

Mobilising the community

A PILLARS Guide

by Isabel Carter



Partnership In Local Language Resources



Mobilising the community

A PILLARS Guide

by Isabel Carter

Illustration: Rod Mill

Design: Wingfinger

Mobilising the community

A PILLARS Guide

Introduction to PILLARS Guides

These guides are designed for use in small group situations where one or more people are literate and confident enough to lead others in group discussion. They aim to provide material for discussion around a subject either in isolation or as part of a regular group meeting; for example of farmers, literacy trainees or Mothers Union members. Ideally just two or three pages should be used each time, allowing plenty of time for discussion of the issues raised and for carrying out some of the practical ideas suggested. No training is first necessary for the discussion leader.

PILLARS Guides aim to increase confidence among group members, so that they can successfully manage change within their own situation without the need for outside help. They try to build on existing knowledge and experiences among the members or within their community, so that different ideas can be tried out, adapted, and then either abandoned if not found useful, or adopted if found useful.

Mobilising the community

This guide looks at an exciting example of community mobilisation that is based on using outside facilitators and workshops. However, outside facilitators and money to run workshops may not always be available. This PILLARS guide takes the basis of the mobilisation process and shares it in a way that will help a well-organised and motivated group to use the process without outside help. It would be helpful to churches keen to support their communities or to any small groups or NGO seeking to bring changes that benefit local people.

This example of mobilisation has been carried out in Ruaha Diocese, Tanzania and in Narok and Transmara Dioceses, Kenya with the Anglican Church; with Mara and Ukerewe Diocese in Tanzania with Africa Inland Church and with Soroti District in Uganda with the Pentecostal Assemblies of God. Many thanks are given to the leaders of Kitembere, Ragata, Kabasa and Utegi villages in Tanzania and Ulkeli, Nkareta, Olendeem, Kotolian and Olokuseroi villages in Kenya. Thanks also to Isaac Masesa, Mary Masele and Bishop Kitula of Mara Ukerewe Diocese, and to Phaniel Mung'ong'o, Christine Kilipamwambu and Bishop Mtetemela in Ruaha Diocese. Special thanks to Francis Njoroge for sharing his knowledge and experience to enable others to learn and benefit.

For church groups, the Bible studies at the back of the guide should be used as an essential and ongoing part of the process. They are best used in small groups, with time for everyone to discuss.

It is recommended that all the exercises in this guide should first be discussed and tried out with group members and motivators before they are used with the wider community.

The opportunity for each person to discuss, share information and build their confidence – through action followed by reflection – is essential and should be encouraged throughout the process.

Objectives of this guide

- To help church and community leaders understand their capacity to encourage positive change in their local area.
- To help local people understand their own unique situation.
- To raise awareness in local people and leaders of the value of organising the community to take positive action.
- To encourage local people to gain confidence in their own abilities to work towards making changes.

Anticipated outcomes

- Local leaders have increased awareness of their capacity to make changes in their community and the value of organising local people to take positive action.
- Local people have increased knowledge and understanding of their own unique situation.
- Local people have greater confidence in their own ability to make appropriate changes.
- Effective and ongoing community organisation and action.
- Improved local facilities in education, health, water or sanitation which have a big impact on local communities.
- Better-educated and confident local people able to take self-help measures.
- Local organisations working together effectively at all levels.

Resources

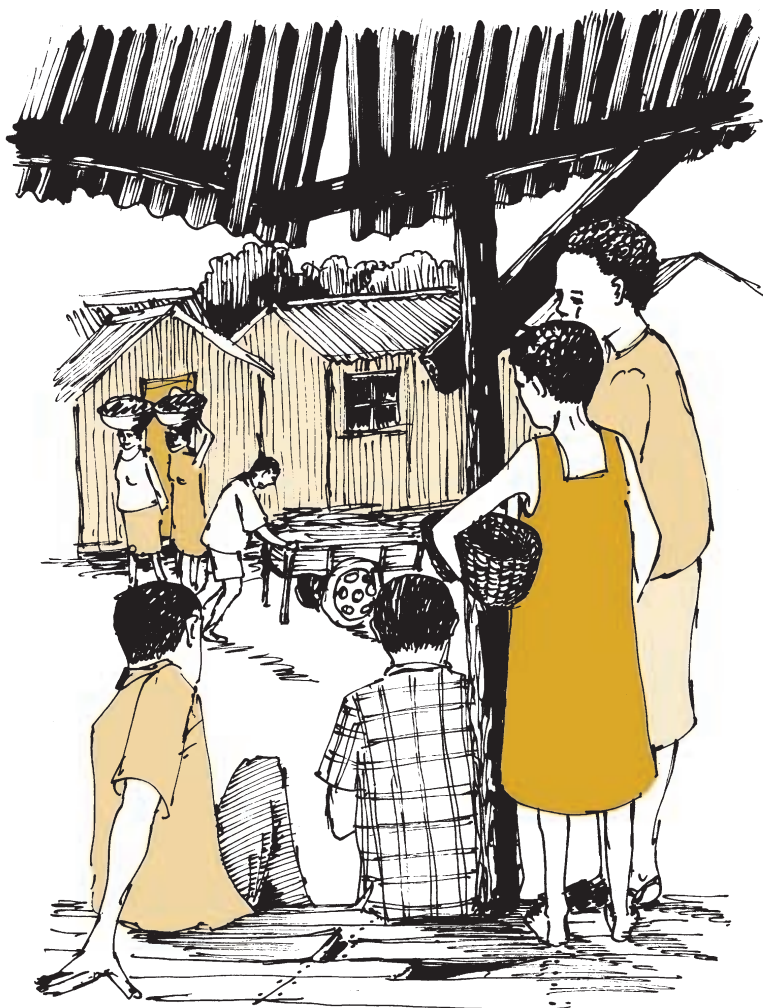
- *Getting People Thinking*, Tearfund
- *Training for Transformation* Books 1–4
- *Footsteps* Issue 50
- *Building the Capacity of Local Groups* – PILLARS Guide

Contents

	PAGE	
Waiting for change	4	A1
Can our community make changes?	6	A2
Working with leaders	8	A3
Lighting the fire	10	A4
Selecting community motivators	12	A5
Training the motivators	14	A6
Assessing local resources	16	A7
Crossing the river	18	A8
Understanding the same language	20	A9
A secret in a box!	22	A10
Mapping the local area	24	A11
Community timeline	26	A12
Seasonal calendar	28	A13
Using role-plays and song	30	A14
Dreaming dreams	32	A15
Gathering information	34	A16
Preparing questionnaires	36	A17
Preparing information charts	38	A18
Presenting community information	40	A19
Planning	42	A20
Ongoing support	44	A21
Future plans	46	A22
Bible studies	48	
Glossary	52	

Waiting for change

- People often think of ‘development’ as something that comes from outside the local area. If life is hard and there are few facilities for health, education or economic development, people may have little hope for the future. They may wait for ‘outsiders’ to come and take action. These outsiders may be government officials, religious groups or NGOs. The community may expect them to improve things such as water supplies, schools, literacy levels or health clinics.
- In the meantime, local people usually feel there is little that can be done to help them. Instead, individuals look after matters in their own households rather than take up concerns in their community.



Discussion

A1

- How much do people in our community want their situation to improve?
- Why do we expect outsiders to bring development to our local area?
- How long will it take for government officials, the church or NGOs to help improve all the areas that do not have basic facilities?
- Discuss this quote from the former president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere; 'People cannot be developed – they can only develop themselves.'
- What do we understand by 'development'? Consider both the positive and negative results of such development in our community.
- What problems may arise if outsiders bring 'development' to our area?

Can our community make changes?

- Waiting for change to be brought into the community by outsiders may take a very long time indeed. It may also not bring the changes that people long to see. For example, local people may see a health clinic and training for health workers as their priority. However, they may find it hard to say no to an NGO wanting to test a new malaria vaccine in that area and train people to collect information.
- However, it may be possible for a small committed group within a community to bring about real changes for the better on their own. This is called 'mobilising'. This may be a church group, a women's group, a farmers' cooperative or a youth group. This guide will provide ideas to help you mobilise your community to bring about improvements.



Discussion

A2

- How can the members of our group support efforts to mobilise the community?
- Discuss the statement, 'Poverty is more an attitude of mind than what is available in the pockets.'
- In addition to members of our group, are there other people in the local area who are committed to improving things?
- Have you seen any changes in the community because of action taken by local people? Discuss if this type of change could be increased by involving more people.

Working with leaders

- The support of local leaders is very important in the process of mobilisation. The rest of this guide will lead your group through a process that has been well tested elsewhere. It will take you step by step towards understanding the needs and priorities of your community. It will help you plan and work together to bring about positive changes. Work through each page together as a small group and then use the information with others in the community.
- First you need the agreement of the local leaders. Build up relationships with them. Make sure you are aware of all the important people – not just political leadership, but also traditional leaders, leaders of other community groups and religious leaders of all faiths. When you are ready, meet together to discuss your suggestions.



Discussion

A3

- Make a list of the names of all the local leaders that members can think of, who need to be supportive of the process of mobilisation.
- When you arrange to meet local leaders, it can be very helpful to invite someone who is well respected by the local community to introduce and lead the discussion (as long as they will not dominate). For example, is there a successful business person from the community? Could you invite, for example, the head of the nearest secondary school?
- Why is it important to invite all the local leaders, even if they choose not to attend the meeting? How can you make sure you do not leave out anyone important?
- Some leaders may prove very unhelpful in supporting community mobilisation. What is the best way to talk with them? Is their agreement to support change important?
- If leaders fail to give their support, is it possible for changes to take place when motivated individuals take the lead instead? What are the possible risks and the likely benefits?

Lighting the fire

- Call together as many local people as possible for a meeting. Make sure you include people who are often not represented, such as women, people with disabilities, older people, youth and those of low caste. Choose a meeting place and a time that is convenient for most people. After welcoming people and giving introductions and explanations, the leader should ask: 'Can we have a cooking fire burning here in two minutes time?'
- At first there will be confusion and people will wonder if the leader is serious. Then a number of them will run off to collect firewood, matches and cooking stones. A fire is quickly lit and burns well for a few minutes. It is then likely to die down unless a few people bring more wood.
- Using this practical example, begin a time of open discussion to discover what we can learn from it.



Discussion

A4

- Where did the resources to make the fire come from?
- Did anyone help to maintain the fire once it started burning well?
- Who could continue to maintain the 'fire of development' in our area? What resources are available?
- Can the churches (or other religious organisations) provide the necessary leadership and support? For example, will they lead and maintain the fire of development? Or will they act as one of the cooking stones, supporting the process?
- Are there other organisations or groups able to help provide leadership and support for this process?
- Are there certain community members who did not attend the meeting? Can you discover why they didn't come? How can you encourage them to attend meetings in the future?
- Was it the 'rich' or the 'poor' who were most useful in getting things going?

Selecting community motivators

- It was easy to start a fire and involve a number of people. It was harder to make sure that the fire kept burning. Community members need to choose certain people whose role will be to keep the fire of community mobilisation burning. In this guide these people will be called ‘motivators’.
- People in the community know each other very well. Take time to carefully choose honest people who are respected by others, and who can encourage others to work well together. They need to have some time and energy available, have a desire to bring change and be willing to work free of charge. Each community should select two or three motivators. The people chosen will need equipping and support in their role.



Discussion

A5

- List the characteristics of a good motivator.
- How should the motivators be chosen?
- How can we ensure that the selection of motivators is done fairly and that no one tries to influence other people's choice?
- Who will help to train, equip and support the motivators in their work?
- How often should the motivators meet together?
- Who will benefit from their work?

NOTE The role of motivators is very similar to the role of animators (described in C10 of the PILLARS guide, *Building the Capacity of Local Groups*). However, we use a different term here as the motivators are selected and trained.

Training the motivators

- Most motivators learn their skills by experience. The rest of this guide suggests topics that the motivators should first try out on each other with group leaders, before they are tried with the wider community. The motivators should continually encourage each other to gain experiences in speaking and leading discussion. After each session, make time to reflect together on how it went. What went well? What went badly? What can be learned for the future?
- Most motivators will only have experience of formal teaching methods, where somebody stands up and passes on facts to students. This approach is often not helpful for community development, as it does not allow people to share their experiences and ideas. Leading informal discussion, where everyone has the opportunity to speak and the views of each person should be respected, requires new skills. A good motivator learns to value the knowledge and wisdom of each community member, particularly those who are poor or who lack confidence.



Discussion

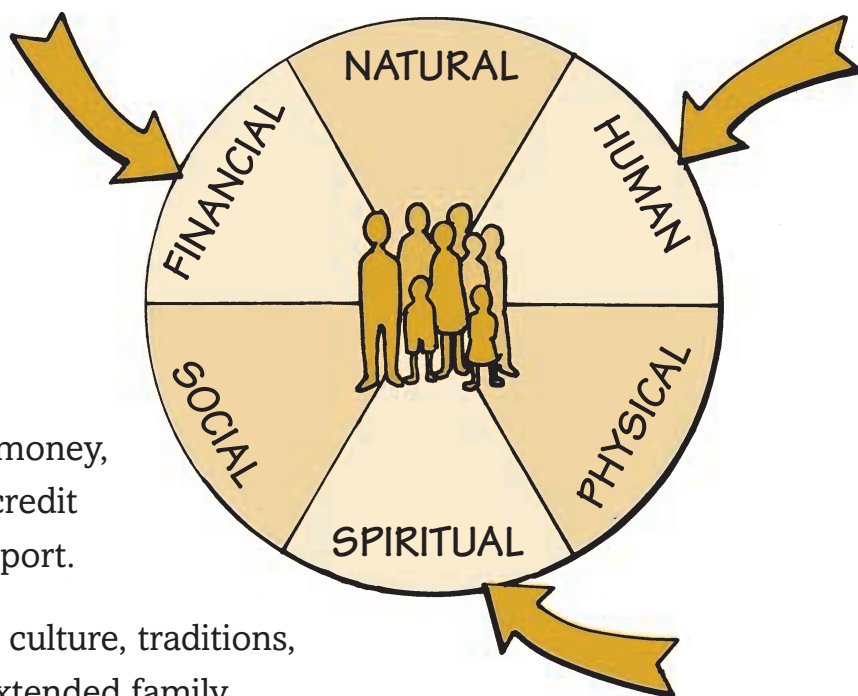
A6

- Ask people in the group to think about particular skills or knowledge they have learned in their life – how did the learning happen?
- As motivators, what is our attitude towards people in our local area? Are we teachers, trainers, listeners or learners?
- What are the signs that one or two people are dominating a meeting? How can they be encouraged to listen to the views of others more?
- What signs are there that some people are not taking part in the discussion? How can they be encouraged to take part more?
- Imagine that during a practical exercise, a community member who has a good education, takes the pen and writes down what they think is important, rather than what the group is discussing. What can motivators do about this?
- How can the motivators help to support each other?
- What other training opportunities or experiences are available that might benefit motivators?

Assessing local resources

Each local area has a number of different kinds of resources. People use these resources to keep alive and to cope with changing seasons, political change and cultural pressures. Helping people to understand and to value the different resources they have is very important. These are the main kinds of resources:

- **Natural resources** include land, trees, forests and water.
- **Human resources** include the skills, knowledge, understanding and labour of local people.
- **Financial resources** include money, access to credit and loans, credit unions and government support.
- **Social resources** include the culture, traditions, organisations, friends and extended family.
- **Physical resources** include buildings, tools, roads, water pumps and transport.
- **Spiritual resources** are the strength and encouragement that people gain from their faith.



Many communities are poor in financial resources but may be rich in terms of their human, social and spiritual resources. Often, one kind of resource can be used in place of another resource which is lacking. For example, instead of growing their own food, a family with few natural resources (land) could earn money to buy food by hiring out their labour and skills (human resources) to others.



Discussion

A7

Draw a chart like the one illustrated and use it to list all the different resources in our local area. Use arrows to show particular stresses that people may face at different times.

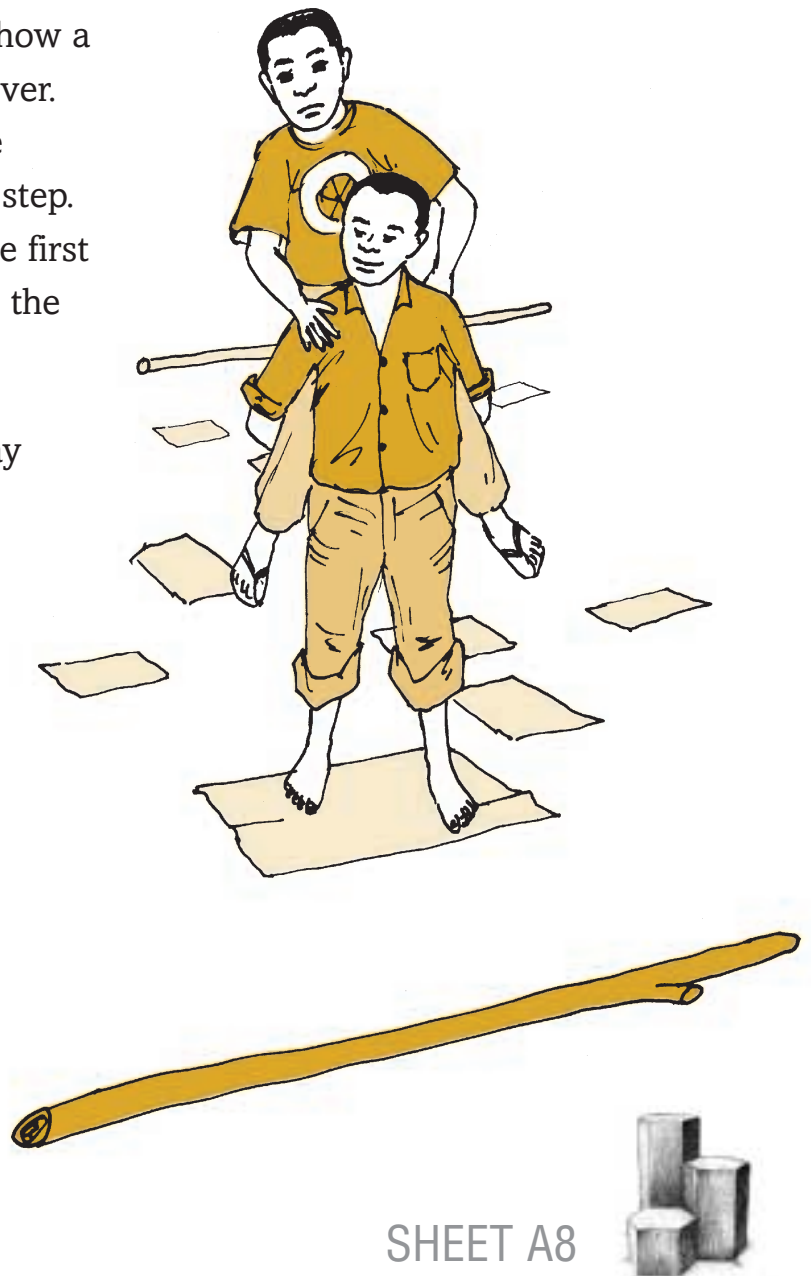
- What kind of resources does our local area have plenty of?
- What kind of resources do you think our local area is poor in?
- What kind of improvements would help to improve our situation?
- How is our community different from other kinds of communities (such as rural, urban, slum or shanty town) which people may have lived in or visited?

Crossing the river

This is a simple and useful role-play to use during a community meeting. Three people are needed for the role-play. One person (usually a man) acts as the outsider who comes to a community and offers to help someone cross the river. The river has several useful stepping-stones. The outsider quickly carries the person on his back, but gets tired and leaves them in the middle of the river on a stepping stone, saying he will return later. The person cannot find the way across the river on their own.

The outsider returns and offers to show a second person the way across the river. They move slowly together with the outsider showing where it is safe to step. They reach the other side safely. The first person is still stuck in the middle of the river.

Discuss the meaning of this role-play using the discussion questions.



Discussion

A8

- What type of outsiders come to our local area to offer help? Do people ever feel like the first person (who was left in the middle of the river)? Have they begun to take action on some new initiative but have then been unable to continue it on their own? Why? How could it have been better?
- What was different about the approach of the outsider during the second role-play?
- What knowledge did the outsider share, and how did he share it?
- What could the second person have done to bring the role play to a different end?
- How can local people make sure that they remain in control of new knowledge and ideas?
- Discuss how you could repeat this role play, this time with local people having the skills and knowledge to place stepping stones and safely cross the river, rather than the outsider.
- Discuss how sharing knowledge can help many people, while doing something for people can help only a few. After sharing knowledge (of making bread for example) you still have as much to share. After giving away loaves of bread there are no more left for sharing.

Understanding the same language

- People need to agree on the words they will use during the training and know exactly what they will mean. For example, one person may have a certain picture in their mind when they think of the words 'community' or 'poverty', while someone else may have a completely different picture. Everybody needs to learn and be clear about what each word refers to, so that misunderstandings are prevented. Meet together with the community leaders and motivators to discuss this.
- These terms need be carefully explained and discussed in small groups: **community, development, ownership, sustainability, participation, replicability, poverty, mobilisation, empowerment and facilitation**. It may be helpful to invite someone from outside to help with this meeting. People may like to find places in the Bible that refer to similar ideas. After discussion, agree on a definition for each word and write this out for future use.



- Can you think of any other words or groups of words that should be added to this list? If it was not possible to reach agreement about one or more of the words, what further action should we plan?
- Was it helpful to discuss the meaning of these words in small groups?
- Does anyone have access to a dictionary that might help in understanding the meaning of these or other difficult terms?
- How does the process of discussion and agreement help us to build understanding and relationships with each other?
- Where in the Bible do we see the example of small groups discussing difficult issues?

USEFUL BIBLE REFERENCES

Community

Acts 2:42-47 The fellowship of believers

Colossians 3:12-17 Therefore, as God's chosen people

Development

Matthew 13:31-32 Parable of the mustard seed

Mark 4:8 Still other seed fell on good soil

Ownership

Ephesians 1:14 Having believed, you were marked

Hebrews 13:6-8 So we say with confidence

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people

Sustainability

1 Thessalonians 2:9 We worked night and day

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres

Hebrews 12:1 Let us run with perseverance, the race

Participation

Romans 12:4-8 One body, many members

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 One body, many parts

Poverty

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit

James 2:5 Chosen poor to be rich

Replicability

Mark 4:8 Still other seed fell on good soil

Acts 6:7 So the word of God spread

Mobilisation

Matthew 5:16 Let your light shine

Matthew 10:1 He called his twelve disciples

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is

Empowerment

John 15:7-8 If you remain in me

Acts 6:8-10 Stephen seized

Facilitation

Philippians 2:6-7 Who, being in very nature God

Matthew 20:24-28 Servant leadership

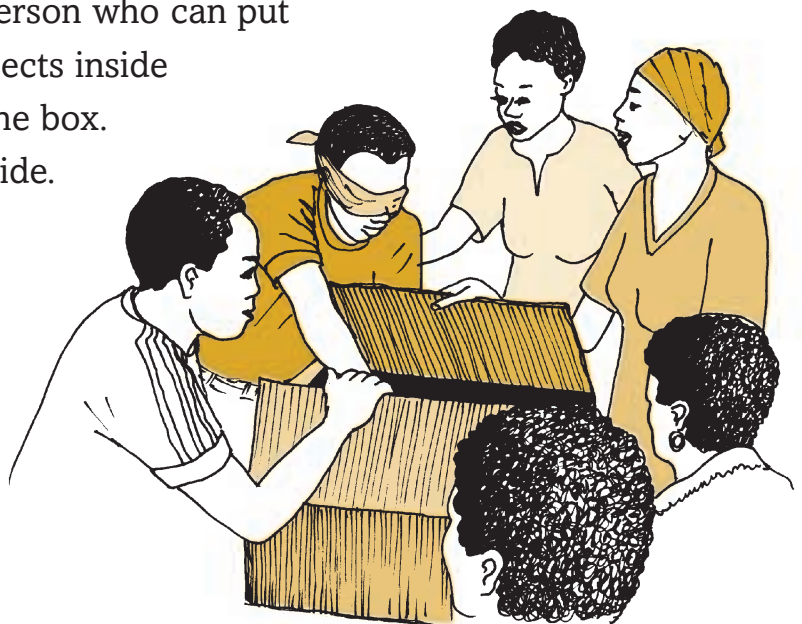
Matthew 18:18-20 Here is my servant

A secret in a box!

Find a large cardboard box without holes. Place a number of different items in the box that have been found in the local area. These could include a bag of seeds, some stones, a hammer and some nails. Close the box so no one can see inside.

The motivators should call a meeting with local people. Divide participants into four groups and set them each a different task. Keep this funny and don't let people take it too seriously. Ask each group, starting with Group A, to carry out their activity in front of the meeting. After discussing, they share with everybody what they think is the secret in the box. They must be very clear about all the details; colour, shape and size. Group B follows next, then Group C and finally Group D.

- Group A is allowed only to walk around the box before it decides what they think is inside.
- Group B is allowed only to pick up the box and smell or shake it.
- Group C can blindfold one person who can put their hand in and feel the objects inside without taking them out of the box. The others must not look inside.
- Group D is allowed to take out the objects one at a time and describe them.



Discussion

A10

- What happened in this exercise? What was each group doing? What did you notice?
- Why did Group A know so little about what was contained in the box?
- What helped each of the other groups to understand more about the 'secret'?
- If the 'secret in the box' is made up of all the important knowledge and resources contained within our local area, who knows most about the 'secret'? Who knows least?
- Who knows best about what is available within our local area? Who is best able to use this knowledge?
- Who do we usually think of as most important? Does this exercise make us question our attitudes about this?

IDEAS FOR BOX CONTENTS

Make sure there are no sharp objects that people could cut their hands with.

bag of gravel	chalk	string
flowers	bag of good soil	candle
leaves	stones	bottle
coins	hoe for digging	seeds
pen	bottle tops	exercise book

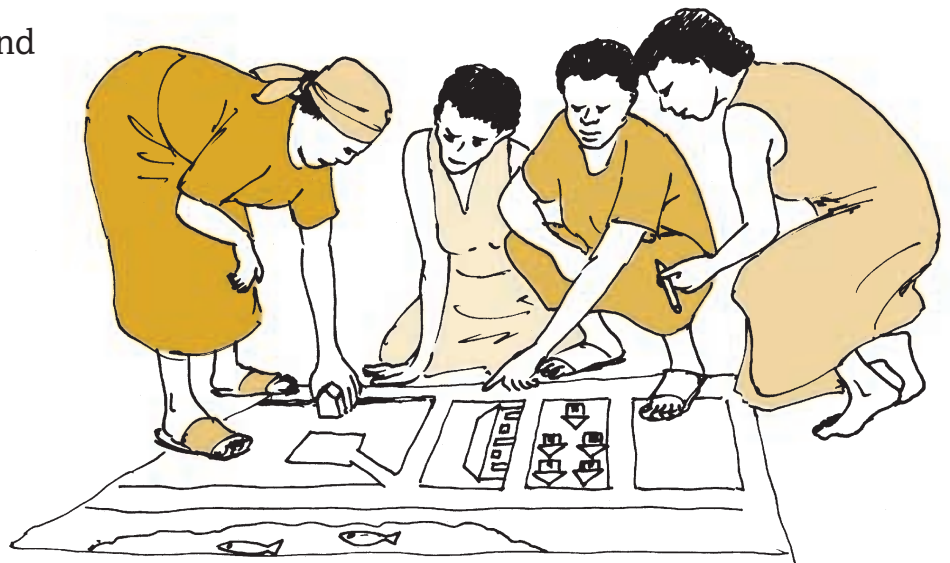
Mapping the local area

Local people already know more than any outsider about their community and the people living there. Many people assume they know everything about their local area, but there is always more to learn and understand before making new plans.

Take plenty of time to help people in the 'community' to tell their story together. One very effective way of doing this is to draw maps, either using clear ground with sticks, leaves and stones, or if available, large sheets of paper and pens.

Encourage small groups to draw different maps to show:

- the natural and physical resources in the area (hills, forests, roads and rivers, for example)
- where people live, noting important people and organisations
- how the area looked 50 or 20 years ago (only for older people).



It is best if groups of different age and gender work separately as sometimes the different results are very revealing. For example, the young people's map may show very different information from that of older women. Allow each group to explain their map fully. Encourage questions and discussions.



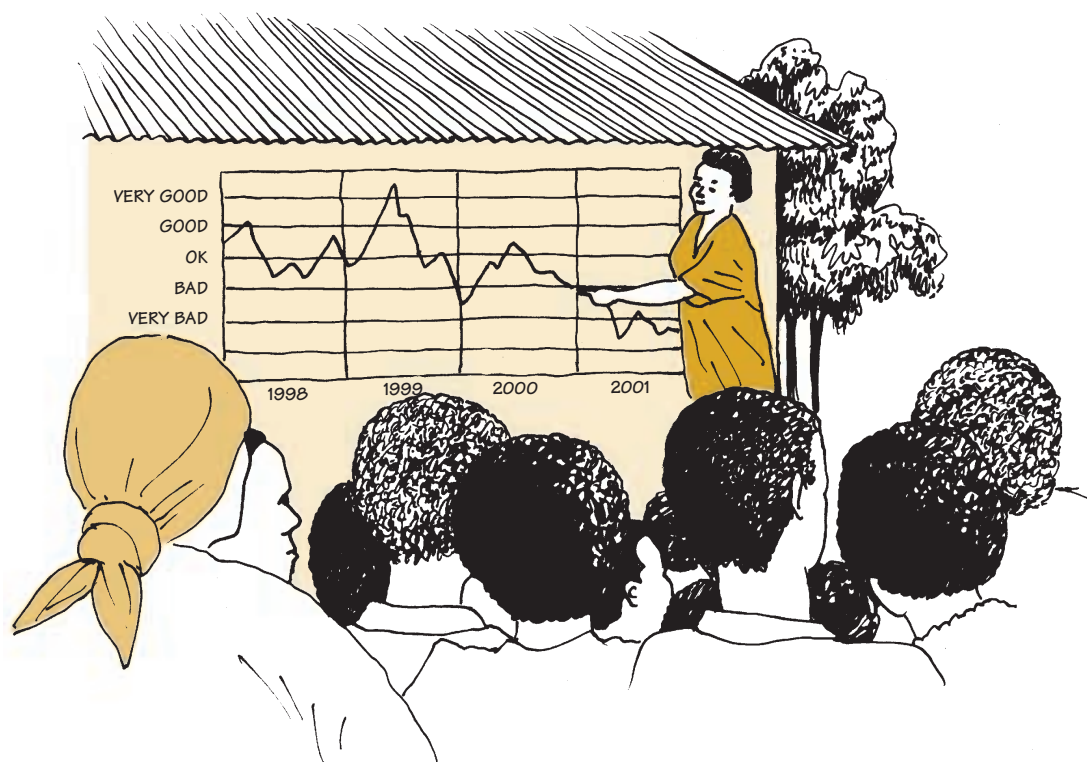
Discussion

A11

- Discuss what information should be included in a map showing important organisations. For example, the map could include credit unions, NGOs, food processing mills and both large and small producers.
- Who did most of the drawing and most of the talking in each group? Did everyone have the opportunity to participate? If not, how could shy or quiet people be encouraged to draw and share their knowledge?
- Did people have plenty of time to complete their maps? Was there enough time for community members to look to look at the various maps and listen to each group explaining their map fully? Encourage questions and discussions.
- What differences are there between the maps produced by different groups? Why are there differences? How does the information from each map help to make a more complete picture of the community? Do the differences tell us something about our community?
- How can the information on the maps be kept safe for future reference? Can maps drawn on the ground be copied onto paper? Who should look after the maps and make them available if needed?

Community timeline

- All change builds on what has gone before. It is helpful for a community to reflect on the changes that have already occurred and what has been learned from them. One very useful way to help discussion about this is to produce a 'community timeline'.
- A timeline is a way of looking back and recording how things were and how people have felt over time. Sometimes this is called a 'line of well-being'. Agree on a start date – usually a particular time within the memory of most people present, maybe around 10 years ago. Together, remind each other of important events – a time of drought, or the opening of the school or clinic. How was life at that time for people here? Give an example of how to carry out the exercise. As with the maps, work in small groups so that each group draws a timeline. Then discuss each timeline to enable people to get a complete picture of the recent history of their community.



Discussion

A12

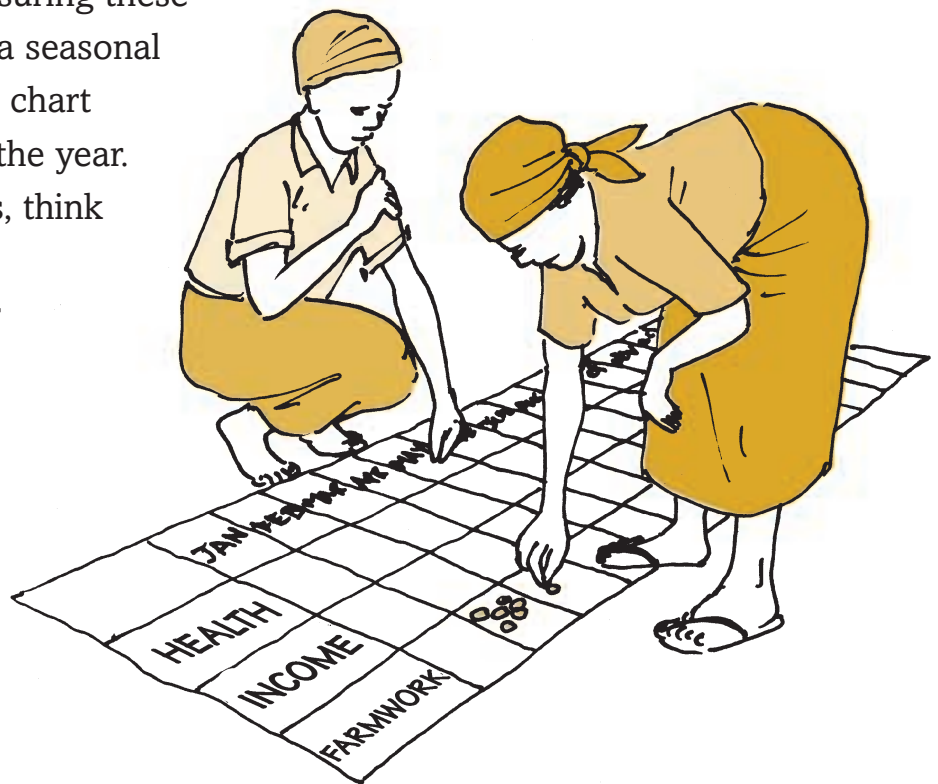
- Discuss the meaning of the different levels of well-being. 'Very good' measures a time when people feel positive, have money for food and essentials or are excited about the future. 'OK' means that life is generally all right – not too good but not too bad. 'Very bad' means that people find it very difficult to manage, have little or no money and little hope for the future. In between these three measures are a wide range of levels.
- Discuss whether to work in small mixed groups or to form groups according to age and gender.
- Discuss whether to encourage people to let their timeline finish at today's date or a date in the future. Do people want to consider how they feel about the future?
- Did people have enough time to finish? How similar were the different timelines? Were there many differences? What can be learned from each of these?
- How can this information be kept safe to look at in the future? Can timelines drawn on the ground be copied onto paper? Who should look after the timelines?
- How can we hold on to what we are learning together?

Seasonal calendar

At certain times of the year, there may be particular pressures or struggles that people face. Sometimes, ways to reduce these pressures may develop through discussion, helping community members to plan better for the future.

One simple way of measuring these pressures is to produce a seasonal calendar. Draw a simple chart showing the months of the year. Working in small groups, think about different issues throughout the year. For example:

- household income
- farm labour
- health
- water supplies.



Give each group 48 beans or small stones. Look at each issue in turn and distribute the beans appropriately for each month of the year. An average month would have four beans. If, for example, income or health is a real concern one month, put many more than four beans. In months when health or income is good, put less than four, even none. Encourage plenty of discussion. When each calendar is finished, come together to discuss and learn from each group.



Discussion

A13

- Who will record what each group has found and note down any important comments or information? How will the information be kept safe?
- How does household income change throughout the year? When do households have most income? When do households tend to have less income? Is there any way of reducing the problems we face during particular seasons?
- How does farm labour change throughout the year? When do households need to do most farmwork? How do households cope? When are the less busy times of the year? Is there anything that could be done during these times to make life easier during the very busy times? How does it vary for different groups in the community?
- Are there particular health concerns at different times during the year? What might cause these problems? How do households cope with these health issues? Is there anything that could be done to improve health at these times? How does it vary for different groups in the community?
- Are there links between different issues? For example, people may be in poor health when labour is most needed because they are hungry.
- What other important issues could be looked at in this way?

Using role-plays and song

- Another helpful way to focus on key issues within the local area is to encourage people to prepare a role-play to express their concerns. As people discuss what subjects to use, they will often focus on important issues. However, they are also likely to share these in funny ways. Laughter has a way of taking the pressure out of a situation, helping people to discuss sensitive issues, sometimes for the first time. Again, encourage people to work in small groups.
- Another group challenge, particularly if there are church or school choir members present, is to write a song about the local area. This could be descriptive, educational, challenging or funny. It is a good idea to use a tune that people are already familiar with.
- When the role-plays or songs are ready, perform them at the end of community meetings. It may also be good to perform them in schools, churches or during meetings with local officials.



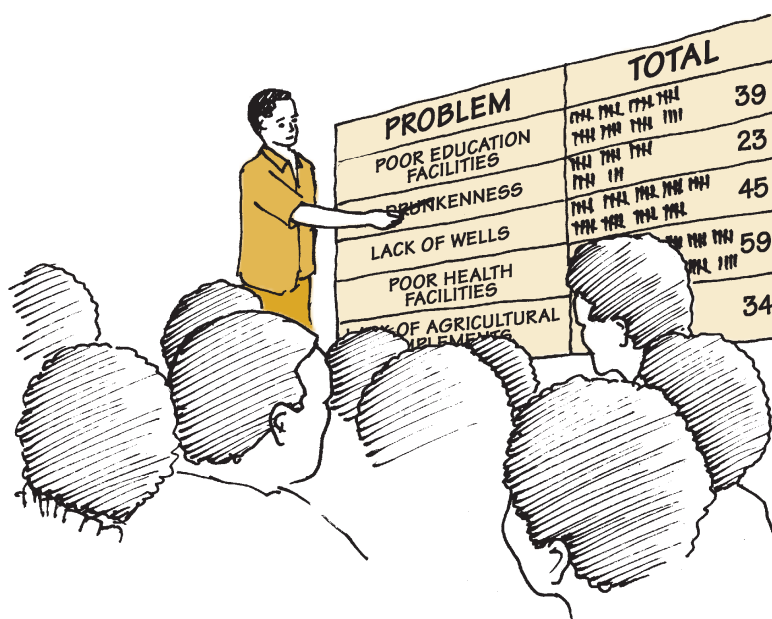
Discussion

A14

- Do we give enough importance to local skills in drama and music in our community? Who in our community has gifts in drama or music? Are we encouraging them to use their skills as much as possible?
- How could we encourage these people to produce role-plays or perform songs on the issues we face?
- Why do people usually enjoy watching role-plays? What response does drama or role-play bring?
- Who will learn most: those preparing and performing the role-play, or those watching?
- How do good role-plays encourage discussion, particularly of sensitive issues?
- How could people improve their skills at role-play?
- What kind of subjects could be covered by role-play or song?
- What particular benefits do songs have?

Dreaming dreams

- Preparing and discussing information gathered from timelines, mapping and role-plays will highlight the key issues facing the community. Now it is time to decide on the way ahead. Remind people of all they have learned and achieved so far. Do we want things to continue as they are? If people are not satisfied, ask them to consider the future and to dream dreams.
- Encourage people to spend time dreaming about how they would like their community to be in 10 years time, then 20 or even 30 years time. This could be in silence or in small group discussion. Imagine how it will look, how life will be and what will be happening. Gather together all these thoughts and write them down on a chart to keep.
- Now return to the present day. Together, list on a chart the problems that are preventing these dreams being achieved. Let each person vote once by show of hands for the problem they think most serious. Those with the highest scores will be the priorities for action. But remember, we also need to seek God's priorities too! Gain agreement on one priority that is achievable within a couple of years. Later another priority can be tackled.



Discussion

A15

- Which dreams are easy to bring about? Which may seem completely unrealistic? Discuss which dreams could be practically achieved within our local area and which seem totally out of reach.
- How can we seek God's priorities and values for our community and for our lives?
- Prepare a chart to record all the dreams and put this in a public place. Divide up those that could be achieved within a few years from those that may take 20–30 years.
- How can we make sure that the priority selected is something that can be achieved here? Choosing an issue that is so big that local people will not see any change, will make us lose enthusiasm. For example, clean water supplies may be a priority, but if this needs a lot of money for drilling wells, we should first choose another priority that we can achieve ourselves without outside help.
- Discuss whether people should vote by show of hands to indicate which problem is the most serious. Will people be influenced too much by other people's views? If so, consider using beans to enable people to vote in secret – placing the beans under the problems they think are most serious (with illustrations for those who can't read).

Gathering information

- Having chosen their first priority for action, local people need to decide whether they have enough information to take action. For example, if education is identified as the priority, people may need more information about the problems and whether they are at primary or secondary level. The problem may be poor attendance and, if so, there is a need to find out why. The problem may be due to a lack of teachers or books or classrooms. Decide what further facts and figures would be helpful before the community takes action.
- Consider electing teams of local people to gather this information. Choose people who can be trusted and who know their community well. Before sending teams out to gather information, take plenty of time to decide exactly what kind of information is needed. If some questions are not asked, it will take a lot more time to go back and gather further information. It is much better to agree first exactly what to ask people.



- For the priority identified, take time to discuss and consider what further information will be needed. Consider all the different things that would be useful to know in detail. Here are some ideas of possible subjects:
 - Age of people in the community (eg: 0–5, 6–15, 16–21, 22–35, 36–49, 50–65, over 65)
 - Social groups in village (youth, women’s, farmers)
 - What health services do people use?
 - Number of children in school, by school class, age and sex.
 - Facilities in the schools (eg: desks, tables, chairs, classrooms, toilets, houses for teachers)
 - What livestock services do people use? (cattle dips, cattle crushes, veterinary stores, livestock officers)
 - Numbers of different livestock owned.

- What is the easiest way to gather this information? Discuss the best places and times to do this.

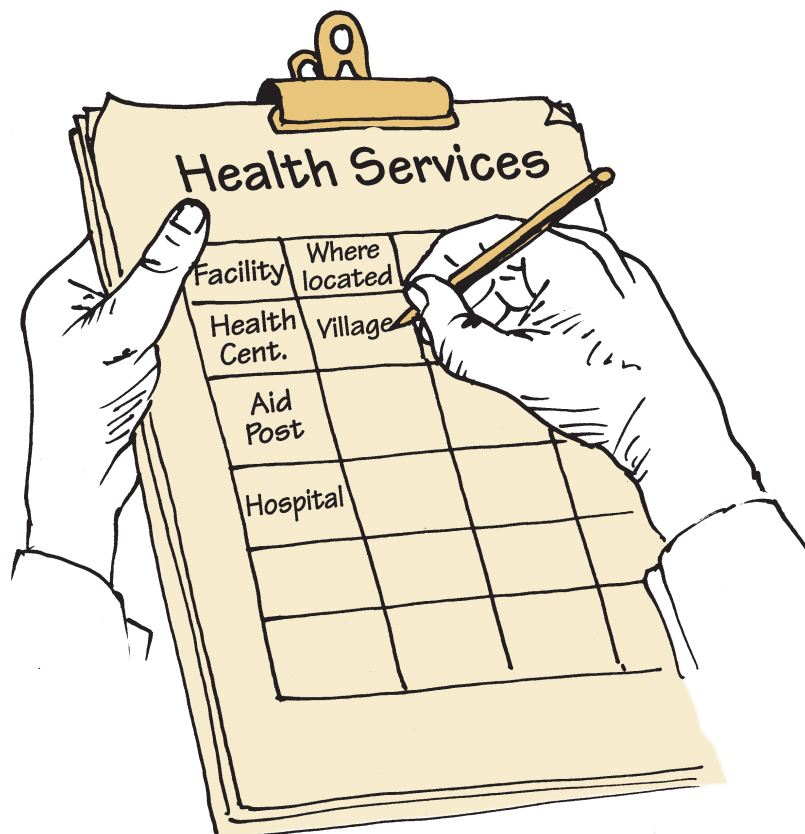
- What kind of attitude should people take when asking for information, especially if it is personal information? How can they reassure people and put them at ease? (It is best not to record people’s names so the information is confidential.)

- Who will go out to gather this information? Should they go on their own or in pairs? Should particular people go to certain groups of people (for example, women to talk to mothers)?

- What should they do if people refuse to answer their questions?

Preparing questionnaires

- Preparing simple questionnaires and forms to collect the answers will make things much easier, both during the interviews and when preparing charts of the results.
- A sample form on gathering information about the use of health services is shown below. Discuss any changes you might need to make to this, so that it is useful in your community. Consider other questions that could be asked.
- You will also need to decide how many people need to be asked. If you live in a community with about 100 families, you might consider asking all of them. If you have over 1,000 families in your community, you could consider visiting 1 house in every 10 houses. (Multiplying your figures by 10 would then indicate the overall situation in the community.)



Discussion

A17

- What will people use to record the information?
- Why is it important to visit homes at random (for example, counting off every tenth home in strict order) rather than choosing the homes of people known to the teams who are collecting the information?
- This information will have come from the whole community and will belong to all of us. How could this information be shared with the rest of our community during an open meeting? Make plans on how to share this information.
- Here are two sample forms that could be used for gathering information about livestock or health services. Using these as examples, consider how to prepare a questionnaire on the priority subject chosen by our own community.

Number of livestock and their uses...

	Number		Uses					
	Village 1	Village 2	Meat	Milk	Skins	Manure	Traction	Eggs
Cattle								
Sheep								
Goats								
Donkeys								
Chickens								
Ducks								

Health services...

	Location	Visits per year	Treatment	Cost
Health centre	<i>Sarakoi</i>			
Aid post	<i>Michka</i>			
Private clinic	<i>Ranai</i>			
Hospital	<i>Potogai</i>			

Preparing information charts

The interviewers will come back with lots of numbers and information. These need to be displayed clearly and simply to enable everyone to understand the issues. Charts should show the answers to the following questions, using as much information as possible:

- What is the issue? (title)
- How large is the problem? (indicate the size)
- Who is affected?
- How many people are affected?
- Where is the issue found in the community?
- How long has this been an issue?
- What are the causes?

School attendance in Marnabas for children aged between 5 and 11				
Village	Total boys	Boys in school	Total girls	Girls in school
Kigani	58	39	54	25
Ruana	67	55	62	47
Tijoona	52	27	48	23

Reasons given for non-attendance at school				
Village	Children needed for farm work	No money for books and uniforms	School may be too far away	Poor Teaching
Kigani 48	16	18	3	6
Ruana 27	6	15	6	0
Tijoona 50	9	14	23	2

Figures should be added up and checked carefully to make sure they are correct and as clear as possible.



Discussion

A18

- Once information is gathered, how can it be brought together and checked? Who is good at mathematics and could help work out the total figures for all the information? Will some outside help be needed to sort out all the information?
- Discuss the chart shown on Marnabas school attendance. Think how many of these questions it provides answers for. What questions does it not answer? Could the chart be improved? Rewrite the chart if necessary with spaces for the extra information that is needed.
- Decide together how to prepare charts that will provide information that answers these key questions. The charts need to show clearly the findings of the information gathered. Work in small groups and review each other's work.
- Decide who will share with our community the findings from each of the charts prepared.

Presenting community information

Arrange a community meeting to share all the information gathered. Present the information clearly showing all the important facts. Present each chart in turn, using different people. Explain how the information was gathered, who was involved, people's response and whether there were any difficulties. At the end of each short presentation, share a clear conclusion. Ask if people agree with the findings. Then allow time for questions and discussion.

As information is presented, make sure that key questions are raised and discussed:

- How do we know this is an important problem?
- What are local people doing about this problem at present?
- What will happen if we do not take any action on this issue?

The community owns this information. Consider if there is somewhere for these charts to be on permanent display. Now arrange another community meeting to plan for action.



Discussion

A19

- As charts are prepared for this community meeting, how can they be made as clear as possible?
- If people do not find numbers easy to understand, how can information be shared simply but effectively? If possible, discuss the use of percentages and ways of showing the findings in pictures. (Maybe you could ask a school teacher who teaches maths for help.)
- Before the meeting, choose two people to present each chart. Encourage those who lack confidence to do this as well.
- Who will be responsible for asking the key questions when the results are discussed? This needs to be someone good at encouraging and managing discussion in a big group. They also need to be able to gather the discussion together to form a conclusion to each question.
- What other questions could be asked?
- Are people in our community now fully aware – both of their own resources and strengths, and the challenges we face if we want to change things for the better? How have people in our community responded so far to the mobilisation process?

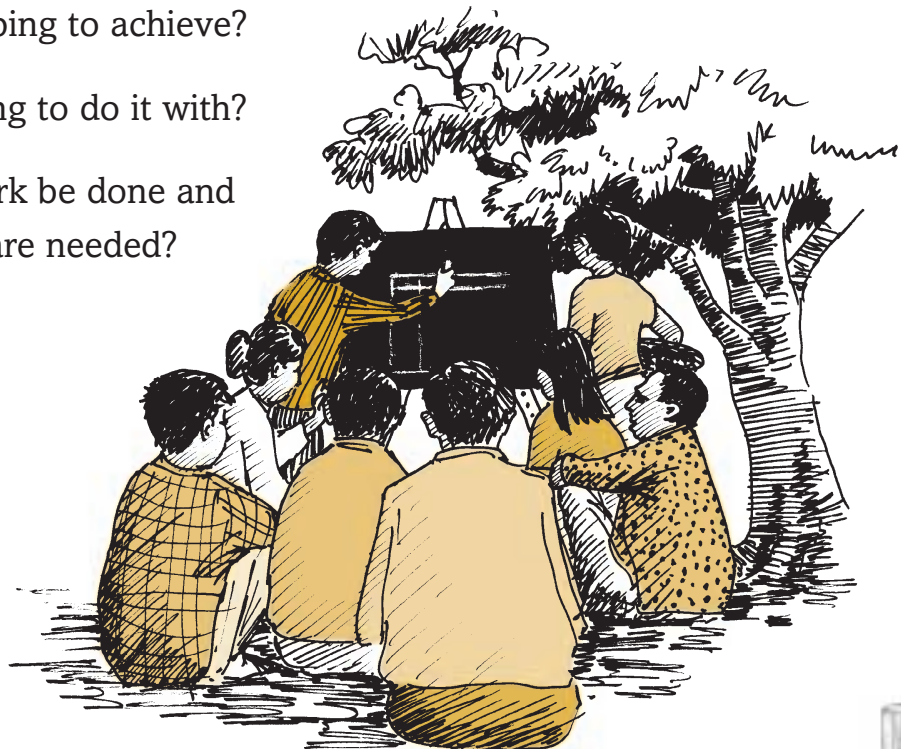
Planning

Careful planning takes time. It is easy to miss out this stage and just start doing things. However, time spent planning is never wasted. Good planning also helps to check on progress.

Gaining experience in good planning will not only help the community to succeed, it will also help a lot in gaining the interest and approval of outside authorities and donors if needed. Remember the dreams that people have for this area. Some of them may need outside help and money. Any group that has kept careful records of their activities and learnt how to write short reports will find it much easier to gain help for bigger plans in the future.

There are some key questions to ask when you begin to plan:

- What is our wider vision?
- What is the particular problem we are tackling first?
- What are we hoping to achieve?
- Who are we going to do it with?
- How will the work be done and what resources are needed?



- There is a saying: ‘Someone who fails to plan, plans to fail.’ Discuss your own experiences in this. Do you agree?
- Form a committee and elect people to take on different responsibilities, including others from the community with particular skills or interest in the issue. Plan to meet together regularly so that everyone knows what is going on. For example, if health is the priority, invite clinic staff, local health workers and government health officials to the committee. If education is the priority, make sure that teachers, head teachers, parents and education officials are on the committee.
- Practice using the questions opposite, on a small example. Choose a simple task as an example, such as making a cup of tea for a visitor. With the help of these questions make a plan of action. Work in small groups. Discuss the results and agree together on the best wording.
- Now return to the priority agreed by the community and write this out in the same way.
- Gaining enthusiasm for change has taken a long time. Make sure that this is not lost. It is vital that some changes happen very quickly to maintain people’s enthusiasm and commitment. As people see things happening, so they will be willing to continue and maybe even increase their efforts. Discuss all that needs to be done to support this process.

Ongoing support

- After the time of planning, work will start and changes will take place over time. On a regular, maybe monthly, basis, check what happens against what was planned to make sure all is going according to plan. Sometimes plans need to be adjusted as things change in the community.
- It is always good to take time to reflect and consider what has been achieved. Celebrate achievements with the community when, for example, classrooms, clinics, wells or cattle crushes are completed.
- The detailed information first gathered by the community now provides a way of checking progress. People can gather new figures and compare them with the earlier ones to find out how things have changed.
- Each change should be considered to see what difference or impact it has had on people's lives. Listen and learn from people and don't assume you already know their views.



Discussion

A21

- What opportunities could we make to celebrate our achievements? What visitors could be invited to observe and celebrate progress?
- Consider inviting people from neighbouring communities to come and see what is happening. Could we provide simple hospitality and an opportunity for discussion?
- Is any further information needed to show that change is happening? During the planning you may have thought of other ways to find this information – such as clinic records or school registers.
- Discuss whether everyone in the local area is kept fully informed of all that is happening and of progress, particularly if some of it may not be obvious (training of health workers, for example). How can we make sure everyone knows what is happening?

Future plans

- Nothing is more exciting than for people to gain confidence about themselves and what they can do together. If leaders and motivators are committed and have helped the community to plan wisely, the sense of achievement and confidence will be very exciting to experience.
- Once a community has successfully achieved its first priority, the people who worked hard from the beginning to support the process of change – but also others who didn't want to get involved last time – are likely to be keen to help with further changes.
- This time there is no need to go back to the beginning. The information and the dreams are all there. Help people to choose their next priority wisely. Remember all that has been learnt about planning, and working on one priority at a time.
- The practical achievements will be there for everyone to see, but the real achievements are in people's hearts and spirits – a new confidence that the future is in their hands.



- Reflect on how things were before we started the community mobilisation process. How have we changed as individuals?
- What has gone well during the past year or two? What has gone badly? Why?
- What are the lessons we have learnt? What should we have done differently?
- As we begin planning a new priority, do we need to bring in any extra help? Are any more motivators needed? What other resources might be needed?
- If future changes need outside help or money, remember that the best way to persuade an organisation to help us is to show how we achieved our goals in the past by community mobilising. How can we write up information about our past achievements clearly and simply, using the available facts and figures we have gathered?

Bible studies

These Bible studies are designed to use in small groups. They may provide a useful introduction to a meeting where different topics from the Guide are being discussed. Choose a study that will be linked to the topic you plan to study or that is relevant to your situation. During the studies, encourage people to think about what they read, to discuss the meaning and the implications of what they learn and, finally, to pray together about what they have learnt.

PICTURES OF THE CHURCH

BIBLE STUDY 1

Picture 1: a spiritual house

Read 1 Peter 2:4-8. Here Peter uses the first of three pictures to describe the community of Christians. In Jewish culture the cornerstone was the first stone to be laid down and was a large stone at the corner of the building supporting two walls at right angles to each other.

- Discuss the significance of the cornerstone when building a house. In this passage, Jesus is compared to a cornerstone. What is his importance in building our lives?
- How does Peter describe the cornerstone and the temple in this passage?
- What is Peter trying to say about the nature of the Christian Church by using these words?
- Who is the builder? God the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit or the people?
- What are the characteristics of the ideal church?

BIBLE STUDY 2

Picture 2: a holy and royal priesthood

Read 1 Peter 2:4-9. At the time when Peter was writing, the priests in the Jewish faith acted as go-betweens between God and the people of Israel. They maintained the buildings, took the people's sacrifices, presented them to God on the altar and gave the people's tithes to the poor.

- What was the role of the priesthood according to this passage?
- In what ways are the holy priesthood and all Christian believers similar?

- Discuss why Peter says that all believers are ‘royal priests’.
- What are the spiritual sacrifices we are to offer as believers?

BIBLE STUDY 3

Picture 3: a holy nation

Read 1 Peter 2:9-12. Using the term ‘holy nation’ would remind Jewish people of their own history. God had saved the nation of Israel from slavery in Egypt and taken them to the Promised Land. They were to be the light, or an example, for the Gentiles.

- What do you understand by the term ‘holy nation’? What was the role of Israel towards the Gentiles?
- In what ways is the church different from the world?
- What is the purpose of the church being ‘different’?

After bringing together all the answers and discussion from these three studies, consider the characteristics of:

- the ideal church (and compare with our own church situation)
- the ideal priesthood of believers (and compare with the situation within our churches)
- the ideal nation (and compare with the situation within this country).

BIBLE STUDY 4

The ministry of Jesus: repentance

Read Matthew 3:1-2 and 4:17. Jesus is giving his agreement to the message which John the Baptist had preached.

- Why do you think Jesus is repeating John’s message?
- What was the content of what John the Baptist preached? (Read Luke 3:7-14)
- Which particular sins did John stress needed repentance, if people were to be ready for the kingdom of God? Make a list.
- If John were to preach in our community today, discuss what sins he would stress that people need to repent of. Make a list.
- From what Jesus and John preached, what are the characteristics of the Kingdom of God?
- What challenges does this present to us today?

BIBLE STUDY 5

The ministry of Jesus: healing

Read Matthew 4:12-13, 23-25. Jesus went out to meet with people where they were, in order to do his work.

- What do these verses say about the actions of Jesus?
- What brought so many people coming to hear Jesus?
- What does Jesus' healing ministry tell us about the kingdom of God?

BIBLE STUDY 6

The ministry of Jesus: compassion

Read Matthew 9:35-38.

- How are the descriptions of Jesus's work similar in this passage to what is described in Matthew 4:23-25? What new things do we learn about Jesus' ministry?
- What images does the description, 'The people were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd,' (verse 36) mean to you?
- How do we respond when we see people in need? How often do we look to see if someone is in need?
- When we try to help people in need, is our motivation similar or different to that of Jesus?
- Why do we think Jesus' compassionate response to those in need leads him to say, 'the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are so few'? (verse 37)

After bringing together all the answers and discussion from the three studies above on the ministry of Jesus, consider what we have learned about:

- the kingdom of God
- how we need to change in order to show more of God's kingdom in our own lives
- how we need to change as a church in order to show more of God's kingdom.

BIBLE STUDY 7

Salt and light

Read Matthew 5:13-16. This is a passage from Jesus' 'Sermon on the mount'.

- What are the natural characteristics and uses of salt?
- What do we think Jesus meant when he said, 'You are the salt of the earth'? (verse 13)

- If salt loses its taste what is its use – in food and in the spiritual sense?
- What does it mean for the church to be ‘the light of the world’? (verse 14)
- If we are salt and light, what impact should we be having in our community and church?
- What things could we do to have more impact on our community and church?

BIBLE STUDY 8

Servants of the King

Read Matthew 20:20-28. Each of us needs to develop humility and servanthood in our Christian lives. We need to be witnesses by what we do – not just by what we say – even if those all around us act differently.

- Why do you think James, John and their mother asked for a special favour?
- How did Jesus respond to their request? What does this tell us about Jesus’ idea of leadership?
- What impact did this request have on the other disciples? Have there been similar situations within our work or church?
- What kind of leadership does Jesus refer to in verse 28? Is this the model of leadership we have found in our church?
- Discuss what this model of leadership would look like:
 - in the workplace
 - in the family
 - in the church
 - in the community.
- What are the key characteristics of a servant leader?
- How do both we and our church need to change to reflect more of the servant attitude of Jesus?

Glossary of difficult words

caste	social class system determined by birth
community	people living in one local area, often with the same culture and similar interests
credit union	an organisation able to lend money at fair interest rates to poorer people
development	a process of change that may lead to improvements in social and financial well-being and increased confidence
empowerment	a gradual process in which people gain in self-confidence and feel more able to choose their own priorities and way forward
facilitation	helping a group of people to achieve their aims
facilitator	a person who helps a group to achieve its aims through discussion, encouragement and support with planning and action
gender	the social differences between men and women, or boys and girls that are learned and can change with time (rather than the sexual differences which are biological)
mobilising	creating an awareness of the present situation in order to encourage positive change in the future
motivators	individuals who are able to encourage and inspire other people and support new ideas
NGOs	non-governmental organisations that are managed independently of government
ownership	when local people take control and accept responsibility for issues that affect their own development
participants	people taking part in any kind of activity
participation	involving people in the decisions and processes that affect their lives
poverty	a situation where there are not enough resources to maintain an adequate standard of life
sustainability	when an organisation's capacity or a set of activities are self-supporting in all senses: financial, environmental, etc.
tithes	gifts, usually of money or produce, that are given to the church on a regular basis
trainer	a person who guides or teaches others, usually in an informal way, to carry out certain skills or activities

Mobilising the community
A PILLARS Guide

by Isabel Carter