PADev Guidebook

PARTICIPATORY ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

Ton Dietz, Adama Bélemvire, Kees van der Geest, Dieneke de Groot,
Francis Obeng, Wouter Rijneveld, Fred Zaal, and Roger Bymolt

University of Amsterdam, Tamale University for Development Studies, Expertise pour le Développement du Sahel, ICCO Alliance,
Prisma, Woord & Daad, with support from African Studies Centre Leiden and the Royal Tropical Institute Amsterdam
PADev Guidebook – Participatory Assessment of Development

Ton Dietz¹, Adama Bélemvire², Kees van der Geest³, Dieneke de Groor⁴, Francis Obeng⁵, Wouter Rijneveld⁶, Fred Zaal⁷, and Roger Bymolt⁸

In collaboration with:

We would like to thank all contributors so far, including Robert Chambers and Irene Guijt for their many useful remarks.

Funded by:
ICCO Alliance, Prisma, Royal Tropical Institute, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Woord en Daad, and the African Studies Centre Leiden, 2008-2012

Amsterdam July 5 2011 (version 1.0)

Information and all reports on: www.padev.nl

¹ Current overall PADev team leader; University of Amsterdam/African Studies Centre Leiden, The Netherlands
All correspondence: dietzaj@ascleiden.nl
² Team leader PADev Burkina Faso, Expertise pour le Développement du Sahel, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
³ PADev information manager; University of Amsterdam
⁴ ICCO Alliance, Utrecht, the Netherlands
⁵ Team leader PADev Ghana, University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana
⁶ Woord en Daad, Gorinchem The Netherlands
⁷ Initial overall team PADev leader; University of Amsterdam/Royal Tropical Institute Amsterdam, The Netherlands
⁸ In 2010 a Master’s student of the University of Amsterdam, participating in the third round of PADev workshops, and doing his own research later in Wulensi, experimenting with a further improved methodology. He edited the present version this PADev Guidebook, while working for the Royal Tropical Institute, funded by the African Studies Centre in Leiden, with an additional grant from ICCO Alliance.
# Table of Contents

Preface .......................................................................................................................... 4
Introduction .................................................................................................................... 6
   Overall goal ................................................................................................................. 6
Workshop Setup ............................................................................................................ 7
   Scale ........................................................................................................................... 7
   Participants ............................................................................................................... 7
   Participant Group Sizes ........................................................................................... 8
   Some bias can’t be avoided ...................................................................................... 8
   Timing of a workshop ............................................................................................... 9
   Organisation, catering and accommodation ............................................................ 9
   On language and interpretation .............................................................................. 9
   On religion ................................................................................................................ 10
   Workshop introductions .......................................................................................... 10
   Workshop configurations ......................................................................................... 11
   Data Management and Workflow .......................................................................... 11
   Reporting .................................................................................................................. 11
   Time management and workshop duration ......................................................... 12
   Enhancing participation – stick and stone methods .............................................. 13
Exercise 1: Events ........................................................................................................ 14
Exercise 2 - Changes ..................................................................................................... 17
Exercise 3 – Wealth Groups ....................................................................................... 21
Exercise 4 – Project recall .......................................................................................... 25
Exercise 5 – Project Assessment ............................................................................... 29
Exercise 6 – Relationship between Changes and Projects ....................................... 32
Exercise 7 – Best/Worst Projects ............................................................................. 35
Exercise 8 – Historical Assessment of Best/Worst Projects ..................................... 39
Exercise 9 – Impact on Wealth Classes .................................................................... 41
Exercise 10 – Assessment of Agencies .................................................................... 46
Additional Exercise – Personal Profiles .................................................................... 49
After the Workshop - Follow up ............................................................................... 52
Preface

PA Dev is an 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 is expected to continue through to mid 2012. As of July 2011 most of the fieldwork component of the PA Dev project is complete. To date, nine 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 Sily (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.

Ten additional theses have been done by (former) Master students:

- 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)

Two further studies were also undertaken

- Agnieszka Kazimierczuk: Langbinsi/Gbangu follow-up, with a focus on the poor (2010)

In 2011 the nine workshop reports will be finalized and (combinations of) Ghanaian, Burkinabé and Dutch participants will write concluding papers. In 2012 a final workshop round will be
organized. This will focus on the recent dynamics in two of the 2008 workshop areas, the testing of the new PAdEv guidebook, and the confronting of local agencies with our findings in order to hear their feedback and viewpoints.

See the PAdEv website for all available reports, data sets, and excel files used for recording data: [www.paddev.nl](http://www.paddev.nl).
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 NGOs 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. This can be an important lesson for future interventions. PADev should not be thought of as a replacement for conventional approaches, but rather as an alternative approach that enables a ‘big picture’ of development and change to be constructed for an area.

This guidebook has been written specifically for those interested in implementing 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 the 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 findings⁹, 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 NGOs and even local governments to improve the design of their interventions and their communication with supposed beneficiaries. *We encourage you to share your experiences with us*.¹⁰

---

¹⁰ The PADev team can be contacted at [http://www.padev.nl/contact.htm](http://www.padev.nl/contact.htm)
Workshop Setup

Scale
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 regional 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 gradually discovered 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 subgroups. 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 different setting.

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, social-cultural and social-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, if one insists on an approach that leads to a statistically representative sample, listing and selection would be quite a
time-consuming affair and would stretch the financial and organisational capacity of many researchers and development agencies who want to apply this method.

In practice we select participants to include specific groups of people: old/young, female/male, officials/commoners, 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’ and respected elders in the workshop as these participants can offer great 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 a separate group 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.

Selection should preferably be done by a local researcher who knows the area. The researcher can use a 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 of the bias that may occur (intended or unintended).

**Participant Group Sizes**

We have observed that the size of the participant group affects the extent to which participants 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).

**Some bias can’t be avoided**

Looking at the experiences so far we can say that it is very unlikely that the richest and most influential businesspeople 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 the groups.

It is also very unlikely that the very poor (and often despised) 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 form 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.

Timing of a workshop
The timing of the workshop is important. It should not be 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.

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: they go home at the end of the afternoon and come back the following morning (although sometimes transport 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.

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.

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, proper translation is very important, 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 at all be fluent. 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 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 (see exercise 10).
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).

**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.

**Data Management and Workflow**

In PADev workshops, a senior facilitator is typically paired with a junior who is responsible for data recording. 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. 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.

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 (a set of excel files will be made available on the [www.padev.nl](http://www.padev.nl)). 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.

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 for 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 backdonors. 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’.

**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. There is a degree of facilitator skill involved in knowing how far participants can be pushed 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 from 9am.

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 three-day workshop a rest is welcomed by all involved.
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, so that all have a chance to talk. The one 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. As you develop your own methods please share these by contacting the PADev team through the PADev website.
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 (I)NGOs)
- older men (> 40)
- older women (>40)
- younger men (40 and below)
- younger women (40 and below)

If groups have 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 (optional)
- Pens with different colours

Duration
The exercise generally takes between 1½ - 2 hours, 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.

Method of preparation
Groups are first organised. The ‘officials’ form their own group and go to a separate room with a facilitator and reporter. Then the men and women’s groups are formed, and older as well as younger groups for each gender. Each are assigned a facilitator and reporter. It can be a good idea to assign female facilitators to female groups, although in our experience this is not strictly necessary. Very often an interpreter needs to be identified from within each group. Some on-the-spot training is necessary to avoid the case of an interpreter adding too much of his/her own interpretation in the exercises or ‘overruling’ more shy participants.
Exercise
In the group each member briefly presents him/herself, and adds 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. One after the other and round after round, people add events, until nobody can add anything substantial. Collectively participants decide that the end result gives a good impression of the area’s history of major events.

Instrument for recording data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event description</th>
<th>Effect of event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 experience 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 p.13).

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'\textsuperscript{11}. Later 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
- Six large sheets of paper (minimum)
- Markers

Duration
This exercise may easily 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 comparison timeframe prior to the exercise. The same timeframe must be used by all participant groups. Up to now, PAdEv researchers have chosen either 20 or

\textsuperscript{11} This refers to the famous article by Anthony Bebbington in World Development, 1999, Vol. 27 (12): Capitals and Capabilities: A Framework for Analyzing Peasant Viability, Rural Livelihoods and Poverty. DfID and related agencies have contributed a lot to this livelihoods approach.
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 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 6 – Relationship between Changes and Projects). Note this compilation can take several hours.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Change description</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Effect reason</th>
<th>Prompted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Land, soil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water (rainfall, bodies of water)</td>
<td>++</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animals (livestock, wildlife)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plants, crops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Roads &amp; bridges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buildings (types, quality)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dams, wells, boreholes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farming tools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telecommunication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Knowledge &amp; Education (levels, enrolment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health &amp; Hygiene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Women in farming and trading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access to credit, banks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Out-migration &amp; Remittances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Markets &amp; shops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport (means, costs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paid jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-political</td>
<td>Relations between family members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGOs, development agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associations (types, number)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership structures (political, traditional etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land tenure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Religion (Christianity, Islam, traditional etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relations between ethnic groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Languages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Music and dance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 trend-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 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.

Extending the exercise
The exercise can also be extended to ask for the reasons why participants perceive a change to have occurred. 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.

Facilitators can choose to use the stoneman/stonewoman method to elicit responses from participants (see photo)
**Exercise 3 – Wealth Groups**

**Objective**
1) To obtain a locally defined and accepted categorization of wealth groups. Participants identify attributes that act as proxies of poverty and wealth. 2) To get an assessment of the population distribution for each of wealth group. Data from this exercise is also used later in Exercise 9 – Impact on Wealth Classes

**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**
- A few large (A1) sheets of paper
- Markers
- 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, Part 1**
This exercise has two parts.

Groups discuss the local images of poverty and wealth, and the local words used for each of 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 groups 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 ‘desperate poor’ 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 first asked to agree on the local names for the five wealth categories (this may be done in more than one language). Participants are being 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
- Household size and number of wives and children
- Type of house and utensils (beds, bedding, chairs, etc)
- 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
- Funeral rituals
- Other specific rituals
- Social behaviour, e.g. Supporting others or being supported by others

**Format for data recording**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Prompted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Rich (add local names)</td>
<td>Job types</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farm acreage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Types/numbers of animals owned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household size (# wives, children)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home (size, type, contents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Means of transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clothes (types)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>food (# meals/day, type)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>health and handicaps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>funeral rituals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>Same attributes, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise, 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 each wealth group. Participants debate 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 the images in mind that were developed by the group as part 1 of this exercise.

Format for data recording

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Stones (Percent %)</th>
<th>Very Rich</th>
<th>Rich</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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 9 – Impact on Wealth Classes later in the workshop): During the evening a facilitator looks at 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 subgroups 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 between the different wealth classes, or confusion about the exercise itself.

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.

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\(^{12}\) (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 smaller levels of scale, it is not necessary to divide participants according to geographical groups. In this listing exercise men and women can be grouped together (and old and young) as this helps to get complete overviews of all project types that have come to the area. Men and women often complement each other in this respect.

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

Duration: 1 hour

Method of preparation
During the first day a list is made of all participants, with names, functions/jobs, gender, age group, and geographical details. In some cases other information can be added as well (e.g. religion, ethnicity). This list is a combined list of information provided by the workshop organiser and of information provided by all individual participants during the first day. This list is then thoroughly checked with the workshop organiser, although there often are problems with the ‘correct’ spelling of names. Together with the workshop organiser, and other knowledgeable people from the area (and if possible with an existing map), a sketch map is being made, plotting the geographical information for all members. This enables a decision about the composition of the geographical groups for the second and the third day of the workshop. If the exercise is being done at the level of scale of a micro region of the size we had in Ghana and Burkina Faso a geographical group from e.g. the northern villages always consists of people from a variety of villages and hamlets from that sub-region. But these villages are generally close enough to enable individual people in that group to know each other’s villages/hamlets. Of course there can be some (joking or sometimes serious) enmity. If it is known in advance that there have been serious

\(^{12}\) We have used the term ‘projects’ because this is how participants themselves commonly refer to these development efforts.
tensions between nearby villages, it is better to separate the people from these villages, and make a different composition of geographical groups.

**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 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 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Dates (start – end)</th>
<th>Agency(s)</th>
<th>Agency type(s)</th>
<th>Other details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural environment</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy, communication</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, markets</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 being 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 borehole 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 everyone of the 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.

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.

If specific information is added by reporters about years, it is useful to be clear about the way
means: more or less in the period covering the years 2002 and 2003.
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). Participants also indicate whether they perceive each project to have impacted ‘many’ people or only ‘a few’. 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 ‘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 that is.
Format for recording (extension of the ‘Project Recall’ recording instrument)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact then ++ + / -</th>
<th>Impact now ++ + / -</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compilation/analysis

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

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

Remarks and Pitfalls

It is interesting to note that, after splitting the area groups in 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.
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).

**Alternative Use**

Researchers may chose to leave out the ‘then’ state for various reasons, such as a lack of time.
Exercise 6 – Relationship between Changes and Projects

Objective
To get an impression of participant’s attribution of major changes to specific or generic development efforts. This exercise utilizes participant responses from Exercise 2 – Changes and Exercise 4 – Project recall. Participants are asked what they attribute both positive and negative changes to (from Exercise 2 – 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: Third exercise of the second day, usually as the first activity after lunch.

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 (from Exercise 2 – Changes). Five positive and 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.

Materials Needed
- Three A1 sheets with summary of the major trends: two domains per sheet and in 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 exceptional cases: “what projects caused these negative trends”).
### Format for reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>pos/neg +/-</th>
<th>Reason for change/how</th>
<th>Projects causing/mitigating change/how</th>
<th>Projects mentioned unprompted? x</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio/Political</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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”.

Exercise 7 – 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 drawn on 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 forth (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 one 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 each think of one project they think is among the very best to have come to the area. The list of recalled projects is then read back to participants slowly. This is important because some participants may have forgotten some of the projects. After the list of project has been read (and possibly re-read), participants are asked to cite which project they think is the best and the reason why. 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 in order 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 as it can shed far
more light on 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank #</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank #</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 points values according to their rank: for example, 5 points for the best project, 4 for the second best etc. Alternately, projects can be given a points 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 points (or negative points, as the case may be).

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? This approach transforms ‘worst’ in ‘least beneficial’, which is usually more acceptable. Participants should not be forced to name all five worst projects if they feel that there aren’t that many bad projects.
Exercise 8 – Historical Assessment of Best/Worst Projects

Objective
To get an idea about how participants perceived projects at the time they first heard a project was coming, how they perceived the project immediately after it was implemented, and how they perceive the project today.

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 second day, or if that is impossible due to time pressure: first exercise during the last day.

Materials Needed
A1 sheet with a list of five best and five worst projects made during Exercise 7 – Best/Worst Projects.

Duration: about one hour

Exercise
The exercise is done for each project that was earlier listed as among the five best and five worst projects. Participants discuss what they thought about a project when they first heard it was coming - what did they think that particular project would do, and for whom? Participants are then asked what they thought about the project the first year it was actually implemented. Finally, participants are asked what they think about the project as it is today.

Format for reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank #</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Ideas when first heard the project was coming</th>
<th>Ideas 1 year after the project was introduced</th>
<th>Ideas Now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Worst 5 Projects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank #</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Ideas when first heard the project was coming</th>
<th>Ideas 1 year after the project was introduced</th>
<th>Ideas Now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compilation/analysis
Per sector (and if relevant per type of agency) the ‘dynamics of judgment’ can be described, by combining all findings for all groups (indicating which group gave which type of information). The emphasis of the analysis is on qualitative statements. It takes about a day to do the analysis and write up.

Remarks and pitfalls
This exercise is most difficult if people had selected ‘best’ or ‘worst’ projects that have been initiated long ago, and for which most workshop members only have vague, or indirect memories. Older participants may dominate these discussions, but sometimes the younger members of a group may ask a lot of critical questions to these elderly people. That alone is important to note (a good reporter adds ‘flavour’ to the report by showing some of these emotions and criticisms).

This exercise often adds information to the project judgments that was not given before. Particularly the reasons for including development efforts among the ‘worst’ projects becomes more clear, as it is often a result of a clash between raised expectations in the early stages of a project and the actual outcomes.
**Exercise 9 – Impact on Wealth Classes**

**Objective**
To get an idea of the impact of the best five/worst five projects on the different wealth groups for both ‘Then’ (when the project first came) and ‘Now’ (the project as it is perceived today). This exercise can give an idea of which group is benefiting most and least from the development interventions that have come to the area.

**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**
- A1 sheets with a summary of the wealth classes
- 10 stones for each group
- A chart with the wealth classes with a place to distribute 10 stones over each category

**Duration:** This exercise can take time and effort to facilitate debates and emotions. Generally it takes 1.5 hours but may take longer. It may be necessary to have a break in between. The exercise is usually done only for the best 5/worst 5 projects due to time constraints.

**Method of preparation**
During Exercise 3 – Wealth Groups 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 at an overall consensus can be arrived at about the five categories to be used and this is written on a large sheet of paper and distributed to each group.

**Exercise – Part 1**
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 richer 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’.

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.

The rest of the group is then invited to debate the stone distribution. When the stone distribution is agreed, the facilitator should confirm with participants the reasons for their 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.

Exercise – Part 2
The exercise is then repeated for those projects earlier nominated among the worst 5 projects. Now the questions is not ‘who benefited most’ but ‘who suffered most’ for ‘Then’ and ‘Now’. That qualitative information has to be carefully noted by the reporter, and also the reasons given. It is of course possible that people selected projects as examples of ‘worst cases’ because nothing ever happened, despite big expectations raised. So in those cases nobody really gained, and nobody really suffered, and the reporter should note that carefully.

In practice this exercise was the most difficult one and needs a very dedicated facilitator, who carefully explains what is expected, and who notices confusion and corrects it.
Format for reporting

Best 5 Projects: Which groups *benefited* the most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>VR</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>VR</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worst 5 Projects: Which groups *suffered* the most?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>VR</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>VR</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
One stoneman places the stones first and gives his reasons to the group. Discussion then ensues upon which a consensus is reached.

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 can not 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 10 – Assessment of Agencies

Objective
To get an idea about participant’s perceptions of agencies working in the area. This information can be useful to analyze 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
- 10 stones for each group

Duration: This may take one 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 criteria (see format for reporting below). These statements and the assessment criteria are based on information that has been gathered in earlier PADev workshops.

The assessment can be done in more than one way. We must note that assessing all agencies on all suggested assessment criteria will make the exercise duration much too long. Instead, 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. Another suggestion would be to only assess, say, five criteria. These criteria could either be selected beforehand by the researchers to ensure that data collected from all participant groups is comparable, or alternatively participants could be first asked to rank what criteria they think are most important and use these.

We suggest that the exercise is conducted using 10 stones, as is done in other exercises. Participants are asked to respond to a statement for each criteria. Participants are invited to place stones, assessing one criteria at a time. Placing 10 stones in a box represents a strong positive/true response for a particular criteria. Placing no stones, or only a few stones in the box for a given criteria represents a negative response to a given criteria. Participants are asked for the reasons behind their stone allocations for each criteria.
An alternative way to run the exercise would be to use a likert scale for assessing the various criteria. In this case participants could place a single stone in a box representing ‘true’, ‘usually true’, ‘sometimes true’, ‘usually not true’, and ‘not true’ for each of the criteria. Again, the reasons behind each stone placement should be probed by facilitators.

Format for reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Long term commitment</th>
<th>Realistic expectations</th>
<th>Honesty</th>
<th>Trust in people</th>
<th>Trustworthiness</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Respect</th>
<th>Local Presence</th>
<th>Positive outcomes</th>
<th>Support for self-reliance</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statements:
“They are/were really concerned about us” (Long term commitment)
“They do/did not promise more than they can/could do” (Realistic expectation)
“When something goes/went wrong, they explain(ed) honestly” (Honesty)
“We feel that they trust(ed) us” (Trust in people)
“We feel that we can/could trust them” (Trustworthiness)
“They really address(ed) the problems that affect us” (Relevance)
“We have/had a real voice in what and how they do/did projects” (Participation)
“They treat(ed) us respectfully and take/took us seriously” (Respect)
“They really live(d) among us and are/were part of us” (Local presence)
“The results really improved the lives of many people in the area” (Positive broad outcome)
“The project really enabled us to improve our activities/way of life” (Support for self-reliance)
“Any other reasons given”

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 local participant versus assessments made by officials and other leaders, some of whom will likely work for some of the agencies assessed.
Assessing projects as an alternative?

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.
Additional Exercise – Personal Profiles

Objective
To get basic information about the participants and their family background in order to get an idea about 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, although many participants will not speak that language or can not read or write). The form asks about some personal characteristics, and some basic information about the participant’s father and mother, about the participant’s own children, and about the participant’s siblings.

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: ................................................................. Gender: ..........Male | Female
2. Age (or birthyear):.................................................................
3. Where do you live now? (name of village/town):.................................................................
4. Where were you born? ........................................... Same place | Elsewhere in the region | Outside region, specify:
5. What is/are your main occupation(s) / job(s)? .................................................................

6. Do you have other income generating activities or community function(s)? ......................... Yes | No If yes, specify .................................................................

7. Ethnicity / mother tongue: .................................................................................................................................
8. Which other languages do you speak?.................................................................................................................................
9. Current religion(s): ................................................................. Traditional | Muslim | Christian, specify .................................................................
10. Did you follow another religion before? If yes, specify which .................................................................
11. Marital status? .................................................................Married | Widowed | Separated | Unmarried
12. If married woman, how many wives does your husband have? .................................................................
13. If married man, how many wives do you have? .................................................................................................
14. Did you go to school? If yes, up to which level (p4, jss2, etc.) .................................................................
15. Have you ever gone on seasonal / temporary migration? ................................................................. Yes | No If yes, how many times? ................................................................. And where did you usually go? .................................................................

16. 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? .................................................................

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year/Period</th>
<th>Good or bad?</th>
<th>What happened?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

19. YOUR FATHER:
   a. Year of birth (estimate decade if unknown) .................................................................................................
   b. Year of death (estimate decade if unknown) .................................................................................................
   c. Education level: .................................................................................................................................Religion(s): .................................................................................................
   d. What was/were his job(s) / occupation(s)? .................................................................................................
   e. How many wives did he have (at the same time)? .................................................................................................
   f. How many children did his wife(s) get in total? .................................................................................................

20. YOUR MOTHER
   a. Year of birth (estimate decade if unknown) .................................................................................................
   b. Year of death (estimate decade if unknown) .................................................................................................
c. Education level: ..................................Religion(s): ..................................
d. Job(s) / occupation(s): .................................................................

21. 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: ..................................Religion(s): ..................................

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Boy / Girl</th>
<th>Birth year</th>
<th>Where does s/he live? (1) Same place (2) same region (3) outside region, specify</th>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Job(s) / occupation(s)</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Married?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth year</th>
<th>Where does he live? (1) Same place (2) same region (3) outside region, specify</th>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Job(s) / occupation(s)</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Married?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth year</th>
<th>Where does she live? (1) Same place (2) same region (3) outside region, specify</th>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Job(s) / occupation(s)</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Married?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 getting 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\(^{13}\); 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 concept report
After making a concept 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 concept document, and making comments). After that the writer of the report 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 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.

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.

\(^{13}\) See http://padev.nl/reports.htm
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.

The PAdEv team would like to encourage you to share your ongoing experiences with us so that we may all continue to learn, and further develop the PAdEv methodology.