

An Approach to Inclusive Development of the Caribbean Communities by Securing Local Participation Throughout the Project Lifecycle

The Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund and the Basic Needs Trust Fund Community Engagement Guidance Note









Effective Community Engagement: A Guidance Note for Development Practitioners Working in the Caribbean

About the projects

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) is a financial institution that helps Caribbean nations finance development programmes in its 19 Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs). Since its establishment in 1970, CDB has provided technical support and financial resources within its BMCs. The Bank has developed various strategies and programmes to improve the quality of life and access to opportunities of vulnerable and at-risk groups, reflecting its mission to reduce poverty systematically through regional social and economic development. In pursuit of its mandate, CDB has implemented several programmes to reduce poverty and inequality, support inclusive and sustainable growth, build resilience and promote good governance. CDB is building capacity at community level to strengthen resilience to climate change while seeking to reduce poverty levels.

The Bank's Strategic Plan (2020-2024) highlights building social, economic and environmental resilience as strategic objectives, in line with a revised mission statement of 'Reducing Poverty and Transforming Lives through Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Development.' The strategy places significant value on client engagement to enable the Bank's mandate to drive sustainable development and address the persistent problem of poverty in BMCs. It identifies community development and participation as one of five core strategic intervention areas to realise the Bank's mission and deliver its ambitious strategic objectives. The Bank's Environment and Social Review Procedures (ESRP) likewise recognise the value a well-informed and engaged public can bring to the development process and commits to promoting meaningful dialogue and participation on environmental and social issues.

CDB support to community projects through two regional funds—the Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (CDRRF) and the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF)—has been an important aspect of its approach. The lessons from these two funds led to the Bank recognising community engagement as a critical approach for achieving the 2030 Global Sustainable Development Goals so that communities are included in decisions that affect them.

Effective community engagement encourages accountability, transparency, participation and inclusion. Continuous engagement at the community level has proved to be a key factor in the success and sustainability of CDRRF and BNTF funded projects and, as a result, is being further applied in community-based projects across the region. The transformational effects of community participation and empowerment enable the most vulnerable to be directly involved, take ownership of project activities and nurture community change processes.

The Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (CDRRF)

Established in 2012, the CDRRF was a multi-donor trust fund, which financed projects to reduce the impacts of natural hazards and support climate change adaptation in communities across the Caribbean. Managed by CDB, with contributions from the Government of Canada, the European Union and the CDB, the CDRRF financed community-driven projects. These projects targeted vulnerable community groups including farmers, fisherfolk, small business owners and employees, women, youth and the elderly through infrastructure improvements, hazard and vulnerability assessments and training initiatives. Before its closure in 2021, the CDRRF selected through a competitive process and supported eight projects in four BMCs—Belize, Virgin Islands, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The project sought to enhance community involvement across the eight sub-projects in 59 beneficiary communities. Community development practitioners across the stakeholder groups were trained in areas such as community development. Community engagement surveys provided data on local engagement preferences, which helped identify barriers to participation and address these limitations.

The Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF)

Since 1979, the BNTF has benefitted over 3 million people in poor communities throughout the region by investing in community-led development. As a major poverty reduction programme, BNTF helps eligible countries to meet basic needs, adds value and strength to communities, and changes the lives of women, men, and children. With grant-funded investments in three strategic areas, Water and Sanitation, Access and Drainage and Education and Human Resources Development, the BNTF has transformed the lives of the most disadvantaged in participating countries such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Montserrat, Suriname, Belize, Guyana, Turks and Caicos and Jamaica. Community participation is a critical driver in enabling communities to play a central role in actively shaping their futures and addressing their needs.

The programme is distinguished by its community-targeted, demand-led, and participatory approaches to engaging with vulnerable segments of the society for sustained peoplefocused development. BNTF will continue its efforts to reduce economic and social vulnerabilities, facilitate local ownership of the investments and enhance social capital and livelihoods within each community, especially among at-risk groups (indigenous people, the elderly living alone, those affected by disability, school-aged youth, and households with large numbers of youth and elderly dependents).

About this guidance note

This guidance note has been developed in response to the need to strengthen community engagement in projects supported by the BNTF and other development partners and in light of the Bank's strategic emphasis on engagement and sharpened lens on safeguarding vulnerable communities. The note has grown organically from a series of workshops and meetings, drawing on existing research and materials from experienced community engagement practitioners, throughout the region and beyond.

In October 2017 in Jamaica, the CDRRF coordinated a regional workshop on Effective Community Engagement and Project Management, targeting project management teams and key partners from the four beneficiary countries. The BNTF was invited to participate and share its experience of using a participatory approach in programming. In addition, BNTF recognised the need to foster stronger linkages between BNTF Implementing Agencies and other community-facing and serving entities. They also realised that it was critical to strengthen community engagement processes beyond the project appraisal stage.

The CDRRF and BNTF. with the involvement of BMC community development practitioners, community liaison officers and project managers, coordinated four further joint regional workshops in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (December 2017), Guyana (July 2018), Jamaica (July 2018) and Suriname (September 2019). Community development experts facilitated the workshops, with practical and interactive sessions examining community engagement methods in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Guyana and Jamaica.

| Acknowledgements

The preparation of the Community Engagement Guidance Note was coordinated by Richardo Aiken, Community Development Specialist and Lavern Louard Greaves, Social Analyst at the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). For any additional information or queries on the guidance note, they can be contacted at <u>aikenr@caribank.org</u> or <u>greavel@caribank.org</u> or <u>greavel@caribank.org</u> respectively.

The guidance note builds on the perspectives of community development practitioners across CDB's BMCs, specifically beneficiaries of CDRRF and BNTF. Special thanks to Dr Dwayne Vernon, Executive Director, Social Development Commission (SDC), Jamaica and his team for leading the initial drafting of the CEGN, which included community consultations in Guyana, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The CDRRF project beneficiary organisations and project partners and the BNTF Implementing Agencies all played a critical role in discussions, providing valuable insights and highlighting both best practices and limitations of implementing community-level interventions. The reflection on approaches to keeping communities engaged throughout the project lifecycle was instrumental in the documentation process. Participating community residents and community leaders all contributed valuable perspectives, and this data validated the existing picture and enhanced the proposed responses. Finally, the Centre for International Development of the University of Wolverhampton prepared the final guidance note, facilitating a continuous dialogue with the CDB team to ensure the CEGN reflects the desired objectives and serves the purpose intended from its inception.

I Acronyms

CDB	Caribbean Development Bank		
вмс	Borrowing Member Country		
CDRRF	Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund		
BNTF	Basic Needs Trust Fund		
CE	Community engagement		
CES	Community Engagement Survey		
CNAA	Community Needs and Assets Assessment		
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction		
PCM	Programme and project cycle management		
CART	Community Assessment of Readiness Tool		
PLA	Participatory learning and action		

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Section A: How to Use This Guidance Note



This section covers:

- why we have developed this guidance note
- who it is for and what you can expect to get out of it
- the different sections of the guidance note, and how to navigate them.

A1 Why this guidance note?

The <u>Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (CDRRF)</u> and the <u>Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF)</u> are two of CDB's grant facilities that specifically focus on improving quality of life and building resilience of poor and vulnerable communities. Both programmes emphasise community participation and ownership in the design and implementation of projects—a focus aligned to the Bank's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable communities and beneficiaries.

With common goals, approaches and community-based focus, both the CDRRF and BNTF acknowledge the need to sharpen strategies used to design and implement transformative development initiatives at the community level. Anecdotal evidence from both programmes shows that limited use of community engagement strategies in project design can result in minimal community participation during execution and weaknesses in project performance. Another identified issue is excellent engagement in the design stage followed by weak engagement once a project is underway, resulting in loss of enthusiasm and ownership by the community inclusion opportunities around the project life cycle. Programmes need to address these gaps to secure stronger ownership, maximise and sustain project impact and strengthen community resilience. Overall, there is recognition that standard approaches to project management should incorporate community involvement, including adequate social and environmental risk identification and management and distribution of project opportunities and benefits.

A2 What is in the guidance note?

In this note, we start by explaining community engagement and its importance and explore when and how different forms of community engagement might be appropriate (Section B), focusing on the circumstances of Caribbean communities.

We then detail aspects of community engagement to consider, particularly how to evaluate a community's readiness to engage and the importance of reaching all relevant parts of a community, particularly those frequently marginalised and excluded (Section C).

Finally, we offer guidance and information on skills, methods and tools that a community practitioner might find helpful (Section D) throughout the project management lifecycle.

A3 What can you expect to get from it?

With this guidance note, our purpose is to equip community-serving practitioners with relevant and practical guidance to inform their community development work. It provides a framework to strengthen community involvement around the project management life cycle across the BMCs of the CDB.

You do not need to read this guidance from beginning to end to benefit from its utility. You can dip in and out or use it as a reference as and when needed. We hope it will become your handy companion when you carry out your community engagement activities!

Section B: Community Engagement in Context



This section introduces you to the main concepts of community engagement. By the end of this section, you will recognise:

- how we define community and what we mean by 'community engagement'
- basic principles and values to guide our community engagement
- reasons why projects and programmes need to be more responsive to community interests
- examples of community engagement in the Caribbean context
- how community engagement adds value in disaster response.

| **B1 Definitions**

Community—in this guidance, we define community as a group of people living together in the same area or having an interest or characteristic in common. For example, we might be talking about the residents of a particular neighbourhood, or fisherfolk, or young people. Any person can be part of many communities, and any community will be diverse and complex—just think about the communities that you are part of. Although 'community' is often used to suggest one group with one particular interest, it is important always to be aware that there are multiple interests and agendas.

Community engagement (CE) is a frequently used phrase that can mean different things. In its simplest form, for this guidance, it is about how you inform, involve and build relationships with the beneficiaries and stakeholders of a development activity as it progresses. The workshops that informed this guide used this definition: 'Effective community engagement is a strategy or process that aligns interests and creates understanding for sustained mutual benefits' (Dr Dwayne Vernon, Executive Director, Social Development Commission (SDC), Jamaica, 2017).

At its most effective, community engagement is a strategy to build relationships of mutual trust within and beyond communities, to ensure that diverse local people's issues and concerns are heard; that they are recognised to have a critical role in shaping and implementing sustainable policies to address poverty, inequality, public health and environmental concerns (Gaventa & Barrett 2010).

The Community Engagement Cycle is an approach that helps to structure our community engagement activities. Effective community engagement will include several clear phases, each with its own set of objectives, tasks and issues. These phases, taken together, represent the path a community engagement initiative takes from the beginning to its end. Although every cycle will be different, a clear understanding of these phases allows CE practitioners to carry out relevant, effective and efficient engagement activities.

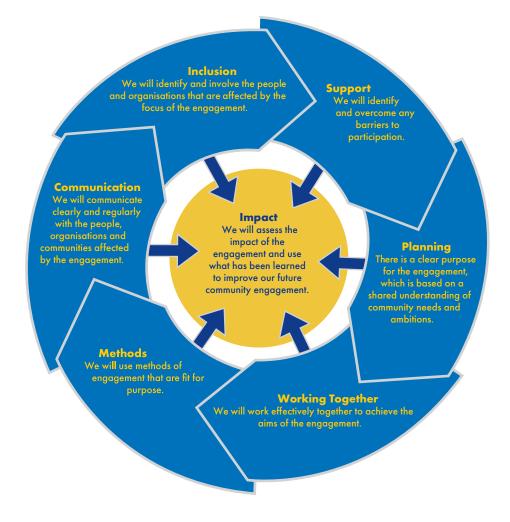


Figure 1: The Community Engagement Cycle

Community participation, which is often used interchangeably with community engagement, is the active involvement of people in the issues that affect their lives. It focuses on the relationships between individuals and groups and the institutions that shape their everyday experiences.

Community engagement practitioner—a CE practitioner might be anyone who is involved in a project, campaign or initiative that needs to engage with members of the community for it to be effective. Even if your job title does not include 'community engagement', you may have to engage with communities for your work to succeed. Whether you have had training or not, we are all part of multiple communities, and we all have experience of working within and with our communities.

B2 Community engagement in the Caribbean context

Community engagement and participatory approaches engaging a range of stakeholders have become increasingly popular in the Caribbean region over several decades.

Caribbean countries have a proud history of civic activism against the social injustices of colonialism and slavery. However, it has been argued that, like many democracies across

the world, modern-day political culture in many parts of the region is finely balanced between authoritarian and participatory governance (*Hinds, 2019:55*). This background means that CE practitioners often work in a messy and challenging space between potentially disengaged and disenchanted communities (with low expectations of positive social change) and more formal political and organisational structures which seek their support and engagement.

The concept of community engagement emerged in the 1970s as an appropriate and effective alternative to the traditional 'top-down' approach that prevailed in the region and across the globe (Potter and Pugh, 2003).

As they move towards more democratic and less-centralised modes of governance and operations, many governments and sectors in the region are adopting participatory forms of planning and development with the support of the CDB.

Spotlight on BNTF

Restoring the social dynamic in Santana, St. Ann's and Corozalito, Belize

This project applied community engagement around the location of a water system supplying three villages, requiring careful consideration to not favour one village over the other.

The collaboration between the three villages towards a common goal and the community's involvement during all phases of the subproject created a sense of pride and ownership amongst villagers, facilitating social cohesion and kinship.

Spotlight on CDRRF

Town residents' ownership of Disaster Reduction Programme in Jeffrey Town, Jamaica

This project invited residents to discuss strategies to reduce the effects of natural disasters on their communities. Well-attended meetings increased community participation leading to greater ownership of project interventions.

Participation in the planning process developed community enthusiasm for the initiative.

| **B3 Guiding principles**

Five basic principles guide successful community engagement. Community engagement should:

- increase citizens' knowledge about a community and/or the issue you are seeking to address
- encourage citizens to co-create additional knowledge and apply that knowledge
- use that knowledge to improve the community or address the identified problem
- create future opportunities for citizens to engage with each other
- ensure that these opportunities and effective communications become a regular and ongoing component of the process.

(Source: Bassler et al, 2008)

B4 Why projects and programmes need to respond to community interests

Both the CDRRF and BNTF have focused on improving quality of life and building resilience of poor and vulnerable communities. Of course, for communities to benefit, a project must respond to a real need or priority of that community and community members must be convinced that it will make a difference to their lives.

"To implement projects that will effectively address the issues, we have to interact with those who are living in the situations we are working to improve. Without doing so, we would be working blindly, and the work we are doing would be ineffective.¹"

Shadeana Mascull, from Equality for All Foundation, Jamaica

Community engagement is therefore central to the success and impact of development projects. Let's explore its potential benefits further.

Community engagement is **ethical**: community members should have agency in projects that affect their lives.

It can be **creative:** professional development workers can become set in their ways, but other people will bring new ideas and perspectives that may work even better.

It **works:** if you have taken the time to understand the communities' needs, priorities, attitudes and capacities, then together, you will be able to design a project that delivers real change.

The experiences from the regional workshops suggest that effective community engagement promotes:

- accountability-holding people responsible for carrying out their duties
- **transparency**—encouraging people and organisations to make information and processes available and accessible to a larger group
- **participation**—galvanising people and groups to get involved so that they can influence decisions that affect themselves and their communities
- **inclusion**—ensuring that those frequently marginalised or excluded have their voices heard.

As a workshop participant, Elizabeth Muschamp, Project Manager for Humana People to People, Belize, said, "A lot of these communities are in rural areas, and so this engagement allows them an opportunity to learn and be empowered... we've been working these months on trust... we have been working on tirelessly—going into the communities, leaving home at 3 o'clock in the morning, to be there at their convenience, to build that trust in Humana."

CE processes are being used by the Community Development Division in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Department for Rural Development in Belize, the Social Development Department in the Virgin Islands and the Social Development Commission in Jamaica.

Spotlight on BNTF

In southern Belize, within the Mayan villages, men play the lead role in the decision making for their respective villages and families. However, experience has shown in the case of BNTF, that specific interventions which target women for capacity building in the areas of maintenance and upkeep of community water systems have improved overall access and sustainability of these interventions.

Spotlight on CDRRF

For a project in Jamaica that initially targeted 200 farmers, after the first community engagement survey was carried out and the results shared back with the community, 450 farmers registered.

B5 Community engagement values

When engaging the community, it is not so much what we do, as how we do it. That is why our values as CE practitioners are critically important to guide how we interact with community members.

Let's consider these core values of the community engagement process:

- Community engagement is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Community engagement includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- Community engagement promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
- Community engagement seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- Community engagement seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Community engagement provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Community engagement communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

(Source: IAP2 Core Values. International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), 2009.)

Stop and reflect...

Consider the IAP core values.

Which of these do you find most important in your own experience of community engagement?

Are there any you think may be challenging in the context in which you engage?

What are some of the strategies you believe you can use to overcome the challenges?

B6 Effective community engagement around the project life cycle

Programme and project cycle management (PCM) is the process of designing, planning, coordinating, and controlling a programme or project effectively and efficiently throughout its various phases, from conception, through execution, completion, and evaluation, to achieve pre-defined objectives on time, on budget and to quality.

The project cycle that the workshop participants used is shown in the centre of Figure 2. Figure 2 also shows the entry points for community engagement around the project cycle.

A project that focuses on community impacts must engage people at every stage from initiation to closure, so that communities:

- know what the project plans to do
- understand project decisions
- understand what the project is doing
- can contribute their perspectives, and
- can evaluate the impact a project has had on them.

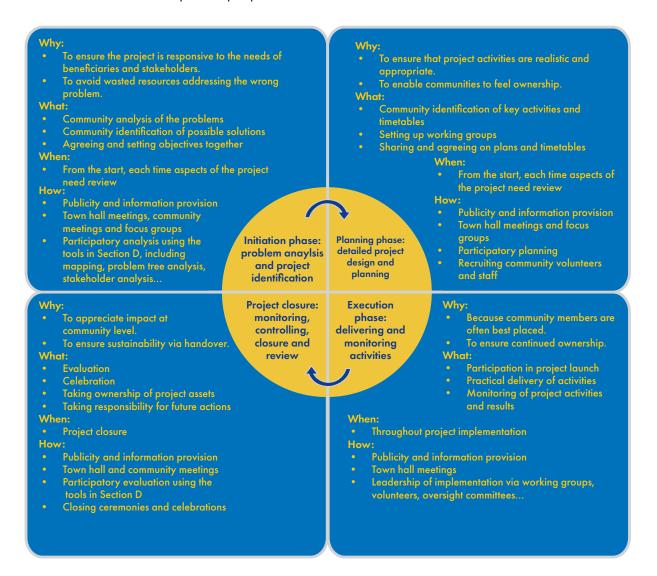


Figure 2: Entry Points for Community Engagement Around the Project Cycle

Typically, there is stronger engagement of communities in the project design and planning phase, and community engagement can sometimes be overlooked during project implementation. Where a project is subject to independent evaluation, it should consult community stakeholders on the relevance and impact of the project results so that the stakeholders can participate in evaluating the project results.

At each stage, the community engagement cycle (shown in Figure 1) will interact with the project cycle – inclusion and support will be essential throughout the process, not just at the initiation phase—learning from each stage can go on to inform the next one.

"Ensuring that capacities and technical expertise are developed and maintained is paramount in order to engage communities throughout the project cycle, and to enhance the effectiveness of development investments.²"

George Yearwood, Portfolio Manager, Basic Needs Trust Fund, Caribbean Development Bank

"Community involvement is critical from the onset—any efforts to adapt to climate change will rely on the information coming out of the communities and the communities' ability to respond immediately."

Sharon Young, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development, Belize

Stop and reflect...

Think about projects you are familiar with.

Were the right community stakeholders engaged at the right points in the project life cycle?

What are the risks and pitfalls of neglecting to involve communities in projects that concern them, or of involving them in the wrong way or at the wrong time?

B7 Community engagement within disaster risk reduction

CDB's Disaster Management Strategy and Operational Guidelines emphasise the importance of community-based approaches. The CDB strategic plan also includes a strong focus on the scale-up of adaptation and climate resilience in five climate vulnerable sectors—one of which is Community Development. Within this intervention area, the Bank commits to continue to provide assistance to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and promote sustainable climate-resilient development and livelihoods at the community level. CDB engagement will encourage and support community-driven development interventions, including early warning signals (EWS), diversification of livelihoods and ecosystem-based adaptation measures.

The BNTF has incorporated enhanced standards for its infrastructure projects and environmental and social safeguards across its portfolio of projects. This reflection of climate change considerations aims to help build resilience and safeguard the wellbeing of Fund beneficiaries, and to respond effectively to various crises as they occur. Likewise, the CDRRF's core focus was to reduce the impacts of natural hazards and support climate change adaptation in communities across the Caribbean.

The region is especially susceptible to a wide range of natural hazards exacerbated by climate change, including hurricanes, floods, landslides, earthquakes and droughts. These hazards, the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other health threats (dengue, zika etc.) have highlighted the alarming consequences of shocks on societies, people's lives and livelihoods across the region. Hazards and shocks can cut off entire communities from outside help after disasters, as in Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines over the past decade. Supporting communities to plan for and deal with events immediately after a crisis can be an effective way to mitigate the after-effects and strengthen the process of recovery. The United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction framework recognises local community members as 'first responders' and recommends empowering communities with adequate resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities.

Climate action strategies have evolved from reactive, post-disaster responses towards a more risk-management, preventative approach. Historically, emergency management has prioritised one-way communication from emergency services to communities (known as 'command and control' tactics). A community-based approach can be far more powerful in facilitating effective risk management. The local knowledge and resources that communities provide can help prepare for events before they occur and enable the community to recover from a disaster more quickly. Involving communities in ongoing facilitation and municipal budgets.

Experience of community engagement in crisis mitigation efforts shows that encouraging full participation from the outset is most effective. Full participation requires empowering engagement that opens a dialogue, respects diverse views and inputs, actively listens and values community skills and knowledge.

The role of CE practitioners is essential for effective risk reduction strategies—ensuring that communities' voices are listened to and working with local people to implement and monitor national risk reduction targets and strategies.

Spotlight on CDRRF

Initial Damage Assessments training in St. Vincent and The Grenadines

This training aimed to build the response capacity in seven communities as well as reducing their vulnerabilities. It engaged a diverse spectrum of participants, including youth.

Participants from different backgrounds and different stages in their lives shared experiences and perspectives, providing opportunities for cross-generational exchange and learning, mentorship and sustainable future engagement.

Spotlight on CDRRF

Pilot testing of the Rapid Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Tool in Jamaica

44 persons participated in pilot testing a tool that aimed to expose national and community-based planning agencies to a simplified method of analysing the climate risk of vulnerable communities.

Incorporating community feedback helped the initiative become more relevant to the community beneficiaries, improved the service, and increased community buy-in and owner-ship of the initiative.

"I have worked in government for 22 years and one of the pitfalls that I have seen is that we make strategies/programmes without getting the community comments on what is important to them and whether it will work for them. So for me, seeing community involved in the beginning stages....so that the things that are important to them are captured... and can be organised by government to help them and their family around climate change was important."

Stacy Stout-James, Deputy Director, Social Development Department, BVI.

Section C: Considerations for Community Engagement



This section discusses things to consider before starting community engagement and provides you with a framework to assess the level of community preparedness to change or engage. Being aware of community dynamics will help you in your initial engagement activities.

By the end of this section, you will be familiar with:

- the different levels at which engagement is possible
- how to assess the readiness of a community for engagement
- voice and power dynamics within the community
- some common challenges to community engagement and how to overcome them
- ethics to guide community engagement and how to recognise and avoid bias.

| C1 Levels of participation

We can engage the community at different levels, ranging from active to passive participation. Note, that the highest level of participation is not necessarily the most appropriate for each project. Different levels will be appropriate depending on various factors, such as the stage in the project cycle, level of community preparedness and the nature of the issue we wish to engage with.

In this guidance note, we consider five levels of participation, ranging from informing communities (least participatory) to empowering communities (most participatory).

When it comes to community engagement, it is important to be clear from the start about what degree of engagement we are committing to and what the community can expect. For each level, we need to be clear about our 'promise to the community' and ensure that we are not promising participation at a higher level (for example, collaboration), while delivering at a lower level (for example, informing).

A common criticism of government and large-scale initiatives which engage communities is that the engagement effort is short term. Often engagement begins when crucial decisions have already been taken and the problem has already been identified. In this scenario, CE practitioners have the task of informing or even 'selling' communities a range of pre-decided solutions. A fundamental problem with this often-used top-down approach is that the analysis of the problem has not included the expert knowledge of the people most affected. Nor has it involved them in seeking solutions.

Degree of participation

	Informing	Consulting	Involving	Collaborating	Empowering
What is it?	Providing balanced and objective information about a project and the reasons for any choices made	Inviting feedback on alternatives, analyses, and decisions related to a project	Working with community members to ensure that their aspirations and concerns are considered at every stage of planning and decision-making Community members engaged as partners to implement solutions	Enabling community members to participate in wide aspects of planning and decision-making Community members actively gen- erate targeted outcomes	Giving commun- ity members decision-making authority over new projects and leadership of work to implement solutions Project staff/ consultants support and consult
What is our promise to the community?	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to your input and feedback, and let you know how your ideas and concerns have influenced decisions.	We will ensure your input and feedback is directly reflected in alternatives, and let you know how your involvement influenced decisions. We will engage you as partners to implement solutions.	We will co-create and co-produce solutions with you. You will be true partners in making and implementing decisions for the community. Your advice and recommendations will be incorp- orated as much as possible.	We will support your decisions and work to implement solutions.
What tools and methodologies will we use?	Fact sheets, newsletters, information meetings, websites	Surveys, focus groups, community meetings and forums	Community organising, leadership development, workshops	Community organising, advisory boards, seats on governing bodies, engaging and funding as partners	Support full governance, leadership, and partnership

Community self help

In Dominica, community engagement around the Providence Footpath proved a viable mechanism for community empowerment and development.

The project worked with the village council, which at the time had been established some 54 years ago. Already at the heart of community social events and development projects, the village council had the experience and skills to manage the project effectively.

Community structures can often be instrumental in delivering community social events and development projects within the community.

Forming collaborative partnerships, Jamaica

In response to implementation gaps within community interventions, representatives from agencies responsible for community development formed part of the CDRRF project partners' team and jointly implemented the targeted DRR and climate change adaptation activities.

Collaborative working can contribute to building capacity while learning 'on the job'. Together, agencies delivered interventions, increasing exposure to those that had differing or limited experience. Their involvement in the partnership fostered sustainable learning initiatives.

Stop and reflect ...

Think about a community you know or are working with and their expectations, capacity, capabilities and ambition around the focal issue for engagement.

How does this inform your thinking around the level of participation that might be most appropriate for this community?

What is the entry point, and what level of participation would you hope to move towards?

| C2 Preparing for community engagement

It is clear why community engagement is so crucial to the success of any project or campaign. Still, for it to happen, conditions need to be in place so that the community concerned is ready and willing to engage.

A common mistake of an inexperienced practitioner is to start consultation without any planning or assessment or to assume that the community is waiting with open arms to receive them!

So how do we prepare for community engagement? There are different aspects to consider when approaching a community for the first time. These aspects may influence where we start the engagement process and our approach. Before implementing our engagement activity, we should consider what we already know or can find out about:

- What is the current climate in the community—is it conducive to change?
- What are current attitudes and efforts surrounding the issue in question?
- What is the existing level of commitment to change?
- What is the capacity to implement change?

Let's look at each aspect further:

Community climate describes the degree to which current community conditions promote positive versus negative attitudes and behaviours. The history or previous experiences of development interventions within the community may also affect its receptiveness towards future change.

Current attitudes and efforts includes three areas:

- Current awareness explores to what extent community members know about the causes and effects of the problem and how it impacts their community and lives.
- Current values reflects the perceived worth or importance that a group places on a particular social problem.
- Current efforts are those that exist currently concerning the issue.

Commitment to change may include:

- the belief that an organisation, community, or neighbourhood can improve
- the extent to which community members feel that there are reasons and need for the change effort, and
- the extent to which community members perceive leaders are committed and support the implementation of change.

Capacity to implement change includes five areas:

- *Relational capacity:* social ties, community attachment, stakeholder involvement, collaboration/teamwork
- Collective efficacy: belief in one's own or the community's ability to effectively accomplish a task or engage in future change efforts
- Leadership: to what extent leaders and influential community members are supportive of the issues, or to what extent leadership is effective
- Resources: to what extent local resources (people, time, money and space) are available to support efforts
- Skills and knowledge: those necessary to implement an innovative programme, including adaptability, evaluation, technical, research, and data dissemination, cultural competency and training

(Source: Castaneda, Holscher, Mumman, Salgado, Keor, Foster-Fishman, Talvera, 2011)

Effective community engagement takes time and resources to establish relationships with a wide range of community members, develop spaces for ongoing communication, and build trust in joint strategies for action over time. Effective community engagement requires engaging in **community-based research** in the first instance to **listen** to diverse local people and explore their experience of living in an area. What are the issues and concerns of girls, boys, men, women, older people, disabled people, and other diverse interests in the area? What priority issues would they like to see addressed?

The CDRRF has developed a helpful tool to assess these dimensions as part of its community readiness assessment—see the CART tool in section C7.

Identifying current community readiness may help us be realistic about our ambitions for community engagement and what it can accomplish. It may point to resources or training that might be required for the engagement to be successful.

C3 Considering power and voice in community engagement

Hierarchies of power are deeply rooted in any community, which may inhibit the full participation of community members. Community engagement practitioners will have to consider power distribution within communities. Cultural practices that implicitly or explicitly affirm or diminish power and voice associated with gender, ethnicity, sexuality, socioeconomic status, age or physical capability may be so embedded as to be invisible; taken for granted by communities as the 'natural' order of things. However, such inequalities will impact local relationships, on who is perceived to have status and power and who might be silenced.

Spotlight on CDRRF

CDRRF used a community engagement survey to identify the engagement needs and preferences of community residents across 38 of their beneficiary communities in Belize, Virgin Islands, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2017/18.

The findings highlighted several **barriers to participation** experienced by groups of individuals such as women, persons with disabilities and the elderly in these communities. Chief among these findings is that women included in the sample explained that the times, locations and days on which community development activities are held often conflict with their role as caregivers. Persons living with disabilities also stated that limited consideration was given to their inability to access information due to their impairments, for example, loss of vision and immobility. As a result, their views and challenges are under-represented in the design of local development initiatives.

"Poverty is multi-dimensional, in that, it is not only about income and consumption. We also need to know how people live and cope, their strategies, and what life is like in relation to health, education, infrastructure, supporting institutions etc."

Roger Young, Community Development Supervisor, Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Youth, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

As CE practitioners, we need to understand the fine balance between accepting 'local culture' while always recognising that culture can be misused to perpetuate social hierarchies. We must be aware of possible 'cultural smokescreens' that protect certain groups (normally those at the top of social hierarchies) or isolate them (those at the very bottom).

We also need to recognise that power dynamics may be so embedded that certain groups within a community may have internalised their sense of powerlessness. As a result, even if all obvious barriers to their participation are removed, their longstanding experience of being or feeling marginalised may constitute an unseen, internal barrier to their engagement.

Stop and reflect...

Think about your own experience in working with communities.

What kind of cultural barriers or dynamics have you encountered?

Did local culture help or hinder the process of community engagement?

What actions did you or could you take to overcome any cultural challenges?

We also need to think about our own power and voice as practitioners. Despite our best efforts, as CE practitioners, we may sometimes unknowingly create barriers through our attitude towards community engagement. Effective community engagement is not about making speeches or being the centre of attention. It may mean setting a process in motion, then 'fading into the background' to allow community voices and actions to take the spotlight. Sometimes, being participatory means being sufficiently humble to just stand aside. Just be quiet and let people make their own mistakes and learn. Often, in good faith, we want to run and help. In order to be a proactive movement, people have to feel things as their own and get involved and think and reflect. It is a process...

(Quoted in Holt-Giménez, 2006, p. 67 in Stout & Love 2019:29)

Stop and reflect...

Imagine yourself facilitating community engagement. Focus on how you are engaging with the community members.

Now, look at yourself through the eyes of the community.

How might you be perceived? How may your approach influence those you are interacting with? Is there anything you might want to think about doing differently?

| C4 Overcoming barriers to community engagement

To design an effective community engagement process, we need to understand the barriers that prevent people from engaging with us.

These barriers may be:

- **Environmental**—the chosen location of the engagement may not be accessible to some people, for reasons of distance, disability, space, etc.
- **Economic**—people may not be able to afford the time to engage.
- **Timing**—different groups of people will be available at different times of day or seasons in the year. People will have work, care and social obligations that mean that their time is limited and precious.
- Language and literacy levels—language and forms of communication need to be tailored so that you can communicate clearly with one another. Complicated text, for example, won't be of much use in a community where literacy levels are low.
- **Social and cultural**—some people and groups within a community may not feel able to join in and may be habitually silenced.

As CE practitioners, to overcome these barriers, we must consider access and equity in how, where and with whom we engage. For example, we should:

- Be prepared to travel to where people are, rather than expect them to come to us.
- Think about how to plan engagement in a way that does not impact people's work.

- Explore when people will have time and inclination to engage.
- Tailor our communication channels and messages to suit the language of our audience.
- Reach out to a wide and diverse stakeholder group.
- Create spaces where different types of stakeholders feel comfortable and have opportunities to have their voices heard.
- Provide support to help facilitate engagement, especially of the most vulnerable.

Spotlight on BNTF

Spotlight on CDRRF

Programme guidance notes on Human Resource Development and Livelihoods Enhancement interventions emphasise the importance of providing social support to help facilitate the participation of marginalised or disadvantaged categories of persons. This support includes the integration of stipends, childcare, transportation costs, insurance and psychosocial support which feature in the many interventions implemented across participating countries in varying combinations. Training for Community Emergency Response Teams in St. Vincent and the Grenadines identified that most persons taking part in the training were young unemployed mothers. Offering childcare provision for the 5-day training period allowed all volunteers who had demon-strated the ability to lead and work in teams to attend the training.

Stop and reflect...

Think about a community that you know and the diverse members that it includes.

What kind of practical barriers might prevent some groups or individuals from participating? Think about practical challenges of time and place.

| C5 Avoiding bias in community engagement

We can get a false picture or draw the wrong conclusions entirely from community engagement so that any findings from the exercise are then biased. Bias is something we want to avoid as much as possible!

People within a community are usually very different in their views, experiences and opinions. Sometimes the purpose of engagement is to collect perspectives specifically from one section of the community. However, bias can still be a problem, especially when we want information **representing diverse groups of people**.

To be effective CE practitioners, we need to be aware of some prevalent forms of bias and strive to avoid these as we carry out our activities:

People bias

- Gender (talking predominantly to women or men)
- Age (omitting certain generations)
- Elites (only talking with 'important' people)
- Active and able (for example, interviews on the streets won't involve those who, for whatever reason, stay at home)
- Users (only talking to those who use a service. We need to explore why are others NOT users?)

Time or place bias

- Only conducting a survey or delivering an activity at a time of day or year when many sections of the community are not available; at work, involved with childcare, on holiday, etc.
- Only conducting a survey or delivering an activity in places where limited sections of the community are present; not wanting, as an interviewer, to enter unfamiliar territory.

Behaviour bias

- Some interviewees may be so polite or shy that they may tell you what they think will please you.
- Some interviewees may want to finish the interview as quickly as possible and say the first thing that comes into their head.
- We, as interviewers, may hear what we want to hear, perhaps because it seems to confirm our pre-conceived ideas or to match our own wants, interests and experience.

Stop and reflect...

Each of us has a view of the world and perceptions that we may not be aware of, developed through our upbringing and lived experiences.

What biases could you encounter in engaging different community members? What personal bias could prevent you from seeing things clearly?

This may be uncomfortable but dig deep and be honest with yourself.

| Triangulation

Our findings are **credible** when we have gathered multiple perspectives. When taken together, this data helps verify the facts and minimise bias. We **triangulate** by looking at our process to ensure that we use a **mix of sources and/or tools** to strengthen the evidence that will emerge from the community engagement process.

There are different methods to help triangulate information. These considerations may take place **before**, **during** and **after** community engagement.

Before engagement:

- Check the composition of the team. Consider using a diverse team—local and external team members, varied backgrounds, skills and expertise, different genders.
- Use multiple data collection sites and groups. Repeat the exercise or discussion with other groups and in different locations (if relevant) to ensure your data doesn't have a geographic bias.

During engagement:

- Use group discussions to verify facts. Check consensus. Relay back to the participants to check your understanding of the points raised and explore if other participants share perspectives.
- Use multiple tools and methods. Explore similar topics in different interactive ways.

After engagement:

- **Consider your own biases.** We all have them based on our gender, background, knowledge; consider how you may reduce their impact when evaluating the data gathered.
- Account for differences in opinions. Consider ways in which different social or demographic groups may have differing views. These are all valid differences, and it is good practice to point out the differences, as they can be significant!

C6 Ethical considerations

Community engagement requires a strong ethical code of conduct to ensure that we 'do no harm'. With some careful thought and reflection, we can help ensure that our presence in the community does not unintentionally lead to conflict, misrepresentation, or any disadvantage or negative impact on our participants. Let's consider some important aspects of the code of conduct for CE practitioners:

- Never pressure anyone to take part-participation should always be voluntary.
- Respect anonymity and confidentiality—always ask for a person's consent if you want to disseminate information they have provided.

- Consider any economic costs to different stakeholders you want to take part in any community engagement exercise.
- Fit the methods and tools to the group, not the group to the methods and tools. Consider any differences in culture, religious practices, sexual orientation, gender roles, disability, age, ethnicity and other social differences when you plan your activities. Recognise that not all methods and tools are appropriate for all. Be ready to rethink the plan and adapt participatory approaches to context-appropriate methods when the need arises.
- Always make sure you mitigate against any possibility of harm to any individual. If one type of community engagement is too risky, then find another approach.
- Be transparent to build mutual trust with your participants—communicating the reasons for engagement, how you will use the information and any expectations for further participation.
- Create a space where participants feel safe to share opinions and ideas that may not be widely shared.
- Your role is as the neutral facilitator, even when your own beliefs and opinions differ from those expressed by participants. Adopt a learning mindset and seek to understand from where others' views stem.
- Have in place safeguarding policies that guide and direct procedures when faced with sensitive issues and vulnerable individuals/groups. These policies are there for everyone to feel and to be safe.
- Always inform participants about **how their data is being used** and make sure that they are aware of the results of the data collected.

Section D: Methods, Skills and Tools for Effective Community Engagement



This section looks at the competencies and toolkit of the individual community engagement practitioner, focusing on the skills and actions required before, during and after the community engagement takes place. We also examine methods and tools for use in community engagement.

By the end of this section you will be familiar with:

- how to plan for and structure community engagement
- the skills involved in interviewing and facilitating engagement
- rapport—what it is and how to build it with participants.

| D1 Key skills for community engagement

In this section, we will focus on some of the tools in our toolkit as CE practitioners. However, it is vital to keep in mind that tools are just ways to help us achieve our goals. Whichever tool we choose, we need to use it sensitively and flexibly. We need to adopt a listening attitude and be ready to adapt our approach at any stage.

Participation relies on an environment of trust in which people freely share their skills, knowledge, ideas and resources. We need to encourage active participation (not just 'passive') and remember that every idea is important, and every contribution counts.

This section looks at the skills required **before**, **during** and **after** the community engagement.

Before community engagement

D2 Planning skills

Before community engagement, we need to activate our planning skills. Planning is essential for effective community engagement. A simple way of looking at this is to consider the **5 Ws**—who, what, why, when, where.

Who is being consulted/engaged?

Who are the community members? What are their needs concerning the project/issue? Which groups and sub-groups do we need to engage with, and how might their needs differ in relation to the project/issue?

What resources do we have/need? When and where will we meet the community?

Where is the engagement to take place? What facilities and equipment are available? How much overall time do we have?

Why do we want to engage community stakeholders?

What are the aims and objectives of the community engagement session or activity? What do we want to achieve?

What should be covered, and in what order?

What information do we need to share now? What do we need to share in the future? What are the areas for consultation? What questions should we use? Which themes should we prioritise?

What methods of engagement should we use?

What methods are appropriate? Do we need different methods for different groups? Does our chosen method suit the community and the setting/venue?

Thinking through community engagement in advance, including the practical logistics involved, is a critical ingredient for success. If you feel comfortable and confident in the space and time that you have available for community engagement, you are more likely to be effective!

Tips for planning your community engagement				
Think about those you want to engage	Think about the resources you need for engagement			
 Who are the target audience? How many of them? Age? What is the gender mix? What are their interests and needs in relation to this issue? What motivates them? What is their attitude/ incentive? What's their current level of knowledge about the issue? 	 Check the venue layout—can you change it if necessary? Where is the best place to stand or be located? Can you easily move around? What equipment you have access to? Does it work? Do you have enough flip charts, pens etc.? Check the participants' perspective—sit where they will and get a feel for what they will hear and see. Where will any group exercises happen? Do you have working surfaces/tables if required? Do you have any support for coordination, registration, follow up queries etc.? How much total time do you have? (How will you ensure you stick to it?!) 			

D3 Facilitation skills

During the community engagement itself, our facilitation skills are our most helpful resource. Facilitation is the technique of creating a learning/sharing space for participants to engage and collectively explore, discuss, debate, create and develop ideas and actions to achieve shared objectives.

The role of the facilitator in community engagement is to:

- Create a conducive atmosphere for **participation**—maximise the effectiveness of individuals' contributions.
- Focus on the needs and objectives of the group and their own role in supporting the group process.
- Seek to understand others' perspectives.
- Listen to and recognise community members as the experts.
- Encourage all group members to participate in discussion and show interest in a wide range of views.

Good facilitators will be able to adapt their styles in response to the circumstances, the nature of the engagement and the nature of the persons they engage with.

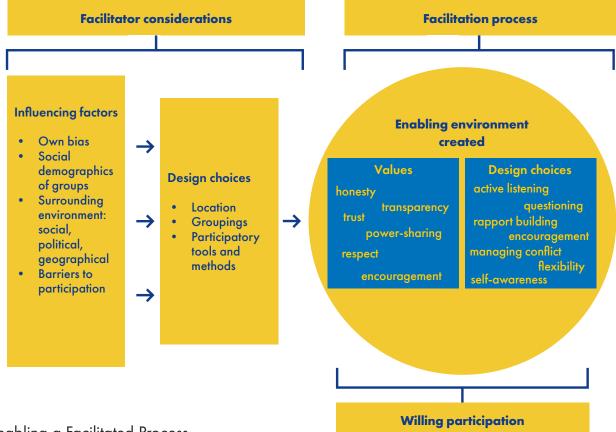


Figure 3 summarises the range of factors at play in a facilitated process.

Figure 3: Enabling a Facilitated Process

As you facilitate community engagement, there are a few principles to keep in mind:

The process may be lengthy, but stick with it.

The essence of facilitation is to build rapport, trust and a safe space to engage. This process takes time. The facilitator needs to be patient, flexible and committed to help participants reach their common goal.

Everyone brings a unique perspective.

Every individual, group or organisation is shaped by their own knowledge and experiences. Every one of these experiences is valid. It is the facilitator's role to capture these experiences because the diversity of perspectives enriches learning through community engagement.

Encourage a shift from passive to active participation.

Participants' presence is not enough. A facilitator needs to encourage a step-change from being a passive participant to an active one. To achieve this change, we, as facilitators, need to consider the types of questions we ask, the environment we create and how we adapt our tools and methods. Managing group dynamics is at the heart of ensuring everyone has the opportunity to share and learn.

Qualities of a good facilitator

- **Flexibility**—the facilitator can adapt to the needs of the group, handle multiple tasks, and has the confidence to try new things.
- Focus—the facilitator has direction and knows where to go next.
- **Encouraging participation**—the facilitator can draw out individuals; involve everyone in an open, positive environment.
- **Self-awareness**—the facilitator examines their own behaviour, learns from mistakes, is honest and open about the limits to their knowledge, and shows enthusiasm.
- **Managing conflict**—the facilitator encourages the group to handle conflict constructively and helps the group reach consensus.
- **Broadening discussion**—the facilitator encourages different points of view and uses techniques and examples to get the group to consider different frames of reference.
- **Presenting information**—the facilitator uses clear and concise language, gives explicit instructions, and is confident with visual, written, graphical and oral methods.

(Source: Voluntary Services Organisation (VSO): Participatory Approaches: A facilitator's guide)

| D4 Developing rapport

Developing good rapport or connection with your participants is critical for effective engagement and an essential aspect of facilitation skills.

What is rapport? Rapport describes a close and harmonious relationship where the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well. Rapport reflects a natural ability to enter someone else's 'model of the world' and let them feel that we truly understand that 'model'.

Why is rapport important? The ability to establish rapport is one of the most important skills of a good CE practitioner. It can form a powerful human bond and develop a short or long-term relationship with community members.

How do we create rapport? Developing rapport is an individualised skill; different people will establish rapport in different ways. However, being aware of the importance of building a bond with participants, and trying to do so, will increase the likelihood of establishing rapport. Being authentic (true to yourself) and sincere are key ingredients in this process.

Rapport often develops well in an environment comfortable for everyone involved especially the people being consulted. Being responsive, respectful, sensitive to emotions, and watching body language can help construct relationships with the group.

Stop and reflect...

What behaviours or communication style will help to build rapport with the communities you are engaging with?

How would you know if you have built rapport? What would you see, hear, or feel?

I D5 Listening and interviewing skills

Informal interviewing skills are at the heart of facilitating community engagement. Good facilitators are active listeners and persistently effective questioners, using open and probing questions to explore issues. By showing an interest and inviting community stakeholders to share their learned experiences and knowledge, we can encourage an atmosphere where they feel valued and respected.

A 'good' question is like a key that fits perfectly in a door, unlocking a flow of information.

Types of question

Open-ended questions

An open-ended question cannot be answered with a single word or phrase such as 'yes' or 'no'. Open-ended questions can be quite powerful because they stimulate thinking and encourage greater discussion. They typically begin with words such as 'how', 'what' or 'why'.

Examples: What happens if we don't solve the problem? How do the rest of you feel about this?

Greater response questions

To gain understanding and add depth to participants' involvement, facilitators need to know how to draw out greater information, using words such as 'describe', 'explain' and 'tell'.

Example: Can you describe the process in more detail?

Challenging questions

These questions are used to challenge certain types of statements that are all-embracing. They allow for no exceptions, and often include words such as 'never', 'always', 'everyone', 'all'.

Example: Statement - I have never had any communication with stakeholders in this project. Question—Never?

Redirection questions

Example: How would the rest of you respond to that point?

Clarification questions

Example: Let's see if I heard you right; you are saying ...?

A good interviewer will try to avoid asking:

- leading questions (questions that are trying to lead the respondent to a specific answer), and
- vague, ambiguous or over-complex questions.

Interviewing involves three main activities:

- observation—keep the eyes open and take in all observable information
- conversation—dialogue, talk with people and listen to them, and
- recording-discreetly take notes to write up in full later.

Once we've collected our data, we need to make sense of it so that our findings are of value, and we can use them in different ways. Data analysis can be very challenging and different people can often come to very different conclusions from the same set of data! When we consider our interview findings from community engagement, we should try to separate fact, opinion and rumour.

Fact Information which can be checked out, known to be or to have happened

Opinion Someone's perspective, judgement or belief based on limited evidence

Rumour Hearsay, general talk, of doubtful accuracy, unverified statement

Note: Opinion is valuable and important even when not based on fact.

Community engagement is all about 'processes', but we also need output that captures the findings of the engagement. This means we need to consider:

- who/how we record or collect the data that emerges from our discussions
- how to collect only the targeted data that we need and will use
- how we will store the data (considering privacy and data protection laws)
- how to capture the data in ways that are accurate, clear and precise
- how we will analyse and use data, and
- how to keep the process as simple as possible!

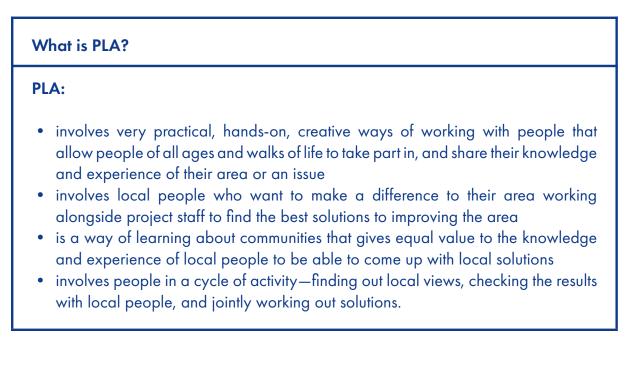
D6 Community engagement methods

Participatory learning and action (PLA)

PLA is an approach used within community engagement. PLA has a long history in international development and features specific activities designed to allow communities to have shared ownership in development decisions, instead of a 'top-down' decision-making approach.

PLA involves a wide range of stakeholder groups and requires diverse representatives of

those groups—likely to include direct project beneficiaries such as community members. These primary stakeholders often have valuable insights on the relevance and sustainability of the project at different levels.



Section D7 introduces some relevant PLA tools for CE practitioners to engage the community at different points around the project life cycle. We can use these tools within a method such as interview or community workshop. There are many simple methods to consider when we consult community stakeholders, including focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and community meetings or workshops. Being familiar with some standard approaches—how to use and adapt them and their strengths and weaknesses—is very helpful when carrying out community engagement.

I Surveys

Surveys collect and record information using set questions designed to collect consistent information. Respondents can answer questions independently (for example, in web-based surveys) or respond in a structured way to an interviewer. A survey is a large-scale, formal exercise to a sample of the target group.

Spotlight on CDRRF

During the implementation of CDRRF, surveys were designed and administered to capture the views of community residents on varying project activities. These surveys facilitated project monitoring and captured gaps and lessons which were included in future interventions. Initially, paper-based surveys were used, but were time consuming and costly. Later in the project, training was provided for community development practitioners and community leaders in using the KoBo Toolbox online data collection platform, which allows for easier data collection and analysis using cellular phones or tablets.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Can reach a wide sample Allow respondents time to think before they answer Can be answered anonymously Consistent—ask all respondents the same things Can make data compilation and comparison easier Produce quantifiable, easy to interpret results 	 Quality of responses depends on the clarity of questions Sometimes difficult to persuade people to complete and return Can involve forcing activities and people's experiences into pre- determined categories Can include closed questions (don't allow room to ask 'why') People don't always tell the truth/ say what is expected Can be time consuming and expensive to organise

| Interviews

Interviews can be structured (using a questionnaire) or open conversations (unstructured) led by an interviewer to find out about views and experiences. Interviews can be with an individual, pair or group, face-to-face or virtual, and/or formal or informal.

Key informant interviews are with 'experts' who are knowledgeable about a subject.

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) are one of the most used types of interviews as they allow both consistency and flexibility. SSIs are based on a checklist of questions but allow the interviewer to explore any areas of interest that might develop.

| Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) bring together small groups of 6-8 people for a (usually recorded) discussion. The facilitator sparks interaction between group members through a participatory analysis tool or some question-prompts. In contrast to a group interview, the facilitator listens and observes while the group interacts around the discussion or task.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Similar advantages to interviews Particularly useful to promote participant interaction Useful way to identify hierarchies and influences Group interaction enriches quality/ quantity of information Can generate ideas for solutions Open-ended questions leave room to follow up interesting lines of enquiry 	 Can be time consuming and difficult to analyse Must be sensitive to hierarchies/ power differentials within the group Must be sensitive to mixing of hierarchical levels Need to review the information soon after the discussion Need experience in notetaking and extracting and summarising data

| Photography and/or video

Photography and/or video are useful to stimulate discussion within focus groups. Visual aids such as photography, diagrams or videos used as a stimulus for discussion can be a creative way to engage in sensitive topics or encourage innovative ideas. The use of photography/video has become more common in recent years with improvements and use in hand-held technologies. For example, beneficiaries and stakeholders can be given cameras to capture images which are important to them in relation to the project.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Photographs, audio and video recordings can stimulate discussion in focus groups Can be used to record events 	 Cost of equipment Different cultural interpretation of images

| Observation

Observation involves observing and recording a situation in a log or diary, including who is involved, what happens, when, where and how events occur. Observation can be direct (the observer watches and records) or participatory (the observer becomes part of the setting for a time as in, for example, monitoring an election).

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Provides descriptive information on context and observed changes Can produce a lot of data in a relatively short time Can see what people actually do, rather than what they say they do Can generate data that can then form the basis of a discussion with those observed 	 Quality and usefulness of data is highly dependent on observer's observational and writing skills Findings can be open to different interpretations Does not easily apply within a short timeframe to focus change Focuses on observable behaviour but doesn't explain motivations for that Danger of over-simplification

| Community meetings

Public meetings—which anyone from the community can attend—are a common method to share information with a wider public.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 A common feature in the functioning of the community and so an obvious space in which to engage Can help people see and understand their community in different ways Add variety to consultation and can engage people who might not otherwise get involved 	 Can generate ideas which are not possible to implement Preparing for the event can be time- consuming Attendance does not necessarily mean engaged or participatory Certain groups may stay away

Community workshops

Workshops are a space where a group of people can come together and collectively work through a problem or set of issues. Workshops can take a variety of formats—they can be used to collectively problem solve, discuss, share information or create action plans.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Encourage active discussion in a welcoming environment Time and resource-efficient way to identify and clarify key issues Variety of formats to create a creative and innovative space for working 	 Difficult to ensure all stakeholders or interests are represented Can be dominated by articulate and confident individuals Require experienced facilitators

Community capacity development activities

Like people, communities never stop developing. New skill and capacity needs are constantly emerging to help respond, maintain and sustain change. Investing in the community to develop appropriate skills and tools can benefit the quality and results of community engagement.

Capacity strengthening can address several areas: collaboration (working together, problem-solving, relationship-building, decision-making); governance (improving systems, accountability and transparency mechanisms, communication skills); and leadership (setting shared goals and creating action plans).

Capacity needs may be explored with communities to assess and prioritise.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 Developing skills and community assets can contribute to improving the quality of development interventions Investment in people can boost morale and commitment Collective activities can reinforce bonds 	 Can be time and resource-intensive to run Opportunities for capacity development can exclude individuals or groups who are most in need of such activities

Spotlight on BNTF and CDRRF

Not only are communities often in need of training, but community development practitioners across the Caribbean also require capacity strengthening in community engagement practices.

Responding to requests from BMCs for technical assistance in this area, during 2017 and 2018, CDRRF and BNTF provided training for 242 community development practitioners and developed the Community Profiles and Community Needs and Assets Assessment (CNAA) as its framework for community engagement, especially at the project preparation and planning stage.

| Online consultation

Online tools for engagement and consultation are becoming more prevalent in our webbased and technological world. Tools can take many forms: online surveys, online forums, social media accounts and analytics, online polls and voting.

Strengths	Weaknesses
 People can choose a convenient time and place to participate Helps to engage those in different locations, or who have difficulties in access Cost effective Can reach large numbers of people Less time consuming than attending a workshop or public meeting 	 Some techniques may require a moderator, or specialist software which can be expensive and time consuming Excludes those without access to devices and/or the internet Needs to be publicised to generate interest Can be cost intensive setting up high specification tools

D7 Community engagement tools for project cycle management (PCM)

At the community level, if project management teams place citizens at the centre of service design, planning and delivery, there is a greater likelihood that the project will deliver results. Effective community engagement helps PCM to be more inclusive and participatory. It integrates the two cycles of community engagement and project life to achieve ongoing engagement and involvement of communities throughout all stages of the project lifecycle.

Figure 4 illustrates how we can combine the two cycles (developed by Dr Dwayne Vernon, Executive Director of the Jamaica Social Development Commission).

Effective Community Engagement (ECE) and Project Management Life Cycle (PMLC)

	Project Management Life Cycle	Effective Community Engagement process	Output	- Outcome
ī	Initiation	Prepare, inform and consult	 Community data Community consultations Draft project document 	 Informed community and stakeholders (ECE) Informed project scope (PMLC)
	Planning	Involve and collaborate	 Community committees Stakeholder workshops Ministries, departments, and agencies network Project management plan Project monitoring committee 	 Community buy-in (ECE) Ministries, departments, and agencies collaboration (ECE) Effective project design (PMLC)
	Execution	Collaborate and empower	 Capacity-strengthening workshops Project monitoring reports Community management committee (minutes/action plans) 	 Community ownership (ECE) Enhanced capacity (ECE & PMLC) Enhanced efficiency effectiveness and accountability (PMLC)
	Closure	Empower	• Trained community management group	Sustainable desired change (ECE & PMLC)
	Effective (Community Enga	aement and Project Manage	ement Life Cycle – A

Effective Community Engagement and Project Management Life Cycle—A Strategic Consideration by the Caribbean Development Bank and the Social Development Commission

Figure 4: Effective Community Engagement and the Project Management Lifecycle

The presentation of tools in this section is aligned to the various stages of the project cycle. However, it is worth highlighting that we can use many of the tools flexibly, and different tools may be appropriate/beneficial at various stages of the cycle. For example, you might use gender analysis to add value in project initiation, planning, execution, and closure. Figure 5 illustrates how we can use the different community engagement tools in different ways around the project cycle.

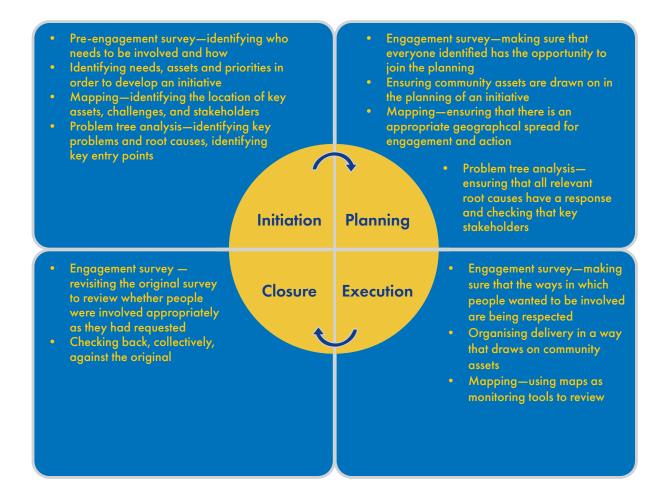


Figure 5: Community Engagement Tools Around the Project Management Lifecycle

I Tools to explore community readiness to engage

| **Project initiation**

The purpose of project initiation is to understand the community's readiness for intervention, including identifying and prioritising risks, capacity gaps and constraints, community assets, and resources. Inadequate stakeholder analysis during the design phase can create a planning gap where the needs and perspectives of key actors—such as poor women, youth-at-risk, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other vulnerable persons—within targeted communities are not properly reflected.

This section includes tools that are particularly relevant and useful for CE practitioners to use at the project initiation and planning stages.

Two key tools for project initiation are the community engagement survey and the community assessment of readiness tool.

Community Engagement Survey (CES)

What?

The CDRRF designed the CES to collect information on how, when and where groups prefer to participate in community activities. The Fund administered community engagement surveys to determine the engagement needs and preferences of community residents. This data helped to determine the most suitable times, days and locations to dialogue with specific groups such as men, women, youths, the elderly and persons living with disabilities.

Why?

The CES helps to build up a picture of the community and environment. It helps to identify beyond poverty indicators such as income and consumption and provides insight into how people live, their coping strategies and their lives in relation to health, education, infrastructure, supporting institutions etc.

When?

At the initiation phase of the project cycle, to inform the other cycle stages. You might also use it during the implementation phase to check on how engagement is going and whether any course correction is needed.

How?

Planning and preparation are required for the survey to take place. CDRFF collaborated with the project management team, volunteer data collectors, project partners, government ministries and national development organisations.

Survey findings need to be shared with all stakeholders, public sector actors, and most importantly, with respondents and the community.

Sharing results has two critical functions:

- 1) It forms the basis of a community engagement plan which helps determine how, when and where to involve community residents.
- 2) If we feedback information and analysis to the residents and respondents of the survey, it helps to establish rapport, trust and a sense of ownership.

Spotlight on BNTF

In Dominica, survey results have helped to empower women towards self-sufficiency.

The Dominica 2008/2009 Country Poverty Assessment identified skills training as a community need for certain communities where high poverty levels were prevalent.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, survey results have helped to:

- identify community issues
- reveal the best medium for communicating with residents, and
- convey community hazard management practices.

Between 2017 and 2019, CDRFF conducted 7 surveys involving 145 volunteer data collectors, across 38 communities in the Virgin Islands, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Examples of completed Community Engagement Surveys can be found at:

https://www.caribank.org/publications-and-resources/resource-library/case-study/ community-engagement-survey-results-and-outputs-st-vincent-and-grenadines

https://www.caribank.org/publications-and-resources/resource-library/case-study/ community-engagement-survey-results-and-outputs-westmoreland-jamaica

https://www.caribank.org/publications-and-resources/resource-library/case-study/ community-engagement-survey-results-and-outputs-st-thomas-jamaica

https://www.caribank.org/publications-and-resources/resource-library/case-study/ community-engagement-survey-results-and-outputs-virgin-islands-bvi

Community Assessment of Readiness Tool (CART)

What?

The Community Assessment of Readiness Tool (CART) is a CDRRF method to assess how adequately prepared a community is to engage in the implementation of an intervention. It considers attitudes, desire and will towards social and behavioural change, and capacity and capabilities for implementing a development intervention.

Why?

Project implementation can often be delayed because of limited capacity of community groups and individuals to execute development interventions effectively. The CART identifies

potential stakeholder and implementation risks, so that we can put in place appropriate measures to address them and mitigate their impact on successful implementation.

Results from the CART can help assess the feasibility of implementing an intervention or programme and inform decisions on appropriate intervention strategies for the community. The CART can help diagnose capacity needs for strategies to strengthen community readiness as part of project activities.

When?

The CART is helpful in the initiation phase so that you can make decisions about what is realistic and what will work well in the current community context. It may also be appropriate to use it during the implementation phase if you are moving to a new phase of the project or need to adjust project design and implementation.

How?

The CART is administered via a mobile/web application. The CART readiness score is a sum of four dimensions, each with different components and questions. It measures community capacity to implement change at the project initiation stage by identifying strengths and gaps in participation potential using the four dimensions (see table 1 below). During project implementation, the CART survey findings will support capacity and awareness building interventions geared at improving the level of readiness by project completion. The purpose is to improve overall readiness by comparing both pre- and post-project scores. By doing this, it is assumed that communities will be better able to sustain project deliverables as well as implement additional initiatives, seeking to improve quality of life for all. The dimensions can be used to 'score' community readiness, and CART will be available via a mobile/web application (coming soon).

Table 1: Matrix of Readiness Assessment Dimensions and CART (adapted, Castaneda,Holscher, Mumman, Salgado, Keor, Foster-Fishman, Talvera, 2011)

Dimension	Sub-Dimensions with Definitions
 Community (and Organisational) Climate that facilitates change 	a. Community Climate: the degree to which current community conditions promote positive versus negative behaviours
	b. Organisational Climate: the degree to which the current climate of the organisation facilitates positive organisational change

2. Current Attitudes and Efforts towards prevention of the issue	a. Current Awareness: to what extent members know about the causes of the problem, consequences, and how it impacts their community/organisation
	b. Current Values: perceived relative worth or importance that a group places on a particular social problem
	c. Current Efforts: Efforts that exist currently that deal with prevention
3. Commitment to Change	a. Hope for Change: the belief that an organisation, community, or neighbourhood can improve
	b. Needed Change: the extent to which members feel that there are legitimate reasons and need for the prospective change effort
	c. Commitment to Change: the extent to which members perceive their leadership is committed and supports the implementation of a prospective change effort
4. Capacity to implement change	a. Relational Capacity: relational attributes for change exists (includes social ties, community attachment, stakeholder involvement, and collaboration/teamwork)
	b. Collective Efficacy: belief in one's own or the community's ability to effectively accomplish a task or engage in future change efforts
	c. Leadership: to what extent leaders and influential community members are supportive of the issues, or to what extent leadership is effective
	d. Resources: to what extent local resources (people, time, money and space) are available to support efforts
	e. Skills and Knowledge: necessary to implement an innovative programme, including: adaptability, evaluation, technical, research, and data dissemination, cultural competency and training

| Project planning

The purpose at this stage is to foster community buy-in and access local knowledge to inform project activities. We can set up or enhance mechanisms for collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders around the project life cycle. Communication or community engagement plans may help to maintain the community's involvement beyond the project initiation stage.

Broad-based community consultations are key to engaging communities and other stakeholders at the planning stage—we can facilitate these through stakeholder workshops, meetings, focus group discussions etc.

Three useful tools for project planning are community needs and assets assessment, stakeholder analysis and problem analysis.

Community Needs and Assets Assessment (CNAA)

What?

The <u>Community Needs and Assets Assessment (CNAA)</u> toolkit, produced by the BNTF, is a type of community profile that uses a community-based participatory research approach and is informed by the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model. It produces a detailed community profile, covering community history, a social, economic and reproductive profile, analysis of decision-making and the community's development needs and priorities. Steps in the CNAA process include desk and field research, including the tools outlined in this section.

Why?

This approach highlights the strengths and capacities of a community. It can help project developers and community members to identify which approaches and project options may work best in that community context. It also provides helpful baseline information for monitoring and evaluation.

When?

A CNAA will inform both planning and implementation, as the community assets identified will likely play an important role in ensuring effective delivery. The information from a CNAA can also serve as a helpful baseline for evaluation. At the initiation phase, a CNAA can be enormously valuable to identify priorities and draft project profiles.

How?

The CNAA offers a process for CE practitioners to produce a community profile.

It starts with desk-based research, using existing secondary data and information on the community, including the socio-economic status of residents, environmental conditions, and social and political dynamics.

Step two involves participatory research with the community, using the tools outlined in this section, which goes on to inform a detailed community profile including the following headings:

A	Identification
В	Historical Profile
С	Physical Profile
D	Economic Profile
E	Social Profile
F	Reproductive Profile
G	Decision Making and Access/Control
Н	Development Profile

Stakeholder analysis

What?

This is used to establish the relative importance and influence of people, groups or institutions with an interest in a particular issue, activity or project.

Why?

Analysing the stakeholders who we need to involve in a project or programme is one of the most critical elements of international development project planning. Stakeholder analysis is a useful tool or process to help us identify stakeholder groups and describe the nature of their stake, roles and interests, then think through how and when to engage them.

When?

At the initiation phase, a thorough and well-executed stakeholder analysis ensures that projects include key actors from the start and identify critical challenges associated with the proposed intervention. Stakeholder analysis is also important at the planning stage, where it guides who we should include in the project and the nature of their involvement at each stage. At implementation, it may be useful to revisit the analysis to check that everyone is engaged who should be and take account of new or emerging stakeholders and changing interests. At project closure, we can use stakeholder analysis to explore and reflect on how different stakeholders influenced or were engaged in the project and learn lessons for future projects.

How?

We can facilitate stakeholder analysis with a variety of community members to explore and verify different perceptions.

- List all possible stakeholders—those who are affected by the project or issue or can influence it in any way. Avoid using words like 'the community' or 'the local authority' or 'youth'. Be more specific, for example, 'not-in-school youth' or the 'Youth Service'.
- Add the identified stakeholders in the first column of the table. For each stakeholder, establish their interest, influence and importance using a simple description or the suggested scoring method below. This process may be through focused discussion or by individuals writing their opinions on sticky notes and adding these to each category. (Importance here relates to the stakeholder interests, not the stakeholder group itself.)
- Stakeholder interests may be hidden or open concerning the theme or project. Some stakeholders may have several interests; some will be conflicting.
- The facilitator can synthesise input from different participants with their agreement or use further discussion or voting to get consensus. It is important to note that the importance awarded to a stakeholder group may be very different for project staff compared to community members!

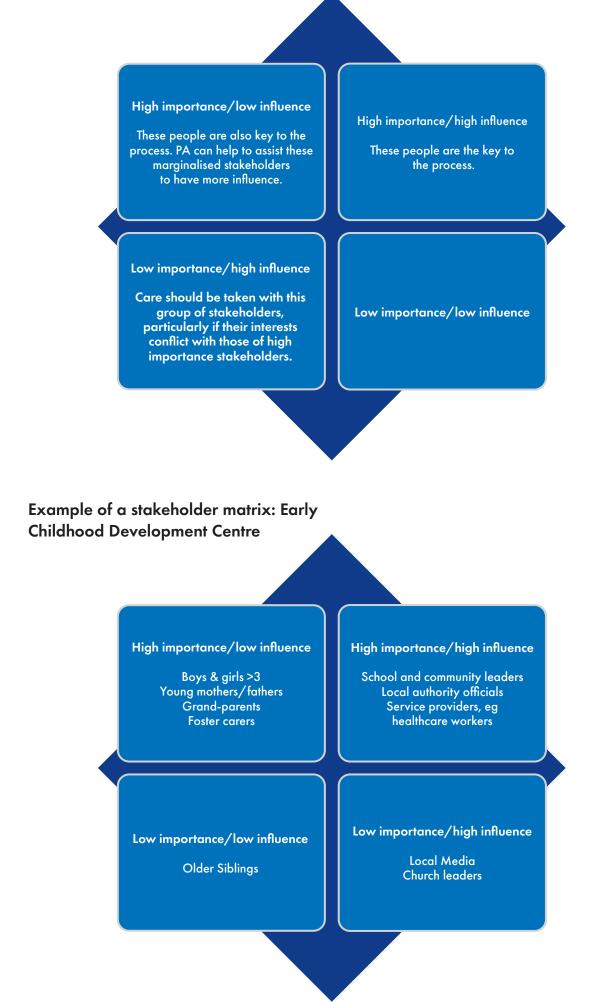
Stakeholder table

Stakeholders	Interest	Influence	Importance
Checklist	Description, reasons	-4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4	12345

Once the table is complete, the results can be mapped onto a matrix by the group (see the example matrices below).

Use open questions to check the reasons and logic for the group's decisions.

Stakeholder matrix



I Venn (Chapatti) diagrams

What?

Venn diagrams (also known as Chapatti diagrams) are helpful in participatory appraisal to explore the different roles and relationships of individuals, groups and institutions relevant to the discussion topic.

Why?

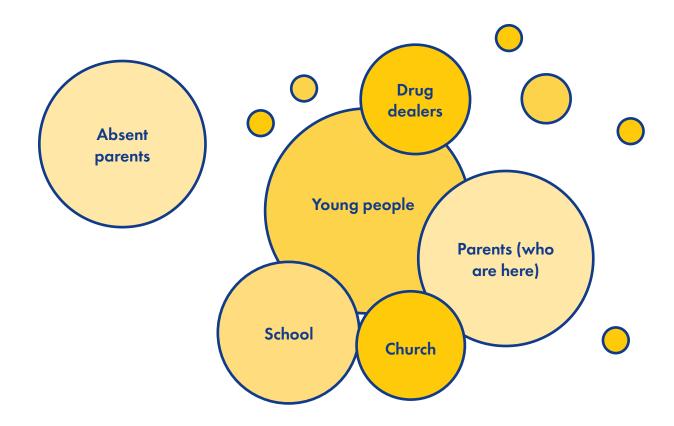
Venn/Chapatti diagrams help participants think about the key players in the issues and decisions that affect their lives and explore the relationships and links between them. They are a simple and visual way to start discussion of quite complex issues—particularly the relative importance and influence of the different players as perceived by the community.

When?

These diagrams are particularly useful at the initiation phase to identify which groups in a community a project must engage with. They are also helpful in planning to determine who might work with whom and, as a monitoring tool during implementation to explore whether and how community dynamics are changing.

How?

- Cut out a number of circles of different sizes. (It may be useful to use a few different colours that can signify, for example, groups and organisations within the community and those external to the community.)
- Work with the group to determine criteria to assess the importance of the different 'players' and to rank them according to those criteria.
- Label the circles according to this ranking with the larger circles representing the more important and the smaller ones the less important.
- Facilitate the group in creating a diagram using the circles where circles are positioned close to or far apart from each other according to their relative influence and overlap where organisations are linked in some way.
- Discuss the participants' arrangement of the circles as they go along, exploring with them the nature of the linkages and the roles played.



| Problem tree analysis

What?

A 'problem tree' is a tool that enables community members to explore the causes and effects of a particular problem and how they relate to one another.

Why?

Analysing the causes of a problem/issue helps people focus and see the problem at different levels and from different perspectives. It also makes it easier to identify opportunities and practical and realistic solutions.

For example, take the problem/issue of 'parents not reading to their children'. By doing a problem tree, we might find that some parents do not read to their children because they don't have access to a library nearby or have reading difficulties themselves. These are problems at the parents' level and solutions to these problems must be found to solve the 'core' problem.

By analysing the effects of the problem, we can see the problem in a broader context and the longer-term consequences of not addressing it. We can also use the tree to start to explore entry points to an issue and possible solutions.

When?

Problem analysis is critical at the design phase to know we are addressing the correct problem and identifying challenges. In implementation, it may be helpful to revisit the tree to check that the problem has not changed over time. At project closure, we can use the tree to test the project intervention logic.

How?

We can do problem trees in both structured and unstructured ways. Both methods are described here:

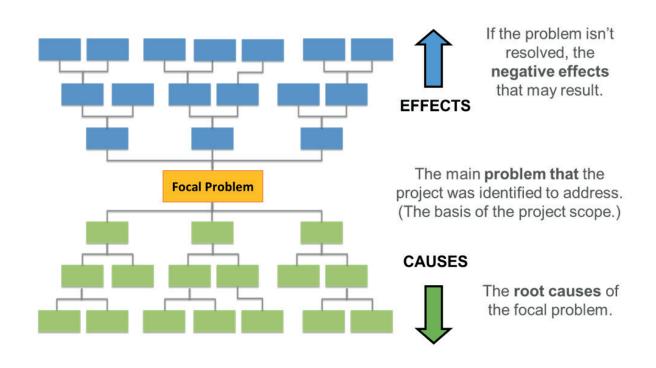
The more structured approach:

Write the problem/issue in the middle of the page. You can elicit this from community members.

- Prompt as many possible direct/immediate causes of the problem and write/represent them below the problem, connected by lines.
- Prompt the 'causes of the causes' and write them below, indicating the links.
- Continue until you have reached the 'root' cause(s) of the problem.
- Next, prompt as many possible direct effects of the main problem and write them above the problem, connected by lines.
- Prompt the 'effects of the effects' and write them above, indicating the links.
- Continue as far as necessary.

Alternatively:

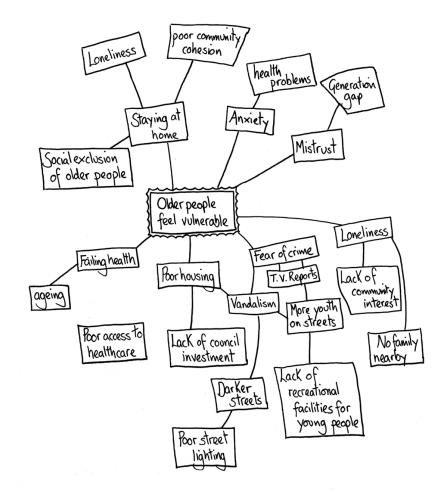
- Write the focal issue in the middle of the page.
- Brainstorm with community members any related issues/problems and write these on pieces of paper/sticky notes.
- Facilitate community members to arrange the issues according to whether they are causes or effects in relation to the focal problem.



Example of a structured problem tree

Example of a non-structured problem tree

Worked example-causes and effects of vulnerability among the elderly



I Tools to facilitate community engagement

| Project execution

At this stage, the project management team should facilitate community and stakeholder ownership and involvement in project implementation and monitoring. The team should provide regular opportunities for community involvement in reviewing and identifying lessons learned from development interventions at the community level. Excluding communities from project execution processes is common—such exclusion can lead to issues with community ownership and undermine project success. Embedding effective community engagement processes in project cycle management and strengthening the capacity of the community and other stakeholders through participatory strategies is highly desirable.

There are many tools we can use in project implementation. The four tools presented in this section include mapping, transect walk, activity calendars and gender analysis. These tools are also valuable during the project planning phase.

Mapping

What?

Community members produce a visual map of a specific area and the resources there that are important to them.

Why?

Mapping activities are useful introductory activities when working with community members/ groups. They allow the community to show and talk about how they see the area where they live, the resources/facilities available and what is important to them in their environment. People's perceptions of the community/area can vary greatly. Maps are a good way to gain an insight into the physical characteristics of a place, but more importantly, how people feel about the area and what it offers them.

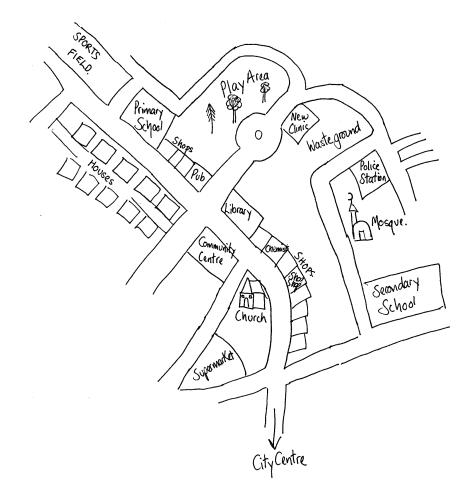
Mapping activities are a good way to break the ice and get community members interested in the early stages of fieldwork. They also help team members who live outside the area to get a quick overview of the community from the perspective of those who live there. The mapping process can also help the team identify how community members relate and work together—who is vocal, who keeps quiet etc.—and to plan the subsequent activities to ensure that as many voices as possible are heard.

When?

Mapping is very helpful to monitor progress during implementation and for evaluation during project closure. It is also valuable in the initiation phase when you are getting to know the community and understand the issue.

How?

- Maps can be hand-drawn or 3D and either provide a basic overview of an area or more detailed information around specific concerns depending on the interests and focus of the team and the community members.
- Community members sketch the layout of the area, including key roads/paths and landmarks. They might do this on paper or by drawing out or laying materials on the ground.



- Add Important facilities or resources, depending on the themes you're exploring with a community. For example, if you're mapping a neighbourhood in a town or village, people might identify schools, community centres, parks and playing fields, mosques/temples/ churches, health centres/hospitals, bars, shops, libraries. If you're discussing climate change and agriculture, people might want to identify key water sources and courses, different types of land and land use and areas threatened by erosion or flooding.
- Community members can show through different colours or symbols more detailed information such as the number of people in a household, employment status, different age groups, chief crops etc. If so, include a key of some kind.

It is important to note that the production of the map itself is not the point of the exercise. Through facilitation and probing of what community members choose to include or leave out, what they tell us about the water sources/ schools/crime rates, the mapping tool serves as a springboard for a richer and more detailed discussion.

| Transect walks

What?

Transect walks are a type of mapping activity that involves walking across an area with a community member/small group of community members and observing, asking questions and listening as you go. This information is then represented in a transect sketch/diagram.

Why?

Transect walks share many of the advantages of maps and also allow the team to get a feel for the area as they walk across it. They also enable community members to point out or draw the team's attention to features of their environment and for the team to ask specific questions about things that they notice along the way.

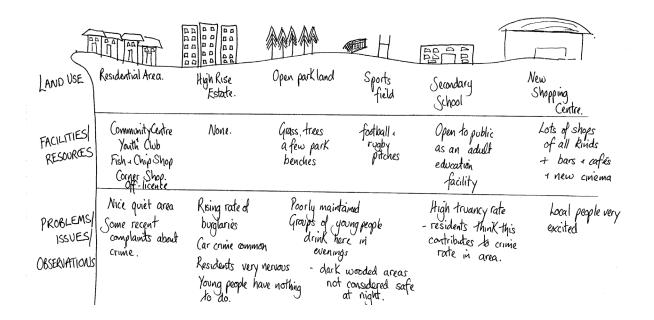
When?

Transect walks are useful to monitor progress during implementation and for evaluation during project closure. In the initiation phase, they can help you get to know the community and understand the issues

How?

- Decide on the factors to draw in the transect, for example, land use, facilities, problems, opportunities.
- Discuss the route.
- Walk the transect.
- Observe, ask, listen, note.
- Sketch distinguishing features.
- Draw the transect—do not be too detailed. (This can be done with or by the community informant.)
- Cross-check the transect information with other community members during further fieldwork

Example of a transect walk



Activity calendars

What?

Calendars are a tool to help analyse patterns of activity across a particular time, for example, a year, month, week, day.

Why?

Activity calendars help to identify 'livelihood tasks' (the things that people have to do to, for example, make a living, provide and care for their family etc.) and chart how and when these tasks are performed, identifying periods of intense activity, rest periods etc. They build up a picture of the activity cycle of a community/individual, considering and exploring those factors which impact on activity. The information calendars generate can be particularly valuable for project planning purposes.

When?

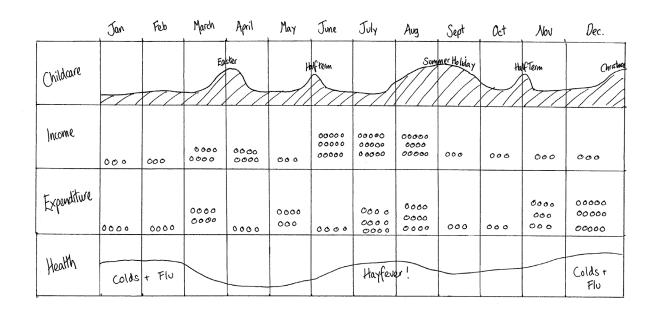
During implementation, this tool can inform planning of project activities. It is also helpful in the initiation phase when you are getting to know the community and understand the issues and challenges.

How?

- Allow participants to construct their criteria for the calendar, using months, seasons, days etc., according to the period you wish to analyse and what they feel comfortable with.
- Ask participants to add the information that they/you feel relevant (for example,

seasonality, income and expenditure, employment opportunities, school year, health problems etc.)

• Chart the peaks and troughs showing activity patterns for each of the factors, discussing the reasons for and implications of the patterns that emerge.



Example of a calendar: What factors affect parents and children in a family

Gender analysis

What?

A social and gender analysis **examines primary**, **secondary and historical data at the individual**, **household**, **or societal level to draw conclusions on the differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities** and access to resources. Gender analysis is concerned with uncovering causes of inequalities and aims to achieve equity in the form of positive opportunities for women and girls, boys and men.

A gender lens is relevant and valuable around the whole project cycle, particularly during stakeholder analysis, problem analysis, and setting gender-sensitive indicators of change.

Why?

We live in societies characterised by gender differences and gender inequalities. The inequalities are often so deeply embedded and normalised that they are difficult to perceive. This means that any interventions that claim to be gender-neutral may reinforce the imbalances that exist.

The purpose of gender analysis is to differentiate the different and complex needs, interests, concerns and potentials of women and men at all levels. It helps us to ensure that the

benefits of the interventions are shared equitably—not only as a matter of justice but also of efficiency and sustainability.

When?

Gender analysis is relevant throughout the project cycle.

Planning and implementation stages should include a gender analysis to ensure that both women and men are participating and informed appropriately.

Gender analysis is critical at the initiation phase so that the needs, interests, concerns and potential of all individuals and groups are considered and ensure that the project is effective and sustainable.

Gender-focused questions are also critical in evaluations and in planning for sustainability in the closure phase.

How?

Gender analysis poses a series of questions around the project issue or proposed intervention:

- Which different groups of women and men are, or might be, involved and at what level(s)?
- Who, of these, are affected? How might they be affected?
- What opportunities are there—for whom? Who will benefit?
- What might be the issues for girls/women/boys/men?
- What are the dangers if the interests and needs of any group are not considered and they are not consulted?

To strengthen the gender analyses, needs are often considered at two levels:

Types of needs

Practical needs:

- relate to daily needs: food, housing, income, healthy children, etc.
- tend to be immediate, short-term and easily identifiable
- can be addressed by provision of specific inputs.

Strategic needs

- relate to disadvantaged position subordination, lack of resources and education, vulnerability to poverty and violence etc.
- tend to be long term and are not always identifiable by women/men
- can be addressed by awareness raising, confidence building etc.

Types of needs

Gender blind

Project or programme activities do not consider the specific needs of females and males. No action is taken to ensure that both benefit equally. May inadvertently reinforce or exacerbate existing inequalities.

Gender aware

Projects recognise that women and men have different needs and access to resources, even within households, and that the project or programme can be shaped to address the needs of each, but action to address differences and inequalities is limited.

Gender responsive

Project or programme activities include actions to close the gender gap, reduce barriers and ensure that both women and men can benefit equally from the programme.

Spotlight on BNTF

BNTF has a Gender Marker Tool that encourages project officers to look at each stage of the cycle and allocate scores. This then categorises projects as Gender Mainstreamed, Mostly Mainstreamed or None—which is roughly equivalent to Gender Responsive, Gender Aware and Gender Blind.

Example

In the case of a community profile of Chateaubelair in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the team identified that women were at greater risk from disasters than men, as they were particularly involved in livestock production. However, the women also had support groups, such as the 'Fancy Ladies', which were networking strengths that the team could build on when developing responses with communities.³

| Project closure

At this stage, the purpose of community engagement is to ensure that the project has delivered results in line with community and other stakeholder expectations. This stage includes handover of any project assets, underscoring the importance of community ownership and capacity for sustainability of results.

There is often insufficient use of tools to assess levels of community satisfaction with project outcomes and to explore any misalignment of community expectations and delivered outputs. Projects can use the tools described here as part of an evaluation, to complement other less participatory approaches.

| Timelines

What?

Timelines are a tool to record changes in a community/household/village/life of a community member over time.

Why?

Timelines are a way to note the critical historical markers/milestones of a community or household and help to give a broader historical context to the issue under discussion. They also enable team and community to draw out trends. A timeline is a useful tool to introduce a discussion of change. One way to do this is to ask questions about past, present and future. Possible future situations can be discussed using 'what if...?' questions which can also reveal the degree of openness to change and the potential impact of an intervention.

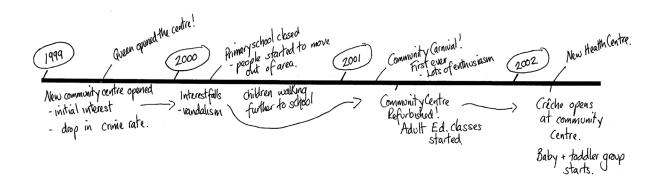
When?

We can use timelines effectively towards project closure to understand how a project has developed and identify key milestones and decision points reached along the way. We can also use them at the Initiation phase to better understand a community.

How?

- Ask participants to use symbols or words to denote important historical events. Some timelines begin with the founding of a community or any event that the oldest people remember, but they can start at any point. For example, they could look at change around a project life cycle.
- Timelines may be represented in a circular rather than linear fashion depending on the participants' perspective. Years can be estimated, and exact numbers are not necessarily important.
- Use the emerging timeline to discuss wider issues and changes—the possible reasons for changes and their impact (on both individuals and the community).

Worked example of a timeline



I Ranking and scoring activities

What?

Ranking/scoring activities are a way for community members to weigh up/rate items or issues, either relative to one another (ranking) or according to other criteria (scoring).

Why?

Ranking/scoring activities generate quantitative information through more specific and focused questions relating to the community's preferences. They help people to prioritise options and therefore are a valuable basis for planning.

Ranking/scoring activities also give equal weight to the voices of different community participants.

When?

These tools are valuable at the closure phase. They can help explore which elements of a project worked well or not so well, for example, during an evaluation or in prioritising which elements of a project a community wishes to secure for the longer term. They are also very helpful during the inception and planning phases, for example, to make choices between possible solutions.

How?

There are different types of ranking/scoring activities, four of which are described here.

Preference ranking

- Choose a set of items/issues/problems to prioritise.
- Ask people, one by one, to give you their preferences for the items in the set, in order of priority ('1' may be highest or lowest priority if this is consistent and clear.)
- Enter the responses in a table like the example.
- When all the participants have given their order of preference, calculate the results to give an overall order for the group.

our neighbourhood Person Person Person Person Person Person Total Ranking 1 2 3 4 5 6 1 Ranking

Example preference ranking: Biggest challenges facing young people in

	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Total	Ranking
Unemployment	1	3	1	2	1	4	12	1
Drugs and crime	3	1	5	5	3	3	20	3
Early pregnancy	5	2	4	6	2	5	24	5
No access to training	4	4	2	1	4	2	19	2
No facilities	2	5	3	4	6	1	21	4
Poor environment	6	6	6	3	5	6	32	6

Pairwise ranking

In this type of activity, one item is valued relative to another.

- Choose/elicit a set of issues/items to prioritise. Write/draw these on separate cards.
- Place two cards in front of the participant, asking which is more urgent/important/the preferred option.
- Note down their preference on the table.
- Repeat the process with different respondents and tabulate their responses.

Example of pairwise ranking: Biggest challenges facing young people in our neighbourhood

		1	2	3	4	5	
		Unemployment	Drugs	Early pregnancy	Training	Environment	No. of 'wins'
1	Unemployment		1,2,1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1,1	11
2	Drugs			2,2,3	4,2,2	2,2,2	7
3	Early pregnancy				3,3,4	3,3,3	6
4	Lack of training					4,4,4	3
5	Earl pregnancy						0

Based on this example, the issue that came out as most important was unemployment because it came first each time, and the least important to the respondents was the physical environment, which did not come first even once.

Matrix ranking

Matrix ranking identifies lists of criteria to judge and rank items or issues against.

- Choose a set of issues/items.
- Elicit criteria by asking 'What is good/bad?' about each item.
- List all criteria—turn negative into positive, for example, 'difficult to get to' becomes 'easy to get to'.
- Draw up a table.
- Give each participant a limited number of votes and ask them to distribute their votes across the different criteria.

Example of matrix ranking: Reasons for limited access to training for young people

Factor	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Total
No provision	•••	••		•••	9
Fear of failure		•	•		2
No time	••	••	••••	•••	11
Can't afford materials	•	•••	••••		8
Caring responsibilities	••••		•		5
Not physically accessible		••		•••	5

Based on this example, in which each young person had ten votes, it looks as though lack of time was the most significant factor stopping them from accessing training. The next step would be to explore what was causing that lack of time. Again the importance of the ranking matrices/tools is as a springboard for deeper discussion. The facilitator will want to explore why participants feel A is a more urgent problem than B etc., and it is often through asking why that the richest data/insights emerge.

| Most Significant Change

What?

Collecting stories of significant change resulting from a project from stakeholders and then supporting a panel of stakeholders to identify the most important.

Why?

Stakeholders can define their own indicators of success by picking out the stories that resonate most for them—it allows the community and the project teams to identify both expected and unexpected impacts.

When?

This tool is probably most relevant for monitoring during implementation and for evaluation at project closure.

How?

- Invite a range of stakeholders to tell the story of a significant change that they have witnessed or experienced during the project.
- Gather and share the stories with a smaller panel of stakeholders who select a limited number of the stories as the most significant, explaining their reasoning for each one.

Example of a story of change (adapted from the ODI toolkit, Tools for Knowledge and Learning: A Guide for Development and Humanitarian Organisations.)

Richardo had the job of assessing the impact of a project on 650 people in three large communities. His first idea was to get everyone to agree on a set of indicators to measure the results, but that seemed very technical. Then he heard about an evaluation method that relied on people telling stories of significant change they had experienced or witnessed because of the project. Within this approach, the beneficiaries were also invited to explain why they thought their story was significant.

Richardo was quite pleased with the data collected from this exercise, and the project had a nice collection of stories, but he still felt that the project needed to reach wider stakeholders. He wanted to engage district decision-makers to help them see (and maybe even feel) the change. His solution was to get different groups of community members to select the stories they thought were most significant and explain why they made that selection.

Each of the three community committees had collected several stories. Richardo asked them to choose one story that demonstrated different themes or areas of results. He then invited the district office to select a significant story from the 12 submitted. Next, he communicated back the selected stories and reasons for selection to the project team and the original storytellers. Over time, the stakeholders began to understand the project's impact and the project's beneficiaries began to understand what the district officials believed was important. People were learning from each other. Participation in the project increased as positive changes were identified and reinforced.

| D8 Reflective practice

Throughout the whole community engagement process, it is invaluable to take time to reflect on what has worked well and what we might do differently next time. Community engagement isn't necessarily easy, nor are its impacts immediately apparent, so taking time out to think, reflect and understand what inspires you and keeps you going is important—stepping back, to review whether what you're doing is delivering what you have hoped.

You might choose to reflect on your practice by keeping a journal or meeting regularly with colleagues or community members to reflect on and review what has taken place in terms of community engagement.

One useful way of looking at any process could be to use the **four Fs**:

- Facts—What happened?
- Feelings—What do I feel about it? What were my emotions?
- **Findings**—What have I learnt from the situation? What went well and what didn't go so well?
- Future–What can I take from this and apply in the future?

How do I improve my practice next time?

• Was the engagement effective? What should be done differently in future? (reflection)

D9 Closing the loop: what next?

Any community engagement process **must** include feedback to the community involved.

For feedback to be effective, it should be done in such a way that it is:

- interesting
- appropriate-designed with the audience in mind
- **clear**—use the language of the intended audience
- **convincing** and representative of those involved—those who were not involved in the process of collection or analysis should have an opportunity to verify the information
- timely—to help stakeholders and donors make informed decisions
- **participatory**—stakeholders should decide what and how to communicate to others. It is their story, and it will be more powerful if they tell it in their own way.

Feedback sessions allow the community to confirm what has taken place and offer space for everyone to evaluate the effects of any engagement. They can also be a space for everyone concerned to think about what they want or need to do next.

By the time you get to the end of the project management life cycle, the community should be empowered to represent their own interests and to act on their own behalf to manage development outputs and outcomes, negotiate with influential stakeholders, and seek resources or to implement development interventions.

Effective community engagement could act as a catalyst for new initiatives and ideas that move beyond the original project, leading to communities initiating their own actions or asking for support to take their work to the next level. It is vital to think in advance so that you can be ready to respond if this happens!

"Another key step in the whole engagement process is that after you have run a focus group discussion, or you actually administered survey instruments that the residents want to hear what the findings were. So, you need to find some opportunity to go back and say... 'we came, and we asked you these questions, and this is generally what we found".

Claudia James, Project Manager, Community Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (CDRRF).

| D10 Planning community engagement—a checklist

In Annex 1, you will find a detailed checklist and questionnaire to use when planning community engagement.

Section E Next Steps to Embed Community Engagement in CDB's Practice



CDB has a series of useful tools and reports (this guide included) that document approaches to building community engagement and provide detailed community profiles to inform any CE practitioner who may work with that community. However, it appears that once projects and initiatives get started—once a project moves from the initiation and the planning phases, community engagement is often not sustained throughout implementation. This lack of engagement, in turn, means that project long-term impact and sustainability is weaker than it might otherwise be.

In terms of concrete next steps, CDB could do the following:

- 1. Launch this guide to Bank staff and CE practitioners in the region, shining a spotlight on community engagement good practice and widely promoting the resource to increase its uptake and use.
- 2. **Consult Bank staff** about their perspectives on how to better integrate community engagement into CDB procedures and projects. This consultation could be a series of virtual focus group discussions.
- 3. **Consult further around BMC experiences of community engagement:** Organise a focused review meeting/s with grant recipients and government stakeholders to explore their experiences of community engagement. The workshop would explore the helping and hindering factors and whether and how projects have sustained engagement throughout a project life cycle. Meetings could be virtual in the first instance.
- 4. **Design and delivery of bespoke learning events for staff and practitioners:** Based on the outcome from these review meetings and the contents of this guidance note, organise workshops or learning forums that tackle areas of need for BMCs. Themes could include:
- How to move from analysis to action—ensuring that the learning from community profiles and needs assessments is well reflected in planning, implementation and evaluation
- Reaching hard-to-reach groups—sharing knowledge and experiences between peers
- Using social media for community engagement
- Practical application of the tools in this toolkit
- Trouble-shooting 'clinics' for peer-led problem solving
- Community development facilitator skills training
- Community engagement for DRR
- 5. Encourage the development of peer support networks, through which practitioners can share experiences and ask for advice, perhaps following an action learning approach. Peer support networks could be informal groups using media such as WhatsApp or other chat platform, regular online or face-to-face meetings with a facilitator, or a more formal platform for questions and requests for help, depending on the needs and priorities.
- 6. **Convert this guidance note into online learning materials** to reach a wider audience in a more accessible format. A blend of self-paced self-access online modules could be paired with recorded webinars from the training carried out (see point 4).

7. Develop a specific policy or framework on community development: The prominence of Community Development in CDB's Strategic Plan is laudable. To offer a roadmap for systemic progress in this arena and to complement tools and outputs of the BNTF and CDRFF the Bank could develop a policy or framework on community development. This framework could be drafted through a participatory approach inclusive of workshops with BMC representation.



Annex 1: Community Engagement Checklist

In summary, this checklist offers questions to think about when planning community engagement and is a useful reflection tool. You will probably want to use it at every stage of the project cycle, from initiation to closure—and to think about what will happen after your project is completed.

| Preparing for community engagement

What do you want to engage about?

- What issue are you working on?
- How did you identify it?

Why are you doing this?

Do you want to...

- share information?
- find out about needs?
- involve people in setting priorities?
- invite people to get involved in delivery?
- involve people in management and decision making?
- inspire people to develop their own initiative?

What outcome(s) do you hope for from this engagement?

Who do you want to engage with?

- Communities of interest?
- Geographical communities?
- User groups?
- The public? Individuals?
- Stakeholders
- Are there others who need to be involved?
- Are there others who want to be involved?

What might they contribute?

Explain what is expected.

Listen to what is expected of you.

Do you know if they are ready to engage?

- Do people agree that this is something that needs doing?
- Is there capacity within the community?
- Are people open to believing that change is possible?

How will you establish trust?

• Do potential partners know each other?

- Are you learning from history or ignoring local knowledge?
- Are the community being 'done to' or are they genuinely involved?
- Is history being repeated (engagement fatigue)? Maybe it should be, but can you explain why?!
- What can be done to help build trust?
- What can be done to remove cynicism?
- Look out for saboteurs!
- How will media communications be handled?

l Delivering community engagement

What level of community engagement relationship will be effective?

- Is an ongoing day-to-day working relationship helpful to this issue? (For example, setting up a local group.)
- Does the community want a light-touch relationship? (Don't pre-suppose the level of engagement they want.)
- What % of costs is being invested into engagement? Is it appropriate?
- Are the selected techniques appropriate to this engagement?
- Have non-traditional techniques been considered?
- Are there examples of best practice you could draw on?

What information is needed for participants?

- What is already known?
- What information is available to ensure that evidence-based decisions are made?
- Is information accessible, trusted, relevant and 'reality checked'?
- Is any information privileged? Are there conflicts of interest?
- Is information managed and by who?
- What formats and methods are best? (Mail, email, posters, web, SMS etc.)
- Is written information concise, understandable, and helpful?
- Have jargon and technical terms been kept to a minimum?
- Are local or cultural expressions understood?

Skills and attitudes

- Do key team members have effective communication skills in:
 - listening?
 - mediation?
 - negotiation?
- Is training needed and/or practical within required timescales?
- How will conflicts be resolved?

Participation

- What are the incentives to participate?
- What makes it worthwhile?
- What are the constraints?
- Have issues of access, transport, availability and 'power balance' been considered?
- Are there barriers to personal safety?
- Have special interest and 'hard-to-reach' groups been effectively included?

Timing

- What is the required timescale to deliver the agreed outcomes?
- What are the time constraints?
- What can help to buy time?
- Is the timetable realistic for all partners?

Resources and risk

- What types of resources are available? (People, logistics etc.)
- How can all resources be joined up?
- What are the resources required to achieve the outcomes?
- Are there different ways of using resources to achieve the outcomes?
- What other community engagement is going on (have partners been spoken to)?
- Is any other similar work currently taking place to share resources?
- Has any similar work been done recently that could be used?
- What risk management arrangements are there? Is there flexibility to cope with the unexpected?

Assessing community engagement

- How will you know your outcomes are achieved?
- Has it made a genuine difference to local wellbeing?
- Has something improved?
- What have you learned about engagement?
- Who will you feed back to?
- How will feedback take place?
- Will feedback work both ways?
- How will results be used for long term benefits and to assist others?
- Do partners still want to work with each other?
- How will you celebrate successes?
- How will you manage setbacks?

What next? Taking community engagement further

Be open to new ideas—and to community members stepping up and taking the initiative!

- Are there ideas for future initiatives?
- Who is ready to take them on and lead them?
- How can you protect enthusiastic community spirits from dying?

Annex 2: Community Engagement Worksheet

Use this list to help you think through your engagement. Make a copy of it, fill it out in as much detail as you find useful and use it as a checklist and reminder sheet for you and your team. Not all the questions need filling in straight away, and some of them might not be relevant for your project. This is a tool for you to use, not a prescription!

What do you want to engage about?				
Why are you doing this?				
Do you want to				
share information?				
 find out about needs? involve people in setting priorities? 				
 invite people to get involved in delivery? involve people in management and decision making? 				
 involve people in management and decision making? inspire people to develop their own initiative? 				
Tick whichever applies.				
What outcome(s) do you hope for from this engagement? What is the required timescale to deliver the agreed outcomes?				

Who do you want to engage with?

Communities of interest? Geographical communities? User groups? The public? Individuals? Stakeholders? Are there others who need to be involved? Are there others who want to be involved?

What might they contribute? What is expected of them?

Do you know if they are ready to engage?

Do people agree that this is something that needs doing?

ls	there	capacit	y within	the	community?	
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Are people open to believing that change is possible?

How will you establish trust?

Delivering community engagement

What level of community engagement relationship will be most effective for your project?

Levels of participation from informing to empowering—which is most appropriate at this stage?

What information do you need for participants?

Is information accessible, trusted, relevant and 'reality checked'? Is any information privileged? Are there conflicts of interest? What formats and methods are best? (Mail, email, posters, web, SMS etc.)

Is training needed and/or practical within required timescales?

How will you resolve conflicts?

Participation

What skills are required for participation?

Have you considered access, transport and availability issues? How?

Have you effectively included special interest and 'hard to reach' groups? How? Have you considered the power balance of the community groups you will engage with?

Resources and risk

What resources do you need and how are you going to source them?

What risk management arrangements are there? Is there flexibility to cope with the unexpected?

Have you considered acc	cess, transport and	availability issues? How?
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Assessing community engagement

How will you know you have achieved your outcomes?

How will you give feedback and to whom? How will you receive feedback from others?

How will you communicate results?

How will you identify and share what you lea	arned about engagement?
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What next? Taking community engagement further

Are there ideas for future initiatives?

Who is ready to take them on and lead them?

How can you protect enthusiastic community spirits from dying under partnership bureaucracy?

Annex 3: Community Engagement Reporting Template

To be completed every 6 months

- 1) Which stakeholders did you plan to engage with and why?
- 2) Did you manage to engage with them as planned?(Give a yes or no answer for each stakeholder group.)a) If so, how? (Give a brief explanation of what you did with each group.)

b) If not, why not? (Give a short explanation for each group. This is about providing a space for you to reflect on challenges you may have encountered.)

c) Please provide any data you have for your engagement activities—differentiated by women and men, age group and/or any other category that is relevant to your initiative.

Group	How many	Amount of time	Comments

3) Are there any ways in which you would change what you did?

4) What were the results of your engagement? What did you learn?

5) What are your plans for engagement for the next 6 months? (Please explain which stakeholders you plan to engage with and how and for what purpose.)

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