

Annex 1A Community Profile And Asset Mapping— Interview Guide

The community profile is elicited through a series of group interviews conducted in the community during the initial days of field work. The community profile allows the research team to become familiar with community characteristics and issues relating to social capital for reference in later phases of the data collection. The group interviews establish a consensus definition of the “community” in which the research takes place. This definition will be used throughout the community profile exercise and will serve as reference for the interviews of the household survey. It will also define the catchment area of institutions for the organizational profile.

Several participatory methods are used to develop the community profile. In addition to a focus group format, the data collection includes a community mapping exercise followed by an institutional diagramming exercise. The primary data source material generated by these interviewing, mapping, and diagramming exercises are:

- Community maps, indicating location of community assets and services
- Observational notes of group process and summary of issues discussed
- List of positive characteristics of community assets and services
- List of negative characteristics of community assets and services
- List of all formal and informal community institutions
- Case study of community collective action
- Institutional diagrams (Venn) of relative impact and accessibility
- Institutional diagrams (web) of institutional network relationships

Between two and eight group interviews should be conducted in each community. Each group should have 5–12 participants. At least two group interviews should be carried out with women and men separately. Groups may be stratified on other sociodemographic characteristics that may be important within the community context, such as age or ethnicity. Mixed group interviews can also be conducted to assess levels of consensus, but these should be in addition to separate groups.

Each group should have a moderator and two observers. The moderator’s role is to facilitate the discussion, probe on key issues, elicit comments from all participants, and focus the discussion on the issues of interest without seeming to interrupt or ignore extraneous comments from participants. The observers’ role is to take notes on the content of the discussion and process of group dynamics.

INSTRUMENTS OF THE SOCIAL CAPITAL ASSESSMENT TOOL

The team should have the following materials available: interview guide, pads of notepaper, writing pens, flip-chart paper, markers (several colors), colored paper circles of different sizes, tape, scissors.

1. DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY AND IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS

Bring large sheets of paper and several color markers. Ask the group to draw a map of their village or neighborhood that shows the settlement pattern, sites for productive activities, and locations of various assets and services in the community. A second group may be asked to make modifications to the map developed by the first group or, if they prefer, draw their own. The map is a key reference point for the discussion and should be used throughout the interview process to stimulate discussion, identify critical issues, clarify discussion points, and so on.

- 1.1 How do you define this village/neighborhood?
(Probe on geographical boundaries, place names, and other reference points. Establish consensus on the geopolitical definition of "community" for later use in the household survey.)
- 1.2 Where is/are the...
 - ...primary school? Secondary school? Childcare centers? Other schools?
 - ...health services (both formal and informal)?
 - ...sources of water?
 - ...waste and garbage disposal sites?
 - ...sources of electric lighting?
 - ...public telephones?
 - ...main streets/roads?
 - ...principal means of transportation?
 - ...markets, shops, and other commercial establishments?
 - ...churches (places of worship)?
 - ...cultural and recreational areas? (Where do you spend your free time?)
 - ...areas that are less safe?RURAL:...irrigation systems?
- 1.3 How many years has this village/neighborhood been in existence? Has the village/neighborhood grown, gotten smaller, or stayed the same in the last five years? Who are the people most likely to come into or leave the community?
(In the case of significant in- or out-migration, have the group draw a second map showing patterns of migration, new settlement, and expansion of community boundaries and land use.)

2. COLLECTIVE ACTION AND SOLIDARITY

- 2.1 People from the same village/neighborhood often get together to address a particular issue that faces the community, fix a problem, improve the quality of life, or something similar. Which of the following issues has your village/neighborhood tried to address in the last three years?

(Probe: education, health, public services, roads and transportation, markets, credit, recreational and cultural resources, security, child care, irrigation, agricultural services.)

- 2.2 Do you think that everyone in this village/neighborhood has equal access to _____?

(Probe: same services as mentioned under 2.1)

Is this also true for the poorest members of the community?

- 2.3 Have there been any efforts by the community to improve the quality of the _____ *(service or benefit)* or overcome a problem? Can you describe one instance in detail? (Refer to this case study for specifics of the following questions.) Were there community groups that played an important role? What kinds of responses did you get from the local government? From other organizations? From the rest of the community? What kinds of obstacles did you have to deal with? What was the outcome of the effort?

(Probe for locus of leadership, resources tapped, sources of resistance, who benefited or suffered from the outcome, the kind of follow-up that occurred as a result of the effort, and the mechanisms employed to ensure sustainability of the effort.)

- 2.4 Has this village/neighborhood ever attempted to make improvements but failed? Why do you think the attempt failed? What would you have done differently to make the effort more successful?

(Probe for constraints on collective action; identify the roles of government, community organizations, and secondary institutions in influencing outcomes; and discuss the relationship between the community, representative organizations, local government, and other civil society actors.)

3. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND DECISIONMAKING

- 3.1 Who are the main leaders in this community?

(Probe formal and informal leadership.)

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- 3.2 How do they become leaders? How are new leaders selected?
- 3.3 How are decisions made within this community? What is the role of the community leaders? How are community members involved?
(Probe on role of traditional leaders, informal leaders, elites.)

4. LIST OF COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

- 4.1 What are the groups, organizations, or associations that function in this village/neighborhood?

Have the group list all the organizations, formal and informal, that exist in the community. Make sure all different types of organizations are included (agriculture, credit, religious, recreational, health, education, etc.) and that the list is as complete as possible. Have the group go through the list and identify which institutions are most important in meeting the community's needs. Make sure the list is written with plenty of space between each item.
- 4.2 Which groups play the most active role in helping improve the well-being of community members?
- 4.3 How did this group or organization get started (government initiated, through government donations, NGO donations, grassroots initiative, etc.)?
- 4.4 How are the leaders selected (election, appointment, inheritance)? How stable is the leadership (frequent or sudden changes, normal progressive change, or never changes)? Is leadership generally harmonious or conflictive?
- 4.5 How are decisions made within these groups or organizations?

5. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS AND THE COMMUNITY

Venn diagram: Cut out (ahead of time) paper circles of three different sizes and lay them out. Ask the group to place the largest circles next to the most important organizations, the middle-sized circles next to the less important organizations, and the smallest circles next to the least important organizations. Write the name of the organization in each circle. Observers should record the group's reasoning as to why organizations are categorized as more or less important.

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Draw a relatively large square in the center of the flip-chart paper. Tell the group that this square represents themselves. Have the group place the organization-labeled circles in or around the square at the center. The closer they are to the center square, the more accessible the particular organization is to the community. Let the group discuss among themselves and facilitate as necessary. Record the resulting diagram and reasoning behind the group's discussion on each organization.

- 5.1 Of the organizations on this list, which are most important? Which are least important? Which are of medium importance?
- 5.2 Of the organizations on this list, which ones are most accessible to the community? Which are least accessible? Which are somewhat accessible?

6. INSTITUTIONAL NETWORKS AND ORGANIZATIONAL DENSITY

Flowchart diagram: Have ready a sheet of flip-chart-sized paper and markers. Facilitate a discussion among the group regarding the relationships among the identified organizations, community leaders, and the community. Probe on local government institutions, nongovernmental organizations, base organizations, and other civil society actors. Ask the group to draw each actor and, using arrows or other appropriate symbols, indicate the relationship among them. Probe links among all organizations.

- 6.1 Which organizations work together? How do they work together (hierarchically, collaboratively)?
- 6.2 Are there any organizations that work against each other (compete or have some sort of conflict)? Which ones and why?
- 6.3 Some groups may share the same members and some groups have different members. Which organizations have the same or similar membership?
- 6.4 Are there organizations that share resources?