PADev Guidebook

Participatory Assessment of Development

African Studies Centre

Royal Tropical Institute

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Information and all reports on: www.padev.nl

Contents

Preface

In recent times, development aid agencies have been confronted with ongoing skepticism as to their effectiveness. Aid agencies are increasingly expected to demonstrate 'proof of success', as measured by sophisticated monitoring and evaluation tools.

In turn, the methods used to evaluate the effectiveness of development interventions have also received their share of criticism. They are often costly, time-consuming, have a bias towards quantitative data, often fail to capture the complexity of development and frequently require the input of expensive professional evaluators. The so-called 'gold standards' in impact evaluations are experimental or quasi-experimental econometric exercises, with randomized control trials (RCT's), and 'difference in difference' measurements. The overall aim of RCT's is finding dominant patterns on the basis of 'average' behavior. As such, it pays relatively less attention to heterogeneity and dynamic interactions with other development interventions and processes of change. While some studies have shown the potential of such an approach, they also highlight the downside of its use: their applicability tends to be restricted to certain domains of social change (like education, health care and water sectors), where this type of measurement is relatively easy, and they very much tend to be expert driven. PADev is an approach to development assessment that is holistic and participatory, and at the same time rigorous, and frequently makes use of both qualitative and quantitative data. It is intended as an additional impact measurement tool, rather than as a replacement for RCT's. It aims to add both context and depth by building up a big picture of development and change in an area over time. This is done through a more inclusive approach, which gives a clear voice to the beneficiaries of development interventions. Additionally it can be used as a set of tools for participatory history writing at local levels of scale.

PADev is a five-year experimental research project to develop and test a new holistic and participatory methodology for assessing development. In 2007 three Dutch NGOs (ICCO Alliance, Prisma and Woord en Daad) made the decision to fund this project, which will be continued through to mid-2012. As of March 2012 all fieldwork components of the PADev project are complete. To date, eleven workshops have been organized:

- 2008: Langbinsi, Sandema (both Ghana) and Tô (Burkina Faso), in areas with ongoing intensive collaboration between local NGOs and Dutch funding agencies
- 2009: Lasia Tuolu, Nandom (both Ghana) and Silly (Burkina Faso), in areas with past collaboration between local NGOs and Dutch financing agencies
- 2010: Wulensi, Daboya (both Ghana) and Niabouri (Burkina Faso), in areas with no collaboration between local NGOs and Dutch development agencies.
- 2012: Tô II (Burkina Faso) and Langbinsi II (Ghana), to test the final methodology that was developed based on experiences during earlier rounds, update the findings for the last four years of development and change, and discuss the findings with the local agencies in order to hear their feedback and viewpoints.

A number of additional theses have been written by (former) Master's students at the University of Amsterdam and the University of Antwerpen:

- Jerim Obure: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: A Meta- Analysis of Anti-Poverty Interventions in Northern Ghana (2008)
- Agnieszka Kazimierczuk: Participatory Poverty Assessment and Participatory Evaluation of the Impact of Development Projects on Wealth Categories in Northern Ghana (2008/2009)
- Martha Lahai: Participatory Evaluation: Perceptions of Local People on Long-Term Impact of Development Interventions in Northern Ghana (2008/2009)
- Aurelien Marsais: Participation in the Land of the Righteous: Between Discourse and Development Reality in Burkina Faso (2009)
- Jolien Oosterheerd: Perceptions of the impact of migration on the development of the sending communities, Dondometeng and Kogle, Northwest Ghana (2009/2010)
- Sanne Böhmer: "That's how it is" Local perceptions of the notion of education-for-development and its impact on people's livelihood strategies to improve their lives in Nandom, Ghana (2009/2010)
- Genevieve Audet Bélanger: Participatory Assessment of Environmental Projects: Concerns and Realities of Villagers and Development Organisations in the East Mamprusi District, Ghana (2010)
- Roger Bymolt: HADev - Holistic Assessment of Development: Assessing the 'big picture' of development in Nanumba South District, Ghana (2010)
- Zjos Vlamick: PADev:*The way forward: An Assessment of the Utilisation and Empowerment Capability, based on Fieldwork in East-Mamprusi, Northern Region, Ghana.* MA thesis, University of Antwerpen (2011)

Two further studies were also undertaken

- Agnieszka Kazimierczuk: Langbinsi/Gbangu follow-up, with a focus on the poor (2010)
- Anika Altaf: Perceptions about Islamic NGOs in Northern Ghana (2010).

In 2012 the eleven workshop reports were finalized and (combinations of) Ghanaian, Burkinabé and Dutch participants will write additional concluding papers.

See the PADev website for all available reports, data sets, and excel files formats used for recording data: www.padev.nl .

Please contact the PADev team through the website to provide feedback on the guidebook or to share experiences with the methodology.

Introduction

Overall goal

PADev is an innovative toolbox of tools and methods that have been designed to get a bottom-up assessment of development and change in a particular area over a period of time based on the value systems of the population. PADev is thus a holistic and participatory approach to development assessment.

PADev can be differentiated from conventional assessment methodologies, which often focus on a single agency, project/programme or sector with quite a 'technical' expert-driven approach to evaluation of output, effect and sometimes impact. In PADev, participants assess a wide range of changes, projects and agencies based on their perceptions. Further, PADev assessments typically look back at development and change over the past twenty to thirty years. This yields extremely valuable information for development agencies in the area: they learn about their own impact vis-à-vis other actors, and in addition, they find out which types of projects have been regarded as most effective and relevant in that particular geographic and cultural setting and more importantly: for whom and why, according to people's own experiences and criteria. This can be an important lesson for future interventions. PADev should not be considered as a replacement for conventional approaches, but rather as an alternative approach that enables construction of a 'big picture' of development and change for an area.

This guidebook has been written specifically for those interested in using the PADev methodology. It begins with an introduction to the PADev workshop setup, before describing the aims and methods of each exercise. The complete PADev methodology comprises nine participatory exercises that can be run in a workshop format over three days. Proponents interested in employing PADev in their assessments can do so in its entirety, or by using selected exercises and components to complement their existing assessment approach. It is entirely possible to implement PADev as it is described in this guidebook. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that this guidebook is *not* intended to be prescriptive. While it does describe what has worked for us, we do encourage further experimentation and adaptation as circumstances require.

Up to this point we have employed PADev only in ex-post assessments. However, as Robert Chambers has pointed out during a recent debate about the PADev approach and preliminary findings[1], there is also potential for PADev to be extended for use in the development of community action plans. PADev can also be an excellent way for local governments, NGOs and development-oriented banks and businesses to improve the design of their interventions and their communication with supposed beneficiaries.

1 Insights in Complexity Workshop, Sept. 15, 2010. See www.padev.nl

The most recent workshop round in early 2012 showed that PADev also promises to be a valuable set of tools to enable local people to write their own development history. *We encourage you to share your experiences with us*[2].

2 The PADev team can be contacted at http://www.padev.nl/contact.htm

Workshop setup

Scale and scope

PADev exercises can be done at various levels of scale. To date, PADev workshops have been run in northern Ghana and southern Burkina Faso. Each research area had around 50,000 inhabitants, which often translated to an area of roughly twenty by twenty or thirty-by-thirty kilometres. Generally this meant an area with a central village/town of around 10,000 inhabitants, and ten to twenty villages and hamlets around that service centre. The field team leader in northern Ghana or southern Burkina Faso would pay a visit to the area a few months in advance to have discussions with the local authorities (and get their informal approval), fix a date for the workshop, find a workshop venue and start preparations for selection of participants, catering and accommodation.

We have experimented with using the same method at the level of small villages (150-300 houses), and even at the level of some secondary schools (14-16 year-old students). We have also attempted to specifically target people who are locally regarded as belonging to the poor. Some of this experimentation with scale and composition has been undertaken in Master's thesis projects attached to PADev. This work has enriched the PADev method and has informed this guidebook.

The level of scale chosen has certain implications. We have found that the smallest local market area makes an ideal level of scale. This is because most of the workshop exercises require shared knowledge of the same area by most participants.

A greater level of scale will likely produce data that is more general and less comparable at a project level because participants would need to be divided into geographical groups while the 'local market level' would not require subdivision in geographical groups. Participant groups may know a greater number of different projects, but fewer participant groups will know of, and be able to assess, the same projects. The same is true for assessments of changes and agencies. The level of scale chosen will depend on the research objectives. Also, while it may be possible to apply PADev in a (peri)urban environment, this has not been tested yet by the PADev team and the methodology may require some modifications to accommodate this level of scale and the different setting. Some experiments have taken place to do PADev-type work for specific sectors only, and for relatively limited time periods[3].

This guidebook describes the methodology for the level of scale as we applied it and will therefore indicate for which exercises geographical groups are needed.

3 e.g., Dengerink, Just. 2011.*Experiences with renewable energy in Uganda: a participatory evaluation of the Uganda Domestic Biogas Programme*. Thesis, University of Amsterdam.

Participants

To be sufficiently representative, a workshop should consist of participants from all relevant categories of the local population. In practice, this means sampling participants in a way that does justice to the demographic, socio-cultural and socio-economic composition of the community. To do so requires a listing exercise beforehand and some kind of prior stratification (officials/ non-officials; and: men/women; old/young; relevant socio-cultural categories; relevant socio-economic categories). Unfortunately there is typically little prior information available that could be used to select such a sample. It would be preferable to select participants in such a way that they are representative for all these different characteristics. However, in using an approach that leads to a statistically representative sample, listing and selection is often quite time-consuming and could stretch the financial and organisational capacity of many researchers and development agencies who want to apply this method. A pragmatic approach to sampling participants is suggested, although be aware that the selection of participants can influence the results of the workshop, so do consider this carefully.

In practice we select participants to include specific groups of people: old/young, female/male, officials/villagers, people from the central place and people from hamlets, Muslims/ Christians/ Traditionalists or any other relevant criteria, to get a proxy representation.

It is wise to include 'officials'[4] and respected elders (e.g. the traditional authorities) in the workshop as these participants can offer great historical insight, albeit from a particular perspective. Care should be taken not to exclude locally influential people as exclusion may jeopardise the acceptance of the research activity. However, care should also be taken that these local opinion leaders do not dominate the workshop or that they prevent others to express their thoughts. We have addressed this by treating them as one or two separate groups during the workshop, facilitated by the most experienced or senior facilitators. Chiefs, government staff, NGO leaders and church leaders are all welcome, but preferably they should number only around ten or fifteen out of about fifty or sixty participants in total.

A local, independent researcher who has a good knowledge of the area should preferably do the selection of workshop participants. This researcher can use the 'snowball' method starting with a man and a woman from each village, who should invite people from all groups within the community. It is not advisable to seek the help of NGOs to invite participants because they may bias the sample (intentional or unintentionally) by selecting those they have worked with them in previous projects.

The PADev method is intended to combine knowledge about the area's recent history with an assessment of people's perceived 'valuations' of changes and interventions. The views of local spokespeople and officials should be separated from the views of 'common' villagers. Again: if a fully representative 'valuation' is important, the choice of workshop participants should be based on a representative sample, either of the population as a whole, or based on stratified sampling. In both cases a local 'census' is often needed, as recent and complete lists of people or households are mostly not readily available.

4 'Officials' are people with salaried positions in (local) government and in NGO's working in the area.

Participant group sizes

We have observed that the size of the participant group affects the extent to which participants feel free to engage in the workshop exercises. The larger the group size, the less opportunity there is for each participant to speak. Participants may 'switch off' as they get bored, or 'hide' behind more outspoken group members. In contrast, the smaller the group size, the more participants are involved and engaged, which may result in higher quality data. Participant groups of between six and eight members seem to be ideal. Different subgroup configurations can be used, and these are suggested in the description of each exercise (below).

Avoiding bias

Looking at the experiences so far we can say that it is very unlikely that the richest and most influential business people in a particular research area will attend the workshops. Often they are simply too busy. Even if they say they will come, they either don't turn up, or if they do, they tend to go in and out continuously disrupting their group.

It is also very unlikely that the very poor (and often despised or pitied) members of the local community will participate. Even if they have been explicitly invited, many will shy away from any formal meeting, let alone a three-day workshop. The same can be said about some minority groups (in our research area: Fulani herders for instance), who tend to live separate lives, and who often exclude themselves from meetings (and sometimes there is an element of explicit exclusion).

In practice, it is likely that workshop participation will be biased in favour of the relatively rich, average and poor people, and in favour of the local leaders and social organisers. The very rich and very poor tend to be the least well represented, and it is not uncommon that they choose to self-exclude themselves. Nevertheless, if care is taken to include peripheral villages, both men and women, and old and young, a (much) wider representation can be achieved than is typical of evaluation exercises. The methods used in PADev further facilitate triangulation between the information from different exercises and between different participant groups. The 'story of local development' that evolves is an amalgam of sub-stories, which together forms a locally acceptable reconstruction of the area's development history, including differences of opinion and judgment. If one would really want to hear the stories and opinions of the very poor, it is wise to organise separate activities for them, and take special care to encourage them to talk.

Workshop timing

The timing of the workshop is very important. It should not be organised during the busiest periods of the agricultural season, nor at a time when many people are away. It is important to avoid days of festivities, market days, or the holy days in the week. Organising the workshop during the rainy season causes problems, both of transport (facilitators and participants get stuck on the road, and arrive late, dirty, or not at all), and of illness (malaria, coughs). In many areas with seasonal agriculture, the rainy season is the hunger season and a period of stress; not the best period for reflection. Good timing should be discussed during the preparatory visit.

In cases when it is impossible (or too costly) to get all participants together at the same time, it is also possible to apply the PADev method in a sequential way; one group after the other. Particularly students who want to apply the PADev method for their studies can do this. The students working with the PADev method in our project have positive experiences with this sequential approach.

Organisation, catering and accommodation

Generally the workshop will be organised by a trusted local organiser (maybe a former student of the participating university). Accommodation is necessary for the team of facilitators, but not for the participants: Most go home at the end of the afternoon and come back the following morning (although sometimes transport for those living in faraway communities should be provided).

In general it is important to make sure that there are refreshments and lunch for all participants and facilitators. Providing frequent refreshments and a decent lunch keeps participants happy and their minds alert. When participants see that facilitators are sharing the same food with them they may feel a spirit of togetherness that enhances the participatory experience. Of course care should be taken to provide food and drinks that are locally acceptable. It is good to have a separate logistics officer, who deals with all food, transport and accommodation issues.

Workshop participants did not get formal payment, but we decided to give participants a small token of appreciation to compensate for their time, which they otherwise might have invested in income generating activities. Also, participant's transport costs were paid. The main workshop facilitator mentioned a few times (including in his welcome speech) that attendance lists would be made for all three days, and that during the last day he would ask all participants to come to him in private. As a payment guideline, one could use the equivalent of what a local teacher would get for three days of work. Since the payment was not known beforehand and also not mentioned in the open, we assume that this didn't play a role in the agreement to participate.

Training of facilitators

Workshop facilitators play a crucial role in PADev. Hence, it is important that they are fully aware of the ins and outs, the potential and the pitfalls of the approach. Often the teams of facilitators consist of people with different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds[5], and it is important to come to a common understanding, while at the same time making use of the wealth of cultural and disciplinary difference. Training should be provided before the actual workshop and a focussed refresher training and questions session the night before the workshop. Evening ses-

5 The PADev team of facilitators consisted of people with cultural backgrounds from Belgium, Burkina Faso, Canada, Ghana, Kenya, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, Sierra Leone, and Spain, and they had been trained as anthropologists, (agricultural) economists, geographers, historians, nutritionists, political scientists, sociologists, in international development studies and in natural resource studies.

sions evaluating the process is also recommended. An overall coordinator should be available for on-the-spot checks and follow up. Some of the issues that should be part of training exercises will be discussed in the following sections.

On language and interpretation

In our workshops to date, few facilitators spoke the local language(s), and among themselves English or French were the languages of communication. To be able to communicate with workshop participants of whom few would speak/understand English or French good translation is very important, and sometimes in more than one local language. We always made use of workshop participants, who would volunteer to play the role of translator. There are issues with this, and facilitators should be trained to deal with these. One of the obvious problems is that some of the volunteers may not be fluent in English or French. Another problem is that often these volunteers are young men or women, who have gone to school, and do not yet have a high status among the uneducated elderly people. Volunteers sometimes want to dominate the discussion and valuation, willingly or unwillingly manipulating the outcome of the groups in which they translate. Finally, some of the exercises require analytical skills to translate quite difficult and abstract concepts that may not be known to the interpreters or could be wrongly understood. Facilitators should be aware of these problems and use periods in between sessions to discuss with interpreters about these concepts. Bringing together outcomes of conceptual discussions in plenary sessions (e.g. about wealth categories) often brings to the fore that also in the local languages there are major differences of opinion about concepts like ‘rich’ and ‘poor’, and this may even be more pronounced when there are different languages present in the workshop.

On religion

In Ghana and Burkina Faso religion is very much part of daily life, and so care was taken in the various workshops to include prayers as part of the plenary sessions. A respected local religious leader was asked to pray for everyone; care was taken to have different rounds of prayers during the workshop, to enable religious leaders from a variety of faiths to lead prayers. In our workshops it has never caused a problem that an imam led prayer sessions in groups that also consisted of Catholic or Protestant members and leaders, or the other way around. Also, foreign and local ‘freethinkers’ always joined without any problems. However, there might be a problem if there are severe tensions between religious groups,. And in general one may say that it is not wise to have a workshop in a building or with an organisation that clearly belongs to one of the identity groups in the community (a church, or a mosque).

Workshop introductions

The workshop as a whole starts with a plenary round of introductions, in which the facilitators explain who they are and what the purpose is of the three-day gathering. In general it is wise that the overall coordinator presents him/herself first and leads the round of introductions. At some point the most senior among the facilitators from the country and from abroad should also get a chance to explain who they are and why they play a role in the workshop.

The introduction may last between one and one-and-a-half hours (depending on the type of introductory rituals, prayers, formal addresses, etc.). Brief introductions of the workshop participants are best done at the start of the group exercises due to the time it would take to introduce everyone during the introductory plenary. Participant groups are then formed for the first exercise of the day.

At the end of the first plenary session and after all participants have been introduced, the facilitator who is responsible for the so-called personal files explains about the personal files and gives everyone a copy.

After this first plenary session all workshop facilitators go to specific rooms (or outside, 'under a tree') and ask all group participants to fill in lists with their correct names. These participants' lists will be compared later during the day with the list provided by the workshop organiser(s).

Data management and workflow

In PADev workshops, a senior facilitator is typically paired with a junior who is responsible for data recording for each of the participant groups. Facilitators should be provided with worksheets in which they can fill in participant responses. Some facilitators prefer to record participant responses directly into digital worksheets, while others prefer recording responses with pen and paper and transcribing later. Whichever method is used, the worksheet for recording responses needs to be easy to understand and properly tested prior to use. Providing printed or digital worksheets the day they are to be used gives facilitators no time to gain familiarity or raise questions, which may induce basic recording errors, so this should be done the day before the workshop. At the top of each worksheet should be basic instructions of how to run the exercise. This should include the exact phrasing of exercise questions, ensuring that all facilitators ask the same questions in the same way to all participant groups.

Working with digital PADev data templates (available at padev.nl) makes it possible to get an overview of raw data while the workshop is on-going; to collect comparable data across the different sub-groups in a systematic manner; and to do data cleaning and improvements while the workshop participants are still around. It also enables a first 'fast analyses' and present 'first results' very soon after (or even during) the workshops.

It is crucial that data documents and files are properly named in a consistent format. It should always be clear which file represents which group, and for what exercise. When necessary, participant group names should always be specific to the gender of the group. In practice this requires a dedicated workshop coordinator who clearly explains what is expected from facilitators and regularly makes checks. The excel template files on the PADev website are designed in such a way that it is easy to compile the data from different participant groups per exercise or even across workshops.

Breaks between workshop sessions are important opportunities for facilitators to check and finalise reporting, and to recover from a very exhausting task. In the evenings the facilitators should come together to compare notes and briefly discuss the working process of the exercises - how did participants understand the questions? What were the hitches? Are there suggestions for improvements? Exercises for the next day are also discussed.

Reporting

Following the workshop and after checks and corrections have been made, the 'raw data' from each exercise should be shared among facilitators. One or more team members should then be responsible for compiling the data of each workshop exercise. Later, the compiled data may be made available online. One person should be put in charge of making an analytical report (see the PADev website for formatting suggestions and examples of such reports).

A draft analytical report can be discussed with other facilitators and with a selection of workshop participants before releasing it as a 'final document'. Doing this properly takes time, but it also makes reporting a shared experience. Involving workshop participants as referees of the (English- or French-language) reports of course enters a bias: only those who can read and understand these reports can directly play a role. However, a facilitator may also organize broader sessions in which the main findings are being shared, using the local language(s), also with those who cannot read.

Triangulate the facts and figures from different participant groups. In our experience this typically showed that participants have a shared picture that is quite accurate when objective facts and figures are compared with other sources of information (e.g. data from agencies). One of the more difficult data is the relations between agencies that are related to projects and their donors, especially for multi stakeholder initiatives or value chain development. There may be a need to triangulate this data with other sources of information, especially when analyses are made with regard to the types of agencies. However, it is preferable to make clear in reports which data from the workshop are corrected as a result of this triangulation. Such triangulation should be restricted to the facts and figures aspects.

It is wise to check parts of the participant data with representatives of agencies active in the area. In our experience participants usually have a relatively shared picture of development that is quite accurate when compared to 'official' sources of information. However, sometimes participant data is not fully complete, and occasionally totally 'wrong' in the view of agencies. Without including the agency's voice the analytical conclusions of the overall report and the reliability and acceptability of the method may be undermined. However, this can only be done for those agencies still active and willing to participate. Facilitators should avoid allowing agencies to change the findings from the workshops other than 'facts and figures', but for the credibility of the results it is important to go back to (important) agencies and validate the data with them.

Time management and workshop duration

In this guidebook we have tried to give an approximate duration of each workshop exercise. However, this typically varies between participant groups. The young men are often the fastest, while the older women or officials might be the slowest (often because they want to give a lot of details about projects and programmes). There is a degree of facilitator skill involved in knowing how far participants can be pushed (or restricted) to elaborate their answers while keeping an exercise to a reasonable duration. The facilitator needs to sense the energy levels of the group and ensure breaks are taken at appropriate intervals.

Regarding the length of a workshop day, we feel that participants can comfortably work from 10am to 4pm. However, it should be remembered that participants may not always arrive on time for a variety of reasons, so we often ask them to arrive at 9am, even if in practice the work really starts at 10am.

The workshop coordinator should try to avoid that different workshop groups have very different time schedules. Particularly at the end of the day it can be problematic if some groups are ready and start to leave, while others still have a lot of work to do. For very fast participant groups some sideline exercises may be designed as on-the-spot experiments.

In general participants are tired and want to go home at around 4pm. Many have to travel and want to be back home for supper and before sunset. When a local market is going on in the neighbourhood of the workshop venue, organisers should not be surprised when participants (or even facilitators) try to sneak out for a while, which may jeopardize the flow and quality of the workshop.

The day for facilitators is typically much longer. Facilitators should be briefed at the start of each day or the evening before about the exercises to be run and have an opportunity to raise any questions. In the evenings facilitators often work late, checking data or transcribing written data into digital form. Needless to say, after a thoroughly enjoyable two- or three-day workshop, all involved appreciate a period of rest.

Enhancing participation – stick and stone methods

There can be a tendency for one or two participants to dominate a group. This can undermine the voice of other participants, who may then ‘switch off’. This can result in group responses that are skewed towards the views of dominant individuals. A solution might be to introduce a ‘talking stick’ (many African chiefs have one). The participant with the stick speaks first, before passing it among other members to respond (not necessarily in a predictable circle), so that all have a chance to talk. The person with the stick is called the ‘stickman’ or ‘stickwoman’.

It has also been observed that exercises employing the use of stones generated a lot of discussion and engagement among participants because there was an element of ‘fun’ about them. Facilitators can think about how exercises can be adapted to use sticks and stones to make value judgements, rather than only giving oral responses.

In using 'talking sticks' please be aware of cultural sensitivities. In some areas with 'strong chiefs' it can be a cultural taboo for 'common people' to use a stick that resembles the chief's stick (although chiefs will usually be in an 'officials' group). Also, well painted sticks can give the person holding it a sense of pride to speak. However, we had one instance where decorations painted on a stick were interpreted by a participant as 'juju' (black magic) symbols. If this is a concern, painting symbols or colours from the national flag might be an alternative.

Workshop configurations

This PADev guidebook describes all the exercises that comprise a three-day workshop. However, it is important to restate that the PADev guidebook is not meant to be prescriptive - exercises can be adapted and extended in original ways. Agencies are also encouraged to use PADev as a toolbox of methods and to employ those exercises that are most relevant to their assessment needs – many different configurations are possible. If agencies choose not to utilize some exercises then workshops may be shortened to two days, or even to a single day. It should be noted however that some exercises rely on data collected in a prior exercise and so both exercises would likely need to be run. The PADev team encourages you to share with us your experiences of different configurations.

Writeshop participants using the stickman method

Exercise 1- Events

Objective

To reconstruct the most important historical events in the research area, and assess their most important effects on the community. This 'sets the stage' and helps to establish the development context. The exercise also acts as a nice 'icebreaker' for participants.

Workshop groups

- Officials (all people working for the (local/regional) government or for NGOs)
- older men (> 40)
- older women (>40)
- younger men (40 and below)
- younger women (40 and below)

If groups have a large number of participants it is preferable to split these to enable full participation of all members (e.g. older men I and older men II). We have used the age of '40' as a dividing line between 'old' and 'young', which generally resulted in groups of more or less equal size. If locally other age differentiations make more sense, or if groups become very different in size, other age cut-off points may be used.

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up:

First exercise in the morning of the first day.

Materials needed

- A1 sheets of paper or flip chart sheets (optional)
- Pens or markers with different colours (optional)

Duration

The exercise generally takes around 1 hour, with the group of officials typically taking the longest time. Some participants may choose to use mobile phones to check years with colleagues or friends elsewhere. The elderly groups may go back more than thirty years (with some major events mentioned longer ago). Among the younger people the time line generally goes back twenty to thirty years.

Exercise

In the group each member briefly presents him/herself, and recalls one major event in the area, including the approximate year (or decade, if it can't be made more specific) and what effect on the community that event had.

Participants may be unsure what constitutes an event and may sometimes confuse events with gradual changes or development interventions. While not a big issue, participants can be told that we will talk about gradual changes (exercise 2) and development interventions (exercise 4) later. A useful definition of an event may be: 'Something that happened in a single year which does not usually happen in other years'. Examples of events may be useful, such as natural events, diseases outbreaks, conflicts, political events, sporting events and cultural events. However, care needs to be taken not to be too specific as this may influence the kinds of events that participants recall. The emphasis should be on local-level events, although regional, national or international events that have somehow touched the community are perfectly acceptable. Participants continue to add events, until nobody can add anything substantial anymore. Collectively participants decide that the end result gives a good impression of the area's history of major events.

Instrument for recording data

Group	Decade	Year	Event description and effects
Nandom - young men	1980s	1983	Severe drought and wild bush fire (Nandom east); Low crop yields. This resulted in severe hunger and famine. Poverty increased. In the fire much vegetation was destroyed and many wild animals died.

Compilation/analysis

Data from all participant groups needs to be compiled, preserving an indication of which group came up with what event. The number of groups that mentions an event can be an indicator of how wide its importance was felt. A chronological history of the area can be reported using a timeline format or table format with the most important events. The analysis and write up may take a day or so.

Remarks and potential pitfalls:

This exercise is also an 'icebreaker', which can set the tone for the exercises to come. Responses from all participants should be encouraged, so that every participant has had the opportunity to speak in the group. If this exercise is dominated by only a few voices from the start (say, because others are shy), there is a risk this becomes a pattern for the rest of the workshop. The 'stickman' method may be useful here (see page 18). There are sometimes long discussions about details like the year or years in which an event happened. Facilitators should attempt to balance between giving room for these spontaneous discussions and refocusing on what the intention of the exercise is.

Exercise 2 - Changes

Objective

To get a detailed list of perceptions about the positive and negative changes in the research area. The assessed changes are organised according to six types ('domains') of 'capitals' and 'capabilities'. Later on in Exercise 6, participants will be asked which interventions contributed to the major positive changes, and which interventions helped to mitigate the major negative changes.

Workshop groups

Same groups as for Exercise 1-Events.

- officials (all people working for the government or NGOs, religious leaders)
- older men (> 40 years old)
- older women (>40 years old)
- younger men (40 years old and below)
- younger women (40 years old and below)

Large groups can be split (e.g. older men I and older men II).

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

Second exercise of the first day, probably starting after lunch

Materials Needed

- A1 sheets of paper or flip chart sheets (optional)
- Pens or markers with different colours (optional)
- Stones

Duration

This exercise may take two to three hours; meaning that the facilitator has 20-30 minutes per domain. Facilitators should ensure that groups have sufficient time to discuss changes across all domains. The cultural domain, in particular, often causes much debate and people like to talk about it in a nuanced way ("trend is positive, but"; or "no, we don't like this trend, however…").

Method of preparation

Each of the six domains (see format for reporting) should be discussed with participants to ensure common understanding. Facilitators need to have a common understanding of domains and sub-domains in order to explain these concepts consistently to each subgroup.

The research team must select a certain time frame prior to the exercise. The same time frame must be used by all participant groups. Up to now, PADev researchers have chosen either 20 or 30 years as a comparative timeframe, which is roughly a generation. The research team should be conscious of what the effect of choosing a particular timeframe might be (such as if there was a major conflict, drought, etc 20 years ago). Some participants (especially younger ones) may have difficulty visualising a 20- or 30-year period, so it may be helpful to reference an event that participants earlier recalled in the Events exercise.

Exercise

In groups, participants are asked to describe any changes that have occurred unprompted. So, participants can choose to start with any of the six domains. Participants are then asked whether they perceive the change to be 'big positive', 'small positive', 'big negative' or 'small negative'. After some debate, members of a group usually come to a negotiated consensus. Nevertheless, there may be cases where a change has both positive and negative effects. The facilitator can mediate as to what the dominant effect is (and record this), but should reassure participants that both positive and negative statements are always recorded (qualitatively) as well. When unprompted changes have been exhausted, the facilitator may prompt the group with specific questions about changes in other domains and sub-domains that have not been mentioned. It is important that the reporter records whether each change was discussed prompted or unprompted.

Immediate follow-up action

It is important to use the data from each group that same evening to make a summary of 4-6 major positive trends and 4-6 major negative trends for each domain. These will be needed during the second day (for "Exercise 7 – Relationship between changes and projects"). Note this compilation can take several hours.

Format for reporting

Group	Domain	Sub-domain	Change	Reason for Change	Change effect	Notes on effect
Wulensi - older men	Natural	Forest	Then there were plenty of trees; Now there are much fewer trees	Women have been cutting and taking firewood without replanting trees; increased bushfires; some farmers don't know the usefulness of trees and so burn the trees on their farms	-	Small negative, because "we still have some trees, and people are slowly learning to look after the forest".

Extending the exercise

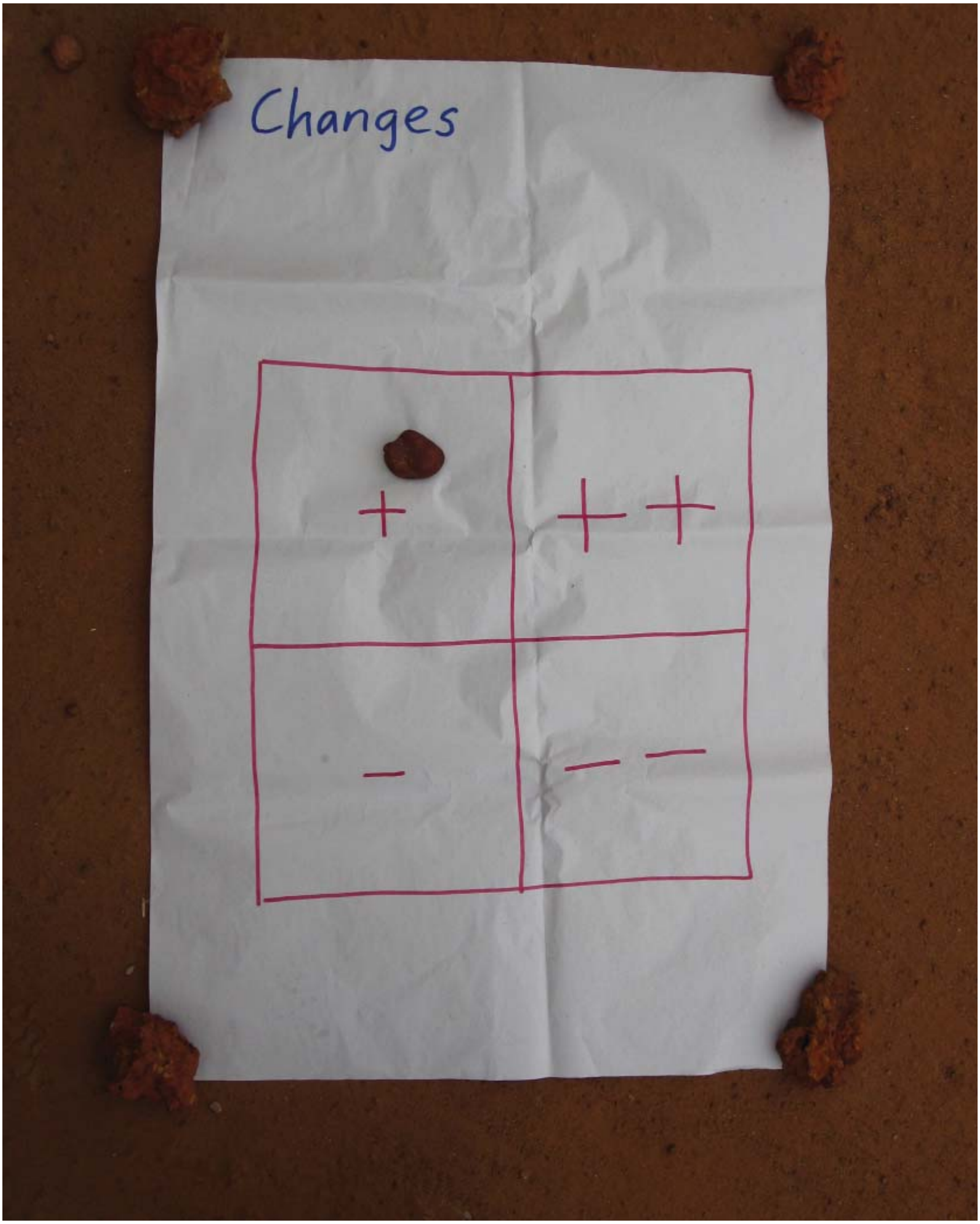
The exercise can also be extended to ask for the reasons why participants perceive a change to have occurred (this field is included in the data format above). This may lead participants to attribute a change to certain projects or project types. Doing so may replace the need to do Exercise 6 later. However, the research team should be aware that this will further extend the duration of what is already a long exercise. Alternatively, this exercise can also be done for only one or two domains, such as for part of an education evaluation with little time available.

Compilation/analysis

The reporting format given above can be used as a format in the workshop report as well, as long as it is clear which group gave what judgment. It is nice to apply a systematic presentation format: e.g. always start with the old men, followed by the old women, followed by the young men and the young women, and finally by the officials. In a separate section of the report some comparative statements can be made, particularly if there are major differences (or similarities) between groups. The compilation and analysis of this information may easily take two days of work.

Remarks and pitfalls

Some sub-domains and their wording are culture and area-specific. It is also wise to allow discussions about words/concepts (and translations) as interpretations may be quite 'language-sensitive'. Any connotations should be noted down by the facilitator, to be used in the analysis later. Facilitators can choose to use the stoneman/stonewoman method to elicit responses from participants.



The 'Changes' exercise, using the stone method

Exercise 3 – Wealth group categorisation

Objectives

1) To obtain a locally defined and accepted categorization of wealth groups. Participants identify attributes that serve as proxies of poverty and wealth in their area. 2) To determine the perceived distribution of wealth group categories within the population. Data from this exercise is also used later in "Exercise 8 – Wealth group benefits".

Workshop groups

Same as in exercises 1 and 2

- officials (all people working for the government or for NGOs)
- older men (> 40 years old)
- older women (>40 years old)
- younger men (40 years old and below)
- younger women (40 years old and below)

Large groups can be split (e.g. older men I and older men II).

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

Third exercise of the first day, mostly in the second part of the afternoon

Materials Needed/Method of preparation

- A1 sheets of paper or flip chart sheets (optional)
- Pens or markers with different colours (optional)
- Stones

Duration: The exercise generally takes about one hour, although in groups with more than one local language, or in the groups with the older people, it may take longer.

Exercise

This exercise consists of two parts.

Part 1

Groups discuss the local images of poverty and wealth, and the local words used for each of the five categories. The classification of five groups (very rich/rich/average/poor/very poor) provides a more nuanced picture of the poverty and wealth situation as perceived by local people as compared to a classification of only three classes (rich/average/poor). The classification of five categories enables participants to describe those few local people who are locally regarded as extremely rich even if there are only a handful of them in the whole research area. Also it allows people to describe those who are regarded as 'hopelessly poor' as distinguished from the 'normal poor'. Often people tend to avoid talking about the very poor, as these 'destitute people' are often despised, avoided, or otherwise excluded. By explicitly talking about a category of very poor (even if there are 'only few', and 'they don't really belong to us') as one of five categories it enables a 'natural' inclusion of these people in the categorization.

Participants are asked to agree on the local names for the five wealth categories (this may be done in more than one language). Participants are asked to describe the attributes of each wealth group. At first this should be unprompted. Following this, participants may be prompted about specific attributes. The reporter should record whether participants described each attribute prompted or unprompted.

Attributes can include the following:

- Type of job (or combinations of jobs)
- If people are farmers: acreage or number and types of animals owned/used, use of machinery and manual labour
- Household size and number of wives and children
- Type of house (material of walls and roofing), furniture, utensils (beds, bedding, chairs, etc.) and other assets.
- Ownership of transport; travel behaviour
- Type of clothes and ornaments
- Food consumption: how many meals a day and what quality
- Education levels (also of the children)
- Health and handicaps (physical and mental)
- Funeral rituals
- Other specific rituals
- Social behaviour, e.g. supporting others or being supported by others

Format for data recording

Group	Category	Local Name	Description	Distribution (10 stones)
Daboya - elderly women	Very rich	Asowura	Very rich are often big traders of farm produce and animals; farm with tractors; More than 1 house; Children able to attend higher education; Enough to eat and provide for others as well; Vehicles: car, motorbike, bike; Funerals: in Daboya there should be funeral functions on the 3rd day, 7th day, 40th day and after one year. Chiefs are buried under the big tree in town. People come from many places to attend. Food is provided for all, even tea in the morning. Other food: TZ, fufu, meat, soda drinks. A lamb is offered as part of the ritual. Food is prepared at home. People are dressed in beautiful clothes.	1

Part 2

In Part 2, participants are asked about the perceived distribution of the population across the five groups. Ten (or alternatively twenty) stones are given to participants in each group to distribute across five squares representing the wealth groups. Participants discuss the distribution of stones until consensus is reached within the group. If there is difficulty reaching consensus the reporter should try to report (in words) the reasons for disagreement. Also, the reporter should note any remarks made during the process. It is important to verify that the distribution of the stones is done with in mind the images of the wealth groups that were developed by the group in part 1 of this exercise.

Format for data recording

(Extension of the format used in Part 1)

Compilation/analysis

The recording format can be used for the final presentation of results, as long as it is clear which group gave which answer. Suggested tables/figures for presentation in the report can include:

- Local perceptions of the characteristics of five wealth categories
- Perceived wealth group distribution

The analysis and write up of this exercise can take a day. (See the follow up section for suggested inclusion in the final report).

Immediate follow-up action

(Needed if doing "Exercise 8 – Wealth group benefits" later in the workshop): During the evening a facilitator analyses the data from all participant groups and makes a summary that comes closest to an 'aggregated' compilation of wealth and poverty in the area (even if there are 'outlier' groups with completely different views). In case there is a lot of difference in interpretation this average understanding is presented back to participant groups the following day to get agreement on the terminology in use for the rest of the workshop days. Of course, this process can somewhat redefine those wealth classifications that participants have already gone to some trouble to define. There is some risk that these aggregated definitions may not be subsequently accepted and/or retained by participant groups and may cause further debate.

Remarks and pitfalls

During Part 2, some participant groups may have an initial tendency to state that 'everybody is poor'. It is useful for the facilitator to recap what the wealth classes are and the attributes given for each. For example, a very large percentage of 'very poor' or 'very rich' is unlikely if the descriptions indicate that these categories include the exceptional cases. This may indicate that there is still some confusion within the group about the different wealth classes, or confusion about the exercise itself.

Participants may have an initial tendency to state that the very rich only live in the capital city or overseas. The intention of the exercise is to capture local definitions of wealth and poverty, so it should be cross checked if the given description indeed refers to those who are locally regarded as very rich, and if this is indeed true, this should be brought back into the discussion by the facilitator.

To check participant's comprehension of the use of stones, one could first ask the participants to distribute the stones according to the number of Europeans and the number of Africans attending the workshop. In some cases, participants will note that the very rich or the very poor are present, but not even up to one stone, and so decide to give them no stones, while still a few persons from that category are present. Such discussions should be reflected in the reported comments.

It may occur that the group is convinced that there are not five but e.g. four groups of wealth classes. Of course if this is a strong and shared conviction, this should be accepted. However, for the data to be comparable across all participant groups it is preferable that indeed five classes of wealth are used. Prompted or not, a separate debate about poverty and wealth with regard to funeral arrangements often sparks a really interesting discussion about social differences, about exclusion-even-after-death, about solidarity, care and cultural institutions, and about cultural change.

Exercise 4 – Project recall

Objective

To get a complete list of all development projects (programmes, interventions, initiatives etc), including the dates, agencies and other relevant details. This list of recalled projects will be assessed and used in a number of later exercises.

Workshop groups

- officials (all people working for the government or for NGOs)
- geographical groups; often:
  - people from the central place (one or two groups)
  - people from villages in the north, the south, the east and the west

When doing the exercise at lower levels of scale, it is not necessary to divide participants according to geographical groups.

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

First exercise in the morning of the second day, after a plenary session to re-open the workshop (often with prayers, see before).

Materials Needed

- none (or large sheets of paper)

Duration

1.5 hours

Exercise

Make a list of all development 'projects' that people can remember in their sub-area (as far back as possible). Information should be added about the initiator agency, which can then be categorised according to initiator type as:

- government
- multilateral or bilateral donor (e.g. in the case of FAO, UNICEF, Worldbank; or: GTZ,

DfID, DANIDA)
- church-based or Catholic/Protestant NGO
- mosque-based or Islamic NGO
- non-faith based NGO with an international or national/local background (e.g. CARE International, Oxfam)
- enterprises
- local community or individuals
- any combination that is relevant

The year when the project started is noted as well as the year when the project ended (or indicate whether it is still ongoing). Finally, any other project details that people can remember are added. Participants should not try to assess the project as this comes later. The recalled project should be recorded under the relevant sector heading in the data worksheet.

Format for recording

Group	Sector	Project name	Initiator name(s)	Initiator type(s)	Project Description	Date(s) from-to	Impact 'Then'	Impact 'Now'	Reason for impact assessment (+ additional comments)
Nandom-central-men	Water	Construc-tion and operation of piped-water	Ghana Water & Sewage	G	Laying of piped structures and supply of water in Nandom Central	1970	+	++	The piped water was excellent and convenient when it came but few people could afford it; Now it needs maintenance and there are some leaks. However, more people can now afford the water and more people are connected, so greater impact

Immediate follow up

After gathering all information of all groups a detailed list can be made about all the agencies mentioned (see above). This information can then be checked with one or more local well-informed people, including the workshop organiser. Mistakes and inconsistencies that are detected in the results of the groups should immediately be corrected, to get a screened dataset. However, it is important that the corrections made remain visible in the primary reports, because the perceptions on agency type give information about what participants know and don't know about interventions and agencies. For instance: some NGO initiatives are not known by the name of the agency, but by the name of people involved as NGO facilitators. It is this information that should be used for the exercises that follow.

Compilation/analysis

Various tables and figures can be generated from this data, including:

- Chronological list of interventions/development efforts
- Number of interventions by agency and decade
- Number of interventions by sector and decade
- Proportion of intervention by sector and decade (%)
- Number of interventions per type of agency (solo and in partnership)
- Agency composition of project partnerships
- Number of development efforts per sector
- Number of intervening agencies per sector
- Proportion of sector involvement per type of agency
- Proportion of type of intervening agencies per sector
- Proportion of interventions by type of agency and decade
- Proportion of interventions by sector and decade
- Proportion of intervening agencies per sector

Remarks and pitfalls on listing

Our experience is that area-groups of the villages/hamlets often list between 30 and 60 development efforts, of the small town between 50 and 90, and of the officials more than 100. A decision has to be made beforehand in which sector certain development efforts are to be positioned and this has to be explained well in advance to facilitators. In practice, only one sector is problematic, infrastructure. Infrastructure is intended to cover roads, bridges, railway lines, airfields, communication devices (e.g. for mobile phones) and the like. Not all buildings will be included and some should appear under other sectors: school buildings under education, health centre buildings under health care, water towers or boreholes under water, irrigation canals under crops, churches and mosques under religion, etc. A 'project', 'development effort', 'intervention', or 'initiative' is any effort that is made by an individual, group or agency with the intention to benefit more people than only a single household (so really individual initiatives should not be included). In this way, a private grain mill that others can use for payment is included, but a well on someone's compound, which others are not allowed to use is not. However, there will be 'grey areas' here.

It is wise to be as specific as possible, so include each particular school as one project, not just 'schools', and each set of boreholes as one project, not just 'boreholes'. In general we used as a rule of thumb: different locations of the same project done by the same agency count as a single intervention (but list the details). If done by different agencies, they count as different projects. E.g., boreholes: not all individual boreholes are counted as interventions (there could be as many as 30), but 1) all boreholes done by agency X, 2) all boreholes done by government arrangement Y, 3) all boreholes done by a different government agency at a later period, 4) that one borehole donated by an individual; etc. If specific information is added by reporters about years, it is useful to be clear about the way they write that down: '2002' means: in that particular year, '2002 onwards' means: from 2002 until today, '2002-2004'means the three year period starting in 2002 and ending in 2004, 'ca 2002-2003' means: more or less in the period covering the years 2002 and 2003.

Remarks and pitfalls on agencies

Information about the agency responsible for an intervention/development effort should be checked thoroughly, during (and even after) the workshop, as there are often mistakes or inconsistencies. We noted with surprise that workshop participants themselves check this type of information during the deliberations by using their mobile phones and asking those who could know, if they are not sure themselves. However: this remains a problematic part of the method. Checking the information with all the agencies involved would be preferable, but it is often impossible as some agencies that people remember are no longer active, and their offices closed and officials gone. Mistakes that may easily happen are misspelling the names of organisations, wrong categorization (e.g. 'NGO' while it is a bilateral donor), incomplete information in cases of multi-donor involvement, mixing up grass-root agencies with their back-donors, etc. Good data recording is also essential for matching projects during data compilation. In practice many development agencies appear to work together and become multi-actor agencies. Some also share funding from a variety of funding agents, sometimes even combining supra-national (UN; World Bank), government, NGO, business and community funding, and hence alliances. Activities supporting 'value chains' are particularly difficult to assign to one agent or type of agent.

Group of women during the 'Project Assessment' exercise

Exercise 5 – Project assessment

Objectives

To assess the perceived impact of the recalled projects. This is done for 'Then' (the first year a project came) and 'Now' (the project as it is perceived today). The exercise helps to get a picture of the valuation of projects that have come to the community.

Workshop groups

Same as the 'Project Recall' exercise, except that the men and women are separated into different groups. The assessments should be done separately because men and women do have different and sometimes contradicting opinions about projects.

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

Second exercise in the morning of the second day, after the 'Project Recall' exercise.

Materials

n/a.

Duration

2 hours

Method of preparation

The 'Project Recall' exercise is a prerequisite for this exercise. The men and women are divided into separate groups for this exercise, but assess the same recalled projects. This means that a copy of the list of recalled projects needs to be made for facilitators of the men's group and the women's group.

Exercise

Facilitators should begin by explaining the exercise. Participants are asked what they perceive the impact to be for each project, for both 'Then' (first year the project actually came and started running) and 'Now' (the project as it is today). Participants may use the following categories:

++ Big positive impact

+ Small positive impact

/ No impact

- Negative impact

* Cannot assess – The project may be too new, participants do not really know the project, etc.

It is important to ask participants to give the reason for each assessment rating, including the reason for any change between 'Then' and 'Now'. If not mentioned by participants, probe about the coverage of the project – did it impact on many people or just a few? In cases where participants cannot assess the project it is especially important to note the reason why.

Format for recording

(extension of the 'Project Recall' recording instrument)

Potential additional module

In some of our workshops we added questions about people's perceptions about the impact of each and every project on the six types of capabilities (see exercise 2 on changes), hoping to get some clarity about people's perceptions on the 'impact domain' of projects. Doing this for each and every project is very cumbersome, though, and the results very much depend on the atmosphere of the group and on the skills of the facilitator. Particularly the women were often all-inclusive: every project seemed to have an impact on each of the six capabilities. To make this exercise more useful it is better to restrict it to a selection of projects, to take the time for the stories behind the choices, and to come to some kind of ranking.

Example: a primary school building project in an area where there was no school before, and where after the building was ready most of the 200 children of school-going age joined as pupils (while before only 20 of them went to a school far away); a feeder road was included in the project; the school also has a successful school garden; there are five new teachers (with teachers' houses) and one of them is very active in a parent-teacher group and in developing culturally sensitive elements of the school curriculum, integrating the opinions of respected elders and traditional leaders.

So people tend to say: the most important impact is on human capabilities; but there are also important impacts on cultural capabilities and awareness; the road itself is ' physical capital' (the school building itself of course as well; but that was seen as part of ' human capability enhancement'); and the school was built by a local contractor, trained by a foreign aid agency (so adding to local economic capabilities). People say that there are also minor impacts on natural capital (the school garden has some impact on the local agricultural practices) and on social-political capabilities (as the parent-teacher organisation in practice improves local people's abilities to deal with the local authorities).

Using the stone method the men would give 4 out of ten stones to human capabilities; 2 to economic capital, and one each to natural, physical, cultural, and socio-political capital/capabilities; the women would give 3 to human capabilities, 2 each to cultural and physical capital and one each to natural, economic and socio-political domains.

Without the stone method these findings become very difficult to interpret.

Compilation/analysis

The following tables or figures can be generated from this data:

- Project impact judgments
- Impact judgment per type of agency
- Proportion of impact judgment per type of agency (%)
- Impact judgments per sector
- Proportion of impact judgments per sector (%)
- Impact on (six) domains, scores per type of agency (where scores can be constructed based on average assessments of all projects by an agency as assessed by all participant groups that mentioned these projects.)
- Many of the same tables can also be given for coverage.
- All analyses can be made for then and for now + analyses of the differences in perception over time.
- Cross tabulation of impact and coverage

If the extension with impacts on the domains is done, the following analyses can also be done:

- Project impact per domain (six domains)
- Impact on (six) domains, scores per sector (frequencies)
- Proportion of impact on domains, scores per type of agency (%)
- Proportion of impact on domains, scores per sector (%)

n.b gendered data analysis is possible

Alternative Use

Researchers may choose to leave out the 'then' state for various reasons, such as a lack of time.

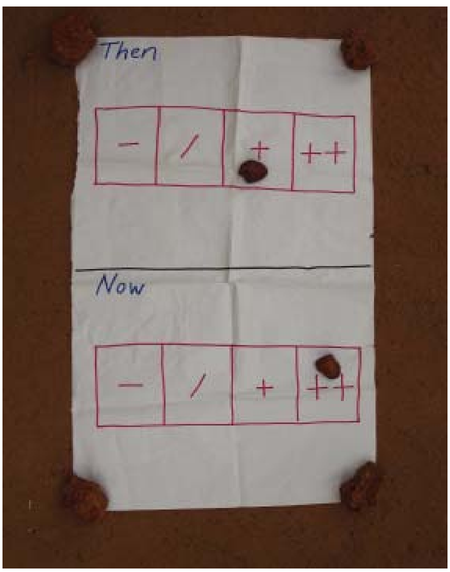
Facilitators may choose to use the stoneman/stonewoman method when assessing projects.

Remarks and Pitfalls

It is interesting to note that, after splitting the area groups into men and women groups for each area, some groups (usually women) recall additional projects that were not given in the ‘Project Recall’ exercise. These should be added to the lists as additions. The definition of ‘then’ is important. Our proposed definition of ‘then’ is: the first year that the project had been in use.

Note that participant’s assessments do not say anything about the financial scale of any project. That information is not collected, as it is obviously clear that very few people have access to these details, and certainly not for all development efforts over a long period of time. Sometimes this information is volunteered (often in the group of officials) and can be added to the column with extra information (and even then it has to be used with care, as people may easily have given the wrong information, and financial mistakes can be in the order of 10 times less or more than what people actually think they know or remember. In the follow up phase of workshops like these, it may be useful to combine more financial assessments with the results of the perception approach. All this also means that impact assessment based on perceptions can say useful things about effectiveness, but never about efficiency, as people (even well-informed officials) are often badly informed about costs and benefits, and about the financial side of potential alternatives.

Some agencies come with big all-inclusive stories and reach only few people. That often has to do with overshooting their case (often for marketing purposes, or as a result of naivety) and it can backfire. We noted many instances of disappointment because of this ‘overshooting tendency’ in the development industry. It is good to realise that projects that have ‘proven’ positive results for some inhabitants can still be judged as ‘quite disappointing’, because promises have been made that were simply very unrealistic. This will be one of the major differences between our ‘perception-based’ method and methods that measure effects physically/directly (and often quantitatively).



Project assessment using the stone method

Exercise 6 – Best/worst projects

Objective

To find out which development efforts are perceived to be among the best and worst projects, and for what reasons. Data from this exercise is also used in later exercises to delve deeper into the best and worst projects.

Workshop groups

- officials (all people working for the government or for NGOs)
- geographical groups; often:
  - people from the central place (one or two groups)
  - people from villages in the north, the south, the east and the west
- and each of these area groups split in men and women

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

The third or fourth (and final) exercise of the second day

Materials Needed

- A1 sheets with list of projects listed before,
- Blank A1 sheets
- means to put the sheets on the wall (or if there is a big blackboard that can also work)
- Markers

Duration

This takes about 1 hour.

Exercise – Part 1

This exercise should be done in two parts: First participants assess which are the *five best* projects that have come to their community.

The objective of the exercise is explained to participants – what projects do they think are among the five best projects *now*. The facilitator begins by slowly reading back to participants all the projects that the group had earlier recalled in “Exercise 4 – Project recall”.

One method to elicit the best projects works as follows: each participant is asked to think of one project he/she thinks is among the very best to have come to the area. After all participants have mentioned a project the group can be asked if there are any other very good projects that they want to include. Depending on the group size, this may result in a list of 8 or so ‘good’ projects.

Participants are then asked to rank the five best projects from this list from best to fifth best. To make this process easier, it may first be useful to ask participants to decide on the final five best before ranking them. An alternative is to first ask the participants to agree on the very best project, then the second best project and so on until they have identified (and at the same time ranked) the best five projects.

Finally, it is *very important* that participants are asked for the reasons why they believe these projects are among the best. The recording of reasons is important because it can shed more light on the various aspects of a project than can be inferred by a project’s ranking alone.

Exercise Part 2

The process is then repeated for the worst projects. The list of all projects should first be re-read to participants to refresh their memories.

The 5 best and 5 worst projects should be listed on A1 sheets, clearly indicating “five best” and “five worst” (and the name of the group).

Format for reporting

Best #	Worst #	Ranking reason
1		This is the best project because it provides moral education and spiritual guidance which are important for the whole community. Without this project we would still be worshipping 'false idols'.
	1	The project didn’t work - there was a high mortality of fowls, low cross-breeding and low adoption. A waste of time, effort and money. The agency didn’t talk to us about what we needed before the project started, and we would have preferred a project on goats.

Compilation/analysis

The first level of analysis should be the combination of the opinions of men and women in each of the area groups with a comparative analysis. As a result, for each area group (and for the officials) ‘projects’ end up in nine potential categories:

- Among the best projects for both the men and the women
- Among the best projects for the men, but not mentioned by the women
- Among the best projects for the women but not mentioned by the men
- Neither mentioned by the men nor the women
- Mentioned by the men, but not by the women as among the worst projects
- Mentioned by the women, but not by the men as among the worst projects
- Mentioned by both the men and the women as among the worst projects.
- The men mention a project as among the best, and the women as among the worst projects
- The women mention a project as among the best, and the men as among the worst projects.

A description should be made about the findings, highlighting differences of opinion between men and women, and between the groups.

Projects can also be given numerical values according to their rank: for example projects can be given a numerical value for being cited among the best 5 projects and then a further points value for their ranking, e.g 5+5 for the best project, 5+4 for the second best project etc. Worst projects can also be awarded numerical values (or negative points, as the case may be) e.g. -5 for the very worst project, -4 for the second worst project, and so on.

All values can be listed according to sector, and type of agency. Per sector and per type of agency an analysis can be made of the quantified results of this exercise. Potential tables are:

- Best projects by area group and gender
- Worst projects by area group and gender
- Best and worst projects by sector
- Best projects by sector and group type (men/women/officials)
- Worst projects by sector and group type (men/women/officials)
- Best and worst projects per type of implementing agency
- Best and worst projects by agency and indicating if it was implemented in partnership or solo
- Best projects by agency and sector
- Worst projects by agency and sector.
- The different tables can list the best and worst projects, but also the frequencies of projects being included as best or worst (per agency type, per sector or per decade of initiation).
- A 'best project score' and 'worst project score' can be calculated on the basis of the scores 5 (for first position), 4 (second position), etc.
- The frequency and scores per type of agency or per sector can also be related to the number of projects in the same category in order to calculate a 'best project ratio' or a

'worst project ratio', the percentage of projects in a category that is counted among best or worst projects.

It takes some time and effort to do the analysis and write up properly (two days).

Remarks and pitfalls

Facilitators should take care that project rankings are properly recorded. The best project should be recorded next to 1). In the 'Worst 5' section, the worst project should also be recorded next to 1). The projects that are being mentioned should be the same as the ones already recalled in "Exercise 4 – Project recall". To avoid later confusion, as many of the project details as possible should be recorded (name, year, agency) to enable later compilation with data from other exercises.

There can be a tendency for participants to identify generic project types (e.g. schools) rather than specific projects. It is the role of the facilitator to encourage responses that are as specific as possible.

It can happen that workshop members suddenly remember another project that is being regarded as very good or (more often) very bad. These projects can be included in this exercise, though these new additions should also be added to the dataset from "Exercise 4 – Project recall".

It is possible that participants are reluctant, or unable, to mention all five 'worst' projects. One strategic line of question could be: "among the whole list of projects, are there any you would have preferred not to have been done?"

Exercise 7 – Relationship between changes and projects

Objective

To get an impression of participant's attribution of major changes to specific or generic development efforts. This exercises utilises participant responses from "Exercise 2 - Changes" and "Exercise 4 – Project recall". Participants are asked to what they attribute both positive and negative changes, and whether they attribute changes to projects, project types or agencies.

Workshop groups

- Same as exercise 5

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

The third or fourth exercise of the second day, usually as the first activity after lunch, sometimes as the last one of the day.

Method of preparation

Exercises 2 and 4 are prerequisites. During the evening of the first day some of the facilitators (often including the workshop coordinator) make a summary of the major changes that people formulated during the first day ("Exercise 2 - Changes"). Between three to five positive and three to five negative trends are selected per domain; copies of these are given to all group facilitators on the morning of the second day. This preparation may take several hours. In cases where the exercise on 'changes' was done by a gender-specific area group (and not by a gender/age specific group for the region as a whole; see exercise 2) one can work with the findings for ' changes' from that specific group, and no compilation is necessary.

Materials Needed

- Three A1 sheets with summary of the major trends: two domains per sheet and a column for positive and a column for negative trend
- Means to put the sheets on the wall (or if there is a big blackboard that can also work), although in practice these are often read to participants
- Markers

Exercise

For each domain subgroup participants have to select one or two negative trends and one or two positive trends (in total, three for each of the six domains).

Then they discuss each of these selected positive trends and discuss the reasons for the change. If projects are not mentioned at first, this is then probed for after other reasons have been given (eg were there 'projects' or project types that were a cause of this positive change, and why was this?)

After discussing the selected positive trends, participants then discuss the reasons for the negative trends. Again, if projects are not mentioned at first, then participants can be asked "what projects/initiatives helped to mitigate the negative trend" (or in some cases: "what projects caused these negative trends").

Format for reporting

Group	Domain	Sub-domain	Change	Reason for Change	Change effect	Project, (initiator), Caused/ Mitigated, how
Wulensi - older men	Natural	Forest	Then there were plenty of trees; Now there are much fewer trees	Women have been cutting and taking for firewood without replanting trees; increased bush-fires; some farmers don't know the usefulness of trees and so burn the trees on their farms	-	*Tree Nurseries (ADRA) MITIGATED by growing new trees and education; *Fire control (community volunteers) MITIGATED by educating people against uncontrolled fires

Duration

About one and a half hours

Compilation/analysis

It will take approximately a day to do the analysis and write up of this section of the report.

Potential tables and figures are:

- Summary of changes by domain (six domains)
- Attribution of positive changes to agencies' interventions, descriptive summary
- Attribution of positive changes to interventions, by type of agency and domain
- Attribution of positive changes attributed to type of agency, per domain
- Proportion of positive changes attributed to types of agency per domain (%)
- Attribution of negative changes to agencies' interventions, descriptive summary
- Attribution of negative changes to interventions, by type of agency and domain
- Proportion of negative changes attributed to types of agency per domain (%)
- Proportion of the contribution of types of agency to negative changes per domain (%)

- Mitigation of negative changes to agencies' interventions
- Mitigation of negative changes by agency and domain
- Mitigation of negative changes attributed to types of agency per domain
- Mitigation of negative changes: contribution of types of agency to domains
- Synthesis of agencies' contribution to positive and negative trends.

Remarks and pitfalls:

Care needs to be taken to record the reasons why participants have made a connection between a change and a project. This is especially important with regards to negative changes. In some cases participants may see this as an opportunity to attribute a negative change to a disliked project. Yet by asking 'why', participants may sometimes acknowledge there is no link.

People tend to attribute changes to projects in rather generic terms. A good facilitator tries to probe a bit deeper for more specific answers. For instance: if a positive change is "many more children are now going to school", the generic answer about what development effort caused it can easily be "education projects", or "the arrival of schools". Probing would then give an answer with more nuances: e.g. "mainly the education efforts of the Catholic mission during the 1980s".

Sometimes people get irritated because some of the relationships are so self-evident: when a 'project' is 'the road from the township to place X, built in 2002' and people have indicated that 'more roads' is one of the major changes in their area since a few years, for them it is obvious that the road-building project caused the change. A good facilitator tries to avoid that people think that facilitators asking these 'stupid questions' try to make them look foolish, by probing a bit deeper into these changes where relevant or by quickly moving on to a next change.

Writeshop participants assessing the impact of projects on wealth groups

Exercise 8 – Wealth group benefits

Objective

To determine the impact of the best five/worst five projects on the different wealth groups for both 'Then' (first year the project actually came and started running) and 'Now' (the project as it is perceived today). This exercise can give an idea of which groups are benefiting the most/least from the development interventions that have come to the area.

This exercise can take two different forms (and if there is time they can be done both):

Option A: determine what the perceived distribution of a project's impact is across the (five) wealth categories: who benefits most and why

Option B: determine what the perceived strength of a benefit is per wealth category: did the project have a major, a minor of no impact on the lives of the people in a particular wealth category

Workshop groups

- officials (all people working for the government or for NGOs)
- geographical groups; often:
  - people from the central place (one or two groups)
  - people from villages in the north, the south, the east and the west
- and each of these area groups split in men and women

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up:

Preferably the first exercise in the morning of the third day, after a plenary re-opening of the workshop.

Materials Needed

- An A1 sheet of paper per participant group, drawn up for stones to be distributed on
- Option A) 20 stones for each participant group (10 each for 'then' and 'now' states)
- Option B) 10 big stones and 10 small stones (5 big and 5 small stone each for 'then' and 'now' states)

Duration

This exercise takes about 1.5 hours. The exercise is usually done only for the best 5 projects due to time constraints.

Method of preparation

During "Exercise 3 – Wealth group categorisation" all groups gave an indication of the wealth classifications of the area and the attributes of these. During the evenings, workshop facilitator(s) make a summary of this data and present this summary to the plenary meeting at the start of the third day. This can cause quite some debate (as it is clear that different groups came with different names and descriptions for the 'very rich', the 'rich', the 'average', the 'poor', and the 'very poor' in the research area). Nevertheless, during the morning session an overall consensus can be arrived at about the names and descriptions of the five categories of wealth groups and this is written on a large sheet of paper and distributed to each group.

Option A:

This exercise is first done for the projects earlier nominated as being among the best 5 projects. To begin, the exercise is carefully explained to participants with a demonstration using the stones. Participants are clearly told that we are assessing the amount of benefit that a project brings to each wealth group, *not* the number of people benefiting. So for example, for a project that benefits all wealth groups equally, the stones would be equally distributed in each of the squares (2 ,2 ,2 ,2 ,2). For a project that benefits the rich wealth groups more than the poor the stone distribution might be (4,3,2,1,0) Participants should also be reminded that we are talking about the wealth groups of people in their community, not those in 'Europe' or 'America'. A helpful way of asking could be "consider a very rich, a rich, an average, a poor and a very poor household and think about this project: how much did each of these five households benefit from the project?"

Participants are asked, 'Which wealth group benefited more from the project the first year the project came ('then'), and today ('now') - the very rich, rich, average, poor, very poor?' One participant is given ten stones to distribute across five squares representing the wealth groups for 'then'. The participant is then given another ten stones to distribute across the five squares representing the wealth groups for 'now'. They then give their reasons for the stone distribution and for any change in distribution between 'then' and 'now'.

The rest of the group is then invited to discuss the stone distribution. When the stone distribution is agreed, it is *very important* that the facilitator elicits from participants their reasons for the stone distribution. Also, if there is a change in stone distribution between 'Then' and 'Now', participants should be asked what the reason is for the change. The exercise is then repeated for the next project.

Format for reporting

			Then						Now					
Group	Project / Description	Initiator name	VR	R	A	P	VP	Reasons	VR	R	A	P	VP	Reasons
Daboya - central - men	Establishment of Boreholes	Catholic Services	4	3	2	1	0	At first rich groups used the borehole more because they knew if they drank from it and got sick they could afford to pay for health care. People were initially unsure of the quality of the water. The poor didn't trust the water and thought dam water was 'sweeter'.	2	2	2	2	2	Rating has changed because now even the poor man has learned that if he drinks from the borehole he will not get guinea worm. All benefit equally because the water is free for all.

Option B:

The Option B version of this exercise does not regard the distribution of impact over wealth classes, but the strength of the impact for each of the wealth classes. For each of the best five projects participants look at the impact on each of the five wealth categories separately and they can use a big stone for ' big impact on that wealth category', a small stone for ' small impact' and no stone for ' no impact'.

It is very important to ask for reasons why the stone judgements were made.

Format for reporting

(extension of the 'Option A' recording instrument)

Compilation/analysis

The data from all groups can be combined per sector and per agency (with due attention for the gender and area differences, while reporting). There is generally insufficient data to do this on a project level because not all groups are assessing the same projects, and not all of the projects are assessed. At the end an overall summary can be presented about the impact of all projects on the wealth categories, and about the differences between areas, sectors, and types of agencies.

Potential tables/figures are:

- The impact of best and worst projects on five wealth categories by type of implementing agency: description
- The impact of best and worst projects on wealth categories by type of agency

- The impact of best and worst projects on wealth categories by sector
- Initiatives with the highest perceived impact on the poor and very poor
- Impact of best and worst projects on wealth categories per workshop group
- Impact of best and worst projects on wealth categories by type of workshop group

The analysis and write up of this exercise may take 2 days.

Remarks and pitfalls:

This exercise goes to the limit of what you can do in a workshop setting like this, and in some cases maybe even beyond it, as it is either too complicated, or too emotional.

If at the start participants still have trouble understanding the exercise, it might be useful to ask them to visualise a hypothetical family in each wealth group and how much they might benefit from each project.

Emotions and big differences of opinion make it very difficult to come to any (fast) conclusion, and so the role of the facilitator is really important here. He/she should avoid steering the judgments, but on the other hand should work as a decision-making diplomat. If discussion about a project becomes really long and heated, it may be good to take a brief break between projects. In exceptional cases it may be necessary to conclude that there is no shared opinion and to have different judgments. The qualitative opinions of different participants can still be reported.

Every time a new project is being discussed, a different member of the group should be asked to distribute the stones first and give their justifications. Each group member should have a chance to do it at least once. This avoids the domination of any particular member, and it allows the reporter to also make notes about the 'social process of decision-making'. In case of clear status differences in a group (and that happens), the relatively marginal members of a group also get a chance to say what they have to say (and they cannot shy away). Of course it is possible that opinion leaders in the group still dominate the discussion and the outcomes. A good reporter reports both about the final outcomes, and about the process that led to that outcome.

If done well, this exercise can really add a wealth of insights. This is particularly the case when there is a perceived shift in the distribution of benefits between 'then' and 'now'. These reasons given for this insight can reveal the mechanisms of how interventions work and how they lead to benefits for different wealth classes.

This type of exercise can easily be adapted to form new exercises. For example, we have tested the impact of projects on the benefits to each gender group. In theory, this could also be attempted for other attributes such as age and ethnicity. The exercise could even be extended to assess the impacts of projects on the different capitals for different wealth groups, but in most cases this would become too complicated.

Exercise 9 – Assessment of agencies

Objective

To find out about participant's perceptions of agencies working in the area. This information can be useful to analyse alongside participant assessments of projects that agencies were involved in.

Workshop groups

- officials (all people working for the government or for NGOs)
- geographical groups; often:
  - people from the central place (one or two groups)
  - people from villages in the north, the south, the east and the west
- and each of these area groups split in men and women

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

Last exercise of the third day, either at the end of the morning or immediately after lunch

Materials Needed:

- A list of 'likely judgment criteria'
- A list of agencies working in the area (compiled from the Project Recall exercise)
- A1 sheets (optional)

Duration

Approximately 1 hour

Exercise

This exercise elicits participant perceptions of the development agencies working in the area. Participants are asked to assess the agencies working in the area based on various statements (see format for reporting below). Participants respond to the statements by saying either that they are true 'always', 'usually', 'sometimes', or 'usually not/never'. (These statements given below are based on information that has been gathered in earlier PADev workshops).

It is possible to use the stone(wo)man or stick(wo)man technique in this exercise. An A1 sheet of paper can be drawn up like a likert scale from 'always' to 'never'. The stoneman can place a stone on his/her square of choice, or alternatively the stick(wo)man can point to a square with his/her stick.

Note that assessing all agencies in the area will make the exercise duration much too long. One suggestion would be to assess only the most prominent agencies in the area, based on, say, the number of projects an agency has been involved in.

Note also that researchers may of course choose to use different statements to those given below for their assessment. Alternatively participants can be asked what criteria they think are most important when assessing an agency (asking participants will make the exercise longer).

Format for reporting

Group	Agency Name	Long term commitment	Realistic Expectations	Honesty	Relevance	Participation	Local Presence	Reasons/comments
Niabouri - old men	Credo	++	/	+	-	-	++	We like that they have a long term commitment to us. They are in our community and we feel close to them. However, they often tell us what to do, like on the borehole project. We wish they would ask us more about what we want before they do it.

Suggested Statements:

We don't recommend more than 6 statements due to time constraints. The exercise works well when participants assess all agencies for a given statement before moving on to the next statement.

- The agency is committed to us in the long term
- The agency doesn't promise more than what they can do
- When something goes wrong they tell us honestly
- The agency addresses the problems that affect us
- We have a voice in the type of projects the agency does and how projects are done
- The agency staff live among us

Compilation/analysis:

Data from all the participant groups can be compiled for each of the agencies assessed. Agency 'scores' can be produced for each agency based on each criterion and for all criteria combined. It can be interesting to compare how different participant groups perceived each agency (say 'town' people versus 'village' participant groups). It is especially interesting to compare the assessments made by 'non-elite' participants versus assessments made by officials and other leaders, some of whom will likely work for some of the agencies assessed.

Assessing an agency's performance in a specific project?

A further adaptation of this exercise may be to assess the approach that was taken by agencies for a given project, rather than assessing agencies in general. For example, for a borehole project, participants can be asked how the implementing agencies performed against the assessment criteria. Due to time constraints this is probably best done with only the best 5 and worst 5 projects.

Personal profiles (additional exercise)

Objective

To get basic information about the participants and their family background in order to determine the social composition of the group (and the community). The exercise is a way of comparing the participants with their parents, siblings, and children to get a little more insight in representation, at least compared to their closest relatives.

Position in a three-day, nine-exercise set up

During the introductory plenary session on the first morning participants are issued with forms to take home and given a basic introduction to the exercise. Participants are given reminders during the start of the second day, and there is individual follow-up during the second and third days of the workshop.

Method

Each participant gets a form to fill in (in English or French, (often their own children who can read and write and/or children in the neighbourhood).

During the first day one specially tasked facilitator explains this exercise, and he/she guides the whole process, and collects and checks the forms. It is made clear to all participants that they are asked to assist each other in filling in the form, and that they can take the form home to get support from those at home who can read and write English/French. During the second and third day the facilitator for this exercise goes from group to group to inquire who is ready and then goes through the form in a one-to-one meeting (often assisted by an interpreter) to check and clarify the information.

Analysis

There should be one form from each participant, totalling fifty to sixty forms. It can take a full week to do the data entry and cleaning and another week to do the analysis and write-up.

Report

This exercise results in a detailed report, a summary of which will be included in the final report of a workshop.

Personal Life History

1. Name: ....

2. Gender: ....Male | Female

3. Age (or birth year):...

4. Where do you live now? (name of village/town) ....

5. Where were you born? ....
   Same place | Elsewhere in the region | Outside region, specify:

6. What is/are your main occupation(s) / job(s)? ....

7. Do you have other income generating activities or community function(s)? Yes | No

   If yes, specify ....

8. Ethnicity / mother tongue: ....

9. Which other languages do you speak? ....

10. Current religion(s): .... Traditional | Muslim | Christian, specify...

11. Did you follow another religion before? If yes, specify which

12. Marital status? Married | Widowed | Separated | Unmarried

13. If married man, how many wives do you have?...

14. If married woman, how many wives does your husband have?...

15. Did you go to school? If yes, up to which level?(p4, jss2, etc.)..

16. Have you ever gone on seasonal / temporary migration? Yes | No

    If yes, how many times?...

And where did you usually go? ....

17. Have you ever migrated out of the region for longer periods (at least 1 year)?...................................
Yes | No

If yes, for how many years (total)...

Where did you live most of time? (mention region)..

And what was your main occupation there? ....

18. Could you tell us which years or periods in your life were very good or very bad:

Year/Period	Good or bad?	What happened?

19. Other things that have been important in your life...

....

....

20. YOUR FATHER:

a. Year of birth (estimate decade if unknown)...

b. Year of death (estimate decade if unknown)...

c. Education level: ....

d. Religion(s):............................. ....

e. What was/were his job(s) / occupation(s)?..

f. How many wives did he have (at the same time)? ....

g. How many children did his wive(s) get in total? ....

21. YOUR MOTHER

a. Year of birth (estimate decade if unknown)..

b. Year of death (estimate decade if unknown)..

c. Education level: ....

d. Religion(s): ....

e. Job(s) / occupation(s): ....

22. YOUR WIFE OR HUSBAND: (if more than one wife, please write on other side of paper)

a. Year of birth (estimate decade if unknown)..

b. Year of death (estimate decade if unknown)..

c. Education level: ....

d. Religion(s): ....

23. YOUR CHILDREN (if more than 10, please write others on other side of paper)

	Boy/ Girl	Birth year	Where does s/he live? (1) Same place (2) same region (3) out-side region, specify	Education	Job(s)	Religion	Married?
1							
2							

3							
4							
5							
6							

24. YOUR BROTHERS – SAME MOTHER AS YOU (if more than 5, please write others on other side of paper)

	Name	Birth year	Where does he live? (1) Same place (2) same region (3) outside region, specify	Education level	Job(s)	Religion	Married?
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

25. YOUR SISTERS – SAME MOTHER AS YOU (if more than 5, please write others on other side of paper)

	Name	Birth year	Where does she live? (1) Same place (2) same region (3) outside region, specify	Education level	Job(s)	Religion	Married?
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

Workshop evaluation

The workshop could be evaluated in various ways. At the end of a workshop it can be useful to do an evaluation of the workshop as a whole; or at a repeat workshop it may be very useful to evaluate what people have done with the findings and ideas generated during an earlier workshop. It may be useful to discuss issues of empowerment and initiatives taken.

After the workshop - follow up

Immediate follow up

Care should be taken that all reporters finalise all of their files at the conclusion of the workshop. One person should be responsible for collecting all files and checking them for completeness and quality. After the workshop one central person should do the write up. All facilitators and coordinators get a full electronic data set of material.

Format of the workshop report

Until now, we have experimented with different formats, from very extensive (with executive summary) to simpler summary statements.

As an example see the *Nandom Report*, by Kees van der Geest[6]: this is the most inclusive report of all, and may give an idea about the order of magnitude – in terms of pages – of each of the chapters in the report.

As part of the introduction we suggest including a map of the country and the position of the research area, and also a map indicating all the major names of places in the research area. It would be good to use the information of key people in the workshop to complete this (sketch) map before leaving the area.

Checking the draft report

After making a draft report, other members of the coordination team should check the document and correct mistakes/add information. The improved report should then be discussed with a few selected people from the research area (in a special session; and on the basis of allowing them time to read the draft document, and making comments). After that the writer of the report

6 See http://padev.nl/reports.htm

finalises the document. It can be distributed and put online. It should be brought to the workshop area, and presented to the main agencies active in the area, and of course also to the local organisers of the workshop.

Agency profiles

An additional step can be to make a profile document for each of the (main) development/donor agencies and summarise the information by indicating:

- Which of their activities/initiatives/projects has been mentioned (and by which group)
- Which of their development efforts have been mentioned as among the best projects, by which group, and why?
- The same for the 'worst' projects
- And which of their development efforts have never been mentioned as among either the best or the worst ones in the research area.
- How did the participants evaluate this agency's performance

Spokespeople of the agency can then be asked if they agree or not and the information from people's judgments can be compared with existing results of monitoring and evaluation exercises.

Or even better: before confronting the agency spokespeople with the results, they could volunteer to do (part of) the exercises themselves, and then later their own perceptions of their agency and its projects can be compared with the perceptions of the workshop participants. However, what should be checked beforehand is if workshop participants have attributed the projects and activities to the correct agencies.

Finally, follow-up questions can be formulated for in-depth additional research.

Costs of developing the PADev methodology 2007-2013

The PADev project was designed as an approach of 'learning-by-doing', funded by three Dutch NGOs (ICCO, Woord en Daad and Prisma), and with intellectual input by the University of Amsterdam and its students, the African Studies Centre Leiden, the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam, Woord en Daad, ICCO and PRISMA, together with colleagues from the University for Development Studies in Tamale Northern Ghana and the Ouagadougou-based consultancy firm EDS. Four workshops have been organised in Burkina Faso and seven in Northern Ghana. These workshops were joint activities by all participants. So, unlike the model worked out under 'Costs of Organising a Local PADev Workshop' below (where all workshop activities would be carried out by local staff), part of the facilitators came from the Netherlands, and their costs were covered by the project budget and additional time (uncharged) from the Dutch, Ghanaian and Burkina Faso's institutes participating. The total budget spent to develop PADev as a methodology for participatory assessment of development or participatory history writing was 510,000€ (2007-2013). A major part of that budget was used to organise eleven PADev workshops, but there were also quite a number of students and other activities involved (students from around the globe participated as facilitators in workshops and in addition did their own research).

Costs of organising a local PADev workshop

With the experience gained during this process, we can come to a realistic assessment of what a PADev three-day workshop would cost if all participants would be from a country like Ghana or Burkina Faso (prices 2012).

Description	**Cost €**
Workshop coordinator, 7 days x 110-150€/day	770 -1150
2 senior researchers, 2 x 4 days x 80-100€/day	640 - 800
4-6 junior researchers, 4-6 x 4 days x 50-70€/day	800 -1680
Workshop costs (venue, catering, gifts for participants)	3300 - 3500
Accommodation for facilitators, 7-9 x 3 x 30€/day	630 - 810
Travel costs for researchers and (some) participants	800 - 850
Writing report, including follow up, 15 days x 80-100	1200 -1500
Report (if printed) and misc. costs	460 - 610
Total costs of one PADev workshop	**8600– 10900**

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Colophon

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