III. DESCRIPTION OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE TOOLKIT

There are two ways in which to organise the discussion of the techniques that are included in the RRA toolkit and the situations in which they are applied. One is according to the purpose for which they are to be used. The other is in terms of specific techniques. In this section, the discussion will be focused on the specific techniques, describing their limits and indicating some of the types of circumstances in which they are applied. Where there are strongly parallel content issues related to the use of particular techniques, such as in the case regarding the limits and applicability of formal sampling to RRA exercises, these aspects of the toolkit are discussed subsequently at greater length as detailed.

3.1 General Methods

The general methods that are employed in RRA are to the time constraint on data collection and analysis are: use of cross-checking or triangulation, extensive reliance on the available secondary data; use of detailed but open-ended interview guides to ensure pertinent issues are covered; exposure of team interaction to maintain a multi-disciplinary perspective. This paper will not go into detail about these general methods. The box below lists a number of excellent sources that describe the general principles of the RRA toolkit.

3.1.1. Triangulation

Triangulation or cross-checking is not unique to RRA methods. It means quite simply gathering information about a particular topic from a variety of different sources, using a variety of data-gathering methods. If, for instance, a farmer informs the team that a new wheat landrace is giving more grain than the current variety, the team should “check” this information by asking other farmers with similar fields, by discussing this issue with other group interviewees, by checking what project reports have said on this subject, or by finding out if the new wheat has recently been planted on other farms. This information is always needed repeatedly, it is not ever correct. The trick is in using this cross-checking to be sure the information is actually coming from a different source. Teams with tight time frames often make the mistake of checking questions only in a limited geographic area and only in planned reports regarding that limited area, and come away generating a very poor, piecemeal, and one-sided picture of the phenomenon. For example, one FSESE expert talked about designers being very lean when faced with the network designer who worked a few years back. However, this information only pertained to the small team of farmers that we interviewed, who lived relatively close to a sugarcane growing area and who migrated from other work on the harvest wages paid by the sugar-growers. Their cross-checks had not included a broad enough geographic radius.

Box 3.1.4 - MOST USEFUL GENERAL REFERENCE SOURCES ON RRA TOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition</th>
</tr>
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</table>

3.1.2. Pre-existing Data

The topic is well-documented in the sources mentioned above. The purpose of pre-existing and secondary data is always problematic in the short RRA exercises, since there is seldom adequate time allotted to the team for background literature review and analysis, especially when the team is working with a small group of people. The information gained from pre-existing data includes information on the specific efforts made by the community or area to deal with the issue at hand. This information is gathered from available secondary sources, such as reports, articles, and other sources that have been documented and collected on the area. The information gathered can provide a general overview of the situation and can be used to identify priorities for further investigation. Pre-existing data is particularly useful when there is limited time available for data collection and analysis.

3.1.3. Interview Guides

Two of the findings of this review have been that: (1) the standardisation of interview guides for land-based, natural resource management planning is increasing, and (2) this is a methodological area which would become greatly more form work on in the near future. Interview guides are designed to be a guide for field interviewers and are developed to promote consistency in the way data is collected. The interview guide is a tool that can be used to structure the interview and ensure that all important topics are covered.

3.1.4. Interdisciplinary Team Interaction

An inter-disciplinary team is a team of people from multiple disciplines working together on a project. This type of team is designed to bring together different perspectives and expertise to address complex issues. Inter-disciplinary teams are often used in RRA exercises to ensure that all important topics are covered and to avoid overlooking any potential areas of concern. The team members may include social scientists, economists, environmentalists, and policymakers. The team members work collaboratively to develop a comprehensive understanding of the issue and to identify potential solutions.

3.1.5. Issues for Multi-Disciplinary Team Interviewing

In an interview conducted for the review, particularly with social scientists who use RRA techniques on a regular basis, an interesting mix of results emerged regarding the best ways to develop a good team interaction and allow social scientists to maximize the quality of information collected from local people. Some argued strongly that the role of the social scientist in a team setting was to provide accessible socio-economic information for the purpose of a more selective and targeted research. Other team members were of the opinion that a team member’s role was not simply to provide information but to actively participate in the RRA exercise itself. Leaving the team for several days of independent interviews, perhaps with a translator, can be beneficial in introducing a social perspective to team members from technical disciplines or fostering a multi-disciplinary team.

3.1.6. The Case for Interviewing Apart from Other Team Members

One of the most important points is the use of interview guides. The team stopped questioning their hypotheses and accepted the findings as it was a key stage in the process. A good team always questions the findings that are emerging and agrees to look for new evidence and methods that provide new evidence and new results. Simple use of RRA to confirm one’s assumptions is the biggest fail in applying such an approach.
Rapid appraisal

3.3. Techniques of Group Interviewing

even slower, more difficult and more sensitive process than would otherwise be the ca
language speakers should also be included in the team and that this will be of great
skills in local institutions should be a high priority. Nevertheless, there are many
selection of interviewees and sampling methods are another way to reduce bias.
before breaking off from work to answer questions), interviewing individuals in a com
in which lands had begun to be measured in hectares rather than in acres. Less educat
offering her often greater knowledge of women and development issues is important, su
There has been a common assumption in RRA manuals that women are necessary members of
in the "Art of the Informal Survey" is a good guideline along with Warwick (1976)
are developed on the premise that other team members can in this way devote adequate time to their training in the course of the RRA. Humility is the key. The good, seasoned interviewers are humble when evaluating the effectiveness of their own techniques. When one technique proves biased, they substitute another.

Box nos.5—Probing is a Key Element of— RRA interview/Method

Situation: In Africa, one team 'found' it difficult to assess the reliability of answers from men
and women to the question whether food supplies were adequate year round. Men and
women constantly replied they were, and other methods of inquiry were employed. One
team member went to grocery and asked the woman if always had enough stored grains
in the household. "Not all year round", was the answer. "How often is it inadequate?" they
asked. "During what months?" From a step-by-step process emerged a very different
picture, one of periods of acute scarcity as well as periods which women consumed less
than men of the household.

3.2.5. Special Techniques to Reduce Bias

Interview techniques are a critical element of the task. Since there are a host of applicable techniques described in conventional and RRA literature such as these listed in 3.2 and 3.2.5. following, I have not devoted much space to this topic here.

Some of the techniques used for proper interviewing are listed:

avoiding questions that are too leading or as to how the respondent to provide a certain answer (non-leading questioning)
use of the interviewer (what, who, where, when, how) to tell the interviewee that the interviewer is really understanding the situation and not drawing conclusions on the basis of partial information
probing, or not stopping when a respondent replies, but continuing to elicit more detailed information about these and not make assumptions

There are certain interview practices that work much better with women than men. In general, women are more familiar with local, cultural categories, time intervals, size classes, and measurements than are men. An Africanist cites an instance in which lands had been measured in hectares rather than in acres. Less educated men and most women did not "convert" their land size when this change occurred, but for a given size-term land began to tell interviewers that they had 2/3 of an acre rather than 2 acres. Women were able to use the new measure. Women were less used to formal interviews, and questions must be phrased in a straightforward manner that does not assume the respondent is ready to say only the question is being asked or what the interviewer means to find.

When properly interviewed, however, women may have very valuable information about harvest quantities, processing values, storage losses, consumption patterns, etc. The interviewer must know how to collect such information. A classic example from African experience is the greater understanding of non-marketed production, because these crops are harvested as needed from garden plots, rather than harvested at all once (1984). Questions must creatively elicit estimates of total production from consumption patterns, rather than relying upon "guesswork" of total harvesting.

Women also tend to know a very different set of facts about marriage, family, and inheritance, resource use, and resource processing. Interviewing women about a particular village resource or farming system will invariably elicit a different and much more detailed and useful collection of information about use and ownership of that resource. Women may benefit very differently from an activity than do men and, therefore, women may have a different opinion about the particular roles women play. The need to approach women and men from a part of questioning effective RRA. The team leader should consider who is engaged in what activity or sector and interview those who, rather than whatever happens to be easiest to interview. Information should be collected by trying to examine structured the work done by one or her employees, or on a given interviewees needs to a guide, as by interviewing RRA the values held by a woman.

In terms of resource management, women may have strategies that are not commonly understood or of interest to men in the same village. Women may have fuel-harvesting techniques that maximize forest resources, or they may meet to decide on forest protection techniques that are not discussed in detail with men, since they do not regularly harvest forest products from the resource. Women may also have different perceptions about projected activity plans that will the men of the same locality.

Box nos. 6—Evaluating Gains and Losses to Women

1. A team evaluating a participatory rural development project sought to gather the
male and female losses to women. One positive component, was a bagel program, one aspect of the program which staff noted was influenced on was the impact on women's time. Two problems emerged: a) during the dry season, when animals are not fed, women spend time collecting dung from going lands to feed the animals and b) while the primary promoter uses fuel from firewood in the fields from the plant, this is heavy, and men with carts to transport it to the fields. Instead, men will do the dry to dry and also the transport work to women to be done in with traditional work divisions. And poor women have lost a source of fuel-buying customers among the houses with big smoke.

(Source: Age Atlas Foundation-Evaluation in Guipuz, 1980)

3.2.4. Key Informant Interviews

Key Informants are a major source of information for those conducting in depth RRA for those interviewing under time constraints as is the case with RRA applications. Key informants, simply defined, are individuals with a special knowledge and understanding of the topic of interest (respected leaders, irrigation system maintenance committees, etc.), RRA manuals pay particular attention to how and when to interview key informants and how to encourage such interviews with other respondents. There are many RRA manuals that provide insights into interviewing such individuals and about how to weigh their answers. One excellent tool on this topic is Eliz J. Folkers in the Guide to the Conduct of Field Research in the Social Sciences (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1981). One use for key informants is that a particular respondent can serve as a key informant and not in the RRA interviews at different points in a single interview. A village headman can be a key informant at one moment, while a team on village-wide patterns of land use, and be an informant in the next, when describing his personal-use practice to the team. Team members must be able to keep these roles separate when taking notes about what this individual says and when evaluating the information acquired.

Box nos.7—Interviewing Women

One male interviewer who works often with community forestry has found that he can much
more easily interview women in Asia by starting with a question about their stove and
cooking habits. This leads into their leisure interests where they live and home in
command, and in this setting they are far more open in expressing opinions attitude and feels
needs about a whole range of forestry and local economic issues.

3.2.5. Special Techniques to Reduce Bias

There are a large number of documents regarding proper ways to conduct an interview. These include Vilcenc (1976), Rhodes (1980), Chambers (1985), Khan-Haen (1987), and Osler, Osler and Forsani (1988). These include providing the proper warm-up to the interview, ordering questions in an open-ended and understanding way, interviewing on field without visibly disrupting the work (many farmers will appreciate the interviewers' offer of help with an on-going task before breaking off from work to answer questions), interviewing individuals in a comfortable setting (women generally speak more freely in their kitchen than outside the house), and phrasing questions in a way that is easy to understand by people interviewed.

One practitioner recommends adding a last question to the interview schedule which is:
Are there any questions that you would like to ask the interviewee?

This allows the interviewer to get a feel for how much the respondent may have been pushed, the respondent may be more or less interested in the topic at hand, and also provides a closer check on the respondent and interviewee understand what was being asked. If the question is out of the blue, there is a good chance that the respondent did not fully understand what the interview was about and the interviewer may have asked a question that the respondent believes is not related to the interview.

The interview techniques survey, which may help in understanding the context that will be discussed in a separate section are other tools to reduce bias and ensure that researcher and respondent understand what is being said. Rating.

3.2.6. Use of Interpreters/Translators

Opinions differ on the best way to use interpreters/intermediaries during RRA. Nearly all practitioners agree that being able to converse directly with interviewees is a decided advantage of using interpreters or translators, and that promoting RRA skills in local institutions should be a high priority. Nevertheless, there are many occasions when RRA work must be done with an interpreter, and RRA practitioners often look for techniques designed to maximize forest regrowth, or they may meet to decide on forest protection techniques that are not discussed in detail with men, since they do not regularly harvest forest products from the resource. Women may also have different perceptions about projected activity plans that will benefit the men of the same locality.

3.3. Techniques of Group Interviewing

3.3.1. Overview

All RRA applications make use of individual and group interviews to gather information about the local situation. Some general principles of the toolkit are ways to reduce bias in the questioning process. Rhodes (1980) on the "Art of the Informal Survey" is a good guideline along with Vilcenc (1976) The Simple Survey: Theory and Practice. Acquiring expertise in sensitive and non-biased interviewing is a slow process requiring considerable training and long-term experience. Khan-Haen practitioners advocate developing this capability by having RRA-trained members on the premise that other team members can in this way devote adequate time to their training in the course of the RRA. Humility is the key. The good, seasoned interviewers are humble when evaluating the effectiveness of their own techniques. When one technique proves biased, they substitute another.
Group interviewing is an important element of the RRA toolkit because: (a) its usefulness in collecting information from a wide range of individuals relatively quickly; (b) its usefulness in generating discussion of relevant problems, issues, and options; and (c) its usefulness in the process of village-level planning of activities. Written information about group interviewing techniques focuses much more often on the first two options than on the third. In addition, group interviewing is often unavoidable, since household interview often becomes group interviews when passers-by see the team at work and most likely be included in the interview. Manuals also include techniques for discouraging new arrivals on the scene of the interviews from dominating the discussion and for capitalizing on their presence by changing the nature of the interview.

There are a number of excellent guides on group interviewing apart from the guides mentioned in Box 4. These include Kumar (1987), Shaner, Philipp and Schmehl (1982), Chambers (1982), Khan Kain (1987), and McCracken, Pretty and Convey (1988). Harendee (1982) and Hendricks (1987) include useful charts outlining the trade-offs between different types of group interview techniques.

Like individual interviews, group interviews are a trick proposition. Give (1987) makes the important observation that community interviews can often provide a team with a detailed picture of the local situation because local leaders dominate the discussion, because respondents discuss ‘ideal reality’ rather than actual practices, because respondents may take control of topics out of the hands of the moderator, and because interviews with large groups often degenerate into a chaotic procession to air grievances and feelings. Kumar (1987) suggests some strategies for circumventing these problems:

- carefully worded, leading questions to circumvent evasiveness of real issues;
- sub-dividing the group into smaller, homogenous working groups;
- varying topics to spark the interest of a wider group; and
- using humor when pointing out the futility of certain cultural subgroups.

A practitioner drawing up his work in Africa suggests that group discussions can more forcefully lead to village consensus about their desired course of action. The research team explores issues of importance informally with traditionally-respected community leaders, and then allows an ‘elder’ leader to generate the discussion, thereby gaining the confidence of the group of villagers present that the topic deserves their interest and attention. In discussions of the optimal ways to achieve effective common property resource management over a particular piece of common land, for instance, villagers are more likely to seriously consider new options and provide a research team with an honest opinion if the discussion is initiated by a local authority who commands their respect in this topic, if the team members present hypothetical options from their outside view of the situation.

There is often an assumption that host-country team members and local project staff will be able to generate a balanced, useful discussion with local groups of people. While it may be the case that local professionals will better understand local cultural values and norms, they may be forced by this same knowledge to generate a more homogeneous and less representative list of what the villagers think than might be the case if interviewers from outside the village were used. This is not an absolute: while the individuals are not skilled in interviewing and use of the toolkit, the host-country team members often have as many ‘thicker’ pre-conceptions about what ‘the villagers think or do’ on the subject. They may have a very clear understanding about a certain group or class within the village itself, but fail to recognize the diversity of different situations. Hom-country team members must be careful to filter their own assumptions when choosing questions, phrasing questions, or leading a discussion.

Box 6.3 - A High-Profile Visit May Elicit Only What the Villagers Want The Team to Hear

Questions in these interviews are highly focused on a few, key issues. It is generally not useful to have such interviews at a very exploratory stage, before the team understands the general parameters of the problem. It is useful to evaluate the range of circumstances of the group and to provide a setting in which individuals are comfortable about giving their honest feelings or opinions.

3.3.2 When Are Group Interviews Used

Group interviews can be useful in the following situations to provide complementary data to that available in individual interviews.

1) To find out village-wide information, or to define an initial range of situations that can be refined in household or individual interviews (such as, how many cattle people own, whether grazing areas are adequate, what is the effect of time spent in gathering fuelwood on the overall workload of a typical working family, and how prevalent the source of income is for different types of households).

2) To find out homogenous groups of people are assembled for a specific purpose when the team enters the village – women, landless, smallholders, irrigated-land owners – group interviews generate in-depth information about differing perspectives of different types of villagers).

3) To gain information from a group of ‘professionals’ who are less likely to be as frank as individuals about their problems – government extension workers, local medical personnel, local foresters – to identify the range of their views on a subject.

4) WHEN information from individual interviews does not make sense – groups may clarify the information and explain more comprehensively in light of additional information or they may react emotionally to the information, thereby revealing a key issue needing further discussion; or

5) To solicit information about local knowledge categories, so that questions asked in an individual or household setting will be more fruitful (techniques promoted in the toolkit) for this objective are the ranking games, such as those described by Chambers in Box 11.6 of this report. Questioning respondents of what local people make decisions about collecting or harvesting specific products, such as the use of Eric Ruspi’s ‘Research in Progress’ in the research on fire and forest in the hilly agro-ecology area.

3.3.3 Focus-Group Interviews

A focus group is a group interview technique that is becoming more popular for natural resource management-related surveys in the focus-group interview. Focus-group interviews are adapted from social marketing methods in private industry and involve interviewing relatively homogenous groups of local people or government extension agents, such as women seeking medical care, smallholders growing fodder trees, or forest guards. This technique is appropriate when smaller, homogenous groups of people are naturally assembled during the field visits – all women, all landless, all smallholders, all irrigated-land owners – to gain in-depth information about particular issues. It is also used to get a consensus of opinions from a group of ‘professionals’ – local foresters, local medical personnel, extension personnel, etc.

Questions in these interviews are highly focused on a few, key issues. It is generally not useful to have such interviews at a very exploratory stage, before the team understands the general parameters of the problem. It is useful to evaluate the range of circumstances of the group and to provide a setting in which individuals are comfortable about giving their honest feelings or opinions.

Box 6.4 - Don’t Believe What You Hear Until You Investigate

Situation: A team evaluating the progress of an Indian state social forestry project visited a community which had recently been visited by local people under the guidance of the local elected officials, the panchayats. The leaders of the community told the team that they had divided the produce equally among the villagers, and showed them a document with signatures of those who received the produce. One team member spoke to some poor villagers present and asked if they had thumbprints on the list. They did, but upon questioning them, it emerged that they and a number of other poor villagers present had never received any produce at all.

Box 6.10 - Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews can be very useful tools for eliciting opinions about difficulties that extension workers face in providing extension support to local villagers. Bringing together village-level workers apart from their the supervisors creates a timeline for open discussion of key issues. In India, such discussions within villages, or between forest officers and local leaders, are often given because they have been enraged enough by influential people and leaders to hope the leaders will use their authority to have these people excluded. No training has been provided to forest officers to help them find solutions to such problems in the field.

3.4.1 Overview

One of the most critical and controversial issues in sound use of the RRA toolkit is the selection of respondents and sampling. There is a wide range of opinion on this subject – some practitioners go by an intentional selection process (purposive sampling is one name for this), interviewing people and groups of different classes, ethnicity, age, gender, resource base, and adding new respondents to round out the gaps in the information that is emerging. Other practitioners find it more useful to use either simple random or one-stage sampling or more complex choices between the formal sampling principles.

There have been studies comparing the findings of informal and formal, statistical surveys in particular geographic locations for a particular topic (Hinnell, 1987; Njogemasou, et al, 1987). There appears to be a strong lack of consensus as to whether these studies have more general application.

3.4.2 Possible Uses of Formal Sampling Theory in RRA

The key controversy is not whether the purpose of the sample is to faithfully represent the population – a clearly impossible task – but whether some kind of application of formal, sampling principles in the context of RRA exercise is a useful means of comparing the data. The proponents of the Zero data base are not at all concerned with the meaning of the data collected by zero data base, but feel that the survey should be made available to the people to see if they are doing something as the sampling, or some other people have done something to this end. This has been devised for a large-scale, formal survey (see Annex 2 for a description of this program).

Box 6.11 - Sampling Techniques

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Law (Confidence Interval)</th>
<th>Confidence-Building Measure</th>
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<tr>
<td>Small Size of Sample</td>
<td>Small Complementary Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Representative of Minorities</td>
<td>Stratification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Selection Procedures</td>
<td>Striving for Randomness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Statistical Validity</td>
<td>Non-Heuristic Caution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Context Sampling</td>
<td>Cross-checking by Multimethod Triangulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biasing Contact</td>
<td>Creative Case Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purposeful Deception</td>
<td>Skill &amp; Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Intelligibility</td>
<td>Skill &amp; Experience</td>
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(Source: Campbell, J.G., from a workshop presentation on RRA methods, World Bank, Washington, D.C., December 1988.)

3.4.3 Application of Formal Sampling Theory in the RRA Toolkit

What can realistically be adapted from formal sampling theory in selecting samples to talk with during RRA-style field visits? What formal sampling achieves in statistical surveys is to reduce the choice that investigators will pick a certain set of individuals over another, thereby coming out of the field with a skewed impression of the local situation or problem. A well-executed statistical sample will have what is known as a low ‘random sampling error. Any survey, however statistical, fails

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The text provided is a part of a larger document and includes references to various sources and methods. For a comprehensive understanding, the full document is recommended.
A chance of other sources of bias (reviewed errors), which are lumped together in survey terminology as non-sampling errors. One criticism that is often leveled against formal surveys is that, while the random sampling errors are very small, the non-sampling errors resulting from poor wording of the questions, poor choice of question order, lack of sufficient attention to the context in which the question is asked, and poor choice of a time of day to hold the interview, can be much more damaging than sampling errors. The sample for the survey may be quite perfect, but the data that results from the survey may not be adequate.

In-depth and open-ended interviews attempt to reduce the non-sampling errors by paying close attention to putting the person at ease, asking questions in a number of different directions to reduce the chance that the question was misunderstood, eliciting longer answers from the person to ensure the researcher understands what is being said, and a host of other such techniques. However, good interviews remain difficult to secure whether the interviewer or household is typical, or even representative of the sampling of the rest of the population. In situations in which RRA tools are being used, it is seldom worth to sacrifice many of the usual constraints of formal sampling to ensure that the sample is adequate for the study.

Box 10-1 - Proving the Null Hypothesis

While the community is part of the community, the knowledge of the community is not just a common collection of information for a 10-year period for both crops and prices, a very useful body of information when evaluating the economics of an intervention from the farm household’s perspective. One practitioner advocated for a “no in the wind.” There is neither time to carry out formal sampling, nor is there any reason that the sampling error would be measured in the sample population unless it was representative of a general pattern in the case at hand. The sample population had 75% survival of those, says the statistician. It is most likely that the rest of the population did as well. These same hypotheses, in turn, which argues that the sample is not representative, but it is not the population of the population.

One application of this principle to quick surveys that do not use random sampling is, instead of the sample population to prove a 70% survival rate in the following two questions summarize some of these options. There are two points that are relevant in determining whether or not some other randomly selected events to the validity of the information collected. First, random sampling gains the researcher nothing. The interviews of people selected through that random process are poorly conducted. Second, however, much use of RRA techniques may be seen as a form of convenience (I do not cost time and money). It may be worth more in terms of the ease of access to introduce a role model rigor into an RRA-style exercise and make it a slightly longer process, than to have to come back to the field with the same range of team members to collect the same sort of information later on. This is an issue that will do no double counting of those RRA staff adapting RRA more extensively to forestry and natural resource management programs in different project stages.

3.4.4 Reasons That Teams Using RRA Tools May Not Use Formal Sampling

Two options as to why sampling might not appropriate which were expressed in the preceding two questions are as follows:

1) Formative surveys have no place in an RRA, which is a “scan” of the range of situations in the project area. The objective of an RRA exercise is generally to find out the scope of a problem or of several issues. The team does best by keeping their “noses in the wind.” There is neither time to carry out formal sampling, nor is there any reason to think that the informal information gathered in your field visits is representative of the rest of the population. The team does best by keeping their “noses in the wind.” There is neither time to carry out formal sampling, nor is there any reason to think that the informal information gathered in your field visits is representative of the rest of the population.

2) The biggest constraint on formal sampling in an RRA is time. While it could contribute substantially to validity of information, there just is not time to devote to constructing an informal sample and interviewing those in it.

3.4.5 Alternative Methodologies to Representative Sampling

One set of social scientists who were interviewed focused not on the trade-offs of random versus purpose/typical sampling, but on the need for RRA practitioners to become more conscious of the value (and limitations) of qualitative data collection methods that are traditionally applied in a single-time frame, but that can be adapted to the RRA setting. One such methodology is “evolutionary analysis.”

In ethnographic work, evolutionary analysis is used as an alternative in tapping in a range of individuals. Instead of the interviewees trying to gather information as completely as possible about a single “situation” or a set of situations of importance to the project (growing conflict or complete conflict, understanding of communities, for example), the interview and individual interviews is divided by the “situation” rather than by a methodology decision to interview a specific “range of individual types” (social groups, income/wealth groups, and so on). What emerges is an in-depth understanding of that situation that the team sees as a salient pattern in the project area. Those interviewed represent a range of social views of the situation, and interviews give the team some key ideas about local decision-making processes, a key to broadening resource management. Recommendations made on the basis of such an approach are often given in the depth of knowledge, but the approach relies upon the prior training of the interviewers in social and cultural theories of norms and behaviors, at least those relevant to the geographic area where work is being carried out.

A corollary to this is that a more in-depth knowledge of information concerning the research context. Conway’s “Evolutionary Analysis” (1986) and Ramnath’s “Diagnosis and Design” (1986) analyses both include questions about use of land for trees and crops over time. In addition to checking with what crops were grown over years, however, is the importance of information on the history of conflict over land use and the development of potential or actual conflicts. Villagers should be asked about changes in the composition of management groups, the history of their formation, changes in leadership, use of watchers or people assigned to maintenance tasks. In conflict history, it is important to establish how the socio-economic or cultural role of individuals or groups has changed over time and adapted to the land, would there be a case or case it because it was a man with a large cattle herd? For cropping patterns and trees, Conway’s approach includes collection of information for a 10-year period for both crops and prices, a very useful body of information when investigating the economics of an intervention from the farmer’s perspective.

The qualitative approach generally requires a social scientist on the team, who has a first-hand understanding of qualitative research methodology, so that they can correctly evaluate what values and norms underlie a particular persons’ expressed opinion or action. For participatory planning applications of the RRA toolkit, they may not need to be social scientists, but local staff should have some training in understanding such an exercise on their own as well as a first-hand understanding of the communities with which they plan to work, not just a common national identity.

Box 11-3 - Structural Analysis

Recognized and, use patterns can be high complexity and hard to be generally related to offer information to outsiders about their land-based, ownership, and decision-making rights. This makes us RRA tools highly difficult in给您作答。 could be looking for evidence of in the history of conflict over land use and the development of potential or actual conflicts. Villagers should be asked about changes in the composition of management groups, the history of their formation, changes in leadership, use of watchers or people assigned to maintainance tasks. In conflict history, it is important to establish how the socio-economic or cultural role of individuals or groups has changed over time and adapted to the land, would there be a case or case it because it was a man with a large cattle herd? For cropping patterns and trees, Conway’s approach includes collection of information for a 10-year period for both crops and prices, a very useful body of information when investigating the economics of an intervention from the farmer’s perspective.

The qualitative approach generally requires a social scientist on the team, who has a first-hand understanding of qualitative research methodology, so that they can correctly evaluate what values and norms underlie a particular persons’ expressed opinion or action. For participatory planning applications of the RRA toolkit, they may not need to be social scientists, but local staff should have some training in understanding such an exercise on their own as well as a first-hand understanding of the communities with which they plan to work, not just a common national identity.