A TECHNICAL NOTE
FOR VALUE-BASED PARTICIPATORY
PLANNING, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION
IN COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Charles H. Norchi, Lead Consultant
with
Karuna S. Chibber, Research Assistant

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I. Value-Based Participatory Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation

The overriding objective of VBPP is a vision of development as a self-sustaining, participatory process of value fulfillment that leads to an ever-increasing enhancement of human dignity. VBPP meets a need for methodologies that recognize the resources the poor have at their disposal that validate their assets and capacities and enable them to draw on their own values and culture for their development. VBPP combines methods and tools that enable community participation in development based on the explicit recognition, identification, and clarification of local values. Community values are harnessed to the critical development tasks of setting goals, analyzing trends toward achieving those goals, assessing factors that shape project trends, creatively generating alternative future scenarios, and making concrete proposals that match project projections. Hence VBPP is a synthesis of sustained efforts to explicitly place the values of the poor at the center of development.

Value clarification is used as a means of measuring community goals in relation to outcomes, to guide future mobilization of resources, and to support the capacity of the poor to aspire. VBPP enables community members to take note of what is important for achieving their human dignity, and facilitates external agent support of projects whose sustainability is enhanced because of consistency with community values. In practice it can build capacities for local communities, organizations, and local governments to organize and build on their own values and strengths in sustained participatory planning, monitoring, and evaluation.
Introducing VBPP innovations could also achieve critical goals central to CDD projects. Thus, clarification of these CDD goals in relation to VBPP is in order. First, a primary objective of CDD is to improve adaptive self-governance of communities along with communities’ ability to influence other development participants including local government. The financing of subprojects provides iterative contexts and opportunities for such capacity building. CDD’s goal must be to facilitate the development of problem-solving skills and sustainable governance processes and systems. Intense capacity building efforts must be directed toward the poorest and most disenfranchised of any community to enhance their capacities to participate in sustainable development projects. Critically, this capacity-building effort needs to explicitly recognize the community or group’s *values* to help them guide their views of their own futures.

From these goals emerge shaping principles for CDD support of design and continuing support of pilot activities:

A. There must be intense observation and reflection of the context. Values-based approaches are fundamentally *contextual*. Thus, a principle of context-sensitivity must guide interventions aimed at developing organizational capacity and actors who will conduct related functions. Efforts must build on local knowledge and culture.

B. The focus must be on *building systems* and supporting sustainable processes and capabilities at the community and local government levels, not on building projects per se.

C. Projects should have strong *experiential learning* features. That is, learning-by-doing should be central for communities and for local governments.

D. At the community and local government levels, *group authority* rather than individual authority should be nurtured.

E. Both *locally specific* and *technically appropriate* information must be used in project activities.

F. *Local institutions*, with power to take action based on both technical and locally specific information, should be nurtured. Those institutions should be targeted for their capacity to contribute to the goals clarified above.

G. For each context, it is important to distinguish between *functions* in the decisionmaking and larger social process, and the institutionalization of those functions. The institutions are cultural artifacts that are context specific and may not be transferable; thus the focus should first be on the functions that they perform.
H. A key to continuing CDD support must be case appraisal consisting of disciplined comparative analyses using a stable frame of reference that can be applied across cultural contexts, allowing for functional analysis while accounting for the roles of conditioning factors on social change.

The overriding objective is empowerment of the poor. Empowerment is progress in sharing power. It is about giving and withholding support in making important decisions. To paraphrase a statement in the Human Development Report 1995, development must be by and not merely for the people. People must participate in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. VBPP seeks to achieve that end by putting communities and their values first, insofar as they do not violate human dignity.

II. VBPP in CDD: Rules of the Road

A. Community First

VBPP begins by adopting the observational standpoint, or perspective, of the community such that the group moves beyond mere beneficiary to full, active, participant, as an agent in its own development. The key is to put the community first, to understand the communities’ objectives, and to help solve impediments in its decision process by working back through its system. Putting the community first means accounting for the strategies by which poor communities use resources and their preferences based on their values, including the poorest of the poor in these communities, from their observational standpoint.

Community situations vary greatly—from relative tranquility to outright crisis and conflict. Situations must be carefully taken into account because they affect interactions among community members and between the community and external actors. A “community” might be a fiction, observable as a cohesive group only to outsiders. It is important to parse and understand internal perspectives and claims (demands) that might be in conflict. A “community” may not represent all interests. Voices may be repressed and only the interests of key elites may be represented. Thus, a thorough community assessment must occur early in the planning stages of a project. Because communities often are fractured by conflicting internal demands and claims, a key challenge is to understand what the community needs as truly defined by the community. Its needs may vary depending on the issues at stake.

Social process and community mapping tools of context-sensitive calibration should be used. Stakeholder analysis is critical but must be conducted to account for community subjectivities. Thus, it is crucial to know who in a community is a participant in the context by exploring the perspectives in terms of their identifications, their expectations—including their expectations of
authority—and their demands for values. It is important to identify the various stakeholder groups in terms of their outlooks and interests at a particular point in time, taking an inventory of their own perceptions of what they have at stake. Mechanisms designed for systematic listening to the poor and other stakeholders by giving voice to their priorities and concerns should be used to qualitatively understand community perceptions of planned interventions. The emerging VBPP approach draws on existing field-tested tools and methods to understand the complexities and dynamics of communities and their values. The critical functions of these tools and methods are discussed below.

**B. The “Value” in VBPP**

VBPP explicitly recognizes the community or group’s values, to help members guide their views of their own futures and build on what is important to them. People continually seek to maximize values, although they pursue, shape, and share them in different ways. Values are “things”—material and nonmaterial—that people want. They are desired events. Therefore, “values” refers to areas of human endeavor and aspiration that can be shaped (institutionalized) and shared in various ways depending on the context. People pursue values for current consumption or for investment and future use, and they use them to acquire other values. Values are the aspirations that human beings harbor, and the assets that they bring to bear on their efforts to secure and fulfill human dignity for themselves and those they cherish. Within any community, some members have disproportionate access to certain values, such as power, wealth, or respect; thus, value discrepancies within communities must be carefully appraised. By harnessing community values to procedures and action, this value-driven development approach aids in mobilizing resources and sustaining changes launched through projects.

To plan strategically and help prevent projects from destroying aspects of life that the groups would prefer to retain, facilitators should take communities through a value-clarification process. Facilitators should use one of the available field-tested heuristics, or problem-solving techniques, to help the community group scan for value preferences. Use of heuristics should be done implicitly to stimulate a group’s attention, working toward an understanding of demands and preferred outcomes. Contextually sensitive and culturally transportable value categories that can be empirically specified by the community should be used. A value-clarification exercise must approach the community with an empty slate, yet with the explicit recognition of any external agent’s value biases. Hence, self-scrutiny is in order. The objective is to ensure that community value preferences are fully and honestly reflected in the planning, implementation, and monitoring phases of projects. Achieving this objective is key to building the capacities of communities for strategic planning, action, appraisal, and adjustment.

Harmonization of local and universal values should be explored. Value-clarification can help the community take note of what is important for its
collective human dignity, while allowing external agents (for example, governments, donors) to support those community values that are consistent with universal values of human dignity codified as human rights. Studies have demonstrated that most local value categories find expression in global human rights instruments. For poor communities, this knowledge can be empowering. It can contribute to a peoples’ capacity to aspire.

C. Key VBPP Functions and Tasks for CDD Support

VBPP is a process aimed at building systems and capacities rather than simply projects. Value-based sustainable systems consist of the component functions that are key to implementing the whole. When harnessed to community values, certain functions and tasks emerge as crucial in building the capacities of groups for strategic planning, action, appraisal, and adjustment. An important contribution of the VBPP expert practitioners workshop was the identification of the most important of these functions and how they can be performed by drawing on existing tools and field experiences in combination with new orientations and synergies. The following functions were identified as priorities to be performed at the community level, facilitated at local and national government levels, and supported by CDD.

1. Identifying key participants

As stated earlier, a community is unlikely to be a homogeneous group but rather comprised of individuals with differing needs, demands, and access to values including power (see appendix 2, Community Forum, “Lessons”). With the goal of building the capacity of the poorest and most disenfranchised, and of putting the community first in planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluation, a fundamental task in a VBPP approach is identifying the poor and most disenfranchised, who are key participants of the process.

The VLPA approach, widely used in Africa, draws on the principle of seeking maximum diversity. It aims to seek out the differences and variability rather than the averages to identify the key participants. Transect walks and social mapping are Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools commonly used to identify key participants. On arriving at a community site, facilitators/practitioners take transect walks (closely observational walks around the community) beginning to grasp the physical and social context, and meeting with individuals from groups and subgroups that comprise the community. Often, the presence of outsiders raises curiosity, and several individuals (mostly men and/or community elders) come forward to meet the outsiders and understand the purpose of their visit. If the outsiders appear genuine and are able to establish a relationship of trust, these individuals often take it on themselves to show the outsiders their community and accompany them on a transect walk.
Another tool used to obtain a visual summary of the community is a social map; this is often considered the starting point in participatory processes and builds rapport and trust, while providing an overview of the community. Community members are called on to develop these maps, using locally available material. Social maps are used to identify residential areas; the poorest and most needy individuals; prevalence of poverty-indicating phenomena such as proximity of the poorest families to water, electricity, and public institutions; types of institutions and organizations present; and existence of natural resources. These tools can be used separately with the different groups within a community, ensuring that even those without power are able to represent their situation and participate in the process of planning and implementing activities for their development (see appendix 1, VLPA).

The policy sciences approach also employs tools to map key participants and their roles, as well as to identify nonparticipating community members. A detailed set of questions begins by asking community members: Who is a participant in the context under scrutiny? Then, the perspectives of participants are explored in terms of their identifications, their expectations—including their expectations of authority—and their demands for values. Situations of interaction are examined in terms of their spatial, temporal, institutional, and crisis dimensions. Base values that participants draw on in their efforts to achieve their demanded values are inventoried, and the strategies available to participants are assessed. The outcomes of participants’ interactions are tracked on a continuing basis. The objective is to understand levels of participation within the community, access to values, and outcomes; and to fully appraise the nature and dynamics of the “community” including its interactions with external actors and processes. For example, a previous Afghan government-in-exile used policy sciences mapping tools to appraise community decisionmaking under the former monarchy and during the Soviet occupation, and then to make projections about post-war governance. In mapping post-conflict governance, the Afghans answered these questions: Who should participate? What perspectives should be developed and encouraged to flourish? What kinds of institutions should be established? How should assets or base values, including authority, be distributed? What strategies for establishing a new government should be pursued? How should the new government operate? What kind of public order system should the new government attempt to establish (see appendix 3, Policy Sciences, Tool # 3)?

Q Methodology can be used to identify stakeholder groups according to their own perceptions at particular points in time. Q technique is a way for stakeholders to express their value-based standpoints on any issue, and incorporates factor analysis to disclose functional groupings indigenous to the community and its culture (see appendix 5, Q Methodology). The Community-Based Initiatives (CBI) approach, built on policy sciences foundations and sharing many of its tools, relies on comprehensive community mapping as a critical initial resource. CBI uses patient and continuous observing and listening.
to identify actual and perceived deprivations within the community. The approach recommends canvassing assumed and additional resources while identifying potential opportunities for the pursuit of community goals. Context is crucial in identifying key participants. Each local context is unique, and its relevant characteristics must be taken into account. CBI considers who should be recruited into a community-based initiative for various roles, and who should not be recruited. This recruiting function is approximately equivalent to "Identifying stakeholders." However "stakeholder" is viewed as a limited role, and there are many others. CBI considers how and to what extent interactions should be organized among community participants, and with participants outside the community.

2. Aggregating individuals, especially the weakest and the poorest

Identifying key participants alone does not guarantee that all individuals, particularly those who have been subjugated, will have a voice in their own development. Some people may be disaggregated, and they may be the most disenfranchised. Thus, the function of aggregating individuals, particularly those most vulnerable, is critical. It is important to bring together these individuals and identify the common interests of the most vulnerable; their interests may be distinct from the wider community. As the weakest and the poorest of the poor are enabled to work collectively, they can begin to participate in their own development activities.

Performing this function requires a particularly active catalytic standpoint with the objective of achieving project inclusiveness. While a number of existing tools lend themselves to this task, none considered is explicitly keyed to aggregating vulnerable individuals to achieve inclusiveness. This was a key task for the Community Forum Projects in Afghanistan, where the experience proved that this must be a deliberate activity in which careful listening is essential (see appendix 2, Community Forum). Policy sciences provides tools to identify nonparticipating community members and to clarify common interests of subgroups. This method proposes a set of questions to better understand exclusionary trends from the viewpoint of local people at every level. (see appendix 3, Policy Sciences). Beneficiary Assessment (BA) employs sampling processes to draw on and represent both genders, the less poor and more poor, and others from different categories to ensure that all voices are considered. BA emphasizes learning from all subgroups that comprise a community, not merely the elite or more accessible groups (see appendix 4, Beneficiary Assessment). The shift in orientation to perform this function is perhaps as important as choice of tool to apply. Contextual field-testing in pilots will be necessary to identify the best means. The aim is to ensure that the project priorities and benefits are fully inclusive and compatible with all groups.
3. Identifying the community’s own priorities (scanning for values)

The function of scanning and clarifying community values is key to the VBPP approach. The aim is to understand value priorities, accumulation, distribution, investment, and enjoyment within the community. Various culturally sensitive heuristics have been used to perform this function. Heuristics, or classifications, are used because of the vast numbers of culturally diverse, yet specific, value demands. Hence, a classification whose terms are workably few, yet whose connotations can be clarified by community members is the preferred VBPP value-scanning tool. One scanning tool is a continuum of value categories recommended by the policy sciences. The heuristics comprising this tool are respect, power, well-being, wealth, rectitude, affection, enlightenment, and skill. These categories are designed to be logically exhaustive but empirically open; and are empirically clarified differently, according to peoples, cultures, and communities. When people possess these in varying quantities, they are base values; when they are aspirations of individuals and the community, they are scope values. The value-scanning task proceeds by having community members fill the categories from their standpoints so that the facilitator can understand (1) which values are scarce and which are abundant, (2) how they are shaped and shared within the community, and (3) which are most sought by the community (see appendix 3, Policy Sciences). Heuristic value scanning can be performed in combination with Beneficiary Assessment (or “inverted” Beneficiary Assessment, which is conducted directly by the community) and/or Reflective Listening tools to further determine how people in the community comprehend and clarify their own values. (see appendix 4, Beneficiary Assessment) The effective performance of this value-scanning function is at the heart of value-based sustainable community-driven development.

4. Recognizing a community’s bases of power

A VBPP principle is building on what exists in a community. Every community possesses assets, or base values, even at minimal levels. These assets will have been inventoried by the performance of the value-scanning function above. However, some assets can be base values for power, and these are vital to the community. Power may be veiled within the community as another value such as respect, rectitude, or skill. These may be prima facie intangible resources, which can advance tangible development activities. A community must be assisted in recognizing and harnessing its own bases of power to achieve its own goals. The performance of this function was key to the VLPA Malawi pilot, in which people used their power of association to organize themselves as committees to attract external funding and sustain the project post-World Bank support. The two Afghanistan cases provided in the appendix demonstrate the importance of recognizing, and facilitating the community’s ability to draw upon, its bases of power such as respect, skills, and association or affection. The determined capacity to associate despite a widespread expectation of violence was a basis
of power for the Community Forum through the Taliban period and beyond (see appendix 2, Community Forum). Pre-Taliban Afghans drew on shared enlightenment and respect to render their decision seminar group a momentary instrument of power (see appendix 3, Policy Sciences). Recognizing a community’s base of power means digging below the surface to understand how the community produces intended effects. Every community possesses this capacity, even if the intended effect is merely to survive. The value resources that spawn this capacity are a form of power, so they must be identified. Once recognized, the VBPP approach builds these bases of power into project plans and continues to draw on them through implementation, thus helping the community to expand its capacity to draw on indigenous power bases.

5. Learning-by-doing

Deliberate and necessary contextual learning-by-doing is an essential VBPP function. It should be central for both the community and local government. Facilitators should help the local people organize and work toward their own goals by using their own skills and bases of power, evaluating their goals, and appraising progress in moving towards them. This should be an iterative approach in which people experience for themselves the pursuit of an opportunity or solving a problem.

Several experiences advocate starting with small, relatively easily achievable projects. By beginning with a community’s immediate needs, it is feasible to use the community’s own bases of power to support small-scale activities that are central to poverty reduction. These activities can be strategic and catalytic in that, if successful, people will gain confidence about the potential for collective action and community process. This approach enables community members to learn by doing while the facilitators/practitioners gain credibility and the support of the community going forward in the project.

6. Devising strategies and plans based on the group’s priorities and both locally specific and technical information

When setting project goals, development strategies and implementation plans must be based on local priorities. The key is contextuality. Community priorities will have been identified by performing the value-scanning function discussed above. This task is a goal-clarification function that must allow for continuing adjustment as trends are appraised and community perspectives and priorities evolve. When development goals are set, local information as well as appropriate technical and scientific information must inform strategic plans and designs. Each type of information should be a planning source. This is critical in creatively generating alternative future scenarios and making realistic and concrete proposals that match project projections. Several experiences and methods described in the Appendix demonstrate contextually derived strategies that combine local and technical information. The key is that plans and goals must be
informed by local knowledge and community priorities. In addition, strategies and development design should incorporate bridge-building from the community to external agencies that share common interests with the community goals. This will help in building governance and accountability chains.

7. Identifying obstacles and opportunities in their contexts

Identifying obstacles and opportunities in context is a critical function that has not received wide attention in traditionally applied development methodologies. This function comprises twin tasks: analyzing trends and analyzing conditioning factors that shape trends. This function is key to a VBPP approach. It is guided by the facilitator but, more importantly, performed by the community in careful learning-by-doing so that it becomes iterative. Community members appraise the obstacles to progress, which may be posed by, for example, powerful elites or limited access to public institutions. Trends are scrutinized for unexploited opportunities and advantages. The community learns to ask, What and where are the pitfalls in trends that cause failure to meet development goals? and What are the pivotal factors and conditions in achieving preferred outcomes? Policy sciences addresses this question using explicit factor analysis to appraise the effects of conditioning factors in achieving development goals. Community members review trends leading to desirable and undesirable outcomes. They highlight factors in the process on which, from their standpoint, success or failure turned (see appendix 3, Policy Sciences, Tool #1). The VLPA approach incorporates certain features of this type of assessment in a problem analysis tool that helps communities identify their needs and assign priorities. Facilitators encourage community members to first identify their problems and needs, and then develop a grid to compare them against a range of criteria such as rank importance, severity, and number of people affected. By assigning a score or a rank to each problem according to fixed criteria, critical issues affecting the community can be pinpointed.

8. Developing negotiating skills

Developing negotiation skills is essential to community empowerment. This task builds on earlier functions (a) enabling a community and its subgroups to recognize and draw on its own bases of power and (b) identifying obstacles and opportunities. When a community understands a project to be value-driven based on that community’s own values, it is better positioned to negotiate on its own behalf. VBPP urges attention to developing the negotiation skills of the community. The community should be taught to recognize negotiation opportunities and to advance its positions while protecting its most vulnerable members. An important element of this task is identifying the potential for optimal compromise between those identified as key and other stakeholders. Communities should be assisted in negotiating with one another, as well as with other organizations such as government agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Bargaining and negotiation are key components of
Community-Based Initiatives (CBI). Policy sciences and VLPA can clarify diverse community interests for bargaining and possible compromise. Q Methodology can identify commonalities for consensus in negotiation and compromise among subgroups of beneficiaries. For example, community negotiation with governmental and shifting power entities was a regular component of the Community Forum in Afghanistan (see appendixes for cases and tools).

9. Developing systems for monitoring and evaluation

This function stresses systemic and continuous monitoring and evaluation (M&E), including the capacity to take corrective action while working toward community goals. Taking corrective action includes terminating activities that are not contributing to achieving the group’s goals. It is important to understand how people within the community are undertaking their own M&E to think about their own progress. How do people react and adapt to change? It is important to know what is occurring within a community because a sustainable VBPP M&E system is one in which the community participates drawing on local knowledge, values, and perspectives. The system should be a context-sensitive performance measurement that ensures that goals are being achieved and information is being generated and shared; and that allows for a change of course in the event of a projection of unmet goals. It is important to know how participation in the context under scrutiny is being affected by events as they transpire. Thus, policy sciences (and CBI) employs tools to clarify community preferences to establish an indigenous baseline against which to monitor and evaluate whether projects are achieving development objectives. Changes in perspectives, situations, base values, and strategies are examined; and outcomes and projected futures are tested for their congruence with the community’s goals and preferred policies (see appendix 3, Policy Sciences). In a Malawi pilot project, using the VLPA approach, community members innovated a Venn diagram and used the tool to monitor the functioning of organizations within the community, to measure the extent to which they were able to attract new organizations to work in their communities, and to address self-funding priorities and progress post-World Bank support. Irrespective of the tools or combination thereof, context sensitivity is crucial in monitoring and evaluation systems and their appraisal. The community and third-party appraisers must be able to harvest experiences to know what works and to be able to terminate what does not work.

10. Developing self-governance and constitutive processes through iterative learning-by-doing

Developing self-governance and a constitutive process through iterative learning-by-doing requires building on all the earlier functions. Since community members have been involved in the tasks of planning and implementation, it is important to frame self-governing institutions and build local capacities in governance and leadership. Communities have internal “constitutions”—operational codes and
accepted customary practices for governance that must be accounted for and built on in assisting further development of community constitutive processes. VLPA established Village Development Committees (VDC) in each of its pilot projects. The BUPP (Bangalore) project established a three-tier governing structure consisting of (1) steering committee responsible for implementing the program from a distance with participants from state government, NGOs, and community-based organizations (CBOs); (2) a project management unit responsible for day-to-day management; and (3) development teams at the slum level. The Policy Sciences Decision Seminar for Afghans was devoted largely to building a constitutive process in Afghanistan. The tools utilized to this end are presented in the Appendix. Governance arrangements were key to the Community Forum in Afghanistan, in which people could consult, take decisions, and elect representative bodies to make decision on their behalf.

The two cases in the Appendix that involve Afghanistan offer explicit constitutive process lessons from the microcommunity level on the one hand, and the macrocommunity on the other. Constitutive and governance decision processes are different from ordinary social process decisions. Particular attention should be devoted to the distinct functions of group decisionmaking, and the community should be assisted in developing skills in performing each of these special functions. Hence, the community must be assisted in skills related to gathering, processing, and disseminating information relevant to community-wide governance decisionmaking. The community must be trained in the promotion and active advocacy of its own policy goals; in the means of projecting community policy that is authoritative and controlling; in procedures for invoking events in terms of community prescriptions; in applying community prescriptions to incidents and events; in procedures to terminate governance arrangements; and how to appraise the entire community governance and constitutive process. The goal is to build sustainable governance processes that are contextually sensitive and that fundamentally build on local cultures and values.

A path to building sustainable systems is to focus on key VBPP functions by drawing on lessons learned from case and project experiences and tested tools. When iteratively performed, these functions amount to a needed enabling framework for a community value-driven, needs-based approach.

III. Building a Value-Based Agenda and Capacities for Facilitation

Bank support for community-driven development is evolving toward providing more explicit assistance to develop sustained capacity of poor communities and organizations. This support can enable groups to think through their values, understand the kind of futures they would like to have, assess their own strengths, understand their contexts, and plan and mobilize resources in a continuing iterative process of capacity development. The aim of VBPP is to support this agenda.
Facilitators will be key VBPP agents, and they should possess particular characteristics for which they should be screened in the selection process. They should have a certain innate aptitude for listening, nurturing, and treating people with respect. They should be of some background comparable to the community members with whom they will work. The VBPP approach calls for orientation, training, and sustained re-enforcement of facilitators' ability to work with both head and heart. It demands training and ongoing coaching of facilitators’ skills in trust-building; adopting a holistic approach; and helping communities and groups develop capacities for self-governance, influence, and networking. Facilitators will be trained in the VBPP tasks of clarifying project and community goals, analyzing trends and key factors in community development from the observational standpoint of the community, making development projections based on those trends, and generating creative future alternatives that account for community perspectives. The facilitator will help the community develop the habit of regularly applying these tasks. In this way, a VBPP facilitator will:

1. Help communities use and rescue their own language
2. Recognize diversity in the community, and help the community to focus on needs of the poorest, most disenfranchised
3. Help them develop their own voices—in meetings, community radio programming, and other media and means of communication
4. Help communities identify services that are available to them (for example, legal services to advocate and change barriers)
5. Help community members articulate their own values and wrestle with their values in terms of whether they support the human dignity of all their members—and of those outside their group
6. Help the community carry out functions based on the community’s initiative and iteratively build capacities for adaptive self-governance
7. Encourage groups, starting with the disenfranchised, to create fora for themselves to discuss their needs, rights, and responsibilities; and to get organized, identify and mobilize allies, and take effective actions
8. Encourage community members to listen to one another respectfully and teach them how to negotiate
9. Encourage communities to develop institutions and mechanisms that give voice to people with the authority to operate on behalf of the community, based on the community’s right to elect representatives with transparency and accountability and on clarification of community decision processes
10. Help the community build bridges.
The VPBB agenda will be significantly advanced when systems are developed for facilitators that stimulate learning and networking across communities. This advance will mean building linkages with Southern universities, institutes, and NGOs to assist in ongoing appraisal; and building their experience and capacities in performing key VBPP functions. Thus, forging a Community of Practice and implementing South-South Learning will be critical. Participants in the April 2003 CEERD VBPP expert practitioners workshop will be core collaborators in a community of practice and potentially available for advisory services. This core group may identify others with expertise and experience in key VBPP functions and tools. University institutes and centers should be identified and engaged to undertake training and assessment. However, if they are located in the North, they should commit to partnerships or associations with Southern institutions. A vigorous network of VBPP-committed training and research centers would support South-South learning and build capacity. The Bank’s Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), a network of videoconferencing facilities around the globe, would be available to assist those in the field to confer with members of this community of practice as pilots are undertaken. Eventually, well-planned study visits for groups of diverse stakeholders involved in pilots to visit other pilots and share experiences should be arranged.

Pilots should be undertaken in contexts hospitable to democratization and public participation. The country and project context should permit assistance to be provided both at community and local government levels, and improvements to be introduced working bottom up from the community to higher administrative levels. Pilot goals should be designed based on community trends in value demands and outcomes, as well as on local conditions that have affected these trends. Formulating project projections should be an explicit feature of pilot design. Pilot work should be appraised via a comparative analysis based on a stable frame of reference allowing for the distinct context. It is essential that the local community context be the lens for interpreting project outcomes. Key findings and recommendations should address ways and means to improve piloted activities, larger lessons for broader CDD support with a view to scaling up, and advice to the World Bank on the conduct of the appraisal function itself. An examination of pilot experiences might be captured in a “Values of the Poor” study. As VBPP innovations take hold, national policy and regulatory frameworks that influence groups’ and communities’ abilities to manage resources will be addressed. An aim is achieving positive policy dialogue prior to lending.

As stated at the beginning of this note, the overriding VBPP objective incorporates a vision of development as a self-sustaining participatory process of value fulfillment leading to an ever-increasing enhancement of human dignity. This note has highlighted general principles in realizing this vision. This work certainly will be adjusted with input from the community of practice. The preferred VBPP outcome is no less than a universal human right. It is the right of the
people whom James Joyce called “outcast from life’s feast” to finally and fully participate in shaping and sharing their own values.

Appendixes

Select Cases and Tools for Value-based Participatory Planning

VBPP principles and tools have been applied in the field explicitly and implicitly as features of approaches that are fundamentally value-based or have important value-based components. What follows is reflected in the body of the technical note and is presented in greater detail here to underscore tools we believe are important for an emerging integrated VBPP approach. These appendixes comprise cases and tools that were reviewed or referenced in the April 2003 expert practitioners workshop: (1) Village-Level Participatory Approach (VLPA) (2) Community Forum of Afghanistan, (3) Policy Sciences Decision Seminar for Afghans, (4) Beneficiary Assessment tools for VBPP, and (5) Q Methodology for VBPP.
Appendix 1. Village-level Participatory Approach

The Village-level Participatory Approach (VLPA) began with a series of pilots in a few African countries between 1997 and 1999.\(^1\) Since its inception in 1997, VLPA activities have been implemented in approximately 5,000 villages in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, and Uganda, while activities were planned for Tanzania and Zambia. Each of these countries has completed its pilot operations and, in the last three to five years, has been involved in various stages of scaling up to nationwide coverage.

The objective of VLPA is to assist village communities in implementing action plans addressing priority problems that have been identified by the communities themselves. Thus, VLPA helps communities identify and prioritize their problems, design action plans that address the priority problems, strengthen village organizations for implementing the action plans, and claim the assistance needed from the respective rural development services. A VLPA manual with toolkit that emphasizes training of facilitators and practitioners is used to achieve these goals. VLPA methodology is designed so that traditionally vulnerable groups have equal leverage in identifying village development priorities. Hence, the resulting village action plans can address not only the broader challenge of poverty reduction but also issues of equity within rural communities.

**Process**

The tools and methods used in VLPA are a synthesis of a large number of existing experiences of community participation in rural development. A critical feature of this approach is that it strives to strengthen the capacity of people to implement, monitor, and evaluate the activities they are undertaking, potentially leading to empowerment. A VLPA process typically involves the following steps:

1. **Diagnosis.** Through village mapping exercises, semistructured interviews, transects, daily and seasonal schedules, and social structure diagrams, villagers analyze their situations and become aware of problems, challenges, and their potential for dealing with them. To ensure the active participation of all members, the villagers are asked to divide themselves into self-defined groups based on age, gender, ethnic group, or other affiliation. It is up to the villagers themselves to decide which groups to establish. The use of different tools for the diagnostic exercises enables the villagers to complement and crosscheck the information obtained through one tool with information from another.

2. **Identifying priority problems.** The diagnostic exercises can result in a long list of village problems. Each group is asked to select four to five problems that the members consider to be the most pressing and that should be addressed
immediately. The compilation of the list of group priorities becomes the list of village priority problems.

3. **Problem and solution analysis.** The priority problems are analyzed in mixed groups, using a method of problem and cause analysis called the problem tree. For each problem, the group analyzes the underlying causes and effects or impact of the problem. With the elaboration of the problem tree, villagers become aware of their capacity to influence and deal with the priority problems using their existing resources.

4. **Developing action plans.** Village groups together with the team of facilitators identify the actions most likely to produce the desired results. They then develop detailed action plans, specifying responsibilities, labor and resource needs, implementation dates, and monitoring indicators.

5. **Developing village organizations.** Once the villagers adopt their action plans, they decide whether their existing organizations are adequate to oversee their implementation or whether they need to create a new organization to handle this responsibility. In addition, villagers identify committees that will be in charge of implementing specific activities.

**VLPA Principles**

Although there is no singular and uniform participatory approach, VLPA tries to conform to some general principles. These are:

- **Encourage participants to take responsibility.** Participatory approaches encourage the community to take responsibility for its own development agenda rather than wait for outside assistance.
- **Respect village diversity.** Although the village is a discrete geographic and administrative unit, it is not necessarily homogeneous. Development practitioners should be careful to respect this diversity and ensure that all the different subgroup interests are represented in decisionmaking.
- **Promote participation for all.** For sociocultural reasons, it may be a challenge for women, youth, the poor, and others to speak out in village meetings. Facilitators should make sure that people from disadvantaged groups are able to express their opinions and participate actively in decisionmaking.
- **Reconcile different interests.** Many problems require group decisions. Actions that solve the problems of some groups can harm other groups. Different groups should be encouraged to find solutions that are acceptable to all.
- **Listen to the community.** Facilitators and project staff need to listen to the community and encourage villagers to think through their own problems and develop solutions. Each individual has knowledge and ideas that can contribute to finding solutions to village problems.
• **Involve multidisciplinary teams.** Involving people from different service agencies with different training and backgrounds enables the group to benefit from varied knowledge and perspectives. Collaboration among service agencies is essential to integrate the activities of all those working in the village.

• **Examine the situation from different points of view.** By using the triangulation approach, that is, looking at a problem from at least three different perspectives, and using different tools to collect the same data, the results are likely to be more effective.

• **Adapt to local situations.** Facilitators need to decide which tools to use and then adapt them to local conditions. They also should experiment with new tools.

*For further information, contact:*
Willem Heemskerk, or
Gerard Baltissen
Royal Tropical Institute
Mauritskade 63
P.O. Box 95001
1090 HA The Hague
The Netherlands
T: 31 20 56 88 219
F: 31 20 56 88 444
E: w.heemskerk@kit.nl
Appendix 2. Community Forum of Afghanistan

Under the leadership of Samantha Reynolds of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Afghan Community Forum was established in 1994 to work in urban and rural rehabilitation in Afghanistan. UN-Habitat is an implementing agency for World Bank-supported activities in Afghanistan.

Development of the Community Forum Process

Initially on a mission to provide rehabilitation in urban areas, the UN-Habitat team realized that, despite war and the existing problems, people in Afghanistan were surviving and that the key to a successful project is understanding what people had been doing to survive. To consult about, and to understand, people’s survival strategies, the team engaged local people. The team’s role was not to solve all problems but to facilitate and support indigenous processes and, on this basis, to undertake repair and recovery. Repair and recovery consisted of two dimensions: (1) physical or infrastructure and (2) social, organizational, and institutional. At a time that the situation was adverse and systems were not in place, the team concluded that it had an opportunity to build from the bottom up and institutionalize a participatory and community-driven planning process.

In consulting with local people, the team found that values emerged that equated to human dignity (such as respect, well-being, wealth, and the sharing of power). The challenge was to translate these values into project outcomes on the ground. The people in target communities were beginning to feel that no one was recognizing their human dignity, and no one was listening and asking them what they wanted. The people believed they had a right to participate in these processes. The team grappled with questions of how to follow a systematic approach, how to internalize their activities and impel people to take action, and to ensure that the project would be institutionalized and continue beyond the project cycle.

The team commenced project activities on the physical or infrastructure side in the urban town. Their entry point was talking with community people. At first, they had to rely on the authorities to organize local people to come together. Consultation groups consisted of men only, and most often only a few representatives or the traditional village elders were involved in these consultative processes. The team also consulted with authorities. These discussions with officials from institutions such as the municipality, sanitation, and other services departments were critical to understand which service-delivery strategies were functioning and, despite the hardships, keeping the city running. Aware that, initially, they were meeting and engaging only a select, very traditional community group, the team began exploring other avenues to meet
other community members. By building a rapport with the traditional representative councils (shuras), they eventually were able to access community women.

Engaging the women marked the formal start of the Community Forum process. Starting at the root of the problems, the project team attempted to address the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Given the scarcity of their resources, they appealed to the women to identify the most vulnerable and deserving among themselves. This was an opportunity for these women to organize themselves to consult and select those deserving of benefits. This experience showed them that they needed to consult, and the women approached the team to establish a place in which such consultations could take place consistently. The community women then developed a profit-sharing system whereby they would invest UN funds in various enterprises. The profits generated from these enterprises would pay the running and maintenance costs of their community center. The women themselves determined the activities and projects they wanted to undertake, and they were consulted at every stage of the project that established a community center. To them, this community center would be the means to consult and associate with one another, take joint decisions, earn income, and live with dignity. The process thus became self-sustaining, and soon other groups used the common space to post notices. As awareness of activities spread, the men also became interested in the community meetings. Gradually, the community decided that it was not possible for all of them to meet each time and that they needed to elect a smaller group of representatives. This became the “elected development council.” Thus, the UN team was successful not only in reaching out to excluded groups but also in finding ways to give these groups control, the ability to consult and access information, and a role in decisions regarding their development and fulfillment of their own values as defined by the community. This process of building a community process was the foundation of a constitutive process.

The Community Forum experience was then repeated in other communities in both urban and rural Afghan settings, enabling regular tri-weekly meetings. In the rural area, owing to entrenched and established male-dominated traditions and customs, the team concluded it was more difficult to organize women. Hence, the team negotiated with the local shura (traditional representative council) on the merits of setting up a body that could be elected by the people and be broadly representative. The local people decided that there was a need for another representative body and elected a group of people responsible for consulting and making decisions on behalf of the community. This new representative body often served as the forum to invite agricultural officers and other officials and hold them accountable to their tasks, thus giving people an opportunity not only to consult and plan but also to hold the authorities responsible and accountable.
This Community Forum system and elected group system then took on the same authority at the district level. Gradually, it became not a replacement of the government but the body with which NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and other international agencies could consult. The Community Forum also became the channel to link the community with other processes, organizations, and departments.

**Lessons**

Clearly, the UN-Habitat project team had played only the role of facilitator. The people themselves developed the idea and established the community fora. Even during the Taliban period and when the UN team was evacuated, the fora continued to meet and consult. Women traveled from community to community to see how they were doing, protected their assets, risked their lives to hide materials, and worked at the neighborhood level to survive.

Another aspect of the Community Forum was establishing a community fund. In other words, instead of the funds for community activities being capitalized by the donors or implementing agencies, the people were responsible for managing their own resources. The lesson was that when people have their own treasury, they can use it to leverage additional resources. Furthermore, the people wanted the funds to be invested wisely, not just flooded into their communities. They sought checks to ensure that the money was productively and positively targeted. Their belief was that resources should be given as needed and not flooded into the community.

A central lesson from this process was that since communities consist of diverse groups—people with different interests and demands—it is difficult to force a community into a coherent whole that did not previously exist. Thus, it is critical to work with the community to build the community process, which is also the foundation for the constitutive process. There, the tasks were to observe and learn the community decision process, what outcomes the community achieves, their aspirations and the values they seek to maximize, and the functions and structures they require to achieve these aspirations and solve their problems.

Another lesson from the Community Forum approach is the crucial importance of the government’s role. A larger authoritative and control structure must be communicating rules including legislation and a larger vision and objectives in the greater common interest. Nevertheless, it is critical that communities be involved in this process, ensuring a two-way communication rather than decisions imposed from the top. That grassroots participation is the larger governance and policy process is a key function of the Community Forum.

Finally, while the focus here is on the process more than the outcome, there should be unity in arriving at the objectives and implementing the project. It is not possible to work with every group and get every project right. Some will go
awry. *The key is that people feel involved.* The process should engender in villagers a willingness to act on information on the basis of community perceptions of their own values, and imbue the villagers with a new sense of ability.

For further information, contact:
Ms. Samantha Reynolds
Chief Technical Advisor
Afghanistan United Nations Center for Human Settlements
House 128, Street 11 E-7
Islamabad, Pakistan
T: 92 51 287 2006, 282 4729
F: 92 51 2870054
E: samantha.reynolds@undp.org
Appendix 3. Policy Sciences Decision Seminar for Afghans

The decision seminar is a policy sciences application that enables participants to identify, gain insight into, and propose strategies for addressing problems of mutual concern. Preferred policies and alternative strategies are generated to address problems in ways consistent with the clarified goals of participants. Decision seminars have been applied in a variety of contexts to development, governance, policy clarification, decisionmaking, and training. They are a value-based approach that was applied to the constitutive process of pre-Taliban Afghanistan, both in contrast and in ways similar to, the constitutive process concerns of the Community Forum (above) of post-Taliban Afghanistan.

The decision seminar described here was conducted as a facilitated workshop on governance and reconstruction for a select group of Afghan refugees in Peshawar, Pakistan, in June 1990. Participants came primarily from the east and northeast areas of Afghanistan, many working with the then-Afghan Interim Government. Primarily Sunni Muslims and some Shia Muslims, Hazaras, and Wahhabi sympathizers were represented.

A policy sciences toolkit presented as four handouts provided the seminar’s basic thematic organization. The handouts, or tools, are brief encapsulations of the many conceptual and methodological struts of policy sciences. Each was translated into Pashtu. The order of presenting the material was tailored to this project. The sequence of the tools described here is flexible and context-dependent.

Tool #1 oriented the participants to the intellectual tasks of decisionmaking and problem-solving. Participants were encouraged to think systematically about the performance of each task. They generated specific examples. There was lively discussion about which of many possible development projects should be undertaken in post-war Afghanistan. While the entire infrastructure would require work, the group concluded that the priority was the removal of numerous land mines to make it safe for villagers to re-inhabit many villages and begin to cultivate and irrigate the land. The exploration of ways to secure international assistance in support of this project lent itself well to understanding and using decisionmaking tools.

**Tool #1**

**Intellectual Tasks of Decisionmaking or Problem-solving**

A. *Goal clarification.* This task refers to the processes through which individuals or groups seek to understand what their preferences are in relation to a particular problem. When this task is performed by a group, and the problem under consideration is the way in which the group plans
to organize itself, the group is engaged in determining its basic policies. These are the policies to which individuals commit themselves for the communities of which they are members.

B. **Trend analysis.** This task involves describing the history of what past decisions have produced in relation to clarified and specified goals. Where are we now in relation to fundamental preferences?

C. **Factor analysis.** This task involves an identification and assessment of the predispositional and environmental factors that have affected past decisions. What are the factors and their interrelationships that may affect future decisions?

D. **Future analysis.** This task involves anticipating the likely course of future decisions. What is the likely impact of future decisions on the achievement of fundamental preferences and basic community policies?

E. **Invention of alternatives.** If one does not like what is projected for the future, if it is not compatible with clarified goals, what can one do about it? What are the alternatives in the management of authoritative decisionmaking for doing things differently?

**Tool #2**

**VALUES, OR THE RELATIONSHIPS OR EVENTS THAT PEOPLE DESIRE**

Tool #2 focused on the central task. The eight "value" terms and comparable terms in other languages are part of every local vernacular. However, what each term denotes and how it is identified and evaluated depend on numerous factors, ranging from culture to personality to the relative presence or absence of crisis. The specific characterization of values in particular contexts should never be assumed prior to inquiry. Nevertheless, it is commonly and accurately understood that the outcomes of all decisionmaking or problem-solving can be considered in terms of their impact on values.

**Tool #2**

**VALUES: WHAT PEOPLE DESIRE**

- Power
- Enlightenment
- Wealth
- Well-Being
- Skill
- Affection
- Respect
- Rectitude

Participants divided themselves into 9 groups of 5 members each. A latent dimension of the program was to simulate a constitutional convention. The task for each group was to establish, in print, a common understanding of the empirical referents of each term and to provide two or three sentences in which
each term was used. When each group had finished, the members had produced eight sheets of paper, one for each value. Each group was provided with a copy of the results from all the other groups to enable each to review the common understandings reached by the other groups. The plan then called for a representative from each group to meet in a coordinating group of nine that would attempt to establish the seminar's comprehensive understanding of the eight value terms. This value exercise set the foundation for the discussion of the international law of human rights.

Tool #3 provided a way of identifying and organizing pertinent data during decisionmaking or problem-solving. Prior to 1978, the governance of Afghanistan was described in terms of participants, their perspectives, the situations in which they interacted, the assets or base values on which they drew to govern, the strategies employed, and the outcomes achieved in reference to the distribution of all values. Subsequently, decision seminar members focused on how to use the same set of questions to organize their thinking about the post-war governance of Afghanistan.

**Tool #3**

**Questions to Address When Examining a Particular Problem in Context**

A. Who is participating? Individuals and/or groups? Who would you like to see participate?

B. What are the perspectives of those who are participating? Perspectives include:
   1. Demands, or what participants or potential participants want, in terms of values and institutions.
   2. Expectations, or the matter-of-fact assumptions of participants about the past and future.
   3. Identifications, or on whose behalf are demands made?

C. In what situations do participants interact? In what situations would you like to see them participate?

D. What assets or resources do participants use in their efforts to achieve their goals? All values, including authority, can be used as bases of power. What assets or resources would you like to see participants use to achieve their goals?

E. What strategies do participants employ in their efforts to achieve their goals? Strategies can be considered in terms of diplomatic, ideological, economic, and military instruments. What strategies would you like to see participants use to pursue their goals?

F. What outcomes are achieved in the ongoing, continuous flow of interaction among participants? Outcomes can be considered in terms of changes in the distribution of values. Outcomes also refer to the ways in which values are shaped and shared.
Tool #4 provided a way of organizing thought about the decisionmaking process in any group, including the process of drafting and applying a constitutional document.

**Tool 4**

**CLARIFICATION OF "DECISION"**

Decisionmaking is comprised of a variety of distinct functions by which decisionmaking of any group can be described. Preferences for how each of the functions should be performed can be explored and proposed:

A. **Intelligence.** Gathering, processing, and disseminating information relevant to decision
B. **Promotion.** Active advocacy of policy alternatives, adding intensity of demand to expectations, taking initiative to secure the making of prescriptions
C. **Prescription.** Projecting a community policy that is both authoritative and controlling
D. **Invocation.** Provisional characterization of events in terms of a prescription; initiating an application
E. **Application.** Relation of community prescription to particular instances of interaction and putting such prescriptions into controlling effect
F. **Termination.** Putting an end to prescriptions and to arrangements made during the period that the prescriptions were authoritative
G. **Appraisal.** Inquiry focused on the adequacy of past decision and decision process to secure postulated goals; includes the recommending of new means for goal realization and ascription of responsibility.

This tool was used to enable participants to functionally understand their unfolding constitutive process, including preferences in terms of functions. To the extent that a group’s preferences for how it wants each function performed change over time, the group should understand that its constitutive process also will change.

The decision seminar provided a contextually sensitive, shared frame of reference in which participants could see themselves and one another as engaged in mutual inquiry to clarify their common interest. For a detailed appraisal of the Afghan Decision Seminar project, see “The Decision Seminar as an Instrument of Power and Enlightenment,” Andrew R. Willard and Charles H. Norchi, *Political Psychology* 14 (4): 1993.

*For further information, contact:*
Andrew Willard, President
Policy Sciences Center, Inc.
Appendix 4. Beneficiary Assessment Tools and Experiences

Beneficiary Assessment (BA) is used to investigate the perceptions of a systematic sample of beneficiaries and other stakeholders to ensure that their concerns are heard and incorporated in the project and policy formulation. The general purposes of BA are to (a) undertake systematic listening, which "gives voice" to poor and other hard-to-reach beneficiaries, highlighting constraints to beneficiary participation, and (b) obtain feedback and recommendations from those who are to benefit from policy changes and other interventions. By capturing and revealing the voices of those who intended to benefit, the people are empowered, and managers come to see the benefits of improved communication with project beneficiaries. This can lead to the formation of institutions as well as fora that are more open to collective activity between the two groups, and to managers who are more responsive to their clients’ needs. The ultimate test of BA is the creation of bridges of understanding between the beneficiaries and managers such that the beneficiaries subject to change become the architects of their own development.

The focus of BAs is on obtaining systematic, qualitative information, including subjective opinions, to complement the data from quantitative evaluations with reliable and useful information on the sociocultural context and perceptions of a client population that will inform task managers and policymakers. When possible, BA results are quantified and tabulated. Furthermore, the systematic nature of the information gathering enhances the reliability of the findings due to the combination of techniques used to gather information. The combination allows for crosschecking responses and a reasonable assessment of the extent to which opinions expressed by respondents represent widely held views in their community.

BAs can be used in both rural and urban settings. The most common application of BA techniques has been to projects with a service delivery component, for which it has been especially important to gauge user demand and satisfaction. BA also can help lay the foundation for, or be a component of, intensive VBPP work. With evidence that their ideas are being heard and respected, communities are more likely to participate in development projects and take steps to improve their access to resources. Although BA techniques are used mainly for either project preparation or evaluation, results are most effective when these techniques are used iteratively throughout the project.

BAs usually make use of three qualitative methods of information gathering: semi-structured or conversational individual interviews, focus group discussions, and participant-observations.
Semistructured interviews involve the preparation of an interview guide that lists a predetermined set of questions or issues to be explored during an interview. This guide serves as a checklist during the interview and ensures that the same information is obtained from a number of people. The order and the actual working of the questions are not determined in advance. Moreover, within the list of topic or subject areas, the interviewer is free to pursue certain questions in greater depth. Logical gaps in the data collected can be anticipated and closed, while keeping the interviews fairly conversational and situational.

Focus group interviews are interviews with small groups of relatively homogeneous people with similar backgrounds and experience. Participants are asked to reflect on the questions asked by the interviewers, provide their own comments, listen to what the rest of the group members have to say, and react to their observations. The main purpose is to elicit ideas, insights, and experiences in a social context in which people stimulate one another and consider their own views along with the views of others. Typically, these interviews are conducted several times with different groups so that the evaluator can identify trends in the perceptions and opinions expressed.

Participant observation consists of the evaluating observer becoming a member of the community or population being studied. The researcher participates in activities of the community and observes how people behave and interact with one another and outside organizations. The evaluator tries to become accepted as a neighbor or participant rather than as an outsider. The purpose of such participation is not only to observe what is happening but also to feel what it is like to be part of the group. The extent to which participant observation is possible depends on the characteristics of program participants, the type of questions being studied, and the sociopolitical context of the setting.

**Steps in Beneficiary Assessment**

- **Familiarization.** Technical specialists are selected to guide the BA project. Important problem areas are identified and reviewed using available information including interviews with key stakeholders such as donors, government, and local people. A guide for semistructured interviews is developed to cover key themes.
- **Study design.** Target populations are identified. An appropriate representative sampling framework is devised, and the issues to be explored (according to the objectives of the BA) are clearly delineated. A research group and team leader also should be designated.
- **Selection and orientation of local interviewers.** The research group helps select and train local men and women who are fluent in local language(s), good listeners, and skilled in recall and writing. The study team, including local interviewers, practices descriptive and
accurate writing, note taking, awareness of and separation from preconceived notions, and data analysis.

- **Study.** BA work commonly includes interviews, focus group discussions, participant observation, and institutional analysis.
- **Preparation of the BA report.** The BA report includes recommendations that incorporate assessment findings into project design or sector work. The report should be reviewed by the interviewees to crosscheck for accuracy.

**Bank Experience with Beneficiary Assessment**

A 1998 review undertaken to assess their use in Bank-supported projects found that BAs:

- Influenced policy and led to changes in project design through improved targeting, efficiency, and effectiveness of programs
- Informed policy with otherwise unavailable and/or new information
- Increased sustainability by providing operationally oriented feedback from the client population
- Gave voice to the poor by indicating what the poor see as problems and possible solutions
- Promoted dialogue, ownership, and commitment by involving all stakeholders in listening and consultation.

It is estimated that, by the year 2003, beneficiary assessments have been used in over 200 Bank-supported projects in all regions and all major project lending sectors.

**Cases**

**A. Mali: Use of Beneficiary Assessment in an Education Sector Project**

A BA was undertaken in Mali as part of an education project to understand why parents in rural areas did not send their children to school. Attendance of girls was especially low. The BA found that the costs of transportation and feeding the child at school, plus the opportunity costs of losing the child's labor at home, outweighed the benefits of a poor quality education with few prospects for finding a job. These findings led to reformulation of policy to (1) reduce costs to beneficiaries by building schools in closer proximity, (2) increase attendance by designing a girls' component and (3) train teachers to improve the relationship between parents and the school system.
B. Lesotho: Impact of Beneficiary Assessment on a Health Sector Project

An in-depth qualitative analysis of individual and household behavior was conducted using BA. Participant observers were sent to study three communities for three months. They found that villagers did not use the services of the government health worker because there was no curative medicine and general treatment of patients was poor. An unsteady supply of contraceptives deterred women from making the long trek to the clinics. Fees were seen by the poor as too high and by the well-off as too low. The direct impact of the BA was that (1) village health workers were supplied with aspirin and simple remedies, (2) contraceptive supplies were improved, and (3) user fees were adjusted according to ability to pay.

C. Zambia: Beneficiary Assessment for Monitoring Zambia Social Recovery Project

Zambia’s Social Recovery Fund promotes community-driven infrastructure rehabilitation through micro projects aimed at cushioning vulnerable groups from the negative effects of adjustment. Since 1992, the fund has used BA techniques to ensure that the micro projects are targeting the poor, by enabling them to participate and to set priorities for the fund’s support. BAs have become a valuable tool for fostering community participation, building local capacities in social assessment methodologies. An important impact of BAs in this project has been the building of in-country capacity to conduct participatory research on policy issues. Four BAs have been conducted in Zambia since 1992, and the findings from these assessments have helped the team improve overall project performance, increase the sense of community ownership and responsibility over micro projects, strengthen supervision and monitoring, and foster better communication with the beneficiaries. An example of a direct outcome of BA application is the creation of a quota of two women on each project committee. BA findings showed that less than 20 percent of project committees had women members. To increase women’s participation and improve monitoring, the project manager recommended that two positions on each committee be reserved for women.

For further information, contact:
Lawrence F. Salmen
Lead Social Development Specialist
World Bank Group
1818 H St., NW
Washington, DC 20433, USA
T: 1 202 473 4690
E: lsalmen@worldbank.org
Appendix 5. Q Methodology for VBPP

Q methodology was invented as an outgrowth of psychometric developments in the 1930s. After enjoying popularity in psychology in the 1950s and 1960s, it has been rediscovered and is enjoying increasing use in communication, advertising, counseling, health sciences, education, political science, and public policy. As a measurement, Q technique involves the ranking (Q sorting) of a set of elements (Q sample) according to some criterion (for example, from agree to disagree). When correlated and factor analyzed, Q sorts from several individuals reveal different varieties of subjective response (for a general introduction, see Brown 2003, Donner 2001).

Q samples most often have been comprised of text, that is, of statements drawn from a universe of communication on some topic. For example, in a recent study of why Uruguayan dairy farmers were not participating in a genetic registry project, interviews with program administrators, technicians, and dairy farmers resulted in comments such as:

- “I want to use the system of the Milk Improvement Project, but I need help to keep data and enter it in the computer.”
- “If we want the producers to participate, we have to help them to become more efficient as in other parts of the world.”
- “I don’t like to be pressured to participate; it is my decision and no one else’s.”

Statements such as these then were presented to a small group of respondents, comprised mainly of program nonparticipants, who Q sorted the statements from agree (+4) to disagree (-4). Factor analysis revealed four different perspectives (Kramer, de Hegedus, and Gravina 2003). In another study, evaluation is underway on the effect on empowerment of Peruvian farmers’ experiences in field schools. This study has resulted in interview comments such as:

- “Those born poor will die poor.”
- “I have many plans and dreams for the future.”
- “It is always interesting to experiment and try out new things at home or in the field.”

Once completed, factor analysis will reveal different types of farmer response, which in turn will permit appraisal of the school experience.

Almost all Q studies have involved written text, which presupposes literate respondents; however, non-text Q samples are quite feasible and have been used. In fact, the very first published study using Q methodology involved a collection of 60 color samples (much like what could be obtained from a paint
store), which respondents ranked from pleasant to unpleasant, the factor analysis of which revealed different aesthetic tastes. Since that early study, others have been carried out using political cartoons, newspaper and magazine pictures, magazine and other advertisements, magazine covers, movie frames, land-use and water-resource scenes, pictures of food, drawings by and of children, and head-and-shoulders photos of adults. There have even been nonvisual stimuli, such as studies of musical and odor preferences. Many of these applications are hidden away in conference presentations and academic dissertations.

In sum, any objects or events about which individuals can express preferences and that can be represented in some sensible medium (that is, detectable by the senses), whether textual or otherwise, can be rendered suitable for Q sorting. Some hypothetical possibilities are:

- Imagine that citizens in a poor region of a country are considering developing a tourist trade to increase capital in-flow, but what kind of tourism? A collection could be made of developments in other countries—high-rise hotels, out-back bicycle trails, fishing lakes, gambling casinos, theaters—each represented in a photograph. A sampling of residents (drawn to include all relevant stakeholders) then could Q sort the photographs from desirable (+4) to undesirable (-4). Factor analysis would reveal community divisions with regard to possible development directions, but also points of confluence, that is, projects with wide support (perhaps for diverse reasons) across segments. It is worth noting that representatives of lending institutions and other actors also could provide theoretical Q sorts in terms of project expense, developments apt to be socially disruptive (for example, casinos), and developments apt to have the largest impact on tourism. In this way, certain objective considerations (for example, expense) could be placed alongside the subjective preferences of the community.

- How can we tell whether village women are being empowered, that is, whether empowerment efforts are being effective? Photographs or drawings could be made of women in various settings—cooking (skill), shopping in the market (wealth), taking leadership in a group (power), instructing male employees (respect), being admonished by a husband (affection), and praying in church (rectitude). These photographs then could be presented as a Q sort under the condition of instruction, “Which of these is most like/unlike your situation?” At another sitting, women could be asked, “Which of these will be your daughter’s situation when she is an adult?” Empowerment is related to changing expectations; thus, particular attention would be drawn to any divergences (as measured factor-analytically) between these two conditions; that is, whether women imagined their daughters having a better life. Moreover, attention also would be drawn to changes in the first condition over time. That is, would
there be differences in the Q sorts that women might provide as “most like/unlike my condition” if measured at six-month intervals, and would observed changes be indicative of shifts in identification in the direction of greater empowerment?

- What kinds of dietary changes might be worth fostering? Pictures of different food dishes (a piece of bread, a bowl of soup, a potato) could be presented to villagers, who could be asked to sort the foods from “those I like best” to “those I dislike most.” Q factors would indicate different patterns of food preference. Nutritionists also could sort the foods in terms of their nutritional and caloric contents. Systematic suggestions then could be made in terms of specific food exchanges that would enhance healthy consumption while not substantially altering each individual’s overall preference pattern.

As stated previously, Q studies are designed to examine preferences, and this is normally carried out by expressing Q-sample items in written form. Of course, the more limited the person’s literacy, the simpler the text must be. In the case of a complete inability to read, alternative modes of expressing desires have to be invented.

For further information, contact:
Steven Brown
Professor
Department of Political Science
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio 44242
T: 1 330 672 2719
F: 1 330 672 3362
E: sbrown@kent.edu
ENDNOTES


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