Module 1.2: Effective Participation in Institutions and Planning Processes

Topic 1. Participatory Planning

Participation is a fundamental value as well as an essential process of the CDD-based approach, where all members of the community have ownership of every step of the project’s procedures (e.g. development planning, selection and prioritization of sub-projects, approvals, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and building institutions). Achieving effective, committed, and informed participation is perhaps also the biggest insurance against governance risks in a CDD-based project.

In the core steps of the project involving policy change and decision-making, everyone in the community should participate through such means as developing non-negotiable rules, deciding on development priorities, and approving beneficiaries through targeting exercises and sub-projects. However, day-to-day assignments could be carried out by leaders or representatives who usually form elected (or otherwise community-legitimized) sub-committees.¹

Even for the steps where everyone is supposed to participate, in the real world, constraints exist, and 100% participation in all meetings is usually impossible. Therefore, having an agreed definition of “effective participation” upfront is critical.² In addition to the core conditions, it is important to also set additional conditions to ensure that the definition of “effective participation” meets the project’s objectives (e.g. percentage of women in attendance, percentage of vulnerable groups participating in discussion, etc.). When these rules around participation are well established and followed, this can help to ensure that voices from traditionally disadvantaged groups are heard.

¹ For example, for a village with 200 people, everyone participates in selecting priorities. If the decision is related to a water project, the village would collectively select 8-10 people as members of the water management association. The association would gather and develop a proposal, deciding on where tanks are to be located, calculating the cost, analyzing types of tanks, etc. Once the proposal is prepared, then everyone in the community will again participate in the approval of the plan to move forward.

² An example of this may be that at least 70 or 80% of the members need to be present for the meeting to be considered effective. If this is not the case, participants could still have discussions, but no formal agreement on next steps can be made.
FIGURE 1
Core Phases of Effective Community-Level Participation

- Non-negotiable rules
- Selecting priorities
- Participatory planning

Representatives
Sub-committees

- Gather and assess proposals
- Calculate costs
- Decide on initial plans
- Approval of the plan developed by the sub-committee

All community members

Agreed definition of “effective participation”
For example:
- At least 70-80% members are present
- Of which 50% are women

BOX 1
Key Characteristics of Participatory Planning

- **Tapping into local knowledge:** Participatory planning does not rely solely on the knowledge available from experts and extensive survey reports (such as the census, district gazettes, national sample survey, economic surveys, etc.). Rather, it draws upon the knowledge available within the community.

- **Direct involvement at various stages:** The involvement of communities is not restricted to the early stages of data collection and decision-making. Communities are also actively involved in implementation, monitoring, and the maintenance of services and installations.

- **Individuals develop their views through social interaction:** Conventional planning approaches tend to attach singular static interests and opinions to individuals and groups. In contrast, participatory planning is an exercise in mutual learning through the exchange of ideas, experiences, expertise, and interests. It recognizes that views and interests can change.

- **Multiplicity of interests:** It is important to remember that people have diverse interests and expectations, which are rooted in social constructs (such as family structures, gender roles, and status) and that these can be symbolic as well as material.

Source: *Towards Mainstreaming Social Accountability: Mapping of Participatory Planning in East Asia, 2010. PRIA Global Partnership and ANSA-SEA.*
For sub-projects, participatory planning is a process that convenes a broad base of key stakeholders, on an interactive basis, in order to generate a diagnosis of the existing situation and develop appropriate strategies to solve jointly identified problems. Project components, objectives and strategies are all designed in collaboration with stakeholders.

This process allows project stakeholders (including direct beneficiaries at the community-level) to analyze and discuss their local situation in a systematic manner, identifying critical problems and priorities, and leading to the development of a proposal or strategy based on consensus and participation. It also empowers communities by promoting greater participation and ownership by the local people. Participatory planning is known to be effective in identifying genuine development priorities for target groups. It also allows for local data collection and analysis by community members aided by experienced facilitators.

Participatory planning encourages the participation of different social and ethnic groups within a given community, including women and the most vulnerable groups. When successful, it facilitates social accountability through the enhanced flow of information. The involvement of key stakeholders in identifying problems and prioritizing development needs can also lead to more sustainable development activities.

**BOX 2**

**Challenges in Participatory Planning**

- May require a significant investment in community capacity building and a significant time commitment from participants.
- If not carefully managed, the participatory process can be dominated or captured by influential groups.
- Therefore, it requires facilitation by external agents who draw from Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) techniques and other participatory tools to assist project stakeholders in the planning and decision-making process.
- Positive energy generated among stakeholders will also quickly subside if the process is not translated into actual projects or activities. To avoid, detailed procedures on sub-project proposal preparation, submission, and approval need to be prepared by the project with World Bank advice and input, and elaborated fully in the project’s operational manual.
BOX 3
Philippines KALAHI-CIDSS Project: Participatory Situation Analysis (PSA)

Participatory Situation Analysis (PSA) is a process in the Philippines KALAHI-CIDSS Project where community volunteers undertake community-level research, identify the key factors in the community that cause poverty, and identify a range of possible solutions to address these problems.

Generally, the PSA involves three steps:

- Planning and preparations to undertake the PSA, including attention paid to facilitation support and community mobilization to participate
- Research and Analysis
- Community Consultation (on the results of the Research and Analysis)

EXAMPLE: Community Empowerment Activity Cycle (CEAC)

The KALAHI-CIDSS Project follows a CDD model implemented through a five-stage, multi-activity process referred to as the “KALAHI-CIDSS Community Empowerment Activity Cycle” or the CEAC (see figure below). The CEAC is the primary community development process and intervention of the KALAHI-CIDSS project.

(Continued next page)
Box 3 (continued)

The first stage is called the **Social Preparation** stage. The most critical feature of the social preparation stage is the conduct of the Participatory Situation Analysis wherein the community volunteers collectively gather data on conditions existing in the community, analyze these conditions, and define appropriate development interventions to address identified needs. These are then validated through a designated assembly.

The Social Preparation stage is followed by the **Project Identification stage** where the communities begin to develop identified interventions. The most critical feature of this stage is the criteria setting workshop which is essentially a collective exercise of identifying the parameters by which development projects will be prioritized.

The next stage is the **Project Preparation, Selection, and Approval** stage, where the people begin the arduous but rewarding task of preparing project proposals, and finalizing plans for development projects identified during social preparation.

Once the projects are selected, the cycle moves into the **implementation** of sub-projects.

Before beginning the second cycle, a **period of “transition” is undertaken**. Part of this transition involves a community-based evaluation process where community residents assess their participation in the project and the changes that have been brought about because of this participation.

**Sources:** For more information, please see the following resources:

- About the Philippines KALAHI-CIDSS Project

**FIGURE 2**

Steps to Successful Project Facilitation

1. **Diagnosis and identification of local or community-level needs and priorities:** Using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools such as village mapping, Venn diagramming, focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

2. **Assessment of local resources and problems:** Based on the needs emanating from the local-level stakeholders, along with the local resources available, the problems are analyzed with reference to available data, and priorities are selected by the project stakeholders for further development.

3. **Elaboration of action plans and preparation of project proposals:** Using procedures outlined in the project’s operational manual, local-level stakeholders and/or communities elect representative members (including women) who participate in working groups which usually include technical experts (e.g. engineers, small-scale infrastructure specialists, etc.) and local government and project implementation staff, to prepare and submit project proposals based on the priorities that were decided upon.

4. **Review and approval of the projects:** The process of reviewing and approving proposals is usually carried out by the Approving Authority or Group established in accordance with the project’s operational procedures.

**Additional Resources:** Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA): A Manual for CRS Field Workers and Partners, by Karen Schoonmaker Freudenberger.
## TOOL 1

### Participatory Vulnerability Analysis

**What**
The Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) is a tool for the community to identify obvious vulnerabilities in order to make decisions on the allocation of funds based on established priorities. It works as an entry point activity for mobilizing vulnerable and poor communities and can be particularly useful in communities that are exposed to natural disasters.

The PVA can serve as the standardized methodology to prepare and prioritize community level activities that are included in village development plans. All investments under the village development plans are centered on removing the identified and prioritized vulnerabilities.

**Why**
In many projects, natural disasters are a common phenomenon and the poorest and most vulnerable are often the worst affected. Accordingly, projects aimed at empowerment, institution building, livelihood development or infrastructure support to poor communities that are vulnerable to natural disasters must: (i) mitigate vulnerabilities and (ii) work to build resiliency to withstand internal and external shocks.

The PVA approach helps these efforts by building:

- The accountability of each community member to provide equitable benefits to the most vulnerable
- The broad participation of everyone in the village for making critical resource allocation decisions
- An overall increased resilience capacity within the communities

**How**
The PVA follows a 5 step process:

1. **Conducting a vulnerability analysis** at the individual, family, community, and environmental level.
2. **Prioritizing the vulnerabilities**, as identified in Step 1, based on the extent of damage and number of people affected.
3. **Conducting a participatory social mapping exercise** including damage from natural disaster(s) and future vulnerabilities (e.g. physical, agricultural, water shortages etc.). *For an example, please see the map from the Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood “Nuton Jibon” Project below.*
4. **Identifying and planning mitigation measures** to reduce the vulnerabilities identified. The end product is an overall mitigation plan including prioritized vulnerabilities, mitigation options, fund requirements and other sources of funding in times of need (beyond the project itself).
5. **Preparing an overall village development plan**. This complements the disaster map, showing prioritized vulnerabilities and the mitigation plan.

(Continued next page)
### Module 1.2: Effective Participation in Institutions and Planning Processes

#### Topic 1. Participatory Planning

**Tool 1 (continued)**

| **Who** | All 5 steps are undertaken with the full involvement of the communities and project staff. Well-facilitated focus group discussions are held for analyzing vulnerabilities at different level and also for prioritizing them. |
| **When** | The first exercise is undertaken at the planning stage of the village development cycle, immediately after selection and capacity building of the community institution. The vulnerability maps are updated every year and refined to reflect the emerging changes. |
| **Challenges/ Lessons** | Maintaining the quality of the exercise when scaling up to other villages is the biggest challenge. The success of the exercise depends upon a high quality facilitation process. Understanding the source(s) of funding as a part of this preparation process is important. As a part of the facilitated process, villagers should understand the link between funds available and vulnerabilities identified. Often time, resources will not meet all concerns and vulnerabilities may need to be prioritized. When practiced well, many community-level professionals become experienced in the PVA process, training the next generation to carry forward the activities beyond the project period. |
| **Case Example** | In the Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood “Nuton Jibon” Project, the project team worked with the community to mainstream participatory vulnerability analysis as the entry point activity for mobilizing the extreme poor and poor. As a result, all investments under the village development plans were centered on removing the identified and prioritized vulnerabilities. The village development cycle was renamed as the “resilience cycle,” and its stages and activities are shown below. The map opposite is the result of a community mapping process where the village identified areas as a part of a vulnerability analysis. |

“Participatory Damage and Risk Assessment Map” from the Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood “Nuton Jibon” Project
The following is an example of the Village Development and Disaster Management Resilience Cycle from the Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood “Nuton Jibon” Project.

*VDRRF stands for “Village Development and Risk-Reduction Framework”

Source: Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood “Nuton Jibon” Project.
### TOOL 2
**Participatory Village Development Planning (VDP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Village development plans reflect the collective decisions of the whole community. As these plans serve as a compass for the village’s development moving forward, they should be developed through a participatory process to ensure greater buy-in and ownership from community members. Beyond the plan itself, the participatory process is critical for ensuring accountability.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td>Without using this approach, there are significant community level risks for elite capture, inefficient use of funds and the exclusion of vulnerable and/or disadvantaged members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How | **Step 1: Create a Problem Tree**

A problem tree is used to identify main problems, underlying factors, and solutions. The aim of the exercise is to facilitate deeper reflection and analysis on the root causes of community issues, and in doing so, move the community toward greater consensus on the issues and potential actions to address them.

**Step 2: Discuss the Root Causes of Poverty**

Following the decision tree exercise, the community should discuss the findings of the analysis. This is done in an effort to build and reinforce a collective sense of underlying factors.

**Step 3: Create a Collective Vision for the Village**

Through guided facilitation and building on the common understanding established in Step 2, work with the community to create a longer-term (3-5 year) vision for the village. What will be the same? Different? How will the community members get there together?

**Step 4: Develop an Action Plan for Village Development**

The community should be organized into representative and manageable committees. Ask them to plan in a participatory manner how they will achieve their goals and list out activities under each vision articulated.

**Step 5: Define the Project Activities**

This exercise may result in a large number of plans. The facilitator should guide the group to go through each plan and state whether it can be undertaken with the project funds available. Projects should be prioritized.

**Step 6: Create a Timeline of Activities**

The facilitator works with the community to develop an acceptable timeline for delivering the project activities. |

(Continued next page)
### Tool 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How</th>
<th>Step 7: Continuous Information Gathering and Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At each stage in the process, as implementation begins and continues, transparency on financial data, decisions, and steps in the process should be disclosed for community awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 8: Ongoing Compliance Checks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>These are conducted to ensure work is being carried out to the standards and protocols required by the project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Who | A skilled facilitator should work with the community as a neutral and trusted party to lead the creation of the problem tree, discussion of core poverty areas, development of a collective vision and prioritization of activities (action plan and timeline included). |
|     | While the process should be participatory, depending upon the community structure, a set of committees and sub-committees can be established to deliver on discrete tasks and also work on continuous information flow and public awareness on the process. |

| When | It is recommended that the village development plans are created early in the project cycle so as to inform project design and the sequencing of community-level activities in implementation. |

| Challenges/ Lessons | • **Timing:** If conducted too late in the process, the village may feel as though the exercise is “for show only” and does not influence project design and implementation |
|                     | • **Inclusion:** It is important to know the context of the community well in order to work towards broad representation (including from marginalized or disadvantaged groups) in each step so that all opinions and realities are taken into account in the planning process |
|                     | • **Clear process rules:** Good facilitation in part signifies that the process for identifying and prioritizing problems is clear to the whole group |
|                     | • **Clear compliance rules:** The community should have a strong understanding of fiduciary and other responsibilities related to project implementation and monitoring so as to avoid surprises during compliance checks |
|                     | • **Multi-step:** For various reasons, the planning process might not be completed within one meeting. In this case, it should be made clear that the planning process will span a few sessions and that all participants are to be present to complete the full process. |
Annex 1: More on Participatory Vulnerability Analysis—Sample Formats Used in Bangladesh

Format 1: Participatory Vulnerability Mapping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of Risk</th>
<th>Vulnerability at Different levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Format 2: Vulnerability Mapping for Different Community Segments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Extreme Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Pregnant and lactating mothers</th>
<th>Youth</th>
<th>Elderly</th>
<th>Disabled</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Format 3: Participatory Livelihood Risks and Vulnerability Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Major Livelihoods</th>
<th>Common Risks</th>
<th>Main Vulnerabilities</th>
<th>Possible Measures for Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Format 4: Participatory Vulnerability Analysis for Physical Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Main Infrastructure</th>
<th>Reason for Vulnerability</th>
<th>Main Damage</th>
<th>Level of Vulnerability</th>
<th>Possible Measures for Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Format 5: Participatory Risk Reduction Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL No.</th>
<th>Level Mitigation Measure</th>
<th>No. of Families Benefited</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Investment Amount</th>
<th>Source of Funds</th>
<th>Implementation Schedule</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bangladesh Empowerment and Livelihood “Nuton Jibon” Project
Module 1.2: Effective Participation in Institutions and Planning Processes

Topic 2. Community-Level Institutions

Community-level organizations generally consist of a number of individual members who organize around a common interest or need. They vary greatly in size and in purpose. Some are women’s associations and self-help groups organized to gain access to credit and other services. Others are user groups (e.g. water use and land management associations) organized to manage a common property resource. Producer organizations carry out activities and pool resources around the production of crops, livestock, fish, or forest products and post-harvest processing and marketing. Community-based committees are commonly engaged in projects using social funds to enable communities to finance their own development. Village and municipal development committees organize planning and community priority setting activities across sectors. They also interact with the local government agencies that assume expanded roles in the context of decentralization.

Village institutions should be legitimately representative of all community members. Typically not everyone can participate in every process of the project given limited resources and time. To the extent possible, however, communities should work to ensure broad-based and representative participation of all groups in the identification, selection, and prioritization of issues in the community. Subsequently, community representatives selected to lead the work forward can carry out initial preparatory tasks such as developing proposals or concrete action plans. Once this process is complete, everyone in the community should participate, through village assemblies and other large meetings, in the approval of the plans developed by the representatives. Therefore, selecting trustworthy, capable and honest leaders becomes vital to a successful process overall.

Whenever there are meetings, it is important to keep minutes or records that could be shared and re-visited afterward for greater transparency and accountability. Agendas of the meetings, summaries of main discussions, voting results, participant lists, and the statements of official agreement and decisions should be clearly kept on the record. Should disagreements arise, people should be able to go back to the minutes to verify or cross-check concerns. Third parties should also visit the records and check activities to ensure compliance with proper processes and inclusion. This can also be seen as a social audit function.

This commitment to transparency is the core rule at any level of meetings –whether it is a large general assembly meeting that is held only two or three times a year, or a small, weekly meeting of a self-help group with five members. Minutes will help small groups to report their activities within a larger meeting.
**CASE STUDY 1**  
**Macedonia—Community Implementation Committees in the Community Development Project (CDP)**

| What | The CDP Project Implementation Unit (PIU) delegated to the Community Investment Committees (CICs) the responsibility of outreach and promotion at the community level. The Committee’s responsibilities included:  
- Electing an executive board with a President, Secretary, and Accountant to liaise with the PIU.  
- Planning the nature and size of the community contribution (monetary or in-kind) and collecting it.  
- Discussing and selecting eligible priority micro-projects.  
- Identifying and legally recognizing the entity (represented by a legal association at the CIC) that will sign the framework agreement with the CDP and open a bank account on the micro-project’s behalf.  
- Ensuring compliance with the technical norms and standards of the line ministry for the type of infrastructure/service involved. |
| Why | There are three key factors that stand out in the Macedonia CDP:  
- Project design directly supported the Government’s decentralization program  
- Poverty targeting strategy provided the basis for responding to social needs  
- Project concentrated on promotion and outreach to bring about local self-management and empowerment. |
| How | The scale was at the municipal level. The CDP initially focused local capacity-building activities on the CICs as an integral part of the community outreach and promotion program. Training focused on:  
- Information dissemination of the CDP project  
- Raising awareness for collective action, organization, and responsibilities of CICs  
- Identification and development of project proposals, procurement processes for community works projects  
- Supervision of micro-projects, operations and maintenance of facilities, plus environmental issues |
| Who and When | The CIC was comprised of members of the Municipal Council, representatives from local public enterprises, representatives from local branches of relevant ministries, leaders of NGOs active in the community, established business leaders and civil servants from local government. Members of the CIC included staff from the local media who played a key role in assisting the municipality in launching an information campaign about the status of the bridge construction. |
Tool 1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The CIC served as an important link for communication on project activities between the PIU and the local communities, as well as between the municipality and local communities. This was important for conducting effective outreach with the communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CIC meetings at the municipal level provided an opportunity for the PIU to present critical information, such as CDP goals and objectives, the project typology, and stages of the micro-project cycle and selection criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CICs supported an important process at the local level, enhancing community empowerment by creating meaningful opportunities for citizen participation. As a result, for the first time, communities were able to put forth their priority project proposals through a selected representative of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The CIC worked with the mayor for accountability on community proposals. Since mayors are elected locally, communities feel empowered to have a mechanism for working effectively with local governments and ensure that they are accountable and responsive to their demands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Challenges: |
| • Training programs differed in content and their coverage depended on the local context. |
| • The CDP promotion team observed that the municipalities initially targeted for pilot projects were quite experienced as they had worked with different international and national donor agencies over several years. For those municipalities with little exposure to the donor community, and thus little experience with community projects, the CDP devoted more time and effort to inform and train community members. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Source: Interview with Caroline Mascarell, Task Team Leader for Macedonia CFP, 2012.*
Module 1.2: Effective Participation in Institutions and Planning Processes

Topic 3. Incentives and Rewards

Incentives and rewards act as an effective tool to motivate community members and their organizations to improve their governance by becoming transparent and accountable to their communities. They also motivate communities to utilize the Village Development Fund (VDF) effectively, efficiently, in accordance with the agreed rules and procedures, and in a timely manner. How incentives are designed, aligned with project goals, and presented to the community is critical to the success of the delivery of CDD-based projects.

Use of an Incentive Fund

This is an untied fund that the village can utilize for any shared priority of the village community that benefits the majority of the community members. It is especially used to improve the lives of the poorest households, the poorest youth and women, and vulnerable communities, and/or to improve the functioning and governance of the village organization and its federation.

The operationalization of the Incentive Fund is the responsibility of the village organization and its Executive Committee. Alternatively, it may delegate it to a sub-committee of the village organization with the consent/approval of the General Assembly. The Incentive Fund is given to those village organizations that have achieved high marks in the following five areas: (i) transparency and accountability; (ii) participation of all; (iii) inclusion and equity; (iv) efficiency of the village organization, and (v) sustainability and viability of the institutions and assets created.

The following is the general process of grading village organizations and releasing incentives:

Step 1: Hub and District teams are responsible to disseminate the village organization grading criteria and guidelines for releasing incentive funds well in advance of the process.

Step 2: Board of Directors and members of all committees conduct an initial screening based on the criteria for the particular year with the assistance of the Community Development Facilitator.
Step 3: District Team arranges the Grading team and confirms the date to the village organizations.

Step 4: The Grading team verifies the criteria through field visits, relevant data, records and focus group discussions with the Board of Directors and committee members and beneficiaries. The village organizations submit to the grading team additional records, photographs, video clippings, etc. (if any). After completing the review of all sources of verification in light of the criteria for that year, the grading team members have a discussion on the findings and decide on the grade for the village organization based on the scores given by each member.

Step 5: Grading team communicates the grades to the Governance and Accountability Unit within two weeks after grading each village organization.

Step 6: All the village organizations graded receive certificates with the grade obtained and the signature of the Project Director. Those that receive a grade “A” are informed of the reward/incentive and the amount for that year through a letter from the Project Director.

Step 7: Members of the village organization are informed of the reward/ incentive to be received from the project.

Step 8: The reward/incentive is given in June and December of each year.
CASE STUDY 1
Prize for Best Practices of Municipal Councils in the Rural Poverty Reduction Project (RPRP)—Rio Grande do Norte

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>In line with the goals of the original RPRP, additional funding aimed to enhance local governance by increasing citizen participation and transparency in decision-making, through the creation and strengthening of community associations and Municipal Councils (MCs). MCs are autonomous and financially independent of the government. They include representatives of beneficiaries and civil society (80% of the membership), as well as local government (20% of membership). To recognize the work of the Municipal Councils, the Government of the State of Rio Grande do Norte launched a competition on best practices for promoting participation, transparency, social accountability, and capacity building for community organizations, and their impact on sustainable local development. The award was launched in 2010.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How</th>
<th>The competition was launched through the project website, social media, and other online websites. To ensure that the conditions of participation were balanced in light of local contexts, each MC competed within their own area of focus. In total, the competition awarded 33 awards as follows:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 30 awards in “Best Practices for Thematic Categories”, with 10 prizes for each focal area. Each awarded MC received the prize of one computer hardware package (including PC, 19” monitor, laser printer).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 3 awards under the category of “Best State Practices,” with 1 prize for each focal area. Each awarded MC received the prize of one computer hardware package (including PC, 22” monitor, laser printer, multimedia projector, and digital camera).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition, all participating MCs received a participation certificate. Enrollment in the competition was free. Any applicant MC had to be formally established and operational for at least one year, with a formally constituted and established Board. Validation of the enrollment was contingent on submitting the enrollment form and the relevant write-up (including any multimedia material) as per the protocols. Participating MCs could submit their proposals either directly at the Project offices, via email or via post mail. The evaluation criteria for the selection of the experiences followed general criteria (50 points): Duties performance by the Municipal Councils; and Thematic criteria (50 points): 10 points for each of the above-mentioned 5 thematic categories. From the submissions, the best state practices were selected based on the relevance of the achieved results, the quantitative and qualitative extent to which the standards of living had improved and the experiences were scaled-up and replicated in other municipalities. Additional assessment criteria included the quality, originality, innovation, and relevance of the discussion, as well as the execution parameters of the PRPR. (Continued next page)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The competition was launched by the Secretaria de Estado de Trabalho of the Government of the Rio Grande do Norte State. The funding was provided through the Programa de Desenvolvimento Solidario, funded through the PRPR.

The selection committee was formed by: 3 members of the Programa, 1 member of the Serviço de Apoio aos Projetos Alternativos Comunitários– SEAPAC, and 1 member of the Federação dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte– FETARN.

The scale was statewide.

The submission period was open for 2 months (from mid-August to mid-October 2010).