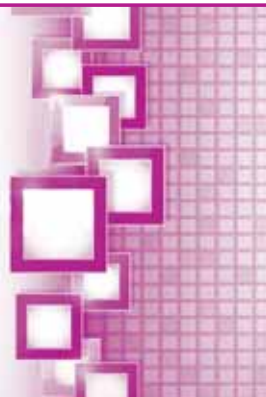
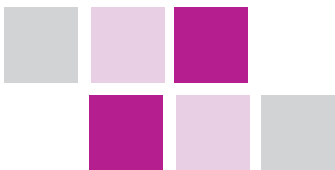
Similarly, in addition to the public institutions in the communities, often other elites and vested interests resist attempts to make changes to the power structures within the villages and towns. Generally many other community members are suspicious and wary of suggestions to change the ways services are provided, and they are reluctant to support such change.

"It is essential that the local authorities clearly understand what **the benefits from community mobilization** are, not just 'in theory.'"

To counter the resistance to community mobilization and to help justify a more equal sharing of decision-making and responsibility it is essential that all the benefits of the change process are listed and promoted. All the community members, from the mayor to the LPA general secretary and all the citizens living within the LPA, must be able to see that in the long term they will all be 'winners'. It is essential that the local authorities clearly understand what are the benefits from community mobilization and not just 'in theory' - the sharing of good practice examples of community mobilization in Moldova is fundamental to securing widespread empowerment.



Getting Ready for Community Mobilization



Who are the key actors in the mobilization process, and what resources and conditions need to be in place to make the process successful?

2.1 The Key Actors

It is important to have a very clear understanding of the necessary institutional arrangements for successful community mobilization for empowerment.

There are various institutions, organizations and individuals who have an influence on the process of community mobilization in Moldova. The diagram below attempts to summarise specially the relationship between these actors:

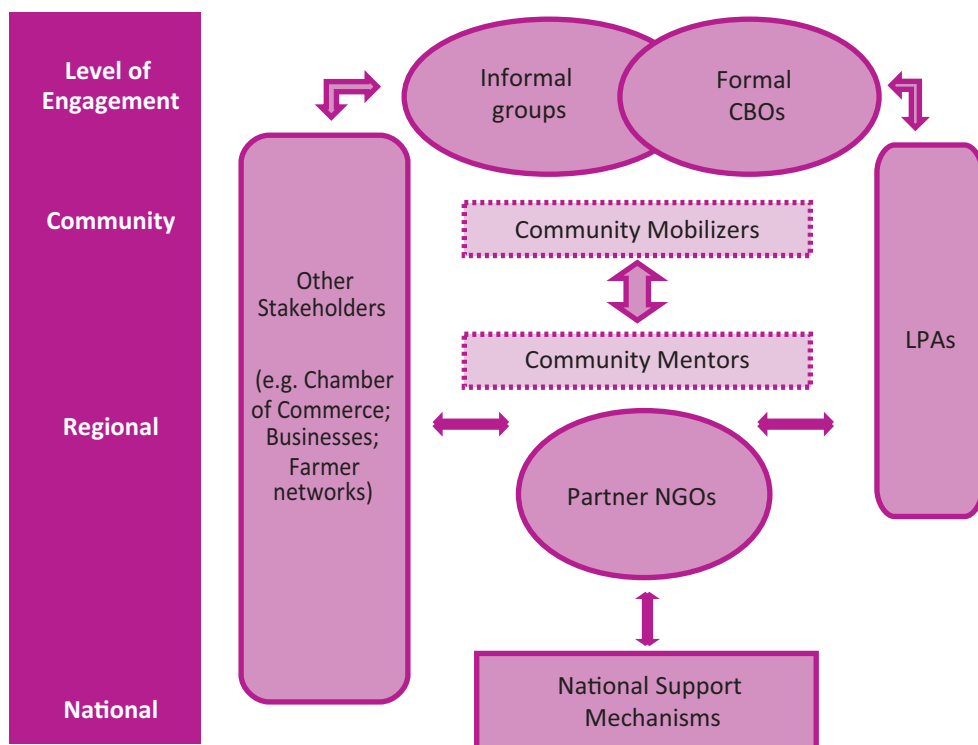


Chart 2. Key Actors in the Community Mobilization Process

To help explain the roles and relationships between the various institutions, organisations and individuals, and how they can influence community mobilization in different ways and at different levels, it is useful to define the stakeholders individually. Thus, below, are general descriptions of the different stakeholders. The reality of how they manifest themselves will differ from community to community, and may also involve organisations that are not even listed below. However, the following descriptions are a good baseline to work with:

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and other informal groups

During Step 3 in the CME process ('Establishing Empowerment Groups', as described in pages 40-2) community members will form different types of groups according to their needs, profiles and expectations. These may manifest themselves as Self Help Groups (SHGs) with relatively small membership numbers and homogenous characteristics, or larger Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) with more mixed characteristics. With assistance from the Community Mobilizers and Mentors the Groups will determine their missions, describe how they will regulate themselves and how they will operate. Depending on the needs, profiles and expectations, the gender composition of the groups can be mixed. Thereafter, the SHGs and CBOs will be the main organizational drivers of the CME process.

Community Mobilizers

Community Mobilizers will be from within the target communities and will be identified during Step 2 (Community Profiling). The proposed qualifications, profiles, tasks and responsibilities of the Mobilizers are described in the 'Job Description for Mobilizers' in the Toolkit. The Mobilizers will be guided and supported by the Community Mentors and may receive reimbursements from the supporting programme both for any incurred expenses and for specific periods of time contributed to the CME process. The programme partners (NGOs or public institutions) will need to take their own measures to ensure that Mobilizers are motivated and rewarded for their efforts. The main role of the Mobilizers is to initiate and develop a

social process within the target communities for collective analysis of community needs, collective action leading to solutions of those problems, and to make the process self-sustaining and self-managed. Self-management will be channelled through the formation of groups (SHGs/CBOs), with the Mobilizers playing an important role in identifying potential group members and catalysts. The Mobilizers will ensure the processes are gender-responsive and human rights-based.

Community Mentors

The Community Mentors are drawn from the staff and associates of the programme's partner. They are likely to be experienced community-development workers, with a good practical understanding of GE/HRBA issues and local public administration. The main role of the Mentors is to provide leadership on the initial steps of the CME process, provide capacity-building support to the Mobilizers and community groups, both through organised workshops and 'on-the-job' coaching, and to facilitate activities that will contribute to self-sustaining empowerment of the SHGs/CBOs. Throughout the CME process the Mentors will be the main interface between the partner NGOs (and programme) and the target communities, and, through the use of participatory tools, they will ensure the mainstreaming of gender equity issue throughout the cycle. The Mentors will also play a significant role in establishing networks amongst the CME actors, particularly in contributing to peer-support activities with other Mentors.

Partner NGOs

It is important that all those involved at the local level - the Mobilizers, Mentors and the groups within the communities themselves - are supported in their organizational development and advocacy work by NGOs and/or other programme partners that are mandated to engage in community and local development, and who are driven by the values and principles of gender equality and human rights-based approach. These organizations will provide the communities with access to training, mentoring, networking and the various resources needed to reach their empow-

erment goals. The main interface between the communities and the partner NGOs, and/or other programme partners, will be through the Community Mentors, who will be assigned by the NGOs. NGOs, and/or other programme partners, will also be organisations that work at regional, national, and even international levels, and thus be able to assist the community groups to network with other such groups and stakeholders, as well as support Mobilizers to network and build their capacities.

Local Public Administrations (LPAs)

Community mobilization is one aspect to improve local development planning and decision-making over the use of scarce resources. However, in isolation, it is a process which has limited impact. To strengthen its impact and to ensure that the empowerment gains are sustained by the most vulnerable groups it is essential that the process is fully integrated with the planning processes of the Local Public Administrations. Thus, community mobilization for empowerment is a complimentary and inter-twinned series of activities to those implemented in support of LPA capacity building.

It is therefore vital for practitioners of mobilization that they align their activities with any of those designed to contribute to the capacity development of the LPAs. It should be noted that Moldova's current decentralisation strategy has enshrined the principles of Gender Equality and a Human Rights-Based Approach to local governance. Thus, in every community, the Mayor should be leading the LPA in planning and managing its services in a rights-based, gender-responsive manner.

The local authorities should elaborate Local Socio-Economic Development Strategies in a non-discriminatory, participatory, transparent and accountable manner, emphasizing local socio-economic development priorities and aligning local-level development initiatives with the international frameworks that support HRBA, as well as with national and regional strategies (National Development Strategies (NDS), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Regional Strategies, relevant Sector strategies). To this end, programmes such as the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme are providing assistance to LPAs to build their capacities and

to the LPAs support mechanisms, such as the Associations of Local Authorities, but progress is slow.

Thus, it is paramount that the community groups, Mobilizers, Mentors and partner NGOs reinforce the objectives of the reform process through their engagement with the LPA actors, including the provision of training to LPAs on issues related to CME, and lobbying of the community groups. But it is also important that elected officials and LPA administrators are aware of, and respect, the fact that SHGs, CBOs and any informal community groups formed as a result of mobilization are independent from the LPA.

Other Stakeholders: Businesses, Civil Society Organisations

During the initial stages of the CME process, various interest groups from both business and civil society will be identified. The community groups and Mobilizers will need to adopt strategies on how, if necessary, to engage with these stakeholders, particularly of those who may either offer opportunities for alliances in achieving empowerment goals, or those that may impede the achievement of those goals.

Programme Supporter/National Support Mechanism

Although community mobilization is a 'bottom up' process, it does not happen spontaneously and does require some kind of external stimulus, involving resources and capacity-development. The main agent of this stimulus is most likely to be an NGO (but may also be a public institution), but at a regional and/or national level, there will be a programme supporter or national programme providing guidance, funds, and coordination. The community level stakeholders will interact with this programme supporter/national mechanism through the Community Mobilizers and Community Mentors.

The recent Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDP) is a good example of such a 'programme supporter'. In 2010 UNDP and UN Women, in partnership with the Government of Moldova, launched the JILDP, with funding from the Government of Sweden. The programme was implemented in four key areas: Policy Advisory and Advocacy; Local Self-Governance

and Participation; Community Empowerment; Transnistria and Security zone. A core activity of the Programme (under a Community Empowerment Component) launched a full cycle of community mobilization for empowerment

in various pilot localities of Moldova, by providing technical and financial support to a group of NGO partners, who in turn worked with communities through Mentors and Mobilizers.

How do all these ‘stakeholders’ work together?

To illustrate these various actors and the profiles that they may have, we can look at an example of Community Mobilizers, Mentors, CBOs, NGOs, and other stakeholders who were involved in the community empowerment exercise in Kazakhstan.

In the rural areas of southern Kazakhstan, an NGO Moldir, based in Almaty, the former capital of Kazakhstan, has been supporting women’s Self Help Groups which are focused both on economic empowerment and on using HRBA to address the high instance of domestic violence involving young brides. NGO Moldir receives support for its work, both in the form of finance and technical assistance, from a consortium of Dutch donors (ICCO), which enables the organisation to send its own Social Workers and Community Development Workers on bimonthly trips to villages where they have helped to establish informal groups. Within each of the 8 villages where Moldir works, a Community Mobilizer has been identified, who has received basic training in mobilisation and who, from time to time, is supported to join networking and peer-learning seminars in Almaty with other Mobilizers that Moldir works with in other areas of the country.

In the targeted villages in southern Kazakhstan, the staff from NGO Moldir has supported the formation and growth of SHGs. The SHGs have two main functions: assisting group members (who are single and married women between 18-40 years) to manage savings and use group credit, for either self-development or micro-enterprises, and to lobby for the interests of the group members in respect of issues such as access to legal advice, law enforcement, and further educational opportunities. To achieve their objectives the SHGs, with assistance of workers from Moldir, have built-up relationships with the local government and the local police, with several other NGOs operating in the area (e.g. the Lawyers Association and local branch of the Union of Scientists), and with a large rural enterprise which owns much of the agricultural land in the region.

2.2 The Importance of the Mobilizer

During the implementation of the Joint Integrated Local Development programme it became evident that of the 70+ selected communities working with the programme, the communities that were most successfully ‘mobilised’ were those that had local Community Mobilizers working in them. In most cases these were individuals who were identified by the programme’s NGO partners and who received a small payment for their efforts, but in some cases they were purely volunteers who were already engaged in some kind of mobilization activity or similar civic work.

Whether they were paid or not, the common features of these Community Mobilizers were key to their success:

- ☐ Residents of the community;
- ☐ Respected within the community and seen as objective and neutral;
- ☐ Sensitive to gender equity and human rights issues;
- ☐ A combination of both leader and team-player;
- ☐ Educated to secondary or tertiary level;
- ☐ Good presentation and negotiation skills;
- ☐ Some previous experience of ‘project-based’ work;
- ☐ Supported by ‘mentors’ and/or community mobilization experts.

Community mobilization is a process which relies on external stimulants and support, however, it is rarely achieved effectively through only the efforts of external consultants or community workers. This is because, although outsiders to the community can get to know the community well, they are unlikely to have the same insights and gain the same levels of trust of as an ‘insider’. Also, by definition, external consultants are usually only visitors to the community and are restricted in how often they can make visits because of the limited available resources (for example, to pay for transport costs), their available time, and

by natural conditions. A mobilizer who is from and lives in the community, is, on the other hand, more accessible to community members and more able to manage their mobilization work on a flexible basis.

For these reasons, throughout this Guidebook, the importance of the role of the ‘internal’ Community Mobilizer is emphasized repeatedly. There is also a sample ‘job description’ for a Community Mobilizer in the Toolkit section of the Guide.

2.3 Demonstrating Success

We have already seen that it is important for every stakeholder in the community mobilization for empowerment cycle to understand that, in the long term, the process is a winning one for all (see section 1.8 ‘Everyone’s a Winner’). The experience to-date in Moldova shows that, in particular, there are two specific stakeholders who are most likely to be either resistant or unsupportive of the process. These are a) the Mayor, and/or officials of the LPA; and b) the members of target groups themselves.

The reasons for this resistance or unsupportive stance can be multiple and complex, and often related to the issues of the power structures discussed above in section 1.5, however, there is also usually one factor common to most communities and that is resistance due to ‘cost’. For Mayors and LPA officials the process of supporting community mobilization can cost them in terms of their time, rapid decision-making, a loss of their authority, extra paperwork and administration, or perhaps a cost in relation to perceived mis-use of resources. For community members the cost might be measured in terms of their time (which, for example, might otherwise be spent on income-generating activities), donation of money, materials or other in-kind contributions, the potential for losing ‘face’ and supporting a ‘bad idea’, and the cost of making a long term commitment to a project or initiative.

These ‘costs’ cannot be ignored. Indeed, it is important that they be enumerated and acknowledged. However, it is also essential that

Empowerment Attracts Resources

In the north Moldovan community of Hincaulti, initial efforts to mobilize the community centred on getting parents more involved in the development and maintenance of the local kindergarten. To drive this process the kindergarten director and a small group of parents held cultural events at the kindergarten. These events not only attracted parents who did not often come to the kindergarten, but also a few local business people. The outcome of these events was that the community members became more aware of the problems facing the kindergarten and more of them joined the parents' group and volunteered to help repair the premises. Furthermore, one of the local entrepreneurs donated free materials to the school.

Seeing this initial success, the parents' group became emboldened and began not only to persuade more community members to get involved, but also to write proposals to request financial support from external donors. In three years, the community group successfully managed three projects, raising funds from the Ministry of Education, the 'Soroptimists Club, an international NGO, and the Czech Republic embassy in Chisinau.

One of the parents summarised their progress: "Now we are more organised, it is easier for us to have a dialogue with different elements in the community and we have more confidence to present ideas to foreign donors". And the result is that the village now has a better kindergarten, enabling more children to attend and for all the children to attend every day.

The Mayor of the community now also sees the benefits of the various partnerships that the different parts of the community can develop, and the effectiveness of well-organised and creative community members. He hopes that the good work of the community group associated with the kindergarten will inspire more villagers to address other issues.

the costs are balanced with a strong presentation of all the benefits of community mobilization, and the best way of doing this is to demonstrate the success that other communities have had, and are having, by embracing the community mobilization method.

The table below summarises the likely general benefits that can be enjoyed by the Mayor and LPA and by the community members, and the accompanying text box on the right-side of the page provides an excellent success story from northern Moldova.

Some Benefits of Community Mobilization for Key Stakeholders

For elected and appointed officials of the LPA	For community members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions are found to previously persistent local service provision problems • Tensions or conflicts within the community are reduced • External resources are attracted to the community to supplement the allocated public funds • Maintenance of infrastructure is supported by community volunteers • The community becomes more attractive to potential business activities • Improved service provision can lead to some cost recovery through community charges being paid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment - previously 'unheard' community members propose and manage the implementation of solutions, thus both upholding their rights and sharing responsibilities • Improved skills (for example, in proposal writing, budgeting, negotiation) and knowledge (of how public administration works, fund-raising, etc.) • More cohesion in the community, which is likely to mean less tensions and conflict and more sharing of resources • Better maintained local infrastructure with better service provision leads to improved living conditions

2.4 Understanding the Community Mobilization for Empowerment Cycle

The mobilization cycle is often referred to in different ways depending on the purpose of the mobilization: the 'Community Participation Promotion Cycle', 'Problem Solving Cycle', 'Community Development Cycle', or 'Social Animation Cycle'. The cycle is a series of interventions (carried out by one or more mobilizers) designed to increase the level of involvement of a community in the decisions that affect its own development. In the case of Community Mobilization for Empowerment, the interventions (or various 'steps') are designed to empower the most vulnerable and marginalised women and men from the communities.

It is called a "Cycle," in that it is repeated, each time building on earlier successes, errors, and lessons learned.

The cycle:

- ❑ Is a series of interventions in a logical and progressive order;

- ❑ Is facilitated by a mobilizer, or mobilizers, recognised and legitimated by the community;
- ❑ Uses the community's choice of action as a means of strengthening, not as an end in itself;
- ❑ Requires that the mobilizer(s) be informed and sensitive to community characteristics;
- ❑ Can be implemented by a ministry or department at the central or district level, or by a non-governmental organization;
- ❑ Is not "bottom-up," community-based or "grass-roots" at its origin, but aims at "bottom-up" community-based or "grass-roots" strengthening as its goal; and
- ❑ Promotes (encourages, advocates for, trains in skills necessary for, and supports) community participation in control and decision making of all actions affecting the community as a whole, and empowers the individual members of that community.

A full cycle of Community Mobilization for Empowerment provides insights into the time, skills and other resources required to run such a cycle, and looks at how the process of Com-

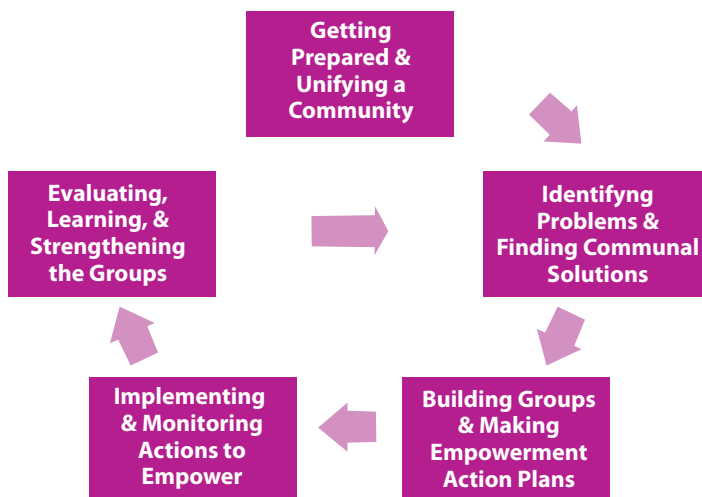


Diagram 1: Understanding the CME Cycle

munity Mobilization for Empowerment can be broken down into 10 clear ‘steps’.

For each of the 10 Steps there will be guidance for practitioners explaining the following issues:

- ❑ What is the purpose of each step and what minimum results are needed before moving on to the next step;
- ❑ What tools and methodologies can be used for achieving the expected outputs from each step;
- ❑ Some examples of the tools and methods in practice;
- ❑ Top tips for success at each step;
- ❑ And any risks to watch out and how to mitigate them.

Throughout every step in the process it is important that gender considerations and the Human Rights-Based Approach are mainstreamed. How this can work in practice is explained after the description of each step, and finally there is a chapter to highlight how to make the outputs of the process sustainable and expandable.

2.5 What Resources Are Needed

Experience shows that there is no standard **timeframe** for completing a ‘cycle’, but rather that it is entirely dependent on the local con-

text and the needs and priorities of the community, as well as the availability of mobilizers and other supporters. In some cases a full cycle can be completed in 6-9 months, whereas in other situations a Cycle might need over 24 months. Factors that may affect the ‘pace’ of mobilization include:

- ❑ The demographics and physical layout of the community;
- ❑ Types of livelihoods of community members and other economic demands on their time;
- ❑ The state of unity of the community;
- ❑ The types and nature of any opportunities or threats to the mobilization process;
- ❑ The levels of motivation of the community;
- ❑ The degree of support available to the process from mobilizers and others;
- ❑ The competence and motivation of mobilizers;
- ❑ The types of priority actions chosen by the community;
- ❑ Natural disasters.

In terms of the **resources** required to successfully complete a cycle, the most obvious ones have already been mentioned: the levels of motivation and engagement of the community members themselves, and the time, availability, experience and skills of the mobilizers. This

second resource is looked at in more detail in the paragraphs below, but there are also other practical considerations in terms of the needed resources. These will include items such as suitable venues for meetings - accessible, suitable for different weather conditions, 'neutral' (and not open to manipulation by power elites), with basic furniture (e.g. tables and chairs), basic equipment and materials for meetings and workshops, and access to the internet for research and communication purposes, as well as regular telecommunications, transport for less mobile members of the community, and external trainers/advisors for capacity building activities and technical expertise.

Experience around the world has demonstrated that in most cases the communities themselves are able to raise resources for a large percentage of their mobilization needs, however, mobilizers and supporters often assist in identifying and providing limited cash and technical assistance, and in assisting in the 'levering' resources from other stakeholders. Issues concerning the resourcing of community mobilization are covered in the detailed mobilization steps below.

The **skills** that the community mobilizers need are not particularly difficult to learn, but can be very powerful when put to good use. They need to learn how to be a public speaker, but not just any kind of public speaker. The kind of public speaking the community mobilizers need to know is the kind for leadership and facilitation. The community mobilizer must learn how to draw information and decisions out of groups, which requires a full understanding of the goal and relaxed confidence in front of people. They must be able to recognize preaching, lecturing and making speeches and avoid those styles. The technical skills they need as mobilizers thus include public speaking, planning, managing, observing, analyzing and writing. Along with these skills, community mobilizers also need to develop a personal character that is honest, enthusiastic, positive, tolerant, patient, and motivated.

The community mobilizer must know how to listen and understand when people talk, and they have to know how to:

- ☐ Ensure that information is accurate;
- ☐ Illustrate a point and make it interesting to a listener, especially in terms of the local context;
- ☐ Encourage dialogue and open speech, and discourage rhetoric and 'sermons';
- ☐ Be sensitive to gender considerations;
- ☐ Acknowledge rights and speak out when rights are being oppressed;
- ☐ Ensure all voices are heard and avoid discussions being dominated by one or two individuals.

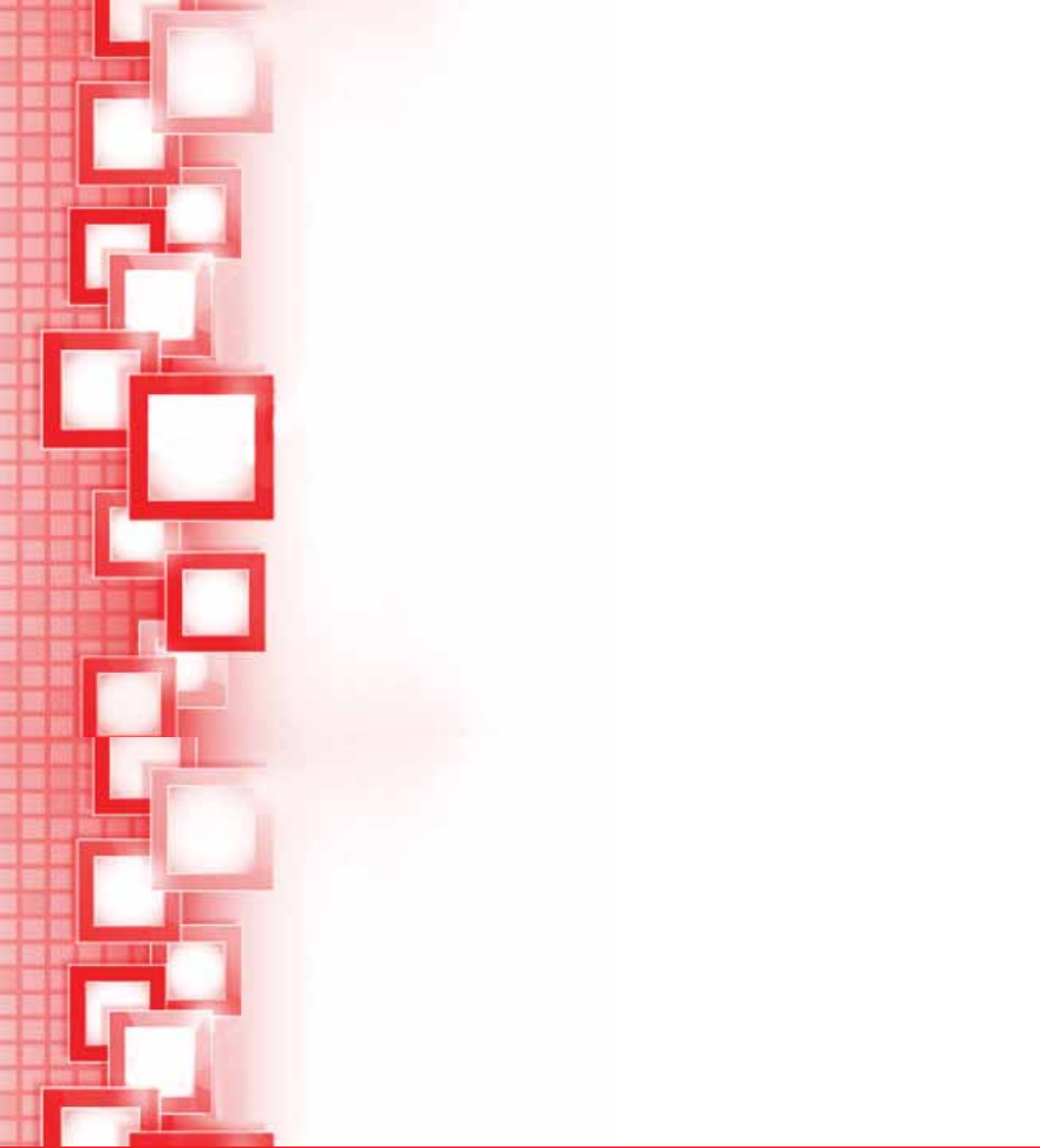
Since the community mobilizer will help organize community groups and form executive committees, they also need some organizational skills in terms of basic management competency, ability to use basic computer programmes and research on the internet, draft simple project designs, and be able to maintain accurate records, including basic financial reports.

2.6 *Checking the Propensity for Successful Mobilization in Rural Moldova*

A final aspect of this section on 'getting ready for community mobilization' is to encourage any institution or organisation planning mobilization interventions to think about the prerequisites that make for successful mobilization. In other words, it is useful to think about what are the characteristics of a community that make it more or less likely to respond positively and effectively to mobilization activities. This means that it is important at the planning stage, if there is a choice of possible communities to be targeted for community mobilization, to review the propensity of the communities to respond to mobilization.

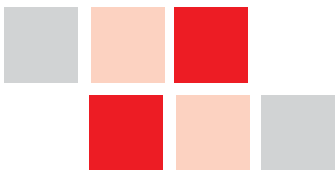
The experience of community mobilization for empowerment in rural Moldova shows that there are two highly influential characteristics in determining the positive response of communities to mobilisation efforts:

- Firstly, the elected officials and local public servants who make up the LPA must demonstrate that they are supportive of the mobilization process. If they express a wish to support mobilization and demonstrate an understanding of the goals of the mobilization, there is a high chance that the mobilization process will meet its objectives. However, if the LPA does not demonstrate sufficient goodwill to support the process and, further still, seems to present resistance to even understanding the concept, the process of mobilization will be much more challenging and will require more resources (time, expertise, and effort) than other communities.
- Secondly, communities that have already experienced some similar actions to mobilizations and/or benefited from any external interventions that have been implemented in a participatory manner (for example, such as a community infrastructural project being carried out by an international organisation, or some kind of services delivery project by a local NGO), will have a higher propensity to responding to a CME process.





Ten Steps for Community Mobilization for Empowerment



10 Steps to Community Mobilization for Empowerment



STEP 1: Touching the Ground

What's the objective?

The programme partners get to know the key local actors in the communities targeted²² for mobilization and raise awareness on the concept and goals of Community Mobilization for Empowerment. The partners will also get to understand the particular local context and existing power structures, using the conceptual analysis presented in Part 1 of this Guide, and identify both potential threats and opportunities for CME. This is a vital piece of analysis as during this first Step the programme partners have to make decisions about what resources might be needed to support the mobilization process (and, in a worst case scenario, where the threats to mobilization are seen to be particularly severe, to postpone or cancel the proposed mobilization.) One important part of the required resources is the need for a local Community Mobilizer. Thus, a final objective of this Step is to identify individuals who are willing and competent to act as Mobilizers.

What are the minimum requirements before moving to the next Step?

- ❑ Establish a clear picture of the various interests of the key local actors in local government, business, and civil society (including religious organisations), especially regarding the forthcoming 12 month period. This will help to identify possible opportunities and threats for the target community.
- ❑ Make sure that women and men are equally covered by the programme partners' intervention of Step 1.
- ❑ Key local actors show a basic understanding of what Community Mobilization involves and that the objective is empowerment. There also needs to be a provisional agreement from existing power structures and community leaders that an interven-

²² A pre-requisite to using these Guidelines is that the relevant partners have a commitment to supporting a process of Community Mobilization for Empowerment (CME) in specified target communities. The criteria by which communities might be targeted are not discussed within these Guidelines, however, it should be assumed that any such criteria are in keeping with the aims of CME as expanded on in Part 1.

Step 1 activities will be conducted by the Community Mentors and staff of the NGO partners

tion which includes CME is relevant and will be supported.

- ❑ The programme partners need to make an initial assessment of the situation that demonstrates that the opportunities for achievements through CME out-weigh the potential threats. Or, in other words, that the potential benefits of the CME process can be gained at a 'reasonable' cost.
- ❑ Ensure free movement of the programme partners in the target community;
- ❑ Take note of any significant actors you were unable to meet, and plan to meet them at a later stage.
- ❑ Identify members of the community who may be candidates to be mobilizers.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

*Map the stakeholders*²³ in and around the target communities by conducting some 'desk research' to draw up a list of institutions and organisations, and during the forthcoming field visit be prepared to use a 'snow-balling' technique to identify any stakeholders missing from the list. ('Snow-balling' means that if during one meeting with one particular stakeholder you hear about another important stakeholder, you then add that stakeholder to your list and go and meet them.)

Prepare basic awareness-raising materials on the programme, including a clear message on Gender Equality and HRBA, and a description of the expected change process outlining the cost-benefits of empowerment. These materials might be in printed format (a simple leaflet or 'flyer'), or a hard-copy presentation, or a simple PowerPoint presentation. It is impor-

²³ A 'stakeholder analysis' tool can be found under 5.6 of the toolkit section of this Guide

A Tale of Two Mayors

In two very similar communities in central Moldova, the process of mobilisation during 2012 had quite different effects. In one village the result was an empowered group of vulnerable citizens, running their own organisation, but in the other village, there was actually no change. One of the key differences, from the very beginning of the process, was the attitude of the Mayors. In the successful village the Mayor did not try to control the CME process, but rather supported its independence and only provided advice when asked.

Thus, the Mayor and the community group saw themselves as equal partners in the process of developing the village. However, in the unsuccessful village, although the Mayor was very enthusiastic about the CME process, he disrupted its progress by always dominating meetings, by participating in the training activities of the group, and by assuming project management responsibilities.

Thus, rather than 'empowering' others, the Mayor took over the work of the group and, in doing so, over-burdened himself and failed to achieve what the group had originally set out to do!

tant that the key messages of the programme can be simply conveyed in a meeting environment in 10-15 minutes. It is also important to prepare a simple list of questions (not more than 5) to explore the scope and interests of the stakeholders. These questions can be based on a *SWOT type analysis* of the stakeholders.

Undertake a series of bilateral meetings at the premises of the different stakeholders. Make sure you arrange meetings with those stakeholders, which would allow identifying the gender patterns, inequalities or particular needs of women and men in the community. These meetings should not be too long (perhaps 30-45 minutes). Apart from presenting the programme, it is useful to quickly ascertain what might be the Strengths and Weaknesses of the stakeholder in terms of supporting Community Empowerment, and what Opportunities and Threats the stakeholder might pose to the process. Take notes from the meetings and produce a summary report covering all the meetings which you can later share with the Mobilizers and communities.

Where necessary, ensure that you have met with any authorities that may otherwise restrict or hinder the work of the Mobilizers (e.g. security forces).



A household in Schinoasa village, Tibirica commune, Calarasi district, June 2011



Emilia Echim, director of kindergarten, and Serghei Ostaf, JILD DP consultant, Buda commune, Calarasi district, June 2011

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

It is important at this early stage that the Community Mentors and the NGO partners are not seen to reinforce existing power elites by seeking their 'permission' or endorsement for the mobilization process. This step is only about providing and seeking information, and, where

possible, checking the understanding of other stakeholders on the concepts and implications of empowerment. For this reason it is fundamental that, in any meetings, stress is put on the fact that the actions and outcomes from the process will be entirely determined by the communities themselves and not by the local authorities, local business leaders, NGOs, informal leaders nor by the programme.

Top Tips

- ☐ When mapping stakeholders, at every stage ask yourself 'who's missing?'
- ☐ During the mapping process draw up a list of individuals who may be interested and eligible (against the criteria in the Job Description - see 5.9 in the toolkit section of this Guide) to act as Community Mobilizers. Candidates on this list should be interviewed and, where appropriate, formally endorsed as Mobilizers and involved in all the CME steps.
- ☐ Field notes (from meetings and observations) should, ideally, be typed-up the same day; otherwise information can get lost and scrawled notes left unread!

STEP 2: Community Profiling

What's the objective?

Aligning the existing data gathered centrally by the programme from 'official' sources with analysis from information gathered in a participatory manner from the communities themselves. Applying a Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) approach will also help to provide a baseline to the communities, and will assist them and the Mobilizers in the process of identifying and analysing the needs and problems of the community in Step 3. The community profiling is an exercise which helps the collection of various types data about the community and its residents, the analysis of which allows identifying the potential equality gaps, power patterns, gender disparities and human rights concerns etc. The community mapping exercise is also an opportunity to raise awareness amongst the community of what 'mobilization' is and the benefits that can come from it.

Step 2 activities will be conducted by the Community Mentors and staff of the NGO partners, and, if already identified, the Community Mobilizer.

It should be stressed that the Community Profiling is a process which is complementary to the formal planning processes of the LPA, but which is not inter-changeable with those processes. That is to say, in line with its annual budgetary formulation, the LPA may produce a Local Development Strategy document, based on data derived from the LPA and the District Administration's official statistics. Such data and the resulting document are important to the Community Profiling, however, the Profiling must also include analysis derived from a participatory process, involving the community members themselves, and thus should contain qualitative data as well as quantitative data. This aspect of the Profiling is essential for two reasons:

- ❑ The Community Profiling must be conducted in such a way that there is a sense

'Unpacking' Statistics

Participatory research methods help to get a better understanding of the most vulnerable citizens in each village. For example, the official data for Marcauti village for 2010 showed that there were 370 elderly, of whom 210 were women, and 11 elderly women with disability. But the Community Profiling helped to explain further the situation of the elderly from interviews with the Social Worker and elderly themselves. Thus, below is an extract from the Profile:

There are 16 single women over 65 years. They experience heightened levels of vulnerability due to small incomes that do not allow them to ensure normal living standards. The average pension is 530 lei, but the minimum living cost is 1350 lei per month. Under this circumstances they are forced to live in absolute poverty.

This category of persons does not benefit from adequate social protection services. The social worker visits them occasionally and provides homecare services. The community has stigmatized them as old and useless...

...The problem arising from the described situation is that the old single women are socially excluded and forced to live in absolute poverty. There is a strong need to reintegrate this vulnerable group in the community.

of ownership of the Profile by the community members themselves (and that it is not just another piece of bureaucratic paper);

- ❑ The community members need to recognise the importance of basing decisions on evidence of real needs as expressed by the community, and of having a baseline against which progress can be measured.

A final objective of this Step, if it was not achieved in Step 1, is to ensure that an appropriate individual from the target community is recruited to act as a Mobilizer.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ❑ A Community Profile template must be completed;
- ❑ In compiling the profile it is essential that the data collection has involved gender-balanced interviews and focus groups, ensure that special provision has been made to meet marginalised individuals, and that meetings have been held with any women's groups or CSOs;
- ❑ There must be at least one Community Mobilizer identified and assigned to each target community before embarking on Step 3.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

In order to allow the communities to engage in comparative studies and contribute to regional or national studies on improving public policies on empowerment and social inclusion, it is important that at this Step a standardised approach is taken. Thus, data needs to be collected in order to fill out the template for Community Profiles. The Community Profile template can be found in the Toolkit section of this Guide.

The template for the Community Profile report provides a framework for which data needs to be collected, analysed, and presented. Such a report should be drafted as a 'working document', which means that it is not an academic research paper, but rather a practical document that can be used by all the stakeholders (LPA officials, community members, central government bodies, civil society groups, JILD staff, etc.) in both the local development planning process and for monitoring and evaluating changes in areas of human rights concerns. Thus, the Community Profile should not be a large document full of endless statistics, but rather a concise snapshot of the community, clearly illustrated with both a standardised analysis of HR and gender equality concerns and the views and perspectives of the community members themselves, particularly those from the most vulnerable groups.

In more specific terms, the Community Profiling exercise is designed to assist all the stakeholders in finding answers to the following questions:

- ❑ What are the **basic demographics of the community**: total population, its structure (gender, age, etc.), ethnic composition, men and women who have migrated, types of households (many children, single mothers/fathers, elderly/children headed families, etc.)?

Rodica Cozma and a group of community members at the community profile validation meeting, Tibirica commune, Calarasi district, December 2011



- ❑ What are the **vulnerable groups** populating the community and along which human rights concerns are they vulnerable? How many are they and how are they distributed across the locality? What are the living conditions of men and women from vulnerable groups?
- ❑ What are the **gender disparities and concerns** in the community in general and among the vulnerable groups in particular?
- ❑ What is the **social profile of the community**?
- ❑ What are the underlying **reasons and root causes for the identified human right concerns** and vulnerability issues? Also to be considered here are the sources of power in the community? Power structures? Social norms and institutions embedded in the community impeding women and men from vulnerable groups to participate in development, decision making, addressing their needs and concerns?
- ❑ What is the profile of the **community duty-bearers** with regard to addressing identified human right concerns and vulnerability issues?
- ❑ What is the **economic and infrastructural profile** of the community?
- ❑ What is the **environmental and disaster profile** of the community?
- ❑ Meeting with any CSOs working with the community, particularly those focused on women (e.g. women's NGOs, associations of single mothers, etc.);
- ❑ *Focus group discussions* with community members, or *community interviews*. In some of communities, you may need to arrange additional separate women and male groups to understand better the gender discrepancies;
- ❑ Neighbourhood meetings and door-to-door visits to both collect specific household information and to verify data from other sources. These must include short, informal interviews with individuals from the most vulnerable groups, especially women. These can be undertaken as part of a 'community walk' or as proposed from other informants.
- ❑ Production of *Timelines* or *Venn Diagrams*, or other similar participatory data collection methods, which facilitate the collection and presentation of concerns as seen by community members themselves, particularly the most vulnerable women and men. Such data helps to illustrate the causes of the human rights concerns and to demonstrate the power structures within the communities.

An Indicative Data Collection Plan Outline:

A comprehensive data collection plan will need to be drawn up and implemented by the Community Mentors, other staff of the NGO partners, and, if possible, any recruited Mobilizers, for every community targeted by the JILDIP. The data should be able to be collected through a series of activities in the community over a number of days. An indicative table of data collection activities is provided below, including a series of meetings and application of research tools, such as:

- ❑ Meeting with LPA and governmental agencies (such as Social Security offices; Health Centres) serving the community that can provide the required data;
- The table below outlines an 'ideal' data collection exercise for a Community Profiling, beginning with the initial data collection undertaken during the 'Touching the Ground' first Step of the CME process, followed by the more detailed data collection during Step 2. The far right column gives an indication of the number of person-days required to complete the data collection. In total this is 16 person-days, but in reality programme partners often have to try to complete such profiling with much less resources. At any rate, it is important to those supporting the CME process to recognise that participatory research is 'labour intensive' and that enough resources are allocated to facilitate meaningful engagement with community members.

	Activity	Purpose	Data Collection Records	Human Resources
Step 1	First visit to meet Mayor and social assistant	To introduce ourselves, and to get a sense of the community	First Visit Form	1 working day
	Identification and meeting with resource persons	To collect detailed information on community and women and men representing vulnerable groups along human rights / gender concerns	Resource Person Interview Forms	3 working days
Step 2	Narrowing the Scope	Based on previously collected information, to narrow the scope of further in-depth profiling to most vulnerable groups and most serious human rights / gender concerns	Preliminary Analysis and Scoping Form	1 working day
	Collection of Additional In-Depth Information	To collect additional in-depth information on women and men from vulnerable groups, their geographical distribution across the locality, and on underlying root causes of vulnerability through interviews / observation, focus groups, site visits, other relevant and valid instruments	In-Depth Forms	5 working days
	Totalling and Analysis of the Collected Data	To total and analyze collected data and on its basis to create First Draft of the Community Profile Report	First Draft of the Community Profile Report Form	1 working day
	Presentation and Validation of the Community Profile Report findings	To present to the community and to validate (legitimize) the findings of the community profiling	Minutes of the Community Events	3 working days
	Finalization of the Community Profile Report	To finalize the community profiling	Final Draft of the Community Profile Report Form	1 working day

Chart 3: Data Collection Plan Outline

Tools and Methodologies

As mentioned above, in order to collect the various data for the Community Profile, the Community Mentors will need to apply a number of qualitative and quantitative data collection methodologies. For guidance on how to use these methodologies, particularly those which are participatory and which involve direct inputs by members of the most vulnerable in the communities, please refer to

the accompanying **Toolkit** and reference materials provided by UNDP on conducting rapid environmental assessments.

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

For many vulnerable community members, the act of external agents collecting information is another aspect of reinforcing their exclusion and adding to their disempowerment. Thus, it

Community Profiling in Kyrgyzstan

Verifying existing data: in Balykchy town, Kyrgyzstan, NGO Umut discovered from their participatory research that the official list of persons of retirement age and older was 38% inaccurate. The NGO's research, undertaken through a door-to-door campaign by a team of volunteers to identify elderly people, revealed that many people on the local authorities' lists were either dead or had migrated, and that a large number of newly-arrived older people were not recorded at all!



Focus group discussion with Roma women in Ursari village, Buda commune, Calarasi district, March 2012

is essential that the process of collecting information is carried out in as participatory manner as possible and as transparently as possible. Potential informants must be fully informed of the purpose of the data collection, and feel comfortable in either agreeing or disagreeing to participate. Any note-taking must be agreed to by the informants and at the end of the interview/meeting the notes can be shown to them. All informants must also be aware that the findings from the data collection are communally owned and will be presented and discussed during the next Step in the mobilization. However, no information given in confidence should be shared with others.

Ideally, if early on in the mapping process (or even before) the Community Mentors have

identified a suitable Mobilizer, that person should be involved in collecting data for the Community Profile.

Another risk during this and the next Step in the cycle of CME is that of raising overly high expectations. It is common in most vulnerable communities that, if someone with 'outside' connections begins to talk about community development and problem-solving, it is assumed that that the 'outsider' is also going to provide solutions to problems. Therefore those involved in raising awareness during the Community Profiling exercise must be firm in stressing the HRBA and that solutions will come from within the community. The Mentors and Mobilizers must ensure from their very first interaction with community members that their role is simply that of facilitators.

Top Tips

- ☐ Disaggregate by gender all relevant questions when designing a data collection plan for the Community Profile. Gender or sex-disaggregated data means that every piece of data is cross-classified by sex, presenting information separately for women and men, girls and boys. Gender-disaggregated data reflect roles, real situations, general conditions of women and men in every aspects of the society. For instance, education levels, business ownership, employment, wage differences, dependants, house and land ownership, loans and credit are all included.
- ☐ Without gender-disaggregated data, it will be more difficult for us to identify the real and potential contributions of half of the population to the community, and could hinder the development of effective local development plans.
- ☐ Do NOT undertake any Community Profiling if you are not fully prepared for the process of using the data collection tools – mismanaged interaction with the target community at this Step can undermine the whole mobilization cycle.

STEP 3: Establishing Empowerment Groups

What's the objective?

Community Mobilizers are trained and activated to support the communities throughout all the next Steps. Community groups, with different formations, are established and their organisational development needs assessed.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ❑ The Community Mobilizers must receive training on the basic concepts (GE/HRBA/Empowerment), the cycle of CME, the fundamentals of group dynamics ('forming', 'storming', 'norming' and 'performing'), the different group modalities, and the basic competences they need.
- ❑ Mobilizers must feel confident that the targeted communities have a sense of unity.
- ❑ Community members, particularly the most vulnerable women and men, have formed at least one organized initiative group or several smaller Self-Help Groups, through a facilitated process of 'self-selection', reflecting the prioritised needs of the specific members of the group (who might be just women, just men, or a mixed group).

Step 3 activities will be conducted by the Community Mentors and Community Mobilizer.

- ❑ The community groups have had facilitated meetings whereby they have begun a team-building process, identified the general problems of the community, and assessed their own capacity for basic management know-how and problem analysis.

Lessons Learnt from Community Mobilization for Empowerment in Moldova, 2011-12

During 2011-2012 the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme supported mobilization efforts in 70 rural communities in different parts of Moldova. The mobilisation process was closely aligned to the programme's parallel support to building capacity within the Local Public Administrations for more strategic local development planning. The link between the mobilization process and support to the LPAs meant that in many of the communities, although there was a significant increase in participation of community members in local decision-making, there was not, on the whole, an increase in the number of sustainable and independent community-based civil society organisations, which in turn means that it is doubtful whether all the 'empowerment gains' will continue after the programme's completion. In other words, without structures (such as CBOs) which are independent of the LPAs, the local development planning agenda is always likely to be dominated by the views of the locally elected officials, who are not always able to represent the interests and views of the most vulnerable and marginalised in the communities.

To ensure that there is more equal and sustained participation, although the LPA may play an important part in supporting the initial mobilization processes, it is essential that independent community groups, with membership of women and the most vulnerable, are given the space and time to meet and discuss issues without interference from the LPA. Such groups should be self-determining and have an identity separate from the LPAs, and be organisationally supported so that they can become sustainable legal entities.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

The programme Partners will arrange an introductory training module for identified Community Mobilizers. An indicative 'job description' for a Community Mobilizer can be seen in the Toolkit. This module will run over a two-day period (ideally consecutive days, but could be delivered in a series of divided sessions). The sessions will assist the Mobilizers to:

- ☐ Understand the key concepts and place themselves in the context of GE and HRBA (and become familiar with a *Glossary of Terms*);
- ☐ Know the objectives and expected outputs from each Step in CME;
- ☐ Review the Community Profile of their community;
- ☐ Strengthen their skills required for unifying and forming groups, and knowledge on different types of CBO;
- ☐ Fill any skill or knowledge gaps related to record-keeping, basic financial management, simple computer and internet use.

Once trained, Mobilizers can begin the process of unifying the community. Depending on the situation, this can be achieved through either a series of small neighbourhood meetings or focus groups with community members who have a specific vulnerability characteristic, or larger '**town hall**' type **public meetings** with a larger number of participants. The methods used will depend on the Mobilizers judgement

Community Groups in the Cantemir Town

Community mobilization activities in Cantemir helped to identify four major concerns among the most vulnerable citizens in the town. With the support of a trained Mobilizer, four separate community groups formed around the key issues:

- ☐ Parents of school-age children
- ☐ Disabled
- ☐ Elderly
- ☐ Youth

The groups developed simple plans, based on their own needs analysis, through regular meetings. Such meetings often took place in public places, such as the local park, which ensured easy access and separation from the proceedings of the LPA.

Members of different groups also met together and at joint meetings decided which action plans they would prioritise as a community. Thus, to date, the groups have successfully worked with the LPA to upgrade sanitary facilities at the local school and to create a new park.



Members of Cantemir community groups meet with Roman Ciubaciuc, Mayor of Cantemir town, June 2012



Members of community groups draft local development project proposals, Cantemir town, May 2012

about the degree of unity, or lack thereof, within the community. If there is already a sense of common purpose and unified interests, a larger meeting (30-40 people) would be suitable, but where there is more diversity and clear distinctions in interests and capacities, smaller group meetings (3-12 people) would be better. At all times the Mobilizer must ensure that:

- i) Meetings are sensitive to gender considerations (include adequate representation of women and men), and include women and men representing the most marginalised groups;
- ii) As Mobilizer, she or he remains neutral;
- iii) While conflicts must be avoided, differences need to be articulated and accepted.

The Mobilizer will need to prepare for these meetings so that she/he can make a brief presentation about community mobilization and the benefits of empowerment, and provide examples and tell stories to illustrate the concept and purpose. The illustrations need to be context-specific - there is an example below from Tanzania, which may or may not be suitable in Moldova, and also a full **Case Study of CME** in rural Moldova in section 5 of the Toolkit. Mobilizers need to have several 'stories' of their own. It is also important that the Mobilizers do not lecture at these meetings, but they do need to act as firm facilitators, encouraging community members to speak and not allow discussions to become too focused on any one individual's issues. The aim of the meetings is to reach an agreement with the majority of participants that community mobilisation should go ahead in their community, and that there is a common understanding of what mobilisation will involve. The meetings do not need to be long, but long enough for affirmations to be given (30-60 minutes).

Once there is a sense of unity amongst community members, or at least amongst certain sections of the community (for example amongst women, the elderly, etc.), the Mobilizer can organise one or two '**Group Formation Workshops**'. These workshops can be run as large events (with 30 or 40 people dividing up into a number of different groups during the workshop), or as smaller events aimed at specific participants (e.g. a group of 5 or 6

Motivating Community Members to Get Involved

Because of the various 'barriers' to empowerment experienced by women and vulnerable groups, many community members are reluctant to get involved in group discussions and the formation of independent organisations. However, a group of 'Community Mentors' who have been supporting mobilization activities with JILD in Moldova, have noted a number of ways to address such reluctance:

- ❑ Showing evidence of how mobilization brings benefits to communities is the most effective tool - this can be done by showing short videos of successful community-driven projects in Moldova; showing and talking about photographs and/or newspaper articles about community groups; or by asking a group member from another community to come and share their story as a 'champion' of mobilization.
- ❑ In Ciuciuleni village, one of the key reasons for the successful mobilization was the use of individuals resident in the community who were willing to be 'supporters' of the process. In this case the village was able to benefit from the experience and support of individuals who were already involved in the activities of two NGOs and from the encouragement of a Peace Corps volunteer. Thus, finding vocal supporters within the community is an important part of building alliances for mobilization.
- ❑ Even though the mobilization process must be independent from the LPA, the formation of groups can often be strengthened by including group members who already have some experience of public decision-making. For example, in Ciutesti, a community group of women was formed around issues related to the provision of educational services and one of the group members was an elected councillor, who helped to provide some insights into how best to lobby the LPA.

single mothers). The workshops will need to be held at a suitable venue in the community (see above comments on Resources) and will require 1.5 to 2 hours, so the timing must also suit the participants' schedules.

The Group Formation Workshops will :

- ❑ Assist participants to reconfirm their desire for mobilization and demonstrate the different kinds of CBO;
- ❑ Explore the requirements of teamwork and identify what kinds of skills and knowledge might be required to run a successful CBO;
- ❑ Facilitate participants to identify what skill sets and experiences they can offer to the group;
- ❑ Involve a brainstorming exercise to give a name to the group.



Members of a Cantemir community group at the public debate "Decentralization reform opening opportunities for vulnerable groups: Older Women and Men", Cantemir town, 3 October 2012

The Mobilizer as a 'Showperson'

An experienced Mobilizer in Tanzania explains: "It is useful to be a bit of an actor or "show person" when mobilizing people. You can use the match sticks demonstration, for example, but take your time with it. Call for a volunteer or two to help you; repeat yourself in various ways; make a drama out of this. Hold up a single matchstick and ask the group to say if it will be easy to break it.

Get their responses. Then ask your volunteer to break it. Congratulate your volunteer and make a big fuss with the group about how easy it is to break the matchstick. Then take a handful of matchsticks and tie them together with an elastic band; show the bunched match sticks to the group. Ask the volunteer to break the batch of matches as a single item. The volunteer will have difficulty or (we hope) will not be able to break the batch.

Thus you say that each match stick is a different faction, but all of them together represent the whole community. Poverty and weakness will easily break the community if the different factions continue pulling in different directions.

Show the group the matches again as you explain the analogy (metaphor, parable) again, breaking one match as you identify it as a faction, struggling to break the bound matches as you identify it as a unified community. Do this in several meetings at different times. (Never be afraid to repeat your principles). Continue this exercise with other demonstrations and stories that you may think up yourself or borrow from other mobilizers."



Ana Sclearov, member of the Cantemir community group, public debate “Decentralization reform opening opportunities for vulnerable groups: Older Women and Men”, Cantemir town, 3 October 2012

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

Given that the mobilization process is an externally supported process, there will always be the temptation for Mobilizers and Mentors to overly encourage community members to make decisions that are convenient for the programme’s constraints of time and resources. Thus, during the Group Formation Step there is a risk that the type of group, the group membership, and roles of group members can be dictated by the Mobilizer. It is important that this does not happen. To avoid this kind of manipulation Mobilizers should consider the tips below.

Top Tips

- ❑ Suggest to community members that, if they are not in agreement on the structure of the group, they hold a second meeting to finalise the group formation, rather than rush the process;
- ❑ Step outside of the venue of the workshop to leave the community members on their own to discuss the details of formation, and then upon return respond to any questions that the group may have about their proposed formation.

STEP 4: Identifying Priority Needs and Consolidating Groups

What's the objective?

Groups have self-defined action plans and a basic set of skills for group management, gender-responsive project design, and basic lobbying and advocacy. This is a very intensive Step in the CME process, but also a highly rewarding one for both Groups and Mobilizers, as the Groups move through the stages of 'storming' to 'norming'. (These terms are part of a *Model of Group Development*.)

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ❑ Groups have the capacity to both analyse problems and to design solutions which are gender-responsive and which are formulated against HRBA, and to be able to present and explain their analysis and solutions to others;
- ❑ Groups have a clear mission statement, organizational structure, and set of simple operational guidelines. (This may include formal registration and a legal identity if required);

Step 4 activities will include implementation and facilitation by the Community Mentors and Community Mobilizer.

- ❑ Groups have an Action Plan, which includes at least one cost proposal for implementing a community project/action;
- ❑ Mobilizers have agreed with Groups on the feasibility of the proposed community projects/actions.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

Step 4 will involve an intensive period of training, coaching and action planning for Groups, Mobilizers and Mentors. It is therefore advisable that Mobilizers meet with the Groups

to carefully plan activities in order to ensure availability of group members and other resources (such as venues for training). Group members need to understand that during this period they will need to devote a lot of their time. This is unlikely to be resisted by the group members, as usually at this Step the community is highly motivated.

A Community Mentor working with JILDLP rural communities reflected that:

"Setting priorities within the community should not be a 'one time' discussion, but rather it needs lots of meetings of the groups and lots of 'town hall' style meetings in the community so that all the relevant information is openly shared and everyone has the chance to express an opinion."

Mobilizers and Mentors will also need to meet to plan their own division of labour in implementing these activities. The series of training and planning workshops, and group meetings should follow this sequence:

1. Half-day Training Workshop to explore HRB actions and GE.

Objectives: Group members able to reflect upon their own positions and those of others in terms of fulfilling rights and equalities.

Method: Mobilizer/Mentor must tailor an approach according to the group profile.

2. Half-day Training Workshop on Problem Analysis and Needs Prioritisation.

Objectives: Group agrees on situation assessment; Group uses a Problem Tree (or other tool) to identify and agree on key issues; Group agrees on priority issues to be addressed.

Method: Mobilizer/Mentor presents Community Profile and facilitates Group to discuss and make their own assessment; Mobilizer/Mentor introduces *Problem Analysis Tools* and Group uses tool; Mobilizer facilitates discussion to help Group prioritise issues.

Materials: copies of Community Profile; flip paper and pens.

3. Half-day Training Workshop on Action Planning

Objectives: Group uses a *Solution Tree* (or other tool) to guide selection of change-related objectives they want to meet; Group agrees on possible activities that will help them achieve their objectives. (These might be collected under a single project, or a series of connected actions, some of which might be elaborated on in Step 7).

Method: Mobilizer/Mentor introduces *Solution Tree* tool (or similar) and Group uses tool; Mobilizer facilitates discussion to help Group clearly define change objectives; Mobilizer facilitates discussion to help Group identify activities to achieve objectives and to sequence activities and estimate what kind of inputs will be needed; Group drafts an Action Plan which includes both project activities and activities related to the Group's operational development (e.g. need to open a bank account; need for any specialised training, etc.).

Materials: Problem Tree chart; flip paper and pens (Mobilizer will need to refer to differ-

ent examples of community empowerment projects – see Case Studies in the Toolkit).

4. Facilitated Group Meeting (two hours) to confirm mission, structure, roles of members, simple operational guide.

5. Half-day Training Workshop on Basic Financial Management and Record Keeping.

Objectives: Group members able to do basic cost-analysis and budgeting, to report on expenditure, keep minutes of meetings and record decision-making; Group members understand benefits and practice of 'peer-learning'.

Method: Mobilizer/Mentor presents overview of the need for these skill sets and basic principles of financial management and record-keeping, and elicits experiences from the Group; Mobilizer/Mentor facilitates a series of exercises whereby group members practice cost analysis, drafting a simple budget, and updating an expenditure spreadsheet; Mobilizer/Mentor presents a checklist for record-keeping; throughout the exercises and review of the checklist, the Mobilizer should ask the more experienced group members to assist and work with the less experienced.



Community mobilizers from Cania and Cantemir, training "Strengthening of the community mobilization for empowerment process", Chisinau, 2-3 March 2012

Analysing Costs and Understanding Budgets

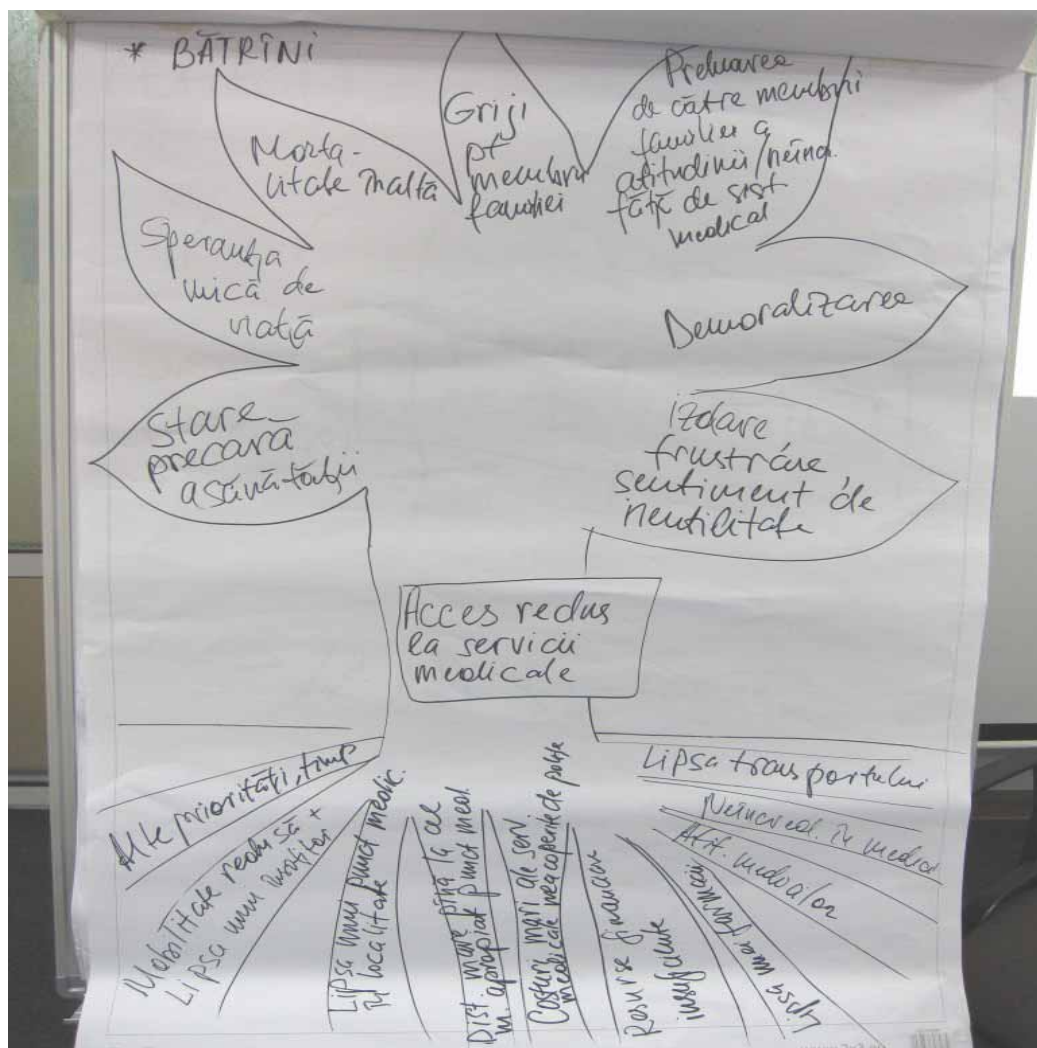
Even the most experienced financial managers in the Public Administration often make mistakes when it comes to estimating the costs of community development projects. So, for members of community-based organisations unaccustomed to estimating costs and drawing up a budget, managing funds - particularly funds donated by the community members and/or an external organisation - is very challenging. Furthermore, the credibility of a CBO can be severely tested by its ability to manage and report on finances. However, when a CBO does a good job in drafting a budget and managing funds it can be a highly empowering. Thus, at this Step it is essential that the Mobilizer and programme partners provide as much support as possible to build capacity for financial management.

Materials: flip chart paper/pens; copies of exercise and checklist.

6. Group meetings (as many as is necessary) for Groups to work on their Action Plans and any operational issues.
7. Half-day Training Workshop on Communication Skills and Basic Lobbying.

Objectives: Group members are confident and have basic skills to implement a communication strategy to address any tensions/conflicts that arose in opposition to their aims, and/or to undertake a basic lobbying action.

Method: Mobilizer/Mentor to develop as per group needs.



The photograph is an example of a Problem Tree developed, following Gender Equity/ Human Rights-Based Approach, during a training exercise on CME

8. Facilitated Group Meeting (2 hours) to review feasibility of Action Plans.

What risks are there?

And how to reduce their impact?

Step 4 is very focused on the personal development of individual group members and on addressing the organisational needs of the Groups. For this reason, given that group members will have varying existing capacities and experiences, it is important that Mobilizers carefully monitor the pace of the various learning activities. There is a risk that the pace

can be too fast for some group members and that they feel 'left behind', confused, and demotivated. To avoid this, Mobilizers need to have checking mechanisms during and after the learning events. These might include simple observation of the levels of participation and the body language of group members, discussing directly with individuals during exercises to check their understanding, and ensuring that the practical tasks of the Group are shared amongst the members (rather than Group leaders assuming the majority of responsibilities).

Top Tips

- ❑ The Problem Analysis/Action Planning process can be used by the groups to identify a number of projects or actions that will contribute to an overall empowerment objective. The Groups can then both prioritise and sequence the proposed actions so that they have a 'pipeline' of projects that they wish to implement.
- ❑ Always critique 'problem trees' to ensure that 'causes and effects' are not mixed up, and that groups identify the real rather than proxy 'root causes'.

STEP 5: Coming Out!

What's the objective?

Groups present their priority objectives and plans to the wider community and make clear their advocacy goals. The Groups and any allies will also ensure that any specific barriers to the CME process identified in Step 1 are addressed. Lastly, Groups secure agreements on cooperation and resources to enable them to begin to implement the project/activities described in their Action Plans.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ☐ Groups able to demonstrate their capacity to present their interests and address challenges to them;
- ☐ Stakeholders in the wider community recognize the objectives and intended actions of the Groups (for example, through formal statements, cooperation agreements, etc.);
- ☐ Groups have secured the minimum inputs they require to begin implementation of their projects/activities.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

The Mobilizer will help to facilitate a Group Meeting whereby the Group discusses strategy and ideas on how to present their Action

Step 5 activities will mostly involve inputs from the Community Mobilizer, with support from the Community Mentors.

Plan to other stakeholders in the community. This meeting should include the Group making decisions about who they want to inform and lobby, how, where, and when they will do this. Thereafter the Mobilizer, with support from the Community Mentor, can assist the Group with preparing any required presentation materials, fixing appointments with specific stakeholders, arranging venues for meetings, setting up meetings with any other similar Groups in the region etc. However, during any 'external activities' of the Group (such as meetings, 'Town Hall' events, networking visits) the Mobilizer must not take any active role other than that of facilitator.

The first 'external activities' of the Group are likely to include some or all of the following:

- ☐ Presentation and discussion with the LPA;
- ☐ A Public Meeting ('Town Hall' style);
- ☐ Bilateral meetings with specific stakeholders;
- ☐ *Exchange visits* with other similar Groups.



Launch of renovated kindergarten in Cania village, Cantemir district, October 2012



Launch of renovated kindergarten in Cania village, Cantemir district, October 2012

What Can Your Community Contribute?

A Community Empowerment Programme provided an initial list of ideas for sources of support for community actions as provided below. How might such a list differ for a community in Moldova?

Donations: cash, land, buildings, supplies and equipment, donated by individuals who want to support their community. *(Acknowledged and thanks expressed in public meetings);*

Donations: cash, land, buildings, supplies and equipment, donated by internationally supported development programmes. *(Acknowledged and thanks expressed in public meetings);*

Commercial: gifts from firms and businesses that want to advertise their good will and support of the community. *(Acknowledged and thanks expressed in public meetings);*

Community Labour: time and labour donated by community members, some unskilled *(clearing grass, laying bricks)*, some skilled *(carpentry, masonry)*, meetings, planning, supervision;

Agricultural: farmers may donate food for the project:

- ☐ To community workers who are working on the project, or
- ☐ To the Group to sell to raise cash for the project;

Food: people donate food and refreshments to the community members on community working days;

Contributions and fees: for credit club and similar financial projects, contributions from all members; service fees, such as for obtaining water;

Governmental: partial funding from central, district or local governmental sources.

NGOs: local community-based organizations, churches, outside NGOs working locally; *and*

Anonymous Donors: benefactors who remain unknown.

The Group is also likely to make a formal agreement with the Programme Partners (or other external funder) in order to secure support for the implementation of their Action Plan. This agreement can be facilitated by the Mobilizer and may use a written *Cooperation Agreement template*.

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

The process of CME is by its very nature challenging to existing power structures, thus during this Step (as also with other Steps to a lesser degree)

there is a high probability that certain interest groups within the wider community will try to influence or 'co-opt' the Groups' Action Plans. This risk can be best mitigated by prior analysis of the stakeholders (as discussed above in Steps 1 and 2) facilitated by the Mobilizers, and for Groups to be prepared for any challenges. This might take the form of arranging a number of additional bilateral meetings and through building alliances with similar Groups. At all times Mobilizers must motivate the Group members to remain assertive of their Action Plans.

Top Tips

- ☐ Mobilizers should also be aware that any challenges to the Groups' plans are mostly likely to be 'positive' signals, as they are indicators of empowerment – that is to say resistance to change is often a sign that an existing power structure senses that a re-distribution of power is imminent.
- ☐ Groups need to be aware of the difference between 'cooperation' with other stakeholders and 'co-opting' by other stakeholders.

STEP 6: Implementing the Project

What's the objective?

For this Step there are two main objectives. Firstly, the Groups achieve initial empowerment objectives and demonstrate capacity to the wider community. And secondly, group members have strengthened management and advocacy skills.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ❑ Group members trained in basic project management skills and demonstrate their competence to manage the implementation of activities;
- ❑ Groups have the capacity and understanding for monitoring and evaluating their activities from an empowerment and gender-sensitive perspective, and are able to a) use the information to make decisions about managing activities, and b) share and celebrate what they have achieved and learnt with others;

Step 6 activities will mostly be implemented by the Groups, but the Community Mobilizers and Community Mentors are required to provide some training, mentoring and encouragement.

- ❑ Groups have some kind of plan for sustaining the results (or expected results) from their project/actions;
- ❑ Groups demonstrate their commitment as sustainable CBOs.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

At this stage the Mobilizers and Mentors will begin to change their roles. In the previous Steps they will have been as 'active' as group members, but in Step 6 the emphasis should be on the Groups performance, with the Mobilizers providing backseat encouragement and assisting in the provision of any needed technical training and mentoring. They may also be required to assist in networking activities amongst the Groups and with stakeholders in other districts of the region.

Prior to beginning, and during, the implementation of their Action Plans, the group members will need to benefit from Training Workshops on various aspects of Project Management. These will vary from community to community depending on the nature of the Groups and their planned Actions. As a minimum, all Groups will need to have access to the following workshops:

- ❑ Half-day Training Workshop on Basic Project Management.

Objectives: Group members have the knowledge and basic skill sets for managing the implementation of a project.

Method: Mobilizer/Mentor assists the Group to undertake a critical analysis of each stage in their Action Plan and identify what key management skills are needed at each stage (e.g. need to manage procurement of some supplies, make logistical arrangements for a public event, or financial reporting on the project, etc.) The Group then reviews its own capaci-



Community members at the opening of the new stadium, Ciulucani village, Telenesti district, June 2012

Community-Driven Projects Empower and Inspire

Recent community mobilization for empowerment in two specific Moldovan villages demonstrated that, by the time community groups actually began to implement some activities, two important changes had taken place:

1. In a village in Cahul district, the members of the community group divided tasks amongst themselves so that two people were responsible for the cost estimates and budgeting, two for the process of mobilising resources, two for writing the project proposal and two others for managing the implementation of the project work. In this way capacity-building was spread across the group, which strengthened its solidarity and made it more sustainable.
2. In Birnova village, the community agreed that it was a priority for the kindergarten to have a new playground, however, given that there were external resources available for its funding, the community members were not initially motivated to provide any of their own resources. But once the basic construction work was completed, the community members changed their attitude towards contributing and provided both labour and materials to ensure that the playground could be completed. Another demonstration of how mobilization can succeed in sharing responsibilities.

ties at each point and the Mentor/Mobilizer explains how 'gaps' can be filled.

Elena Tomuz, JILDIP consultant, and Stela Naghirneac, director of kindergarten, Hincauti village, Edinet district, August 2012

☐ Half-day Training Workshop on Monitoring.

More will be covered on the topic of monitoring in Step 9.

Later during the implementation of their Action Plans, Groups should be offered the following training:

☐ One-day Training Workshop on Basic Advocacy.

This should be carefully tailored according to the needs and context of each Group. The NGO Partners should be consulted on how to design and deliver such a workshop.

In addition to the planned minimum training for the Groups and on-the-job coaching of group members, Mobilizers will need to discuss with Groups and monitor the implementation of their Action Plans with a view to identifying and 'plugging' gaps in the skills required within the Groups for successful completion of their projects/actions. These 'skill gaps' can then be shared with the Community Mentors and appropriate action taken to build the relevant capacity.

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

The obvious risk during implementation is that the activities themselves fail, either due to under-resourcing, bad planning, or technical weaknesses. However, these are not major risks. During implementation there are sure to be some failures and it is the Mobilizer's role to work with Groups at these times to understand and learn from the failures, and take steps to avoid such errors in the future. Thus, the philosophy of 'learning by doing' should be encouraged.



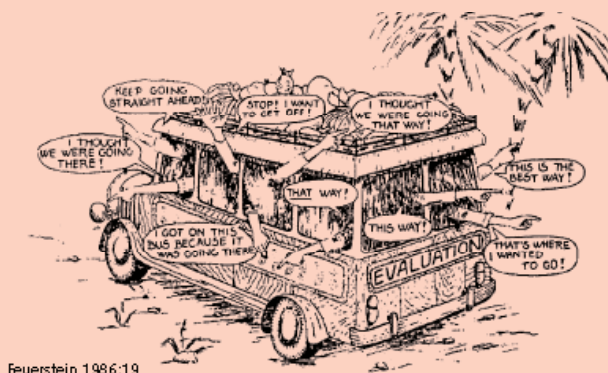
Helping CBOs to Monitor Projects

The UK's International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) provides many definitions of the terms 'Monitoring' and 'Evaluation,' including the following:

Monitoring is the systematic and continuous assessment of the progress of a piece of work over time, which checks that things are 'going to plan' and enables adjustments to be made in a methodical way.

Evaluation is the periodic assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency and impact of a piece of work with respect to its stated objectives. An evaluation is usually carried out at some significant stage in the project's development, e.g. at the end of a planning period, as the project moves to a new phase, or in response to a particular critical issue.

Thus, if we were to use an analogy to going on a road trip with a group by bus, the journey will be monitored by the driver and others as the journey progresses. The driver and passengers will monitor the route, the speed, the amount of fuel used, and make adjustments in order to get to the right destination safely and on time. Once at the destination, the passengers may evaluate the journey in terms of how costly or timely it was compared to other forms of transport. How comfortable the journey was, and what might be improved in terms of services offered by the bus on the way.



Top Tips

- ☐ Mobilizers begin to take more of a 'back seat' from now on, however, it is vital that they continue to monitor the performance of the groups and make suggestions to the groups should they see deviations from the empowerment objectives - for example, it is popular for groups to have an agreement for rotating leadership, but in reality the leadership and management tasks often gets 'stuck' with one or two individuals. Thus, Mobilizers should remind the groups to share such roles.

STEP 7: Secondary Actions and Projects

What's the objective?

Groups have strengthened their skills for developing solutions to problems and advocating for change, and have also reinforced the emerging changes in empowerment.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

Once Groups have matured to the point that they are able to engage in the development and implementation of actions secondary to their initial community project, Mobilizers can be confident that they no longer have a central role to play in the process, and that they can complete their contributions in the remaining Steps without outputs from Step 7 being finalised. However, at this stage, Mobilizers need to be able to advise Groups that their progress and organisational development will depend on the following factors:

- ❑ Being able to apply lessons learnt from the initial project implementation to the design of future actions, particularly in respect of applying principles of GE and HRBA;
- ❑ Having the necessary knowledge and skills to raise resources to implement further actions;
- ❑ Using their organisational unity to ensure all group members benefit equally from the process of designing and implementing actions.

Step 7 activities will mostly be implemented by the Groups, but the Community Mobilizers and, to a lesser extent, the Community Mentors, will need to provide mentoring, constructive criticism, and encouragement.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

The readiness for Groups to embark on secondary actions after their initial community project/action will vary greatly from community to community. Some of the variables include the scope/scale of the initial action and the time and resources required to move towards completion; the maturity of the Group and how successfully it is moving from 'norming' to 'performing'; and the emerging changes (or resistance) taking place in the environment in which the Group is operating. Mobilizers will need to discuss with Groups and assist them in making judgment about what further actions to develop and commit to within the first cycle of CME.

Part of the process and decision-making in developing secondary actions will involve:

- ❑ Half-day Workshop to Review Problem Analysis and Progress to Date.

Objectives: Groups understand the practical management aspects of monitoring and are able to make decisions about planned actions according to changes in circumstances.

Method: Mobilizer facilitates a review of the original 'problem analysis' flip chart and Action Plan and gets Groups to note: a) what has been done; b) was it done easily, or were there problems? c) are the activities actually helping to achieve the objective set out in the Action Plan, or is nothing changing? The Group then looks ahead at the remaining activities and decides what course of action to change, if any.

- ❑ Half-day Workshop on Further Action Planning and Resource Mobilisation

Objectives: Groups agree on one or more 'secondary' action(s), which will complement, or directly contribute to the objective targeted in their original Action Plan, and for which they can fund-raise.

‘Once you’re well organised, lots of things become possible...’

In the commune of Tibirica, a process of mobilization helped the formation of a number of community groups. These different groups, supported by two Mobilizers, prepared various community projects, of which only one was initially funded by external donors. However, the groups whose projects were not funded did not give up. On the contrary, they used the experience of the mobilization process, and the one successfully-funded project, to help them further develop their action plans.

One of the Mobilizers in Tibirica noted that the community groups are effective because:

- ☐ They are well-organised – they meet regularly, keep records, and share tasks;
- ☐ The members are united in their goals;
- ☐ They try different techniques to challenge resistant attitudes - for example, demonstrating the information services of the community library to school children so that they in turn will ‘lobby’ their parents;
- ☐ They understand the importance of networking and searching public information (on the internet and other media) for funding opportunities;
- ☐ They learn from their failures.

Method: This workshop should follow the review process above. It will basically involve the same discussions as per the original Action Planning, but this time the group needs to identify actions which

it can fund itself and/or identify possible donors or additional partners.

These workshops will then facilitate the implementation of additionally planned actions, with elements repeated from Steps 6 and 7.

Examples

Indicatively, Groups may decide to carry out secondary actions such as:

- ☐ Collaborative actions with LPAs to establish innovative mechanisms that facilitate the most marginalised to participate in decision-making;
- ☐ Local campaigns to advocate changes in service provision based on the results of pilot actions under the initial community project;
- ☐ Peer-learning and support to mobilization in other communities;
- ☐ Coalition-building or networking activities with similar groups.

See Case Studies for examples of such actions

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

Given that partner NGOs are under some constraints of the supporting programme and of their own organizational strengths, there is a risk that Community Mobilizers may feel obligated to ‘push’ Groups to perform beyond their nascent capacities within the first cycle of mobilization. To reduce this risk, Mentors must ensure that through thorough monitoring they are able to assist and advise Mobilizers on issues related to the organizational development of the Groups. Both the group members and the Mobilizers must feel comfortable that they have the capacity and Group commitment to embark on secondary actions.

Top Tips

- ☐ Avoid any ‘secondary actions’ which would require contributions to ‘hard’ infrastructure.
- ☐ Encourage groups to choose small and easily manageable secondary projects, so that their confidence is enhanced, rather than deflated by unfeasible actions!

STEP 8: Assisting the Local Public Administration to Adjust

What's the objective?

The process of community mobilization for empowerment is a process which is most effective when independent of local government planning, and community groups formed from the process should be able to resist being co-opted by locally elected officials. However, it is essential that both the process and outputs from the mobilization process are aligned to the activities of the LPAs, and that they are seen as parallel and complimentary to the local government planning. Thus, the objective of this Step is that all the stakeholders, particularly the officials of the LPA, understand the concept and purpose of the community mobilization, and that they not only welcome the outputs into their planning activities, but provide adequate 'space' for this to happen. This means that the LPA must recognize the need for community groups to form and to operate independently from the LPA.

It is important that locally elected officials understand the difference between the mechanisms for representative democracy, participatory decision-making, and empowerment of the most vulnerable. They are all inter-related, and LPAs need to be able to manage these relationships. However, this is extremely challenging for the leadership of LPAs, as historically they have been mandated to manage all the development of the community and the notion of sharing responsibility with independent community groups is alien to many Mayors.

Step 8 activities will actually be carried out throughout the CME cycle and will mainly be the responsibility of the NGO partners and Community Mentors

Iacob Prascurov, Mayor, at the community profile validation meeting, Tibirica commune, Calarasi district, December 2011

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

Considerable institutional capacity already exists in communities and local governments. This capacity has been cloaked by a lack of local empowerment to apply it. Any definition of capacity that focuses only on technical capacity will miss the huge potential that exists. Existing capacity is best defined as the ability to solve problems. People who have survived by trying to solve problems in difficult economic and political conditions have considerable capacity to put their experience and skills to work, once they are empowered. Thus, this Step is somewhat different to the other CME Steps as the activities in question need to be undertaken in a continuous manner rather than on a sequential basis, as the objective of the Step is to change attitudes of LPA officials so that they are aware of the tremendous benefits of the empowerment of the most vulnerable.

There are three key indicators can be used to measure how much LPAs (and other stakeholders) are providing to meet the minimum requirements of the CME:

- ❑ LPA officials organizing and improving community participation – Participation is a central pillar of empowerment. Rather than being mere recipients of services and



Short-term gains can mean long-term loss

In one village in northern Moldova, the JILDLP supported a community project to repair the local kindergarten. The mayor understood that the programme offered a good chance for additional investment in the local budget and accordingly felt it was her duty to mobilize matching resources from the community. Thus, the mobilization process resulted in a small group being established (under the leadership of the mayor), donations of cash and labour from more than half the parents, and the installation of a new heating system in the kindergarten. Subsequently, attendance at the kindergarten increased by about 20%.

However, because the 'community group' was an initiative of the LPA, its activities have not empowered any villagers who are marginal to the LPA, nor contributed to building the capacity of community members outside of the LPA, nor enabled any linkage or connection to NGOs or CBOs in the region. The result of this is that only two people in the community have experience in designing and raising funds for projects (the mayor and school director), the community members do not have a sense of shared responsibility, and the concerns of the most vulnerable in the village still have no effective voice. Thus, although in the short-term the LPA can now provide better kindergarten services, in the long-term it has no community partners who are competent to assist in solving problems, raising funds or protecting the rights of the most vulnerable.

grants, communities, and particularly the most vulnerable groups, take the lead in the development process. Only women and men of their own communities know their local conditions and issues and are best placed to decide what their priorities are. The participatory process gives communities the opportunity to analyze and discuss their local situation in a systematic fashion, identify community needs and implement action plans. The participatory

process is inclusive of all the different social, gender, ethnic and other vulnerable groups within a given community. It provides the space for the heterogeneity of the community to be exposed, and thus would lead to identification of community needs and priorities that are reflective of all the different social groups involved. Participatory planning processes also tap into existing social capital, and also help build and strengthen the community's social capital. Many of the methods, tools and techniques needed for community participation are incorporated in the various Steps in this Guide, particularly the Community Profiling.

- ❑ Financing communities through matching grants - In order to develop local planning and resource allocation capacities, a shift must occur from earmarking to matching untied grants where communities have control over the funds. Untying matching grants does not mean giving money with no rules or conditions at all. On the contrary, they must be accompanied by guidelines to ensure wide local participation; to promote transparency and accountability; to prevent fraud and misuse; to avoid having the elite take over the leadership and social exclusion. The money will not be tied to specific projects, but its disbursements must be based on the observance of approved procedures, and ultimately on performance. The concept of matching grants implies that local communities will contribute part of the share of project costs. Good social accountability mechanisms, accompanied by a strategic communication and information dissemination campaign, is a pre-requisite. Communities must have the requisite information and knowledge so they can actively participate and contribute towards the design and implementation of their own development initiatives.
- ❑ Targeting interventions to ensure the participation of socially excluded sections - It is important that LPA officials recognize that communities are not homogeneous, and that targeting may be needed to reach normally excluded vulnerable groups. As LPAs embrace the findings of the Community Profiles and take them into account in

their own plans, the need for targeting will be demonstrated.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

For the NGO partners and Community Mentors, Step 8 requires a number of actions:

- ❑ During the initial meetings with the LPA officials (in Steps 1 and 2), the concept and process of Community Mobilization for Empowerment needs to be clearly and carefully explained. Such an explanation can be aided by using the visuals of the 'Cycle' and flow chart of 10 Steps in this Guide. Copies of the Guide should also be made available to the officials.
- ❑ NGO partners need to elaborate integrated Action Plans that shows the various complimentary activities of CME and the local development planning cycle. This integrated plan needs to be shared and agreed to with the LPAs.
- ❑ As part of the formal capacity-building activities within the LPAs, a training module on CME needs to be designed and delivered to both elected and appointed officials. This training should include sessions to: explain the CME concept and key Steps; demonstrate the Community Profiling exercise, including the matrix for reflecting upon HR concerns amongst

the most vulnerable; review the process of Group Formation and the cooperation that might be required from the side of local government (e.g. registration needs); and basic training on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation and how comments from community members can be effectively incorporated into formal LPA reporting.

- ❑ Training (either through a formal workshop or through 'on-the-job' coaching) of LPA officials on how to organise and facilitate 'town hall' style meetings so that community groups can present to and interact with administrators on finalising local development plans.

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

Many locally-elected officials may be confused and, at worst, feel threatened by the process of Community Mobilization for Empowerment. They may consider that, as democratically-elected officials, they themselves comprise a genuine mechanism for representing the needs and views of the most vulnerable in their communities. Many may feel that the concerns of a minority in the community (for example, the needs of a vulnerable group such as the disabled, or a linguistic minority) should not prevail over those of the majority.



Tatiana Manoli, director of kindergarten, and Nelea Barnaciuc, parent, at the launch of the renovated kindergarten, Cania village, Cantemir district, October 2012



Members of the community group discuss community priorities with Roman Ciubaciuc, Mayor of Cantemir town, March 2012

Self-Help Groups Empowering the Disabled in Vietnam and Changing the Way the Local Administrations Work

Landmine Survivors Network - Vietnam (LSN-V) is a non-governmental organization operating in Quang Binh Province, Vietnam, since 2003. Created by and for survivors, LSN-V empowers individuals, families and communities affected by landmines to recover from trauma, reclaim their lives, and fulfill their rights.

The network has helped establish a range of Self-Help groups for landmine survivors. Many of these survivors have injury-related impairments, but a unique characteristic of the groups is that they also include people with disabilities who are unrelated to conflict and landmines. These groups aim to facilitate the process of self-empowerment by overcoming social exclusion, enhancing participation in decision-making processes and improving the quality of life. The ultimate goal of LSN-Vietnam is to have a Self-Help group in each commune.

Outreach workers from LSN-Vietnam, many of whom have a disability, are responsible for supporting communes that have expressed an interest in forming a self-help group. These workers start by fostering collaborative relationships with the local authorities, as well as with major representative organizations, such as the Farmers' Association, the Women's Union and the Veterans' Association. They provide training on the concept of Self-Help groups for the organizing group and guidance on the legal steps associated with registration of the group with the local authorities, and arrange initial stakeholder meetings.

Once groups are formally registered and formed, they are run independently by the members. Outreach workers provide on-going support where required. For example, they may provide training for group members on disability issues and/or group facilitation (e.g. how to chair meetings). Group members are responsible for directing activities which have included: **inviting representatives from local authorities to discuss health services for people with disabilities, working with local authorities to improve the quality and accessibility of health services for people with disabilities, organizing local sports events, participating in national sports events and providing peer education on health care and treatment, creating small business ventures and work opportunities**, and promoting a positive image of people with disabilities in the local community. Many self-help groups have assumed responsibility for the National Day of People with Disabilities in Vietnam by setting the agenda for this day and taking part in public celebrations.

One of the greatest achievements of the self-help groups is the impact they have had on raising the awareness of local authorities about the needs of people with disabilities, and the important participatory role people with disabilities can play in addressing their needs. The next step is to bring all Self-Help groups together under one umbrella.

These feelings of LPA officials can result in a major constraint to meaningful mobilization. The only effective way to mitigate the risk is through continuous awareness-raising and training. Officials need to understand the following:

- ❑ The complimentary nature of representative democracy and participatory development;
- ❑ The fundamentals of GE/HRBA and how they impact on poverty and social problems in the community;
- ❑ The process of empowerment can unleash latent capacities in the community and make the whole community more self-reliant and robust;
- ❑ A community that embraces diversity and inclusiveness, and is able to come up with solutions to its own problems, will be seen as a much more attractive target for external investors (public and private) than communities which do not address social exclusion problems.

STEP 9: Using Monitoring for Learning, Sustainability and Empowerment

What's the objective?

Groups have the capacity to collect and analyse monitoring information and to use it for decision-making and self-management. An analysis of their progress in meeting initial empowerment objectives must also contain information on how Groups will sustain the results of their actions, as well as on the development of the Groups themselves.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ❑ Groups have a robust framework for collecting monitoring information and the capacity to use it for decision-making and producing information bulletins for the wider community;
- ❑ Groups have a draft Sustainability Plan for the outputs of their actions to date, and have a basic Organizational Development Plan for the Group.

Step 9 involves the delivery of some training by Community Mentors, but is largely driven by the Groups themselves, with facilitation from the Community Mobilizers.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

During the implementation of the community projects/actions, other activities must also run in parallel in order to achieve the objectives of Step 9. Such activities will include:

- ❑ Facilitated Group Meeting (2 hours) on reporting on Participatory Monitoring.

Mobilizers assist Groups to look at monitoring data collected since the training on Monitoring and to assess its relevance and usefulness, as well as how the information might be analysed and shared within the wider community.

- ❑ Half-day Training Workshop on Evaluating Empowerment.

Potential contents for this workshop will be guided by outputs from the ToT in evaluating the Competences Framework for the community groups.

Another important area of performance of the Groups towards which Mobilizers and Mentors can offer support, is that of Communication. During Step 4 the group members will have received some training on communication skills, but during implementation the Mobilizers will need to remind the Groups of the importance of sharing information within the community and with other stakeholders. This will contribute to transparency and strengthen the empowerment of the groups. The types of communication may include the printing and distribution of community posters or simple newsletters, and events like Public Meetings. It is equally important for the Groups to publically celebrate their success and achievements.

During this Step the organizational development of the Group will benefit from undertaking exchange visits and site visits to other

Community group meeting in Tiganca village, Cantemir district, April 2012



similar Groups, as well as the opportunity to network with CSOs engaged in their field of interest. Mobilizers and Mentors should place particular emphasis on supporting peer-learning and information sharing with women's organisations.

As the Groups move towards the end of implementing their initial activities, Mobilizers will need to facilitate the Groups in planning the

sustainability of the outputs of their actions. In some cases this may simply involve the Group planning follow-up actions, but in many cases (particularly projects related to access to and delivery of services) the Groups will need to establish dedicated committees/units, or other entities, that will assume responsibility for managing the outputs and scaling up the benefits, and mobilising the necessary resources to support this management.

Top Tips

- ❑ If a Group is clearly not going to be sustainable as an entity (for whatever reason), Mobilizers should assist the group members in implementing a 'handover' strategy so that a partner, or new organisation, can take over the tasks representing the project's outputs and so existing group members can make their own future plans.

STEP 10: Evaluation and Next Steps

What's the objective?

Groups have the capacity to undertake analysis through an 'empowerment lens' and demonstrate to others good practices in advocating for gender equality and more inclusive local development.

What are the minimum requirements before moving on to the next Step?

- ❑ Groups have undertaken a participatory evaluation of their actions to date and recorded their findings and impressions in a format appropriate for their own learning, the learning of others, and for sharing with other stakeholders;
- ❑ Groups have a feasible organisational development plan, updated after any identified 'lessons learnt' from the project evaluation.

Step 10 will be driven by the Groups themselves, with facilitation from the Community Mobilizers. Community Mentors and the NGO partners will need to engage with the Groups as they present their evaluations and next steps.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

During Step 9 the group members will have benefited from a training activity on Evaluating Empowerment. Following this, as the Groups near completion of their initial actions, Mobilizers will facilitate a Group Meeting for the development of an evaluation plan. This plan will confirm the indicators to be used to help measure changes, the methods for collecting the information and sources of information, who will participate in the process, and the timeframe for undertaking the evaluation.

Given that the task of measuring 'change' is a big challenge for everyone, the Groups may need support from the Community Mentors and Mobilizers.

Once the Group has collected its evaluation information, it should hold one (or more) meetings to discuss the findings and decide what to do with them. This may include:

- ❑ Producing some kind of simple document to record what has happened as a result of the Group's actions and what actions were the most or least successful and why;
- ❑ Presenting the evaluation findings at a Public Meeting;
- ❑ Sharing the evaluation with specific stakeholders, such as LPAs, at bilateral meetings;
- ❑ Working with the Mobilizers and Mentors to create '*Success Story*' material.

Mobilizers will also need to support Groups in a process that reviews their organisational development plan drafted during Step 9, by taking on board any relevant findings from the evaluation process and from comments and feedback by other stakeholders.

What risks are there? And how to reduce their impact?

Mobilizers will find that Groups reach the final Steps in the CME cycle at different times. If Groups are still engaged in the activities under Step 6 at the time that the programme supporter concludes its support, there is a high risk that Groups will not reach a point of sustainability. To mitigate this to some extent, Mobilizers should work closely with the Community Mentors and NGO partners to help the Groups identify alternative supporters at least three months prior to the anticipated withdrawal of the original programme supporter.

Top Tips

- ❑ The key to documenting success is not to focus on the question of 'what have we done', but rather on questions of 'what has changed in our lives?' and 'what have we achieved?'
- ❑ Never underestimate the 'power' of celebrating success!

GOAL !

What is the objective?

Men and women representing vulnerable groups have created sustainable bodies (SHGs, CBOs, NGOs) which are able to effectively promote and advocate for their needs and interests to be included in the local development process.

How to achieve the objectives at this Step?

This will have been achieved through the successful implementation of Steps 1 to 10, and

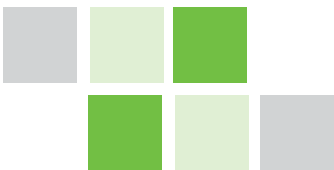
should be finalised through public events to promote and celebrate the achievements of the Groups.

Is sustainability always necessary?

Circumstances will arise when Groups formed through the CME process have achieved their initial objectives and are no longer valid in their existing form. Thus, group members may seek to sustain their achievements by transforming themselves into a different kind of group, or merging with an existing organization.



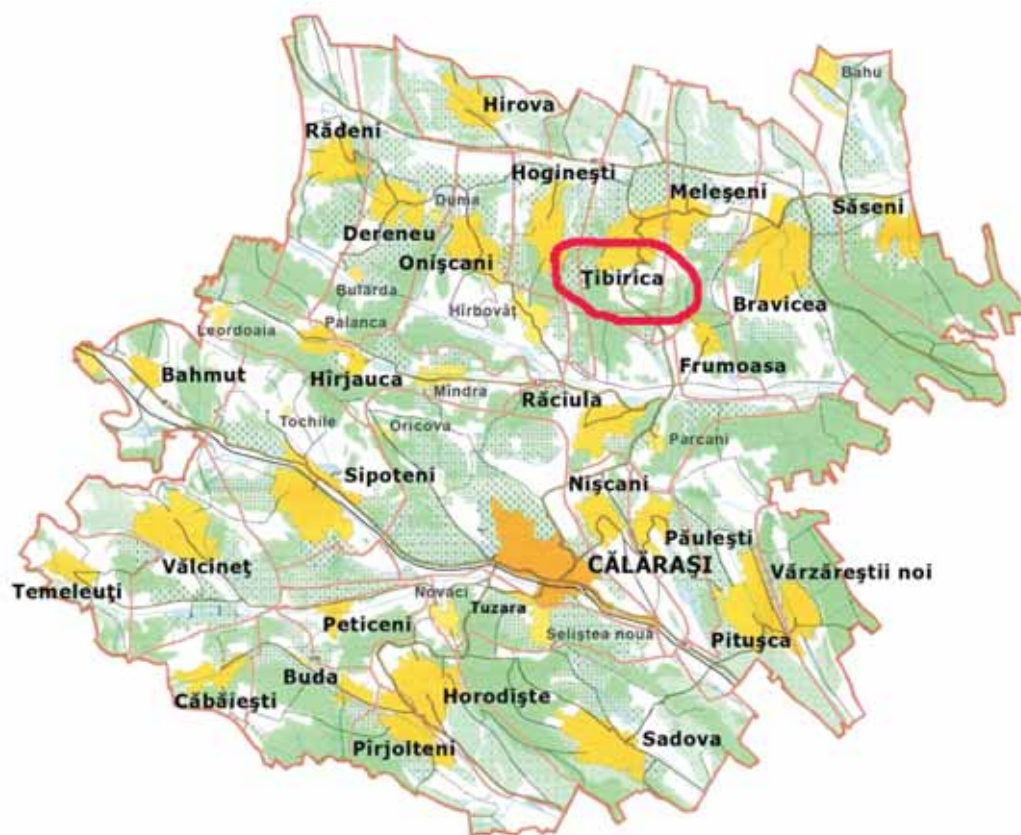
Community Mobilization Case Study



An Introduction to the commune of Tîbîrica

Tîbîrica is located into the heart of the Codru forest, on the right bank of the Cula river, 78 km from Chisinau. The commune is actually

comprised of two separate villages, Tîbîrica and Schinoasa, which are about 5 km apart. The population is under 3,000 and its main source of income is subsistence agriculture.



Tibirica was one of the communities targeted by the Joint Integrated Local Development Programme and as such, during the summer of 2011, activists from one of the programme's NGO partners, NGO CReDO, undertook a participatory community profiling exercise. The Profile analysed existing official data relating to the population: its health, the economic situation of the community and the services accessed by the villagers. This analysis helped to define the status of the most vulnerable in the community. Subsequently, following meetings with LPA officials and two meetings with the community members from the two villages, a picture emerged of the community's most pressing needs.

The following is an extract from the conclusions of the mapping exercise contained in the Community Profile:

The Roma population, which represents 10.4% of the total number of inhabitants, is concentrated in Schinoasa village. They face different economic and social barriers that make this ethnic group vulnerable to exclusion.

Schinoasa village has no water supply system and no access to drinking water. The inhabitants take water from the local wells, but the quality is not adequate for drinking.

All the houses are in poor and deteriorated conditions; in case of an earthquake, the majority of buildings might collapse. Typically, more than two families live under the same roof, and all the households are heated with wood-burning stoves.

There have also been recorded cases of discrimination when healthcare services were not properly provided to village inhabitants. The office of the local family doctor is located too far from Schinoasa and is difficult to reach because the roads are in a very bad condition.

Establishing Groups and Identifying Priorities

During autumn 2011 the Community Mentor from NGO CReDO made more than five visits to Tibirica. These visits were used to develop, present and discuss the Community Profile with the community members, and secondly to

assist the community members to form groups around the 'issues' that were most important to them. The meetings were held in the hall of the kindergarten building in Tibirica village and were open to any villagers who wanted to participate. For the people from Schinosa village the location of the meetings was not so convenient (being 5 km away), but the Mayor was supportive in helping to arrange transport.

At the initial meeting convened to share the Community Profile and to ask community members to identify issues that were most important to them, the Mayor of Tibirica gave an introduction, but once he had finished it he left the meeting which allowed the Community Mentor to facilitate discussions amongst the community members.

During these first discussions with the community members, the Community Mentor was able to identify two participants who clearly demonstrated leadership skills and who were respected by the community. These two individuals thereafter became the main contact points for the Community Mentor (who was based in Chisinau) and by the end of the year they were formally assigned as Community Mobilizers for six months and accorded a small payment for their work.

The discussions at the community meetings quickly identified three key issues that the members wanted to address. Firstly, the poor access to drinking water in Schinosa village; secondly, poor access to kindergarten; and, thirdly, the need to improve access to the community health services. The severity of the first issue was openly acknowledged by all the community members participating in the meetings. Villagers from Tibirica agreed that unless the water supply issue was addressed, the breach of the rights of the community in Schinosa would likely lead to tension.

After these initial discussions, a community group of around 15 people from Schinosa village, who were mostly women, formed to work with the LPA to design a water supply project. In Tibirica village, two other groups, with under 10 members each, the majority women, formed around the issues of the elderly, early education and health.

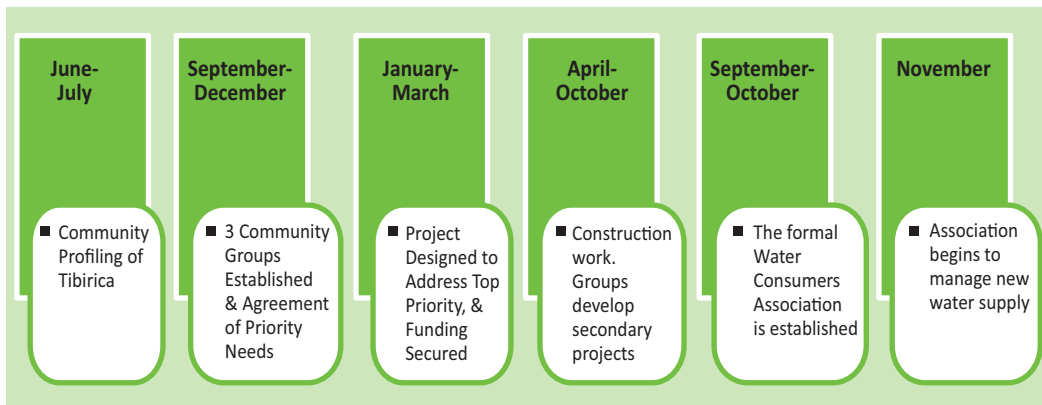


Diagram 2: The CME Timeline for Tibirica

The Mobilizers

The strength of the mobilization process in Tibirica was very much related to the effort and commitment of the two local Community Mobilizers. They were both very much grounded in the community: one was a woman from the Roma community in Schinosa, who had some previous experience of NGO work in the village, and the other a woman from Tibirica village who was actually employed as the local librarian. Both Mobilizers had some basic knowledge and skills for mobilization work and for developing project proposals, and these were strengthened through 'mentoring' from NGO CReDO and from a one-day training held by CReDO in Chisinau.



As the groups were formed, the two Mobilizers took up the role of coordinating group meetings and of serving as the key communication channel between the groups and the LPA, and the programme partners. Indeed, the Mobilizers' actions in ensuring a transparent flow of information and group members' access to success stories and information from potential external supporters was paramount in motivating the groups.

Partnership with the LPA

Another important success factor for Tibirica was LPA officials' clear understanding from the initial meeting with the programme partners that their role was to provide support to the mobilization, and not to manage or control it. To explain this further we can give several examples of how the LPA supported the process.

The Mayor of Tibirica supported the community groups by endorsing their use of LPA buildings (for example, the school) as venues for meetings, but did not participate in the group discussions except when asked to. He was an important ally of the group in Schinosa and provided a degree of quality control over the work of the contractor and ensured the water supply project met all the necessary legal requirements. (In this respect the community group

Roma girl carrying water from the well, Schinoasa village, Tibirica commune, Calarasi district, February 2011

was also supported by the programme partners, as they provided, and paid for, an engineer to develop the technical specifications.)

The Secretary of the LPA was instrumental in facilitating the community group, and advising the Community Mobilizer on the legal requirements involved in installing and self-managing a water supply. In providing this assistance, both the Mayor and Secretary would attend meetings organised by the group in Schinosa (rather than at the LPA office in Tibirica), during which they held ‘question-and-answer’ sessions.

Implementing the Project

Once the community agreed that the water supply project for Schinosa was the number one priority, the Community Mobilizer and members of the community group worked, with support of the programme partners, on the development of the project. As mentioned above the latter were responsible for the technical inputs made by an engineer. Through frequent group meetings in Schinosa expectations of the households were tailored as per the technical advice on how the water supply could be built at the lowest possible cost. The Mobilizer played a significant role during this period by ensuring everyone was well informed and helping the community members to understand the cost and maintenance requirements of the water supply.

Once the project design and legal proceedings were complete, the programme partners provided the funding for the project and transferred the finances to a locally-registered NGO, who had agreed to act as a local partner to the community group. The tender process for hiring a contractor to carry out the work was managed jointly between the LPA and the community group,

and the contract was made between the local NGO and the contractor. This arrangement best suited the timeframe of the programme partners, given that the community group in Schinosa had not yet acquired any legal status and was thus not in a position to conduct any tender process or handle finances. However, if the community group had had the time to complete the cycle of mobilization, it would have been better for the community group to be registered to allow for direct management of the tender process and the contractor.

Secondary Actions

The second Mobilizer in Tibirica has helped the other groups to learn from the experience of the Schinosa group’s water supply project and to encourage them to use their new skills for analysing problems and formulating solutions to develop their own action plans. For example, the group for the elderly have been meeting regularly at the local post office, where the elderly come to draw their pensions. The group developed a project proposal, helped in particular by a retired teacher who the group appointed as its leader, to renovate and furnish an unused room at the back of the post office to become an official Social Centre for the Elderly. At the time of writing, the Mobilizer was assisting the group to make applications for grant-funding from external sources.

The Secretary of the Tibirica LPA meets with the community group to explain the process and responsibilities of legally registering a Water Consumers Association



Sustainability

Over a period of nearly 12 months, the community group in Schinoso became accustomed to meeting regularly and discussing the practical arrangements for installing and maintaining the new water supply. In addition to being part of a team/process to design and implement an infrastructural project - for example, involving learning the basics of making cost estimates and budgets - the group members also learned about the process of establishing their group as a legal entity and taking legal responsibility for the maintenance and running of the water supply. This learning process was a major step forward and comprised a highly significant contribution to the improved self-government of the community at Tibirica.

In October 2012, nearly 18 months after the first steps had been taken towards community mobilization for empowerment, the Community Mobilizer proposed a meeting of the group at which the LPA's Secretary would explain the legal procedures for registering the Schinoso Water Consumers Association. Thus, at another meeting of the group, members voted to proceed with the formal registration and have since made formal arrangements for establishing a board, appointing an executive and a secretary, as well as agreeing to a monthly tariff for water consumption and a regime for maintenance.



Works for construction of the water supply system in Schinoasa village, Tibirica commune, Calarasi district, November 2012



Works for construction of the water supply system in Schinoasa village, Tibirica commune, Calarasi district, November 2012

Glossary of Acronyms

CBO:	<i>Community-Based Organisation (may be informal or a formally registered group)</i>
CME:	<i>Community Mobilization for Empowerment</i>
CSO:	<i>Civil Society Organization</i>
GE:	<i>Gender Equity</i>
HRBA:	<i>Human Rights Based Approach</i>
JILDIP:	<i>Joint Integrated Local Development Programme</i>
LPA:	<i>Local Public Administration</i>
NGO:	<i>Non-Governmental Organization</i>
SHG:	<i>Self-Help Group (an informal group)</i>

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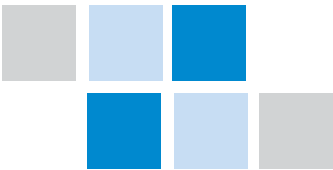
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II: Useful websites

- CReDO - Resource Center for Human Rights – <http://www.credo.md>
- Danish Institute for Human Rights – <http://www.humanrights.dk>
- HelpAge International – <http://www.helpage.org>
- International NGO Training and Resource Centre – <http://www.intrac.org>
- Minority Rights Group International – <http://www.minorityrights.org>
- UN Women – <http://www.unwomen.org/resources/web-portals-and-online-resources>



PART 5 Toolkit





5.1 Toolkit Introduction

This toolkit was designed to accompany the Guide for Community Mobilization for Empowerment. It is not a 'stand alone' document, nor a definitive list of tools for producing a Community Profile or undertaking mobilization activities. Rather it contains practical advice to accompany activities proposed in the Guide and should be used together with other tools and methods.

This version of the Toolkit has been developed in light of the experience of the recent Joint Integrated Local Development Programme (JILDLP).

The Toolkit includes the following:

- 5.2 A Glossary of Acronyms and Terms
- 5.3 Description of Different Types of Community Groups
- 5.4 An HRBA/GE CME Framework
- 5.5 Community Profile Template
- 5.6 Tools for Participatory Data Collection and Analysis
- 5.7 Understanding Power and Empowerment Frameworks
- 5.8 Building Networks and Alliances
- 5.9 Community Mobilizer's Job Description sample
- 5.10 Mobilization Checklists
- 5.11 International Case Studies of CME

5.2 Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

Acronyms

- CBO: Community-Based Organisation (maybe informal or a formally registered group)
- CME: Community Mobilization for Empowerment
- CSO: Civil Society Organization
- GE: Gender Equity
- HRBA: Human Rights-Based Approach
- JILD: Joint Integrated Local Development Programme
- LPA: Local Public Administration
- NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
- SHG: Self-Help Group (an informal group)

Some Terms Commonly Associated with Community Mobilization for Empowerment

Community:

The online resource 'Wikipedia' notes that by the 1950s there were 94 discrete different definitions of the term 'community'. It goes on to state that in human communities, intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, risks, and a number of other conditions may be present and common, affecting the identity of the participants and their degree of cohesiveness.

Community Action:

A clearly defined set of activities, designed, funded and implemented by the community in order to achieve a mutually agreed purpose. The Action is likely to be undertaken in a relatively short period of time (3-9 months), and may have a purpose that requires physical outputs (eg. a refurbished school room, or wheelchair ramp at the local government office), or less tangible achievements (e.g. a change in a local by-law, or an increase in the local government's education budget.)

Community Mentor:

Community Mentors are drawn from the staff and associates of the partner NGOs. The main role of the Mentors is to provide leadership on the initial steps of the CME process, provide capacity-building support to the Mobilizers and community groups, both through organised workshops and 'on-the-job' coaching, and to facilitate activities that will contribute to self-sustaining empowerment of the SHGs/CBOs.

Community Mobilizer:

Community Mobilizers come from the target communities. The likely qualifications, profiles, tasks and responsibilities of the Mobilizers are described in the accompanying 'Job Description for Mobilizers'. The Mobilizers will be guided and supported by the Community Mentors and will receive reimbursements from the Programme both for any incurred expenses and for specific periods of time contributed to the CME process. The main role of the Mobilizers is to initiate and develop a social process within the target communities for collective analysis of community needs, collective action leading to solutions of those problems, and to make the process self-sustaining and self-managed. Self-management will be undertaken through the formation of groups (SHGs/CBOs), with the Mobilizers playing an important role in identifying potential group members and catalysts. The Mobilizers will ensure the processes are gender-responsive and HR-based.

Diversity:

Diversity can be defined in many different ways. One approach is to view diversity as a commitment to recognizing and appreciating the variety of characteristics that make individuals unique in an atmosphere that promotes and celebrates individual and collective achievement.

Examples of these characteristics are as follows: age; cognitive style; culture; disability (mental, learning, physical); economic background; education; ethnicity; gender identity; geographic background; language(s) spoken; marital/partner status; physical appearance; political affiliation; race; religious beliefs; sexual orientation.

Empowerment:

Implies people - both women and men - taking control of their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognized), increasing self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome. (UN Women 2010)

Evaluation:

The periodic assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency and impact of a job with respect to its stated objectives. An evaluation is usually carried out at a significant stage in the project's development, e.g. at the end of a planning period, as the project moves to a new phase, or in response to a particular critical issue.

Gender Equality:

Assumes that all people are free to develop their own personal abilities and to make choices without structural or social barriers, such as stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally at all levels and in all spaces, public and private. Gender equality does not infer gender similarity, but implies that substantive rights, responsibilities and opportunities are not dependent upon biological sex. (ILO 2000)

Indicator:

Indicators are a very important element of a monitoring and evaluation system. In this context, an indicator is an observable

change or event which provides evidence that something has happened – whether an output delivered, immediate effect occurred or long-term change observed. They do not provide proof, but are a reliable sign that the event or process being claimed has actually happened (or is happening). The evidence from a number of indicators will provide the convincing case for the claims being made.

Monitoring:

The systematic and continuous assessment of the measuring work progress over time, which checks that things are 'going to plan' and enables adjustments to be made in a methodical way.

Social Capital:

Social capital is defined by Robert D. Putnam as "the collective value of all social networks and species (who people know), and the inclinations that arise from these works to do things for each other (norms of reciprocity)." Social capital in action can be seen in all sorts of groups, including, for example, the simple process of neighbors keeping an eye on each others' property when absent, or friends borrowing money from each other.

Social Exclusion:

Refers to processes in which individuals and entire communities of people are systematically blocked from rights, opportunities and resources (e.g. housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement, democratic participation and due process) that are normally available to members of society and which are key to social integration. (Institute on Social Exclusion at the Adler School of Professional Psychology, Chicago, USA)

Transparency:

It is implemented by a set of policies, practices and procedures that allow citizens to have accessibility, usability, informative-ness, understandability, and auditability of

information and process held by centres of authority (society or organizations).

Vulnerability:

A person with vulnerability is a person highly susceptible to a specific hazard such as violence, especially gender-based violence (including sexual violence), illness, immobility, poverty, lack of shelter. Different categories of people such as women, men, single heads of households, children, youth, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS, people living with disabilities, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transsexual, queer) and people

experiencing traumatic or post-traumatic shock, encounter different hazards and to different extents – they experience conflict differently and they have different needs. (UN Women 2010)

And finally...

Poverty:

“A man who lived in a cottage was perfectly happy until a neighbour came along who constructed a palace. Then the cottager began to feel deprived”. (Karl Marx, ‘Wage Labour and Capital’)

5.3 Different types of 'Community-Based Organisations'

There is a large body of work researching aspects of community development over the last 20-30 years, much of which attempts to explain how social capital might be leveraged and how communities manage to organise themselves in many different ways. According to this literature it is possible to see that the most common reviews of typologies of CBOs look at a) their functions; b) their origins and associations; and c) their means of legitimacy. Thus, below are presented a number of different types of organizational forms of CBOs.

Initiative Groups – Usually an informal group of community members who come together and agree to work together in order to solve a common, urgent issue. Group membership can be quite large and varied (e.g. all the adults in a small village), but an 'executive committee' of 5 or 6 members is usually endorsed by consensus to carry-out the management of the group's tasks. More often than not the group is abandoned once the immediate objective has been achieved, but in some cases it may develop into a more permanent organisation and seek legal recognition.

Self Help Groups / Mutual Support Groups – Small groups formed around membership that has a common general interest establishing a mechanisms whereby individuals in the group are supported by the group as a whole, with solidarity and mutual capacity building the prime motivators. Such groups are likely to have memberships of between 8 to 15 people, and once formed will restrict expansion of the group. Initially the groups may meet simply for solidarity and to share problems, but eventu-

ally decide on actions that they can take collectively, which may, operationally-speaking, require some type of formal recognition (e.g. opening of a bank account). Such groups usually strengthen their positions by forming coalitions or federations with other similar groups.

Credit and Savings Groups – These groups are similar in size and membership to the Self-Help Groups, but are defined by their main function to assist group members on economic issues. This is done through the group management of savings and corresponding availability of credit from the group to individual members.

Neighbourhood 'Committees' – These are types of community organisations that are founded either through cultural/anthropological tradition to assist in administering a community defined territorially, or established according to specific laws/regulations. (e.g. the housing associations established in the Soviet era in some former Soviet countries.

User Groups – These are groups established as a mechanism through which the wider community (a village, or group of farmers, for example) can self-manage the infrastructure serving the community. The groups are usually legally registered and operate under specific operational guidelines, with a clear, simple mandate (e.g. management of drinking water supply).

Faith-Based Groups – Similar to the Self-Help Groups and Initiative Groups, but with a membership defined by their association to a particular religion, and usually a specific church, mosque, temple.

5.4 HRBA and GE Community Mobilization for Empowerment Framework



Community Profile

.....
(name and location of community)

Report compiled by
Xxxxxxx

(Name of 'Community Mentor', Organisation name and contact details)

date

Contents

Introduction

1. Methodology
2. Findings:
 - 2i. General Description of the Community
 - 2ii. Economic profile
 - 2iii. Environmental and natural disaster mitigation assessment
 - 2iv. Vulnerable Groups
 - 2v. Human Rights Concerns
3. Community Perspectives:
 - 3i. Social Mapping
 - 3ii. Timelines
 - 3iii. Distribution of Authority
 - 3iv. Priority Needs
4. Conclusions of Research Team

Annexes: map; graphic representations of the community; lists of informants; any additional data.

(In total the report should not be more than 50 pages, and if possible, less than 40. It has to be written in an accessible style, so that all literate members of the community can read it, and, wherever possible, should use visuals and graphics to explain the situation. It is also good if the Community Profile is illustrated with photographs.)

Introduction

A brief description of the purpose of the Community Profile and the principles guiding the methodology and content. Remember that the purpose of the Community Profile should touch upon three aspects:

A study of the demographic, social, physical, economic and environmental characteristics of the village(s) or town or defined LPA area. The study may identify the needs of the community as well as the opportunities for and constraints to future development;

An analysis of any groups within the community that share common vulnerability characteristics;

A profile prepared for and in cooperation with the community members.

1. Methodology

- ☐ *Framework for the analysis, and the 'key questions';*
- ☐ *Methods and Tools used;*
- ☐ *Information about those collecting the data, its sources and the informants (and how they were identified);*
- ☐ *Dates for the data collection;*
- ☐ *Remarks on any constraints and unexpected issues during the research.*

2. Findings:

i. General description of the Community

This section should include the general demographics, the location and physical nature of the community, along with its physical infrastructure, and any specific characteristics of the community which make it different to other communities (these might be 'positive' or 'negative' characteristics.)

ii. Economic profile

This should describe the economic infrastructure and local labour market, and explain the main sources of income for the community members. The type of data and the way it is presented should follow the recommendations of the JILDP ToT on Strategic Local Planning.

iii. Environmental and natural disaster mitigation assessment

This section should be completed in line with the methodology proposed by JILDP-: Rapid Rural Assessment

iv. Vulnerable Groups

Described as per the 6 focus areas highlighted in the taxonomy, with statistical data provided in tables and brief summaries of any relevant qualitative data collected in interviews, etc.

v. Human Rights Concerns

Data presented in the matrix templates, followed by any footnotes and additional qualitative information.

3. Community Perspectives:

These sections may differ from community to community depending on the areas of focus suggested in the initial findings and analysis above, and depending on the degree of engagement and accessibility of members of the community during the profiling exercise. However, this section may contain the findings of a selection(s), of community members in some, or all, of the following participatory exercises:

i. Social Mapping

A geographical presentation of the community annotated to show the households and groups of households of regarded seen as vulnerable by the community, and the important assets and institutions in the community.

ii. Timelines

Can be used to show specific events or activities that have had a significant impact on the community over the last decade or more. The impact can be depicted as either positive or negative (or as having elements of both).

iii. Distribution of Authority

The community members use Venn diagrams to demonstrate the importance, influence, and location of institutions or individuals that affect the quality of their lives.

iv. Priority Needs

This may be a list of issues that are articulated by community members during interviews, focus groups, or such interaction during data collection process. The needs should be recorded against the community members expressing them (but not by using personal names).

4. Conclusions of Research Team

Brief conclusions as agreed by the Community Mentor and research team, with recommendations that might be considered by the community members during the problem analysis. These should not run to more than one page.

5.6 Tools for Participatory Data Collection and Analysis

Stakeholder Analysis Matrix

Stakeholder groups		Role in the community issue	Policy impact on stakeholder groups	Stakeholder group influence over the community action		
				<i>Stage preparation</i>	<i>Stage decision</i>	<i>Stage implementation</i>
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Legend:

U = unknown 3 = relative importance
 1 = no importance 4 = high importance
 2 = low importance 5 = critical

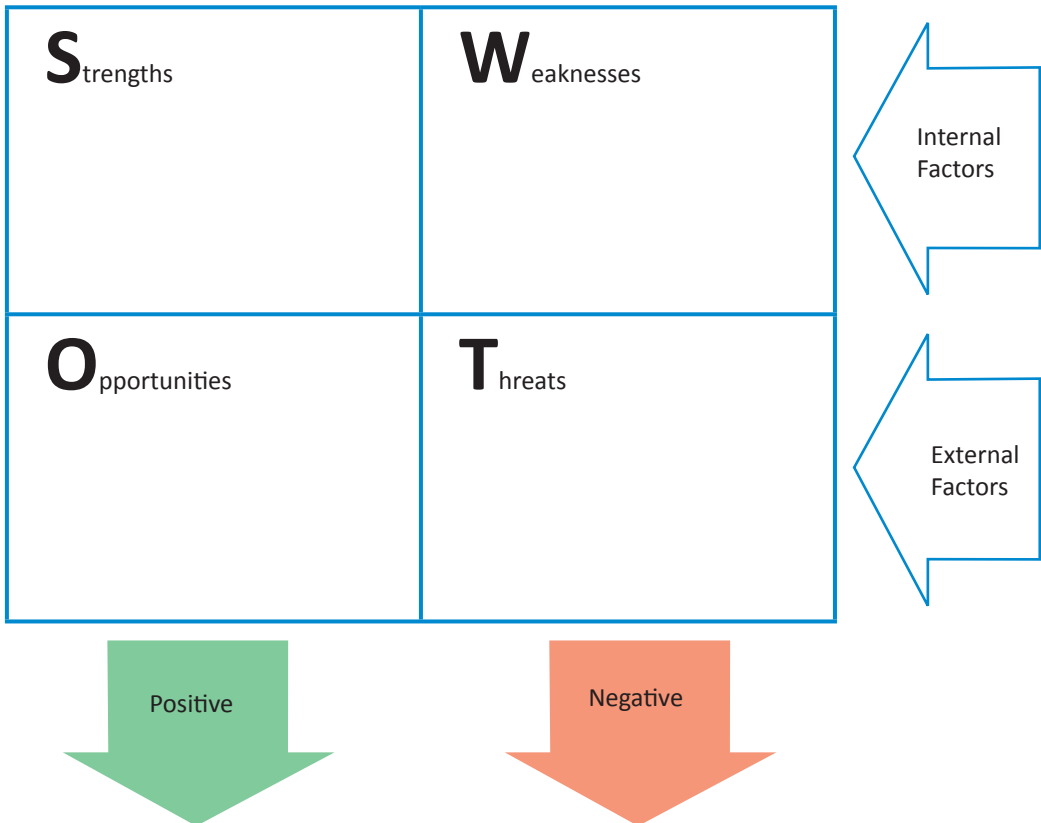
SWOT analysis matrix and explanation

An evaluation of the internal and external environment is an important part of the strategic planning process. Internal environmental factors usually can be classified as *strengths* (**S**) or weaknesses (**W**), and those external to the

organization can be classified as *opportunities* (**O**) or *threats* (**T**). Such an analysis of the strategic environment is referred to as a **SWOT analysis**.

Subject of SWOT Analysis

(define the subject of analysis here – e.g. an organisation's position on the empowerment of community groups)



Some Qualitative Data Collection Tools

Below is a brief description of tools that can be used to collect qualitative data, including methods for facilitating participation of the informants in the collection process. A selection of these tools are further elaborated in the following pages.

Interviews and observation

Informal interviews – These aim to elicit information through conversations between interviewers and respondents. Broadly, they explore, the views, experiences and values of the respondent by giving the interviewer freedom to pursue issues as they arise. Both the selection of informants and types of questions should be gender-responsive.

Semi-structured interviews – These make use of an interview guide with a list of questions to ensure that the main topics are covered. They use open-ended questions in a flexible sequence which allows for interviewer discretion, and can ensure gender considerations are taken into account. They also leave room for additional questions to be asked to pursue particular topics of interest.

Focus groups – These use a small group of people who will discuss openly among themselves and with the interviewer, usually following up on topics identified by an earlier exercise. They can provide an effective means of analysing how people interact and discuss issues as they rely on interactions between group members, not simply between the researchers' questions and the participants' responses. The selection of individuals to be invited to participate in a focus group discussion should follow a previously planned sampling process, allowing for gender, age, and other considerations. The group should be between 5-8 individuals and the moderator will need to plan in advance how to record responses (e.g. with a tape recorder after receiving the participants' prior approval, or with assistance from a note-taker). (More details below)

Community interviews – These are open to all members of a community or neighbourhood and must be very carefully planned if they are to be successful. A structured interview guide should be used to avoid conversations that drift, both women and men are allowed to speak, and the interview is not dominated by a few individuals. As with Focus Groups, there is a need to have a clear strategy for recording responses.

Participant observation – this involves observing the normal daily lives of beneficiaries, possibly through staff living within the community or community members recording observations. Or through a **Community Walk**, whereby the researcher walks through the community on a pre-arranged route, making observations and holding impromptu informal interviews with people on the street.

Participatory Tools

Asset Mapping - A community map is a schematic drawing of an area, used to identify the location and types of resources used by a community, from the perspective of its inhabitants.

Time Line - An illustration of key events in the life of an individual, household, community or organisation over a specified period of time in the past. (More details below)

Venn Diagram - A Venn Diagram is a set of different-sized circles - each representing an institution - drawn to show the relationships between a community or household and the institutions that affect it. (More details below)

Flow Chart - A visual tool for tracking the flow of resources, benefits or negative effects in order to explore impacts of a project or a change. People, institutions resources are represented diagrammatically and arrows are drawn between them to indicate the flow or the linkages between entities.

Testimonials - A recorded narrative - delivered in the first person - of an individual's attitude to and experience of a particular situation or project.

A Selection of Sampling Methods for Qualitative Data Collection

Selection and types of random samples in qualitative procedures	
Types	Definition
Selection on the snowball principle	A key informant is first selected. He/she gives the names of other people who can provide further helpful information
Selection on the basis of pertinent criteria	The selection is made on the basis of the principle of achieving the widest possible variance by choosing people with different functions or in different situations, as far as is possible
Selection on the basis of quotas or proportions	The selection is made with a view to having representatives of all social groupings according to their importance in the social system, thus enabling weightings to be undertaken
Random selection	A person is selected randomly (or random sampling tables are used)

Note: Adapted from Deepa Narayan, "Towards Participatory Research" (Washington DC: World Bank Technical Paper No. 307, 1996).

Managing Focus Group Discussions

Preparing for a Focus Group Discussion

1. Identify the major objective of the meeting - be clear about your information needs from the group.
2. Carefully develop five to six questions (see below).
3. Plan your session (see below).
4. Try to ensure that potential Focus Group members are invited in advance to participate in the meeting. If possible, in advance, let the invitees know about the proposed agenda, session time and list of questions the group will discuss. Plan to provide the session report to every member and let them know you will do this.
5. On the day of the Focus Group call invitees to confirm the place and time for the discussion.

Developing Questions

1. Develop five to six questions - Session should last one to 1.5 hours. During this time, one can ask five or six questions at most.
2. Always first ask yourself what problem or need will be addressed by the information gathered during the session, e.g., to examine if a new service or idea will work, further understand how and why a piece of policy or local service provision is failing.
3. In addition to your main questions, draft a few supplementary questions to help guide the responses if the group 'gets stuck' on one of the questions. However, be careful not to ask 'leading' questions.

Planning the Session

1. Scheduling - Plan meetings last one to 1.5 hours and held at a time convenient for the participants. A lunch time or the end of the work day might suit everyone.

2. Setting and Refreshments - Hold sessions in a room, or other venue, with adequate air flow and lighting. Configure chairs so that all members can see each other. Provide refreshments, especially box lunches, if the session takes place during lunchtime.
3. Ground Rules - It is critical that all members participate as much as possible, yet the session move along while generating useful information. Since the session is often a one-time occurrence, it is useful to have a few, short ground rules that maintain people's focus and their active participation. Consider the following three ground rules:
 - a) Keep focused, so any 'rambling' responses will be cut short;
 - b) Maintain momentum;
 - c) Ensure every participant has an equal opportunity to speak; and
 - d) Get closure on questions.
4. Agenda - Consider the following agenda: welcome, review of agenda, review of goal of the meeting, review of ground rules, introductions, questions and answers, concluding remarks.
5. Membership - Focus groups are usually conducted with 6-10 members who have some similar nature, e.g., similar age group, status in the community, job function, vulnerability characteristic etc. Select members who are likely to participate and be reflective. Attempt to select members who are not acquainted. Ensure that there is gender balance if you organise a 'mixed group' and, where applicable, plan to have gender groups made up of one gender in order to be able to disaggregate data.
6. Plan to record the session with audio equipment. Do not rely on your memory. If this is not practical, involve a co-facilitator who will take notes. Remember to always get participants' permission before recording.

Facilitating the Session

1. Major goal of facilitation is collecting useful information to meet the objective of the session.
2. Introduce yourself and the co-facilitator, if he/she is participating.
3. Explain the means to record the session.
4. Implement the agenda (See “agenda” above).
5. Carefully word each question before that question is addressed by the group. Allow each group member a few minutes to carefully record his/her answers. Then, facilitate discussion around the answers to each question, one at a time.
6. After each question is answered, carefully reflect back a summary of what you heard (the note taker may do this).
7. Ensure equitable participation. If one or two people are dominating the meeting, then call on others to contribute to the conversation. Consider using a round-table approach, including going in one direc-

tion around the table, giving each person a minute to answer the question. If the conversation keeps being monopolized, mention this to the group and ask for ideas on how participation can be increased.

8. Closing the session - Tell the members that a copy of the report, which includes their answers, will be sent to everyone, thank them for coming, and close the meeting.

Immediately after Session

1. Verify whether tape recorder, if used, worked throughout the session.
2. Review your notes to make sure they are legible, e.g., to clarify any scratching, ensure pages are numbered, expand on any notes that don't make sense!
3. Write down any observations made during the session. For example, where did the session occur and when, what was the nature of participation in the group? Any unexpected developments during the meeting? Did the tape recorder break?

Timelines

Visual tools – such as maps, diagrams, timelines - are important elements of participatory research. They enable community members, particular those less literate or those less used to research processes, to explore complex relationships and link issues in ways not possible through verbal methods alone, generating a deeper analysis of local issues. However, like many other participatory research tools, the most experienced practitioners will likely benefit the most from 'timeline' and 'Venn diagram' analysis. Thus, novices are strongly encouraged to seek expert assistance in understanding how best to use the timeline technique. The notes below are offered as a good starting point.

What is a Timeline?

A list of key events in the history of the community that helps identify past trends, events, problems, and achievements in its life.

A key **purpose of generating a timeline** is that it helps the research team to understand what local or national events the community considers to be important in its history. The time line is prepared through discussion with a small group of community members (either a representative cross-section of the whole community, or a group selected according to a particular vulnerability characteristic.) The group composition should consider women and men.

The time-lines can go back as many generations as villagers can recall, but it is most effective when tailored to the immediate Community Profiling needs and thus best limited to recent history (perhaps the last decade). Time-line records could include political events, natural disasters, good/bad harvests, diseases, changes in public service, migration, etc. These discussions provide a good opportunity to ask community members about previous trends and traditional responses, as well as about possible opportunities to resolve current problems.

Time-lines are recorded by the community members, with the research team only assisting by asking probing questions. The group should be asked to identify events along a timeline (of 10 years) that shaped and influenced both individual and communal lives.

The research team will need to provide large sheets of paper and marker pens. The events along the timeline need to be written in large, readable letters.

If there is difficulty in establishing dates for particular events, try to relate them to a well-known event.

Once complete, the facilitator should conclude the discussions with a summary of the timeline produced and photograph it for future reporting and feedback to the wider community.

The research team must note the characteristics of the participants (age range, gender) and the time/date of the exercise, and venue.

Venn Diagrams

Venn diagramming is a method to find out what person or organizations are important in and for a community.

The **main purpose of using Venn Diagrams** is to identify groups and institutions operating in the community, to show how they interact with each other, and the degree of their cooperation and involvement in development. Fundamentally, Venn Diagrams also help community members to illustrate the importance or influence of various institutions on their lives and on decision-making in the community.

Specifically, Venn Diagrams can be used with a group of community members to discuss:

- ☐ The role and significance of various institutions;
- ☐ Levels of communication between organizations;
- ☐ The role of project bodies and their intervention;
- ☐ Improving missing links between existing organizations;
- ☐ The potential for working through existing organizations, which organisations/links;

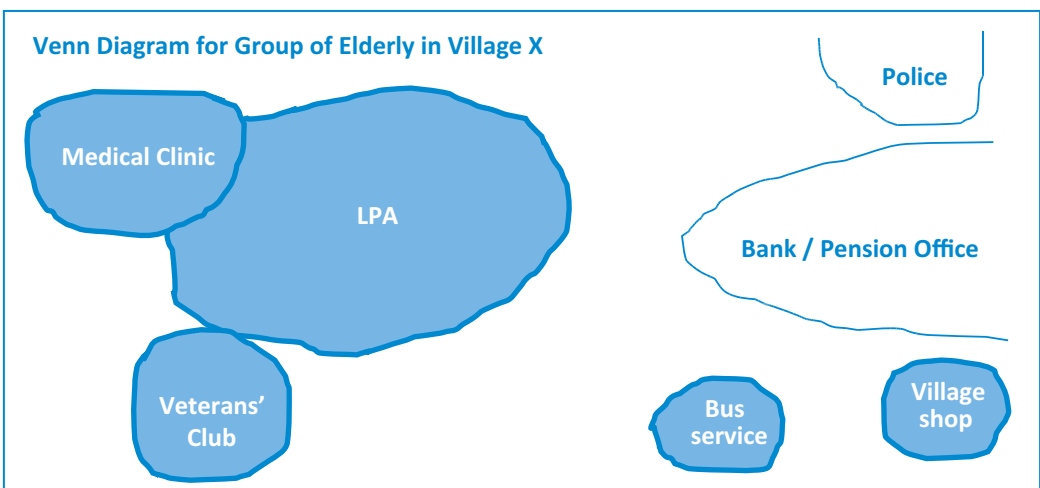
- ☐ Potential roles for new organization;
- ☐ Formal and non-formal groups and their levels of cooperation;
- ☐ Community's perceptions of institutions.

How to Use Venn Diagrams

The research team identifies a group of key informants from amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in the community (this might be done with 2 or 3 different groups, to represent elderly, women, ethnic minorities, etc). Together they take responsibility for listing and evaluating individuals and institutions influencing decision making in the community. This can be done as a 'brainstorming' exercise over 10-15 minutes. It is important that all members of the group express their ideas.

Create different-sized circles and note which circle represents which institution, i.e. large circle very important and decision maker, small circle of minor importance.

When the circles overlap, the size of the circle indicates the importance of the institution, and the distance between the circles indicates the degree of contact between institutions. For instance: a large overlap = high interaction; no overlap = distant relationship.



Problem Tree Analysis

What is it?

A problem tree analysis helps to illustrate the linkages between a set of complex issues or relationships by fitting them into a hierarchy of related factors. It is used to:

- ❑ Link together the various issues or factors which may contribute to an institutional problem,
- ❑ Help to identify the underlying or root causes of an institutional problem.

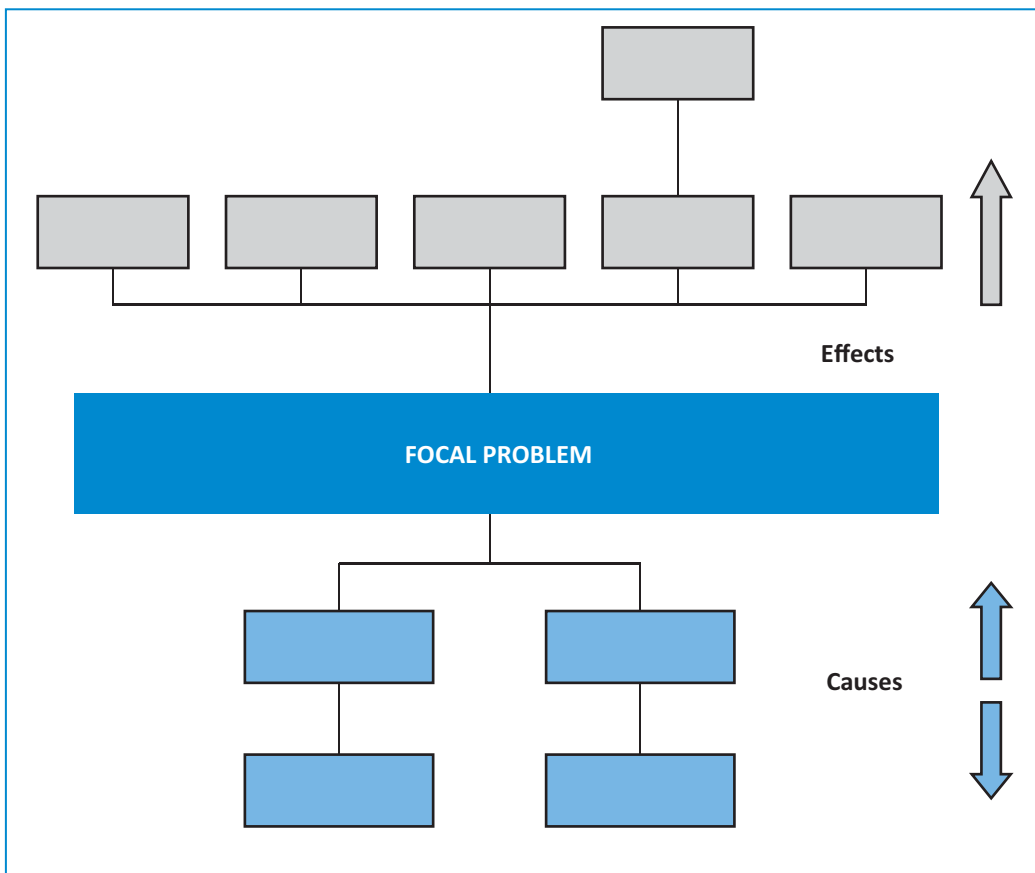
The major assumption underlying the problem tree is the hierarchical relationship between cause and effect.

How do I use it?

- ❑ Identify the major existing problem/issues based on available information (e.g. by brainstorming);
- ❑ Select one focal problem for the analysis e.g. poor communications with staff;
- ❑ Develop the problem tree beginning with the substantial and direct causes of the focal problem, e.g. hierarchical and autocratic management culture.

The following figure illustrates the process:

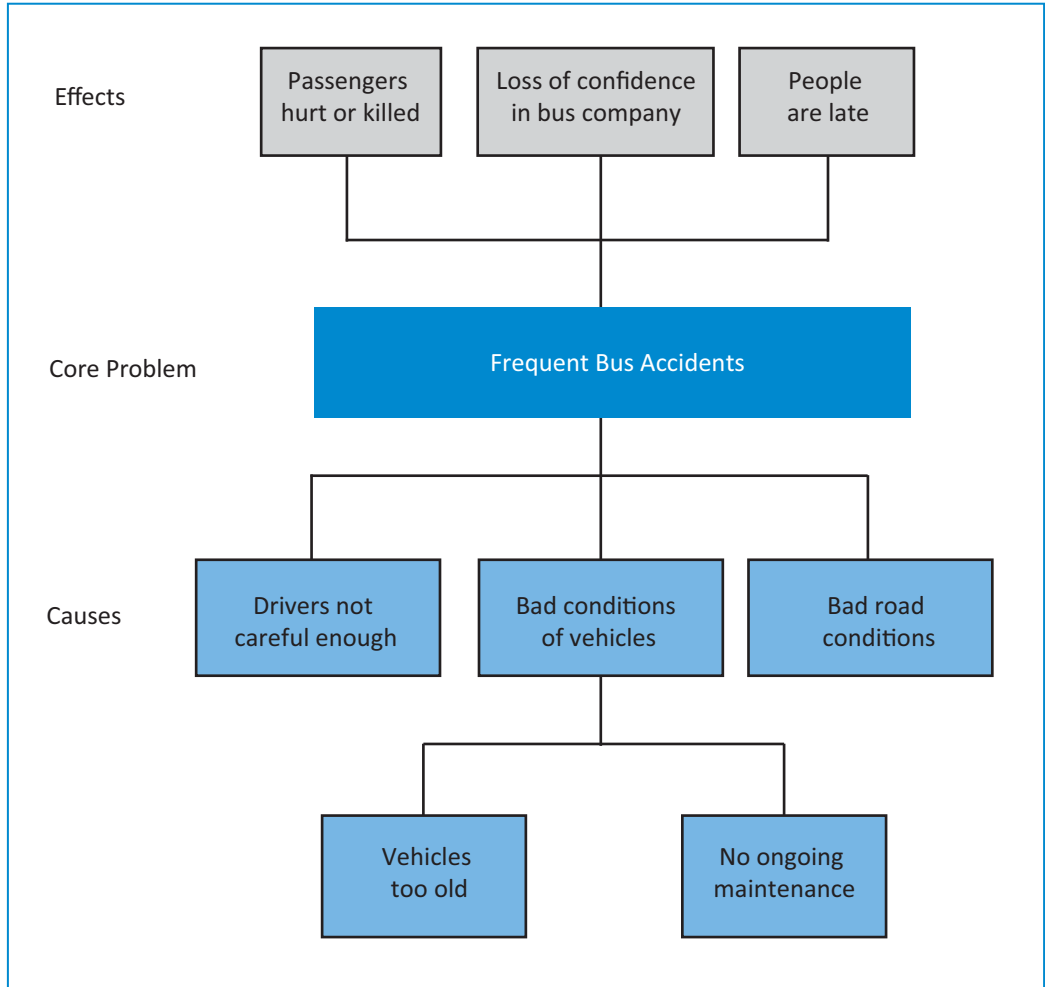
Developing the Problem Tree



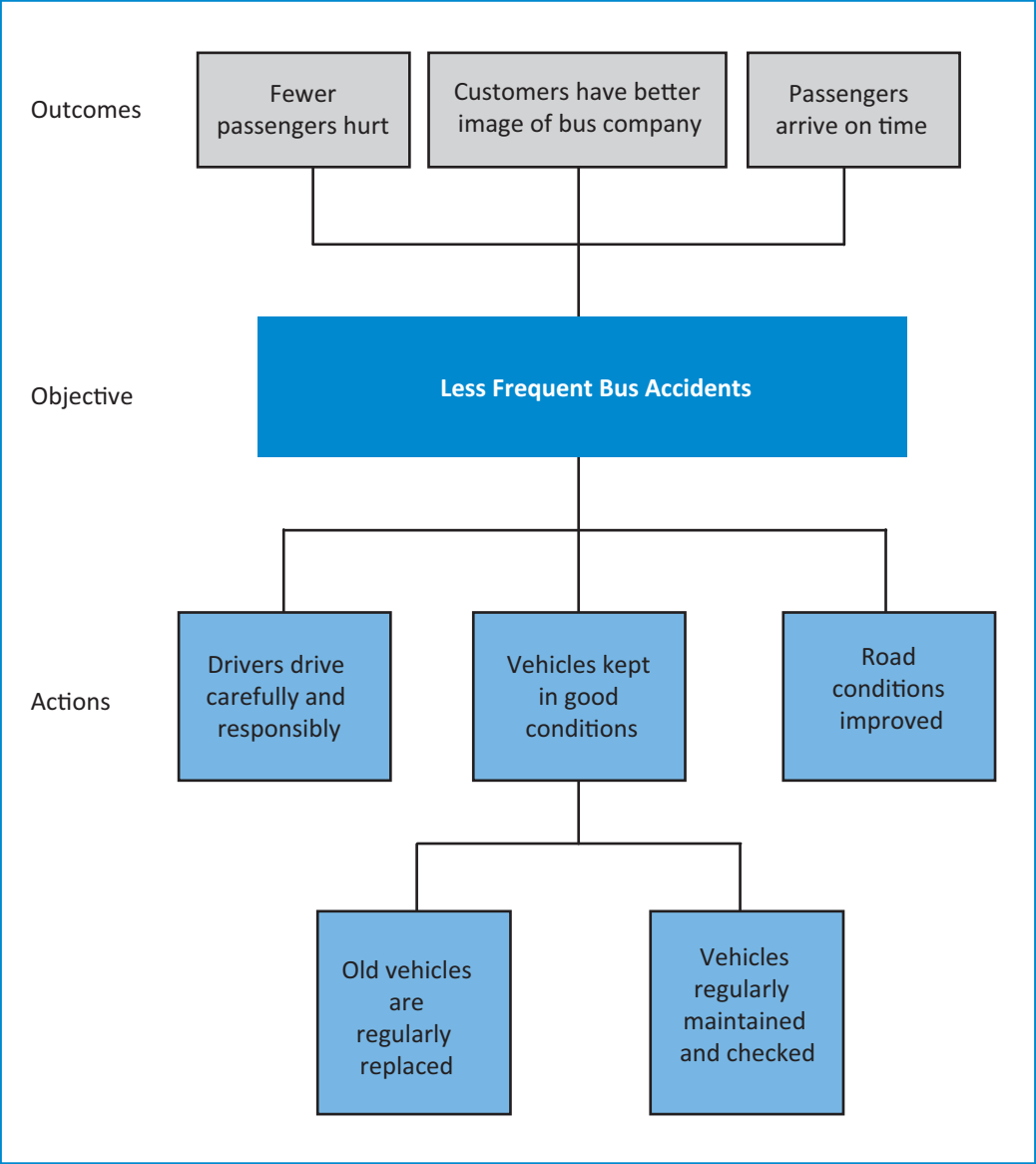
This process can help to distinguish the underlying or root of an institutional problem from their effects, and guide advisers towards the critical issues that need to be tackled in institutional development. For example, poor budg-

etary processes or late arrival of funds in a Ministry may be due to a poor or non-existent Public Expenditure Management process or poorly articulated priorities –or no money.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS: Bus Example



OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS: Bus Example



Critical Path Analysis

Critical Path Analysis is a powerful tool that helps you schedule and manage complex projects/programmes. It was developed in the 1950s to control large defence projects, and has been used routinely since then.

As with Gantt Charts, Critical Path Analysis (CPA) helps you to plan all the tasks that must be completed as part of a project. CPA serves as the basis both for preparation of a schedule and resource planning. When you are managing a project, CPA allow you to monitor achievement of project goals, and help you to see where remedial action needs to be taken to get a project back on course.

The benefit of using CPA over Gantt Charts is that Critical Path Analysis formally identifies tasks which must be completed on time for the whole project to be completed on time (these are the tasks on the critical path), and also identifies tasks which can be delayed for a while, if resources need to be redeployed to catch up elsewhere.

One disadvantage of the CPA is that the relation of tasks to time is not as immediately obvious as with Gantt Charts, which can make them more difficult to understand.

How to use the tool:

As with Gantt Charts, the essential concept behind Critical Path Analysis is that you cannot start certain activities until others are finished. These activities need to be completed in a sequence, with each stage being more-or-less completed before the next stage can begin. These are 'sequential' activities.

Other activities are not dependent on completion of any other tasks. They can be undertaken at any time, before or after a particular stage is reached. These are non-dependent or 'parallel' tasks.

Drawing a Critical Path Analysis Chart:

Use the following steps to draw a CPA Chart:

1. List all activities in the plan

For each activity, show the earliest start date, the estimated length of time it will take, and whether it is parallel or sequential. If the tasks are sequential, indicate which stage they depend on.

2. Plot the activities as a circle and arrow diagrams

Critical Path Analyses are presented using circle and arrow diagrams.

In these, circles show events within the project, such as the start and completion of tasks. Circles are normally numbered to allow you to identify them.

An arrow running between two event circles shows the activity needed to complete that task. A description of the task is written underneath the arrow. The length of the task is shown above it. According to convention, all arrows run left to right.

Key points:

Critical Path Analysis is an effective and powerful method of assessing:

- ☐ What tasks must be carried out;
- ☐ Where parallel activity can be performed;
- ☐ The shortest time in which you can complete a project;
- ☐ Resources needed to execute a project;
- ☐ The sequence of activities, scheduling and timings involved;
- ☐ Task priorities;
- ☐ The most efficient way of reducing the time-frame for urgent projects.

5.7 Understanding ‘Power’ and Empowerment Frameworks

Extracts from the Action Guide on Advocacy and Citizens Participation

Power, Political Participation, and Social Transformation			
MECHANISMS and STRATEGIES	HIDDEN POWER	INVISIBLE POWER	VISIBLE POWER
<p>Mechanisms: Different Expressions and Forms of Power</p> <p>Participation in public decision-making seems relatively straight forward on the surface. It appears to be determined by the political context, clout, resources and expertise of different political actors. Yet invisible mechanisms of power shape the effectiveness of citizens’ participation. These mechanisms can foster powerlessness, marginalization or resistance.</p> <p>Different strategies are required to counter these mechanisms so that political participation can be more democratic and so people can exercise their rights and responsibilities. (See below)</p>	<p><i>Exclusion and delegitimization;</i> Certain groups are excluded from decision-making by society’s and government’s rules, practices, and institutions.</p> <p>They and their grievances are made invisible by intimidation, misinformation and cooptation. Leaders are labeled trouble-makers or unrepresentative; issues such as domestic violence are relegated to the realm of private and therefore nor subject to state action.</p>	<p><i>Socialization and control if information;</i> processes, practices, cultural norms and customs that shape people’s understanding of their needs, roles, possibilities and actions in ways that deter effective action for change.</p> <p>Among marginal groups, socialization internalizes feelings of subordination, apathy, self-blame, powerlessness.</p> <p>Crucial information is concealed or inaccessible.</p>	<p><i>Formal Institutions, officials and instruments;</i> visible mechanisms that shape the formal ground rules of society.</p> <p>Formal institutions and officials: President, Prime Minister, legislature, courts, ministries, police, military, etc. United Nations, IMF, World Bank, multinational corporations, etc.</p> <p>Instruments: Policies, laws, constitutions, regulations, conventions, implementing mechanisms, etc.</p>
<p>Strategies: Principal advocacy strategies to counter powerlessness and exclusion</p> <p>Effective advocacy for social transformation requires alliances and comprehensive action plans that address each of the different forms of both visible and invisible power.</p> <p>(The arrows reflect the relationship between the different forms of power and the different types of strategies.)</p>	<p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building active constituencies around common concerns - Strengthening organizations, coalitions, social movements, and accountable leaders and structures - Mobilizing and demonstrating clout through direct action - Participatory research and dissemination of information that legitimizes the issues of excluded groups 	<p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education for self-esteem, confidence, citizenship, working collaboratively, political awareness and analysis around concrete problems - Activities that reinforce the above such as sharing stories, speaking out and connecting with others, affirming resistance, linking concrete daily problems to rights - Investigation, action research and dissemination of concealed information 	<p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <p>↕</p> <p>↔</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobbying and monitoring by public interest groups and expert lobbyists - Negotiation and litigation - Public education and media - Policy research - Shadow reports - Marches and demonstrations - Voting and running for office

Empowerment Frameworks

The Political Empowerment Process



Adapted from Margaret Schuler, Empowerment and the Law: Strategies of Third World Women, CEF International, 1987.

The Women's Empowerment Framework

Levels of Empowerment	Description
Control	Women and men have equal control over production and the distribution of benefits
↑	
Participation	Women and men participate equally in decision-making in all programs and policies
↑	
Conscientization	Women and men believe that gender roles can be changed and equity is possible
↑	
Access	Women gain access to resources such as land, labor, credit, training, public services, legal rights on an equal basis with men
↑	
Welfare	Women's and men's material needs, such as food, income and health care, are met

Developed by Sara Hlupekile Longwe, Gender Specialist, Zambia



5.8 Building Networks and Alliances

Recommendations from an evaluation of community mobilization in Uzbekistan (2010)

There are a number of means by which community groups can extend and strengthen their relationships with other stakeholders, and build-up alliances with other 'like-minded' groups. Three examples of such tools are listed below. These were taken from recommendations from an Evaluation Report of an ongoing community mobilization programme in Uzbekistan.

Exchange Visits - *The capacity of communities to determine their own social and economic development is highly dependent on the communities' opportunities to engage in a dialogue both with the local administration and with other communities. To date, networking between communities has been limited, therefore during the next 6 months it is recommended that inter-community exchanges (between regions, and, if possible, between countries), involving delegations made up of Initiative Group members and the staff of partners be facilitated.*

Such exchanges should be structured to maximise learning and reflection, thus, at the end of the exchanges the participants need to be facilitated in a workshop to identify and document what they have learnt, what they can apply in their own communities, what constraints have been overcome and what ideas they have for resource mobilization, etc. (There is an obvious scope for exchanges between the regions of the programme, but in addition, if the political conditions allow, it may be possible to arrange visits to community development

work in neighbouring countries - for example, the mobilization work facilitated by the ICCO-funded network of NGOs in Kyrgyzstan or that of the communities supported by the Aga Khan Foundation in Tajikistan).

Community Champions - *Community leaders have frequently commented that one of the most effective ways of building confidence among community members is by showing them examples of successful projects in other communities. Thus, the programme partners need to establish a database of 'Community Champions' - Initiative Group leaders or members who are strong communicators and can be taken to visit other communities to demonstrate the realities of the mobilization process. Such 'champions' would be strengthened by including as many women as possible and individuals who have had no previous leadership position.*

Community Conferences - *A number of the Deputy Hakims (heads of local administrations) have suggested that after the harvest season they would like to see awareness-raising events during which successful community projects under the programme can be showcased for other communities in their districts. This is an excellent idea and it is recommended that the programme partners formulate a structure for running 'Community Conferences'. This means that the events should not just be a formal presentation of successful projects, but that there must be some forum whereby community members can discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Community Development Planning process and what lessons they have learnt.*

5.9 Community Mobilizer's Job Description

This is an indicative Job Description (JD). The specific tasks and responsibilities should be incorporated into it once the NGO/programme partners have agreed to the CME process.

Introduction

Write a few sentences here to introduce the support programme, its objectives, scope, key stakeholders, and the role of CME, as well as an introduction about the specific partner NGO.

General Role of the Community Mobilizer

The Mobilizers will be guided and supported by the Programme's Community Mentors and will receive reimbursements from the Programme, both for any incurred expenses and for specific periods of time when they contributed to the CME process. The main role of the Mobilizers is to initiate and develop a social process within the target communities for collective analysis of community needs, collective action leading to solutions of identified problems, and to make the process self-sustaining and self-managed. Self-management will be channelled through the formation of groups (SHGs/CBOs), with the Mobilizers playing an important role in identifying potential group members and catalysts. The Mobilizers will ensure the processes are gender-responsive and HR-based.

Specific Tasks

Partner NGOs will need to develop and finalize this list of tasks according to their specific mobilization plans and agreed set of CME 'steps'. However, the tasks are likely to include all or most of the following:

Steps 1-3

- ☐ To contribute to the baseline research of selected communities, and contin-

ue to monitor social change and new social information relevant to community empowerment;

- ☐ To identify potential leaders and/or community organizers;
- ☐ To motivate and encourage potential leaders to talk to their fellow community members about unity and empowerment;
- ☐ To initiate actions aimed at breaking down passivity, apathy and attitudes of letting others do things for them;
- ☐ To raise awareness that community members themselves can address causes of discrimination and social exclusion, and to show them examples of ways they can do this for themselves;
- ☐ To develop trust, tolerance and co-operation among community members;
- ☐ To facilitate interaction between the community members and the programme, and ensure that all members of the community can access that interaction;
- ☐ To encourage and stimulate community members to organize for action, using tools and methodologies provided, and to guide them on the most appropriate type of group formation.

Steps 4-6

- ☐ To assist community members to organize events (meetings, workshops, etc.) and to use those occasions to help community members to identify needs and generate solutions, identify priority issues and to analyse their problems;
- ☐ To contribute to providing community group members with management skills and knowledge that help make the groups self-sustaining, and to pro-

vide coaching on skill-sets needed to design, implement, monitor and report on community actions;

- ☐ To assist the community in obtaining available outside resources, warning of the negative effects of becoming too dependent upon outside resources, and in negotiating with other stakeholders.

Steps 7-10

- ☐ To assist the community in monitoring the actions implemented by the groups and the changes emerging within the community, and how to effectively share such monitoring data and evaluation analysis with the wider community and other stakeholders;
- ☐ To assist the community in networking with other communities and possible empowerment support structures;
- ☐ To assist the community members in developing and implementing a sustainability plan to the point where they no longer need the services of you, the mobilizer.

General/Ongoing

- ☐ To encourage and stimulate full participation by all community members; with special attention given to those who are usually forgotten, marginalized and overlooked in community decision making;
- ☐ To assist the community in obtaining information and knowledge that may be available through governmental and non-governmental agencies, through extension and outreach programmes.

Competences for an Effective Mobilizer

- ☐ Ability to read and write well in local languages, and the national language;
- ☐ Ability to speak and listen well in local languages, and the national language;

- ☐ Basic computer skills, or potential to learn them;
- ☐ Internet skills, or potential to learn them, with a focus on using the internet for research and using email;
- ☐ Ability to stand in front of a group without showing fear or arrogance;
- ☐ Ability to learn mobilization skills that will enable the use of the various tools and methodologies proposed by the programme;
- ☐ A desire to contribute to national development through community empowerment;
- ☐ Strong morals viz. honesty, transparency, generosity, altruism and respect;
- ☐ Well motivated, team member able to work alone and/or without supervision;
- ☐ Ability to observe and analyse social indicators; and
- ☐ Willingness to undertake further training offered by and required by the programme.

Required Qualifications and Experience

- ☐ High school education;
- ☐ Experience of public speaking;
- ☐ Some work experience involving the drafting and maintenance of records and documents;
- ☐ Member of the target community.

Desirable Qualifications and Experience

- ☐ Tertiary level education;
- ☐ Educational background in the social sciences;
- ☐ Skills, training or experience in any of the following: management, social animation or extension work, social research, adult learning, journalism.

5.10 Mobilization Checklists

The checklists below are designed to be used by practitioners (Community Mentors and Mobilizers) and any partners committed to supporting processes of Community Mobilization for Empowerment. They should be used before and during the implementation of the CME 10 Steps.

Completing the First Steps - checklist for a CME programme partner

- ☐ Is the target community easily accessible to your organisation?
- ☐ Are your organisation's staff and/or consultants fully trained in how to support a full cycle of Community Mobilization for Empowerment?
- ☐ Do you have appropriate resources available (human and financial) to support the target community for a full cycle of Community Mobilization for Empowerment over at least a period of 24 months? (In addition to funds to cover travel and associated costs, each targeted community will need a minimum input of 20 consultant-days each year, and payments to a local Community Mobilizer for at least 12 months).
- ☐ Have you conducted an initial visit to the target community and identified and hired a suitable Community Mobilizer?
- ☐ Has the LPA of the target community confirmed that they a) understand the concept of CME, and b) understand why CME can be beneficial to their community?
- ☐ Have you undertaken a simple cost/benefit analysis of the target community to ascertain the degree of 'readiness' or 'resistance' to CME within the community?
- ☐ Do you have a contingency plan in place if the initial assessment of the target community indicates that the implementation of CME will face significant challenges?

- ☐ Have you ensured that the Community Profiling is conducted in a participatory manner (and not just relying on official data)?
- ☐ Does the Community Profile provide an analysis of vulnerability in the community and contain gender-disaggregated information?
- ☐ Has the Community Profile been validated by both the LPA and the community members?
- ☐ Are meetings with the community members being conducted without any interference or dominance by the locally-elected officials?
- ☐ Do emerging community groups have a suitable place to meet with the Community Mobilizer without interference from the LPA?
- ☐ Are emerging community groups 'self-defining' and representative of the most vulnerable/marginalised in the community?
- ☐ Is there a clear and agreed timetable of actions that the group(s) will follow, supported by the Mobilizer?

Engaging with the LPA - checklist for the Community Mentor and Mobilizer

- ☐ Secure agreement with the LPA that demonstrates that a) the elected officials understand the concept and benefits of CME, and b) the appointed Mobilizer will be the main coordinator of the CME process and that the elected officials will not interfere with the independence of the CME process.
- ☐ Demonstrate the benefits and process of CME to the LPA by showing a video of good practices, or taking the officials to a neighbouring community where CME

has been successful, or arranging a mayor from a community which has benefitted from CME to meet the LPA.

- ☐ Ensure the community groups are well informed of the LPA's planning/budgeting cycle.
- ☐ Keep the LPA well informed of the CME developments, particularly concerning any discussions with district-level institutions or any external organisations (such as international donors, etc).
- ☐ Assist the community groups to make presentations of their action plans and project proposals to both the mayor and elected councillors.
- ☐ Seek assistance from the LPA to gain approval for any infrastructural work, to locally register community organisations, to promote/advertise events or fund-raising activities, etc.
- ☐ Make sure that LPAs understand the costs in terms of funds and their involvement in the process.
- ☐ Assess the openness of the LPAs to become more transparent and open in their decision-making process.

Project Proposal Essentials-checklist for Mobilizers and Community Groups

- ☐ Do you have appropriate information to support the justification of your project? (e.g. statistics about the potential benefi-

ciaries; statements of support from the community members and LPA).

- ☐ Do you have enough information to demonstrate that the project is feasible? (e.g. engineer's report; any necessary legal documents; market research to support cost analysis).
- ☐ Is the objective and proposed actions logical?
- ☐ Do you have a complete cost analysis and budget for the proposed actions?
- ☐ Do you have a timetable of actions?
- ☐ If necessary, do you have a set of verified technical specifications (for any procurement/tender process)?
- ☐ Is there a clear management structure for the project implementation (e.g. a project manager, book-keeper, project monitor)?
- ☐ Have you prepared the project proposal document exactly according to the format provided?
- ☐ Does your project proposal meet ALL the eligibility requirements of the funding organisation/programme?
- ☐ Is the project proposal clearly written (ideally typed/printed) and does it have all necessary supporting documents attached?
- ☐ Do you have arrangements in place to receive funding for the project (e.g. registered the community group and opened a bank account; signed an agreement with a local NGO to be a partner)?

A) Empowering the Elderly and Reducing Vulnerability - a case from Kyrgyzstan¹

The care of and provision of services to the Elderly in Kyrgyzstan remains stuck with, on the one hand, a failing Soviet infrastructure and legal environment, and on the other with traditional coping strategies and roles for the elderly. There are huge gaps between these two, making elderly people and their families especially vulnerable economically, and in many cases woefully exposed by a lack of social and health-care services. Large waves of external and internal migration, particularly of ethnic Germans and Russians re-locating outside of Kyrgyzstan, have left many elderly people isolated as their relatives and friends move away.

Until 2006 the government did little to address the situation. Resources were being prioritized to ensure pensions were paid in a more timely fashion, but the budget has been unable to sustain pensions to meet the rising costs faced by elderly in a market economy, where many former subsidized services are disappearing. Social workers in the state sector remain unreformed and do not have the skills or resources to respond to the new challenges.

This situation has been changing in the last few years, with much of the driving force coming from the mobilization activities and alliances of an NGO which started its work in the small city of Balykchy. NGO Umut started basic humanitarian work in the 1990s and from 1998 introduced a programme supporting Self Help Groups (SHGs) of elderly with the main aim of providing food security. Between 1998 and 2001 the NGO mobilized more than 300 of the most vulnerable elderly people in Balykchy into 19 different SHGs, with 13 of them forming a Federation in 2001.



When I was young I was scared of the dentist's drill, but more recently I've been scared of the dentist's bill. But not anymore. Now I know how to get free dental treatment!

The mobilization approach of Umut proved to be extremely effective in empowering the elderly and improving their quality of life. This in turn has led to a replication of the method in other parts of Kyrgyzstan, and encouraged NGO Umut to establish a national Resource Centre for the Elderly which more recently facilitated the SHGs in their collective lobbying efforts regarding government policies.

Changing Attitudes, Improving Lives

NGO Umut has made great progress in reducing vulnerability and exclusion through the services it provides to the elderly in self-managed groups and through its relentless awareness-raising work and inter-generational activities is changing attitudes in Balykchy: the elderly are less viewed as burdensome recipients of social assistance, but rather as valued members of the community. Through its various links with local government departments – the social services department, police, government utility managers – Umut and the SHG Federation were positioned to change government offi-

¹ The information for this case study is taken from an NGO Umut Evaluation Report drafted by Simon Forrester for INTRAC in 2005.

cials' view of service provision as being only a one-sided supply-oriented process. The officials began to understand the complexities of the 'demand-side' of such services and the rights of the older people, and consequently they changed their attitude towards groups in need of such services.

In Balykchy three significant changes were observed on the part of the elderly:

- There is a wealth of testimonies from older people in Balykchy that express a change in their lives that could be called empowerment. The **SHG approach has restored a sense of control to its members** that was lost in the anger and despair brought on by the failing Soviet-era infrastructure. Members no longer feel powerless and vulnerable in the face of inadequate and/or late payment of pensions; **they now collectively have mechanisms that help them self-regulate financial shortfalls and mechanisms for lobbying their interests.**



One of the younger members of the community commented: "My granny is participating in training - I'm so proud of her!"

- Members of the 19 SHGs in and around Balykchy have benefited from both the rights awareness-raising work of Umut and the provision of legal advice. For example, pensioners in the SHGs now have a **clearer understanding of entitlements for healthcare provision** and, with support of the Federation, have **established mechanisms for settling the cost of dental treatment**. This is no small feat given the confusion that abounds in Kyrgyzstan as the health service is undergoing reform and a complex system of fee payments introduced. Government agencies, such as the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund and Republican Centre for Health Promotion, are now raising awareness amongst the general population on these issues by demonstrating the actions pioneered in Balykchy.
- At the local level one of the significant contributions to the **empowerment of older people is through the involvement of SHG members in 'Public Councils'**, an initiative inspired and supported by NGO Umut, with councils established in 9 districts of Balykchy to facilitate participatory local development planning and represent the needs of the most vulnerable. These Councils draw membership from across their neighborhoods and have been meeting regularly since their founding in 2001. Discussions held and decisions made by these Councils are related to a higher level large Public Council for consideration for action by the city Administration and/or the smaller 'territorial self-government units'.

B) A Case Study: Rural Schools Empower Marginalised Groups

In Laos, a long-running programme supported by Norwegian Church Aid, has piloted some interesting activities to help counter the social exclusion experienced by various ethnic groups in the remote parts of the country. Although the programme is primarily targeting children,

through its mobilization work a number of small community projects have focused on the empowerment of the children's parents.

By assisting the parents to establish informal associations, the programme's outreach workers have facilitated a process whereby parents identified two main issues that they wanted to address: firstly, their own lack of education, and secondly, their poor access to the school's management. Parents felt that if they could address these issues, then in turn they would have greater capacity for engaging in and supporting the education of their children. In response, the programme supported a number of self-directed community actions, including the implementation of several 'evening school' projects. These were run in 9 villages, with groups of adults (mostly, but not exclusively, the parents of children from ethnic minorities) participating in 3 different levels of evening classes.

An external evaluation of the programme concluded that for the 'evening classes':

Attendance was impressive as was the students' serious attitude. The teacher regarded her interaction with the adult villagers as a positive experience.

But the evaluation also highlighted some of the difficulties faced by the 'evening classes', as well as some ideas for how the activities might be improved:

However, evening classes are not without challenges. The first constraint is the workload of the teachers. It should be taken into consideration that the teachers are involved in preparation work for day classes, as well as the actual teaching and attending meetings with the core teacher. Their main motivation for teaching in the evenings is likely to be the monthly supplement of US\$10. At present the evening classes takes place 5 days a week, following the ordinary school year.

Offering both day – and evening classes could be considered as an integrated or holistic approach to community development. On the other hand, it could be argued, as an interviewee has done, that focusing on both formal education- especially as the teaching methodology is new to both teacher and learner- and non-formal education constitute the risk of "losing them both".

Options to deal with this problem might be considered:

- ☐ *Lobby the local Education Department to assign one more teacher to the village to be in charge of evening classes;*
- ☐ *To put evening classes on hold until the teachers are more prepared and feel more comfortable in the job;*
- ☐ *To pay a former graduate (if any) from the village to teach adults in the community;*
- ☐ *To reduce the number of evening class days to 3-4 during the week;*
- ☐ *If evening classes are to be continued the electricity situation has to be looked into. (holding a torch while doing arithmetic is not very easy!).*

The programme is still ongoing and it is not yet known how the 'evening class' projects have progressed. However, in addition to the 'evening classes' idea, the parents' associations are now also implementing new actions. These include:

- ☐ Parents assisting in the schools - the parents' groups meet with the school management and identify volunteer actions which they can undertake in the schools during regular school hours;
- ☐ Development of a 'local curricula' - under Lao law, up to 20% of the content of schools' curricula can be designed at the local level. Thus, the parents' groups of ethnic minorities have started working with the school directors in their villages to come up with their own proposals for contributing to the curriculum.

C) Case Study: Roma Women Empowerment

In this Case Study we see how specific individuals may play a pivotal role in strengthening the capacities and effectiveness of women's groups within the Roma community, and how the creation of dedicated 'spaces' for meetings of such groups contributes to the building of trust between individuals and the group.

The Power of Women Role Models

The Roma movement is mainly male-dominated: the voice of women is rarely heard. The reasons for this are multiple and interrelated. For instance, women's status in their communities often does not allow them to speak out publicly, and they are less educated than of men. In fact, they face double discrimination: as a marginalised group vis-a-vis both mainstream society and Roma men.

One can question whether a movement is really representative if half its members it claims to represent are hardly able to express its needs and make its voice heard. By including women, the movement gains in power and strengthens its claim on representing the needs and issues of the Roma population. Furthermore, many scholars assert that through women, entire families can be reached, especially the children and youth. The empowerment of Roma women contributes greatly to the creation of an environment in which Roma children grow up as aware citizens of their society. Women that are aware of their rights and place in society transmit this self-confidence to their children. It is what the International Step-by-Step association, a leading network of early childhood education and development organizations from Central/Eastern Europe and Central Asia, calls the creation of 'fertile soil': the establishment of political, social, economic, and community contexts that can promote sound early childhood practices.

Research shows that the first years in a child's life are crucial in ensuring the child's later success, quality of life and ability to contribute as a

responsible citizen. At the same time, children are citizens of today's society; therefore effective investments in the early years are also important to ensure that the rights and needs of young Roma children are met. Focusing on activism and the empowerment of Roma women and the creation of conditions for Early Childhood Development, thus contributes to both a better represented Roma movement and a better environment for Roma children to grow up in.

Although exceptions exist, grassroots Roma women's activism tends to remain local oriented: women appear to be most interested in their immediate living environment. Unlike the Roma youth, self-organization on other than the local level is problematic for most Roma women. At the same time, the gap between the few 'elite' Roma women engaged at the regional, national and even international level and their grassroots peers is wide. Linking grassroots Roma women to their more educated and elite peers is one method to bridge this gap. The latter function as role models that help in representing grassroots Roma interests at the regional, national and international level. Identifying with role models can be a very empowering tool.

Role of Roma women brokers

The cultural anthropological concept of broker, or intermediary, here refers to people who facilitate 'crossing' between different cultures. Brokers are widely used in the health sector, where mediators have the tasks of facilitating the access of indigenous groups to health services. Brokering in a service oriented approach and in an empowerment oriented approach is obviously different, and needs specific mechanisms to establish contacts with grassroots groups.

Furthermore, in the reality of Roma communities, the issue not only touches on different cultural systems, but also on the lack of access to strategic persons and lack of know-how, capacities and educational levels. This hampers both the mobilization and activation of wom-

en and their possibilities to influence public decision making. The 'brokers' thus not only bridge different cultural realities, but also facilitate contacts between grassroots level and strategic persons. They develop and transfer know-how and use their capacities to represent grassroots interests.

The women that could function as brokers need to be capable of representing grassroots interests, have a network within civil society and/or the Roma movement and/or the political scene. Women brokers can be found both within and outside the Roma communities. They can be Roma women activists or women that work professionally with grassroots women. They might have professional jobs or be Roma "advocates" and mediators from other projects.

What makes the women brokers is that they have good relations with the grassroots women groups and other strategic groups, and/or authorities and/or institutions. They open new perspectives for the grassroots groups and facilitate their integration into domains they would otherwise not have access to.

Their main role is to help grassroots women in effectively representing their interests. To be effective brokers must stimulate the empowerment of the women around them, they need to be willing to transfer their capacities to other women in the group and share leadership responsibilities.

Building Trust between Brokers and Community-Based Organisations

The process of building trust between the women brokers and the grassroots groups is very important. The Mother Centres movement developed a methodology for trust-building in grassroots women groups. Also, Spolu² and its partners have expertise in building trust in grassroots groups. Besides Spolu's partners, the Mother Centres network (Mine) will be involved in providing regular coaching and support to both the grassroots groups and women brokers. A very important element of trust building within the women groups and between the brokers and the groups is the space for informal contacts. Within the Mother Centres, this space is provided naturally, since the gatherings themselves are mostly informal. In other groups, this space should be provided. Part of the coaching involves the organisation of social events, in which the women can interact and bond informally.

In the course of the Strengthening the Roma Voice programme, successful experiences and examples have developed. An organisation with a philosophy close to Spolu's and ERGO's, is Mine, the International Mother Centre network. Mother centres are low threshold centres owned and managed by grassroots women in which lobby and advocacy activities develop naturally. Mother Centre Plamen in Bosnia hosted many Roma groups and inspired them to create their own centres. In Bulgaria, several Roma Mother Centres served as examples for Roma women groups who wanted to start their own centres. The Mother Centre network Mine developed methods for women's grassroots empowerment that can help Spolu and ERGO in activating and mobilizing Roma women.

² Spolu is a Centre of Expertise (www.spolu.nl) for building the human and institutional capacity among Roma grassroots groups in Europe. Over the years, Spolu empowered numerous grassroots Roma leaders and organisations to be united in Roma grassroots networks, who in turn organised grassroots Roma groups and organisations to achieve their citizens' rights. With almost 15 years of experience, Spolu is internationally recognized for its expertise and appreciated for creating favourable conditions for Roma to improve their social position. For instance, since 2003, Spolu is the driving force behind the European Roma Grassroots Organisations (ERGO) network, which lobbies for Roma grassroots interests and its recognition at the EU-wide level.



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