

***How to do note on Grassroots Institutional and Organizational Analysis
for capacity development planning in Project Design and Implementation***

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PART ONE : THE HOW TO DO NOTE PURPOSE, USE and RELEVANCE TO IFAD PROJECT PROCESS

Why it is important to understand and support Rural Grassroots Institutions and Organizations ?

Box 1: Who are the Rural Grassroots Organizations?

IFAD works with a wide array of organizations and institutions. In this note, Rural Grassroots Organizations should be considered as a **collection of people operating together in a rural area at grassroots level to achieve a common goal**. RGROs often pursue different activities at the same time and comprise diverse memberships in terms of age, gender, profession, aspirations, and cultural/religious norms and beliefs. This note should be considered as a tool to engage grassroots organizations in the rural space, in their variations. RGROs typically targeted by IFAD can be broadly grouped in three main clusters based on their primary activity:

- 1) Producing & Trading: (i.e. farmers and producers groups and associations; agricultural cooperatives; pastoral and small fisher organizations)
- 2) Managing natural resources: sustainable conservation of the environment (i.e. Water Users' associations, Community Forest associations),
- 3) Saving and credit access: savings groups, financial service associations and community banks; self-help groups)

Smallholder farming and production systems are heterogeneous and are characterized by social, environmental and business risks and challenges which constrain the ability of rural poor whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and related activities to improve their income and food security (Lee 2005) (Tittonell et al. 2009) (Livingstone, et al., 2011)

Under such situations rural grass roots organizations

(RGRIOs)¹ of poor rural people proved to be important safety nets for poor rural people to cope with shocks that they cannot overcome individually, while enhancing their access to inputs, markets, and training collectively. RGRIOs are pivotal to reducing rural poverty;

by promoting market-oriented small-holder agriculture from the bottom up. If well-functioning, grassroots organizations can build the security and confidence of their members, promote social cohesion and stability, and ensure participation and representation of traditionally marginalized groups such as women, the youth, and indigenous peoples- (IFAD, 2011). Strengthening RGRIOs is critical to enhance the capacity of their members to adopt sustainable technologies and practices and adopt innovations IFAD and Donors can provide. As the IFAD [Rural Poverty Report 2011](#) (IFAD, 2010) highlights, there is a continued need to strengthen the collective capabilities of poor rural people as a powerful means of achieving empowerment, rural growth and improved living conditions in rural areas. The current [2011-2015](#)

Box 2: Institutional & Organizational Analysis aims at assessing the formal and informal 'rules of the game' as well as organizational structure and management, values and cultures, capacities and performance

Institutional & Organizational strengthening is a result and a process of institutional and organizational change that strengthens an organization's recognition, standing, influence, performance and ability to achieve its goals.

Source: IFAD, *Field Practitioner's Toolkit: Institutional and Organisational Analysis and Capacity Strengthening* (unpublished), section 2.2 and 2.3.

¹ If you are interested in meso and national level farmer's federations please refer to the how to do note on 'how to engaged with Farmer's organizations for linking smallholders to markets?'

[IFAD strategic framework](#) (IFAD, 2011) identifies three main elements that should be in place for rural institutions and organizations to meaningfully contribute to poverty reduction:

- Ability to manage profitable, sustainable and resilient farm and non-farm enterprises strengthened to emerge as competitive players in the market.
- Capacity to influence policies and larger institutions affecting their livelihoods and environment
- An enabling institutional and policy environment to support agricultural production and the full range of related non-farm activities.

In order to support smallholders to access markets and services like credit or training, reach economies of scale and influence public policies and institutions, facilitating their aggregation into larger associations can be achieved by strengthening their groups. Building of lasting grass-roots institutions would require enhanced support to strengthen the managerial, organizational and financial skills of the groups formed under various projects (Seth, 2009)

Why is this note useful? IFAD lessons learnt

A number of initiatives and interventions targeting smallholder farmers and supporting their organizations in IFAD projects and programmes have had mixed results, primarily showing promise in pilot sites though without clear exit strategies that could ensure gradual withdrawal of the external support, towards sustainability and scaling up, assessment of capacity gaps, and institutional development/strengthening support. To address these issues, IFAD is encouraging a more in-depth institutional and organizational analysis in project design and to build in-house and in-country capacity to improve the design and implementation performance of IFAD projects and increase the likelihood of sustainability of IFAD's field-level interventions (IFAD, unpublished)

The IFAD Synthesis Report on institutional and organizational strengthening² highlights areas where IFAD operations could be improved, namely:

- Institutional and organizational *analyses*:
 - 1) Vary in quality and depth across IFAD portfolio and are often focussed on government agencies, leaving unexplored the potential strengths and weaknesses of non-state in-country partners, including the target groups
 - 2) Are rarely taking into account informal institutions and organizations which often have an influence on successful project delivery
- From analysis to project *delivery support*

- 1) project designs may explicitly declare aims for institutional and organizational development, they rarely provide operational frameworks to achieve the desired changes

² Full name "Strengthening pro-poor institutions and organizations. Lessons learnt from field application of IFAD's sourcebook on Institutional and Organizational Analysis for Pro-poor Change. A synthesis report", reference in section 3 of this note

- 1) Often mechanisms of engaging with the target group (including grassroots organizations) are not well defined
- 2) There is usually fragile coordination between activities towards institutional and organization development with other similar initiatives outside IFAD

- *Capacity development and strengthening mechanisms*

- 1) Supply-driven top-down capacity building mechanisms outnumber the demand-driven approaches, reducing the capability of the beneficiaries to identify their most pressing constraints and therefore threatening ownership of the results and the overall sustainability of the intervention
- 2) In capacity building intervention, the 'one fits all' approach is usually applied rather than those that cater more specifically diverse contexts and take into account different that different groups of RGROs might be at different stages of development. A variety of more demand-driven capacity-building mechanisms emphasizing peer exchange, learning and review – particularly across rural organizations and programmes is recommended
- 3) Capacity development is often confined to training individuals instead of building social capital of organizations and institutions towards maturity and sustainability
- 4) Training need assessments without considering complementary measures that ensure technology application (e.g. provision of inputs and equipment; consideration of external or internal constraining factors such as migration trends, labour peaks, land and labour availability, natural shocks) result in poor adoption and reduced impact in terms of livelihood improvements.

- *Indicators and strategies to monitor institutional and organizational change*

- 1) Operational frameworks and strategies can be better defined and should include indicators, benchmarks and realistic milestones to monitor progress of anticipated individual, organizational and institutional capacity change
- 2) A participatory definition of realistic monitoring indicators and determine benchmarks/timeframes during implementation to track achievement of foreseen institutional/organizational change is important
- 3) Institutional/organizational development interventions should demonstrate how the inputs (financial resources), activities (skills development such as training, mentoring, study tours, etc.) and related outputs lead to the expected outcomes (such as appropriate attitudes, required changes in rules, organizational functions and processes, accountability and transparency).

The methodology presented in this How-to-do Note (henceforth: the note) will address some of the comments outlined above.

3. Overview of the HTD

Objectives of the note: This HTD note is directed to IFAD Country Programme Managers and their teams, IFAD staff and consultants both at Headquarters and country office levels. . It is intended to support the initiation, design, and planning the process of grassroots institutional and organizational analysis and strengthening during project design and implementation.

Uses:

- Define need for capacity development, and its role in grassroots institutional development to focus the development interventions through:
 1. A framework for maturity assessment and participatory capacity needs analysis
 2. The definition of capacity development needs of RGRIOs
 3. The assessment of the immediate conditions the development efforts would take place in, including the key stakeholders that might have an influence on the project outcomes
- Monitor and assess impact of the interventions on the groups and determine the need for further or new interventions

Structure:

The note is structured as follows:

- 1) An introductory section (the one you are reading now) on the purpose, tips for using the note and a summary of the main gaps in grassroots institutional and organizational analysis identified in IFAD operations
- 2) A core section defining the steps and how these should be carried out respectively at design and at implementation level.
- 3) A reference section where you can find useful resources for institutional and organizational analysis and strengthening
- 4) Annexes with tools that are linked to the steps

Box 3: Why not two separate notes for design and implementation?

Design is an ongoing process for the life of the project. Although at design stage smaller amounts of resources (time, funds, experts) are available, the architectural blueprint of the entire project should be built. Good project design is as important for managers as for the initial design team. Planning as early as design stage on how to carry out RGRIOs analysis and strengthening during the implementation phase can help reducing the risk of 'experimenting' and enhance effectiveness. With this in mind, a 'combined' document represents the opportunity see the linkages between 'planning' and 'doing'.

Source: <http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/guide/3/3.htm#>

Depending on your role in the different stages of project cycle and your level of expertise in the topic addressed by this note, you might find some sections to be more relevant than others. For practitioners more involved at implementation level, links and references to facilitators' tools for field use will be made available. Practitioners might decide to follow the proposed approach from step 1 to XX or use some sections or specific tools depending on their level of knowledge of the RGRIOs, the depth and amount of the information needed and the financial, human and time resources available. The note should be considered as a set of recommended steps, actions and tools that can be used by IFAD practitioners in different contexts to meet their specific needs while using their own judgment and experience. The note provides guidance to but **is not** a blueprint or a fixed set of rules.

5. Conceptual framework and definitions

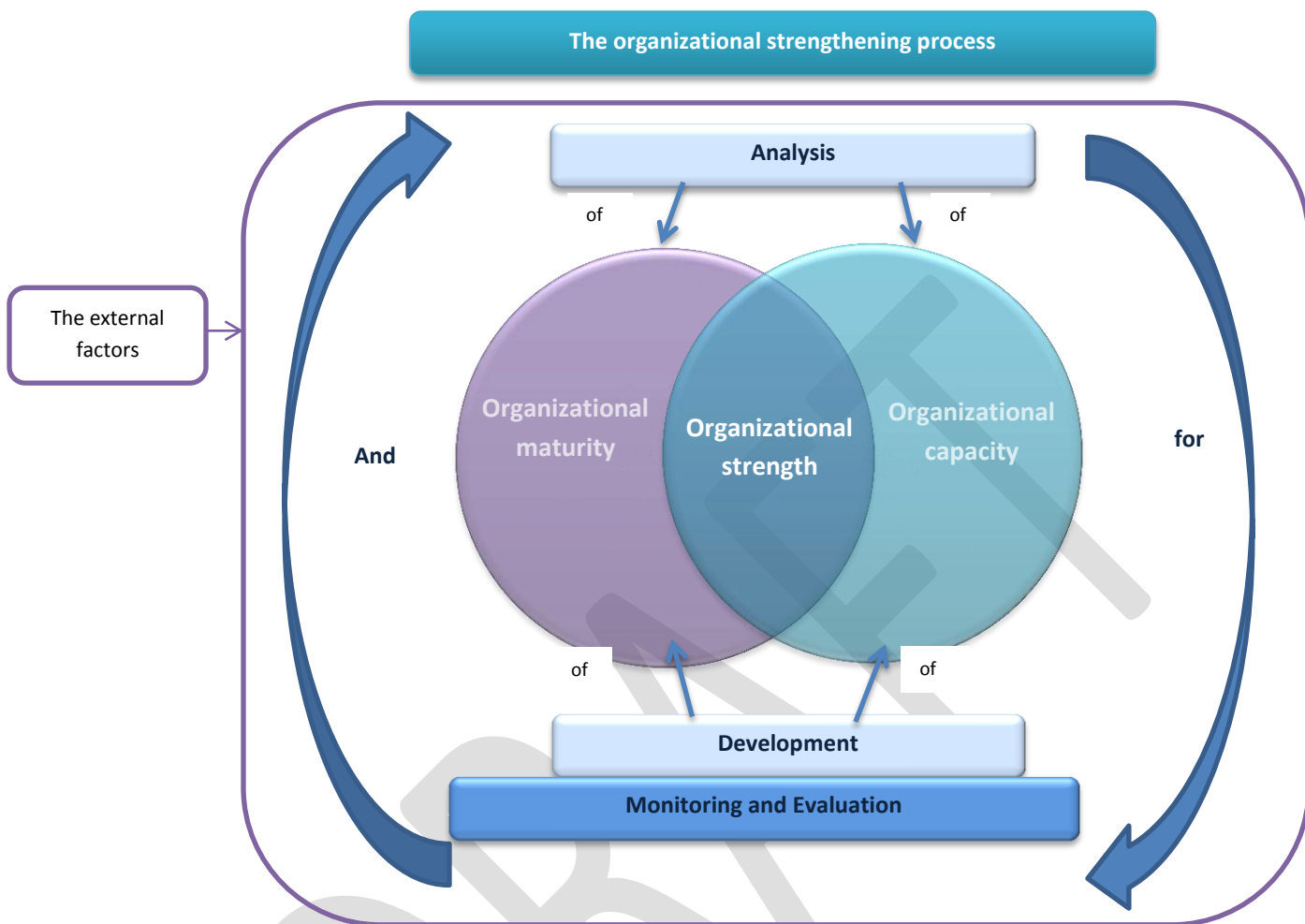


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework³ revolves around two main concepts (defined as below) and three main activities, analysis, development and monitoring.

Concepts

Organizational maturity⁴ refers to the level of development of a the organization and its capability in key areas such as management, governance, leadership, capacity development and resilience. A mature organization is considered to be capable of explicitly and consistently deploying processes that are documented, managed, measured, controlled, and continually improved.

³ The approach, concepts and methodologies hereby proposed are an adaptation of the *Model for strengthening rural grassroots institutions* currently under development at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

⁴ Adapted and modified from <http://www.tutorialspoint.com/cmmi/cmmi-glossary.htm>

Organizational capacity⁵: it is a combination of human, technical and institutional elements (culture, laws, rules, procedures, etc) which enable an organization to achieve its objectives, especially in relation to its vision⁶

The underlying assumption of the proposed approach is that through **capacity development** an organization should be able to achieve its objectives while also advancing in its organizational maturity, which, in combination will result in the overall **organizational strength**. In the methodology proposed, this **organizational development towards strengthening** of RGRIOs is focused on activities which advance the organization according to the values of the group. These can be achieved through trainings, field visits and many other mediums for developing groups.

A large role can be played by the **external factors** include interrelated conditions such as infrastructure, policies, attitudes, fiscal, informational, political and cultural factors as well as other stakeholders that may impact on the capacity of RGRIOs to achieve their objectives. Stakeholders could include, but are not limited to : local governmental agencies and local traditional authorities⁷, other ODIs or IFIs, NGOs, private sector organizations with a key interest in developing local capacities, umbrella bodies established as partnerships between multiple partners, local financial institutions. These factors and stakeholders can sometimes be influenced, but not controlled.

Process

Three main activities constitute the building blocks of the process. Keeping in mind that institutional and organizational change and adaptation to evolving maturity and capacity should be the key objectives of any capacity development intervention, the three activities are presented as separate but interrelated.

Analysis of RGRIOs should happen as early as the design stage of project, and serves the purpose of building an inventory of RGRIOs in the area and assess their level of maturity and capacity. Further rounds of analysis are needed to check **progress in organizational maturity**.

Development of RGRIOs aims at increasing their organizational maturity along with their organizational capacity through a number of activities towards building their hard and soft skills towards the achievements of their development objectives.

Monitoring is meant to track **progress in organizational capacity**, and therefore complement the analysis. Evaluation as an addition to monitoring will help in providing context to the progress made.

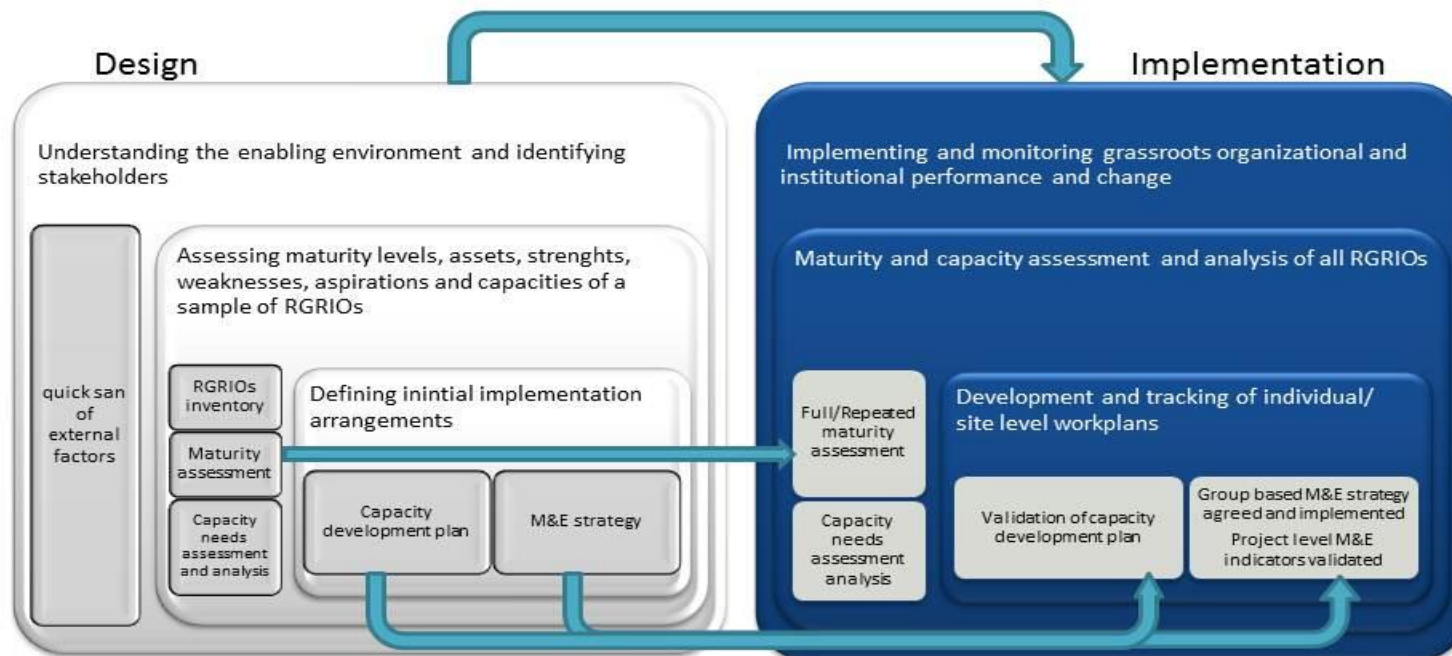
The combination of regular monitoring of RGRIOs progress towards achieving their goals and recurrent analysis of level of organizational maturity will provide information on the overall level of **organizational strength** as the capacity development activities are on-going.

⁵ Adapted and modified from <http://www.tutorialspoint.com/cmmi/cmmi-glossary.htm>

⁶ Adapted and modified from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/capability.html#ixzz2UsBn2FfN>

⁷ These can include political, traditional and spiritual authorities that does not necessary have a clear-cut legal or official recognition, but who can still exert strong influence on grassroots institutions

PART TWO: THE PROCESS in its relation with the IFAD operational model



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⁸ The process is based on the *Strengthening grassroots institutions in smallholder farming systems: an emerging model* currently developed by the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)

Step 1: Quick scan of external factors

Design

Box 4: additional external factors for enterprise or platform development

Enterprises: Rural Grassroots Enterprises are complex structures that require a variety of factors in order to operate effectively and sustainably. Some factors that can be assessed at this stage are: favourable governmental policies that support and promote enterprises, private sector presence and participation, infrastructure (hard and soft) accessible, stable markets for the products of the enterprises, and support services such as legal and financial services.

Platforms: Innovation platforms involves different stakeholders coming together to exchange knowledge and develop joint action to influence change. Some key factors are: Initial stakeholder identification/ mapping, platform boundaries which can be thematic, geographic or even value chain related; level of operation of the platform; broad objectives common to all stakeholders engaged in the platform

Objectives of the step:

- 1) Identification of the external factors
- 2) Assessment of possible risks or opportunities which the external factors could bring and devise a strategy to mitigate negative effects or, alternatively, tap into available resources, funds and partnerships
- 3) Identification of past experiences, approaches and lessons learnt from other development practitioners in the project area
- 4) *Optional:* if your project objective include developing enterprises or innovation platforms please also include indicators suggested in box 4

Who should undertake this step: a qualified assessor with prior knowledge of the area and activities conducted in it, ability to network with various boundary partners to gather the information required for the scan, no conflict of interest with any of the parties involved with the development effort

Recommended actions:

Depending on time and resource availability, this can be done through the use of secondary data and consultation with stakeholders. The assessor will

- 1) Undertake a background research on the area. This is to gather basic information on trends, rules and norms to evaluate whether they are conducive to the formation, strengthening and aggregation of RGRIOs in the project area and if not, identify possible measures to mitigate risks and constraints.⁹
- 2) Identify the stakeholders who could have, or had, an effect on the operations and development of RGRIOs in the area. Through an interview, the following areas should be investigated: Past, current and future activities on ground in the area, existing training and development infrastructure in place (personnel, materials etc), gaps, challenges and hindrances already encountered in the project area with reference to current delivery models, ability and willingness to form partnerships with other organizations to better deliver development interventions, any relevant challenge or expected change which could impair the development effort
- 3) Assessing the relative benefits offered by each stakeholder, in terms of products or services offered that can help in the capacity development process.

⁹ For guidelines on how to conduct an institutional and organizational analysis of the broad institutional environment and meso and national levels please refer to *A Field Practitioner's Toolkit: Institutional and Organisational Analysis and Capacity Strengthening* (underway)

Gathering lists of training providers/ sources of knowledge within the geographical area, along with what knowledge and skill training had been offered previously

Expected output: a brief which highlights possible opportunities and/or threats represented by the external factors, and strategies to leverage on/ counterbalance them.

Box 3: Engaging the stakeholders: the ICRAF- ASSP dialogue in Pemba, Zanzibar

The Agricultural Service Support Programme. Is an IFAD funded nation-wide intervention which also comprises the isle of Pemba, part of the Zanzibar archipelago. The isle of Pemba is made of several districts where both the local government and different typologies of NGOs provide support on a number of topics, such as environmental conservation, HIV prevention, poverty eradication through horticulture production, fisheries and advisory services to other NGOs. The ICRAF research project 'Strengthening Rural Institutions', funded by IFAD through a grant, had met the representatives of six local NGOs in order to maximize the efforts in designing a capacity building plan for RGRs in the island and explore opportunities for enterprise and platform development for the local organisations.

Through this step the ICRAF delegation discovered that

- ✓ A Farmer fora had recently been established but needed significant capacity building particularly in organisational skills (how to manage farmers groups, empowerment, involve others, business planning skills, monitoring and evaluation)- knowing of this allows the project to build on an existing new movement rather than trying to recreate a platform.
- ✓ Marketing off the island was very difficult and there was currently no affordable option for transporting goods to the mainland thus constricting marketing options for the island. suggesting that local market opportunities could have been considered as well as seeking partnerships for a larger transport focused project.
- ✓ The NGOs, despite being experienced on the island and having built a trustworthy relationship with the beneficiaries, still experience challenges which might be offset by strategic partnerships with other ODIs and/or the local government
- ✓ Some NGOs possess expertise on different kinds of trainings therefore and can be involved as local trainers, building on their rootedness on the island.

The learnings gained through this step helped ICRAF practitioner s to re-orient the focus of the upcoming capacity development activities as well as minimize the risk of duplication in the area

Step 2: Establish an inventory of RGRIOs and preliminary maturity level assessment

Design

Objectives of the step: collect information on what groups exist in the proposed project area and if they are sufficient, both in number and capacity to implement the project as well as their level of inclusiveness

Who should undertake this step: CPMT members with previous expertise in institutional and organizational analysis and/or knowledge of the project area, in consultation with local stakeholders experienced and familiar with local RGRIOS.

Recommended actions:

1. Collect secondary data, if available, on the number of groups in an area and the average number of smallholder farmers per group
2. If secondary data is not available or is obsolete, discussions with local government staff who are experienced and familiar with local groups are likely to give an indication

To build the inventory, a set of indicators is suggested below:

1. The number of existing groups
2. The basic characteristics of existing groups, namely:
 - Name
 - Location
 - Affiliation (e.g.project,programme)
 - Registration
 - Typology, by function and by membership
 - Size
 - Years of existence
 - Major bottlenecks in group development
 - Trainings received
3. The level of inclusiveness based on:
 - Group openness to new members
 - Decision- making rights and benefits sharing
 - Members' gender and age balance¹⁰

Box 2: Gender based power struggles for group leadership

"A women's group in Bungoma was facing issues as the members spouses wanted to control the leadership of the group once they saw the group succeeding and earning money. When I became aware of this I arranged for training on leadership for the women executives of the group. Through this training the women understood their roles and the roles of their spouses. After this I trained the rest of the group, including their spouses, on the roles and responsibility of members in the group. This had a positive effect on the group. They also changed the group to be a self-help group rather than a woman's so their spouses could become members and not feel threatened. The group now functions well with no power struggles and everyone understands their responsibilities."

Source: A facilitator from Western Kenya in *Facilitators manual for strengthening rural institutions through building the soft skills in rural grass roots institutions (under revision)*

¹⁰ Oftentimes, women and youth are excluded from leadership and decision-making roles. This should not mean, though, that men's contribution should be neglected,. Box 2 provides an example of a situation in which a better inclusion of men benefitted also women and the group as a whole

3. Sample a reasonable amount of RGRIOs to be visited within the design mission. It is advisable to use the inventory to choose between RGRIOs showing different basic characteristics (e.g. membership type, location, years of experience, etc.)
 1. Meet the RGRIOs and, evaluate their level of maturity by asking the questions provided in Annex I. Each answer is scored and at the end of the interview you will be able to determine the cumulative score for the RGRIO you are interviewing.
 2. The table in Annex I also provides the expected score for each mature clusters: beginners, intermediate and mature. By looking at the score achieved by each group you will be able to determine whether it is a beginner, an intermediate or mature¹¹. Beginners refer to those RGRIOs in an early stage of development with respect to functional arrangements, intermediate have a number of the group functionalities developed while mature show well-developed structures and are likely to plan activities, document their work, practice multiple activities and develop partnerships at a higher level than the other less mature RGRIOs. It is suggested that you place the name of the group in the table to have an overview of the maturity of your sample

Expected outputs :

- Inventory of existing RGRIOs and their basic characteristics and level of inclusiveness
- One or more tables showing how many and which RGRIOs are beginners, intermediate and mature in a specific project area



Decision point:

Experience shows that it is advisable not to engage RGRIOs in activities without building their organizational strength first. Nevertheless, a fully-fledged analysis of RGRIOs organizational maturity and capacity can be time and resource consuming. Factors influencing this decision include budget availability, relevance that capacity development has to achieve project objective and previous knowledge or experience in the project area. Based on these considerations, the information collected during this stage (external conditions, boundary partners, number and basic characteristics of RGRIOs, maturity levels of engaged RGRIOs) should be sufficient to guide you to make an informed decision between:

- ✓ Conducting a more in-depth analysis of key factors that determine the maturity level of a specific RGRIOs (or a group of them) → step 3
- ✓ Sample some RGRIOs based on maturity level and engage them in a participatory workshop to assess their capacity needs and develop work plans for capacity development → step 5
- ✓ Move to other activities such as develop enterprise to connect the RGRIOs to the market or to networks for policy lobbying and advocacy → up-coming HTD notes on RGRIOs enterprise development and platform development

¹¹ The exact cut-off values determining when a group is considered beginner, intermediate or mature will be soon provided. These values will help in tracking when a group is shifting from one maturity cluster to another.

Step 3 : RGRIOs maturity assessment

Implementation

Objectives of the step:

- ✓ Providing the chance to develop criteria and indicators of maturity which reflect the project area and determine locally relevant indicators that can be used to assess maturity
- ✓ Deepen and validate the initial maturity assessment (step 2)
- ✓ Providing information on the maturity level of the RGRIOs involved in the project as well as identifying cut-off points for the three maturity levels and indicators that uniquely define each of the maturity level
- ✓ Providing benchmark indicators to be considered in the monitoring and evaluation baseline that can be tracked over the project period.

Who should undertake this step: In-country project staff with a background knowledge in statistics. This step requires the use of a software.

Recommended actions¹²:

1. *Preparation*: If the criteria and indicators provided in step 2 are not suitable to the project area, identify other criteria to the project area and determine locally relevant indicators that can be used to assess maturity. It is suggested that the criteria and indicators are identified and ranked in through a participatory exercise with relevant stakeholders
2. *Customization*: Through the software a survey and scoring system, based on the criteria and indicators determined before, can be generated
3. *Methodology and data collection*: the project team can determine whether to survey all existing RGRIOs or a sample. Data collection can be carried out either online (through the software) or by enumerators using hardcopy surveys
4. *Data analysis and application*: The software will produce three main outputs, namely individual group maturity scores and level, cut-off points for the three maturity levels and indicators that uniquely define each of the maturity levels.

Expected outputs :

- ✓ Customized survey to conduct maturity assessment using locally relevant criteria and indicators
- ✓ A basis to select a sample of groups to conduct needs assessment (step 4)
- ✓ Benchmark indicators of 'soft skills' to better focus capacity development intervention and tracked over time (can be used as an M&E tool)
- ✓ Terms of comparison between groups within the same project site

¹² These basic steps summarize the process which involves more detailed sub-steps and actions. If interested in carrying out step 3 please refer to World Agroforestry Centre *Strengthening grassroots institutions in smallholder farming systems: an emerging model* (underway)

Step 4 : Capacity needs assessment and analysis

Design

Implementation

Objectives of the step:

- ✓ Providing a comprehensive view of the issues that can be addressed in the capacity development planning process through participatory assessment methodologies and work plan development
- ✓ Providing a thorough and systematic method to determining future capacity needs and assessing existing capacity assets in order to determine organizational capacity
- ✓ Identifying the best ways and means of intervening to facilitate capacity development activities

To follow all the actions required to achieve the objectives set for this step, sufficient time and human resources are critical. For this reason, if the preliminary assessment of maturity level shows that the majority of RGRIOs fall in the mature cluster, it is advisable to post-pone this step to project start-up. If RGRIOs appear to be mostly between the beginner and intermediate clusters, it is advisable to engage a sub-sample from those who show different characteristics as emerging from step 2 in order to be able to plan for a larger workshops and analysis should be included in the Project Design Report based on experience.

Who undertake this step: The workshop should be organised by the project team, with participation from partners in the local area, and representatives from the participating groups ideally, at least two team members should have prior experience in facilitating participatory processes and speak the local language. Previous knowledge of the local area, culture, and RGRIOs would be desirable to accelerate the analysis of identified gaps and needs.

Recommended actions¹³:

Identification and assessment

1. Sample a limited number of RGRIOs and invite their representatives to participate to the workshop (maximum 30 participants). Suggested criteria to sample are: RGRIOs from the same project area and diversity in maturity level. Facilitators should bear that participants will probably share commonalities in terms of stakeholders and external factors but will show differences in capability to effectively participate to all activities and complete workplans.
2. Strike a balance between presentations and participatory methodologies, such as group discussions and role plays to enable participants to be taken through a reflective process and to facilitate capacity identification
3. Use at least some of the suggested modules: introduction to integrated development planning, stakeholder analysis, a SWOT analysis, definition of dissemination and farmer learning processes, guided work plan development and concluding with participatory monitoring and evaluation design.

¹³ This is a summary of minimum requirements to conduct the workshop. For detailed information, examples and stories from the field please refer to the Manual for [Capacity Needs Assessment and Strategy Development Workshop](#).

4. Capture critical information pertaining to RGRIOs' current capacities, objectives and vision, highlight common challenges they face, and enable identification key elements to their stakeholders and how they perceive the relationship with those stakeholders.
5. Ensure that by the end of the workshop, individual workplans for each of the engaged RGRIO are complete to enable to carry out the analysis

Analysis

6. Compile all existing relevant and available data regarding the RGRIOs collected in the previous steps namely external factors, inventory, preliminary (or detailed) maturity assessment and, especially those identified through the workshop. Additional knowledge gathered through project team discussions with regards to the project expectations should be obtained, often down to specific project sites.
7. The second stage of the process is synthesising the data collected to proceed with the analysis. The desired capacity is determined by aligning the group vision and objectives against the existing resources of the group. The capacity gaps identified can then be grouped into four categories, including group development, platform development, enterprise development and external factors to establish the capacity needs for each RGRIO.
8. Compare the desired and existing capacities of each individual RGRIO in order to formulate a capacity development response for the project site.

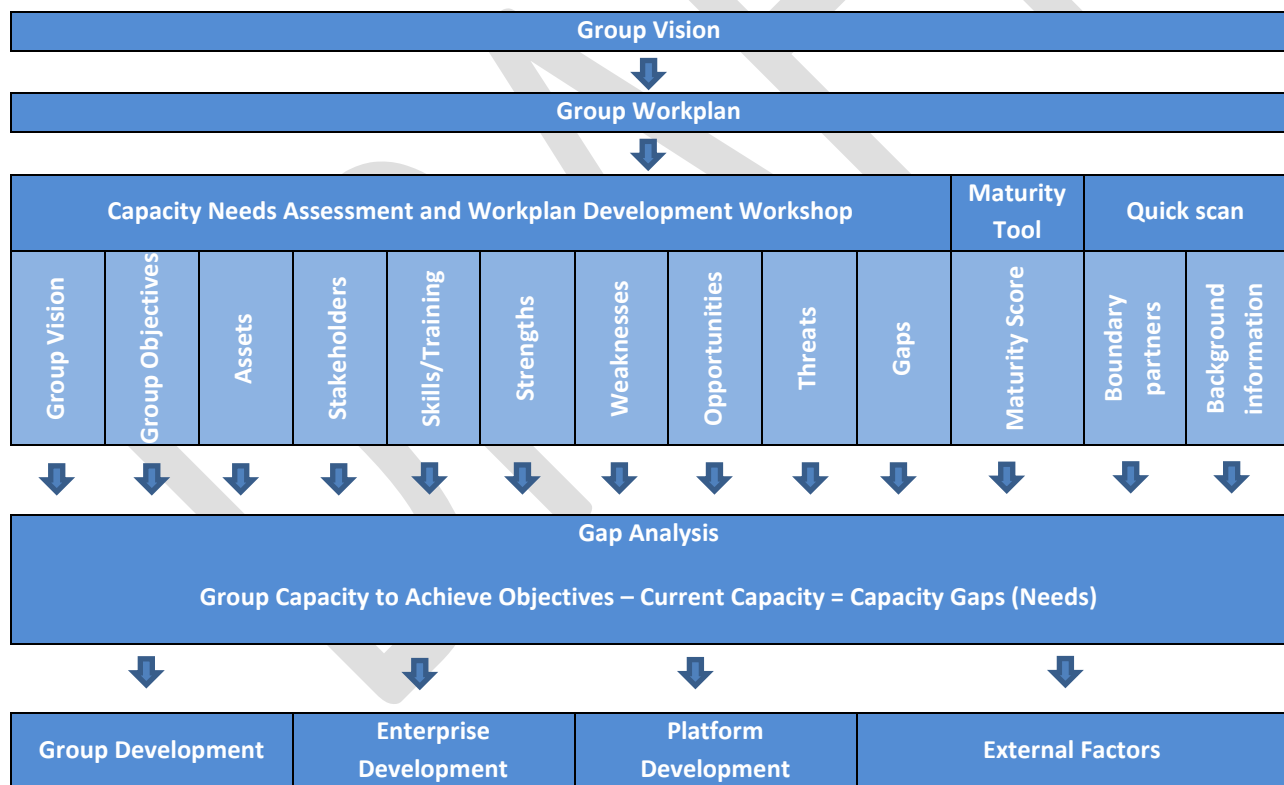


Figure 2: Capacity Needs Analysis Framework

Expected outputs:

From the workshop:

- ✓ A comprehensive assessment of the engaged RGRIOs vision; objective and strategies; assets; stakeholders; existing skills and training, and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- ✓ Workplans including future goals based the relative strengths and opportunities for improvement, the external factors, capabilities of partners and stakeholders and the individual wants and needs of each of the representatives. The wor plans focus on the activities and strategies the group must undertake to achieve those goals and objectives.

From the analysis

- ✓ Individual RGRIOs capacity gaps are identified and capacity development activities are proposed. These relate to group development, enterprise development and platform development. These refer respectively to soft and technical skills, knowledge and attributes the group requires to support their day to day activities and functioning (organizational development); to those skills needed to optimize household level incomes through improved productivity, encouraged savings, investments and asset accumulation (enterprise development) and those skills and mechanisms to promote knowledge sharing, up scaling and public policy participation in which they require support from other groups (platform development).
- ✓ External factors which might affect development interventions are identified and acknowledged.
- ✓ A summary of common needs affecting a group of RGRIOs in a specific project area are identified

Step 5 : Planning, monitoring and evaluation of the capacity development process

Design

Implementation

Objectives of the step:

- ✓ Prepare a plan to build the capacity of RGRIOs in both technical and soft skills.
- ✓ Prepare a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy which aligns project overarching goals and activities to RGRIOs workplans, track maturity changes and adopts a participatory approach to increase ownership of the capacity development process

Who should undertake this step: The CPMT should be able to draft an initial capacity development plan as well as the logframe based on the information gathered in the previous steps (at design mission completion). The in-country project management team (or unit) will then revise and validate the plan and the logframe as well as establishing an M&E strategy at RGRIo level.

Recommended actions:

1. Using the outputs from step 4, prioritize capacity building activities to fill the identified capacity gaps. Prioritization can be influenced by project objectives, budget and available resources and any other factor that can be deemed relevant by the project team. Some guiding questions are: how many RGRIOs will benefit? What are the likely costs associated with running this activity in terms of funds, resources and time? Is this activity building on a knowledge base or current project activity? Will this activity lead to some opportunities (spin-offs) for further partnerships, funding or growth of the groups to move to the next level?
2. Establish a capacity development workplan for the project site. Table 1 (below) outlines some of the topics and considerations for taking the prioritized activities into the workplan

Table 1: Considerations when developing a workplan for capacity development

Topic	Considerations
Activity	Start with highest priority activities (can be grouped or individual)
Activity lead	Who will oversee the implementation of the activity/training and who will conduct it
Partners	Other partners that could be doing similar work that you should involve. Could they implement this activity?
Extension methodology	What type of method will be used (farmer-farmer, extension officer visit, group training in a hall or at site, farmer field schools, exchange visit etc.)
Timing	Should consider how activities will be staged through year and number of days, consider availability of trainers and your availability
Audience	Is it aimed at representatives from each group? How many? Aimed at one group only or many groups?
Budget	Estimate at first and give in local currency and USD. Does it fit in the project budget?

Challenges	List main challenges to implementing the activity if it exists and think of ways to overcome them
Measure of success	What will you use to record activity took place and its value? e.g. attendance lists, reports, feedback from participants, etc

3. Prepare an M&E strategy on a two-tracked basis: logframe (project level) and community simple, participatory M&E tracking tools for RGRIOs to monitor and evaluate their performance (intervention level).
4. Facilitate, through an open and participatory discussion with the RGRIOs representatives, the creation of M&E committees or the election of representatives within each RGRIO. The representative or committee should report to IFAD project management unit/team on a regular basis. Guiding questions when engaging the RGRIOs should be: who should be in charge and why? What needs to be tracked, how frequently and by whom? How frequent should the reporting be? What would be the best mode of reporting? (journal, meeting, etc).
5. Use the mini-maturity tool (annex I) to assess progress made by RGRIOs in their maturity ratings.

Expected outputs:

- ✓ Workplans at individual RGRIO and project site level
- ✓ An M&E strategy to track advancement in capacity building activities as well as progress in maturity

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Annex I: table portraying main IFAD project cycle stages and suggested steps and tools¹⁴

Project Life	Design Tasks	Suggested RGRIOs analysis and strengthening steps, actions and tools
Initial design phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess feasibility, scope and rationale of project. - Determine the goal and objectives. - Outline main project outputs and key activities. - Outline project implementation process and structures. - Outline the M&E system. - Develop the budget and specify staffing levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quick scan of external conditions ✓ RGRIOs inventory ✓ Preliminary maturity assessment ✓ Capacity needs assessment and analysis ✓ Development of workplans ✓ Initial capacity development planning ✓ M&E strategy at project level
Start-up phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop understanding of project goals and objectives with key stakeholders. - Review and revise the initial design. - Design and plan work in sufficient detail to allow for implementation. - Develop a detailed operational M&E system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Validation of the initial findings ✓ Full maturity assessment (with software) ✓ Full capacity needs assessment and analysis ✓ Validation of workplans and creation of new workplans (for previously not engaged RGRIOs) ✓ Establishment of grassroots level M&E committees
Annual review of the work plan and budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check if the outputs, purpose-level objectives and goal remain relevant; adjust. - Decide what activities and tasks are necessary to deliver outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tracking of capacity development activities through workplans and RGRIO level M&E tools
Supervision (recurrent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss overall progress of the project. - Decide on changes that should be made in the annual work plan. - Assess any potential changes in the overall design that require loan agreement negotiations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tracking of capacity development activities through workplans and RGRIO level M&E tools

¹⁴ Adapted from http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/guide/3/3.htm#3_1_1

Mid-term review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review achievement of outputs and progress towards the purpose(s) and goal. - Assess appropriateness of the overall strategy. - Redesign the project as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Repetition of maturity assessment to track change ✓ Tracking of capacity development activities through workplans and RGRIO level M&E tools
Beginning of the phase-out period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the priorities of final activities in order to maximise impact. - Review and adjust strategies with a view to sustained impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluation based on adjusted workplans ✓ Final maturity assessment to track change

Annex II : table of preliminary maturity expected scores by principles and criteria

Suggested questions and maturity indicators	Suggested score
GOVERNANCE	
1. In what ways is the group registered? (registration)	
Not formally registered	-6
Local government	11
Legal /justice system	7
Civil society	6
National level government	8
Group internal registration	3
Total score	
2. Under what circumstances will a member exit the group? (exit policy)	
Absenteeism	12
Unexpected occurrences	11
Not paying subscription/contribution fees	11
Member's expectations of the group not met	7
Limited performance in collective action	6
Group dissolution	8
Vote of no confidence in member by the group	6
Self withdrawal	9
Misconduct	11

Change of marital status	6
Conflicts within the group	7
Condition specified in the constitution	11
Total score	
3. What is the basis of promotion to leadership? (Upward mobility)	
Experience	9
Democratic voting	11
Performance	12
Leadership skills	9
Capacity building	3
After elections terms	5
Self assessment and initiative	5
Level of education	7
Social status	6
Holding groups shares	3
Total score	
4. Which of the following group management practices exist?	
No group policy/regulations	-2
Following the constitutions and bylaws	18
Ensure regular meetings	12
Delegation of duties	7

Group pressure	6
Strength of collective action	5
Monitoring and evaluation	8
Accountability and transparency	9
Government laws	4
Total score	
5. How are group assets jointly managed? (Adherence to group governance)	
Not jointly managed	-5
As specified in the constitution and bylaws	14
Asset management through legal documents	5
Asset management through democratic decisions	8
Group management through formation of a sub committee	9
Transparency	9
Total score	
6. What interaction does the group have with non members? (Interaction with non-members)	
No interaction with non members	-6
Participation is limited	6
Outreach methods	9
Attendance to meetings by invitation of non members	10
Voluntary attendance to meetings allowed for non members	10
7. How do group members participate in group activities? (Participation of group members in group activities)	

Members contribution	13
Participation by sharing ideas	15
Voluntary participation	9
Participation in kind	7
Welfare support	4
Contribution of time	10
Manual labor	12
Produce contribution	5
Meetings	10
Total score	
TOTAL SCORE - GOVERNANCE	
MANAGEMENT	
8. How does the group partner with other groups/organisations? (Model of partnership)	
No partnerships	-5
Minimal interactions with other groups/organizations	8
Partnerships that are mutually beneficial	9
Regulation	5
All local groups participate in general meetings	6
Membership, coordination, training, financial support and capacity building	9
9. How are group activities contracted and enforced? (Track record - follow up and contract enforcement)	
We do not have contracts/MoU	-9

Through the management committee	7
Through meetings	10
Group constitution	7
Group action plan	6
Signing contracts	4
Through the help of technical offices	7
Understanding contents	5
Total score	
5. How are group conflicts managed? (Conflict management)	
We never experience conflicts	-4
Group meetings	15
Arbitrators	6
Executive committee	8
Disciplinary committee	8
Group by laws	9
Total score	
6. What types of resources are available to the group? (Resource availability)	
Human resource	17
Human capabilities	11
Financial resources	11
Physical resources	12

Members contribution	18
Vehicles	4
Natural resource	3
Total score	
TOTAL SCORE - MANAGEMENT	
LEADERSHIP	
7. What responsibilities do the group leaders have? (Leaders responsibilities)	
In group meetings	15
Participation in group activities	14
Lobbying for support from development partners	8
Mobilizing group members for training, meetings, etc.	12
Sensitization of the group through provision of regular progress reports	9
Effective management through good practices	8
Total score	
8. What responsibilities do the group members have? (Members responsibilities)	
No specific responsibilities	1
Respect and acceptance of by- laws and Constitution	15
Payment of membership fee	14
Holding shares	4
Group participation	15
Long-term members should respect terms of office/limits	5

Members' contributions	15
Adhere to group's aims and main purpose	11
Total score	
9. How is group participation promoted? (Promotion of participation and satisfaction)	
No efforts made to promote participation	-2
Provisions in the Constitution and by- laws	12
Access to benefits according to shares and contributions	8
Group benefits (according to shares and contribution)	9
Transparency and accountability	13
Leaders' volunteerism	8
Technology handouts	4
10. What level of performance does the groups partners consider the group to have? (Partners evaluation on groups level of performance)	
Low level of performance according to your partners	4
Medium level of performance according to your partners	15
High level of performance according to your partners	6
Total score	
11. What level of performance does the groups competitors consider the group to have? (Competitors evaluation on groups level of performance)	
No competitors	2
Low group performance compared to other groups undertaking similar activities	7
Medium group performance compared to other groups undertaking similar activities	14
High group performance compared to other groups undertaking similar activities	5

Total score	
12. How does the group perform after support from a partner or funder has finished? (Group performance after partner exit)	
No change	6
Low group performance after the end or change of support received by partners and/or funders	7
Moderate group performance after the end or change of support received by partners and/or funders	12
High group performance after the end or change of support received by partners and/or funders	5
Total score	
TOTAL SCORE - LEADERSHIP	
CAPACITY BUILDING	
13. (Communication to public) How does the group communicate to the public)	
There are no communications to the public	-2
In writing	10
Word of mouth	14
Radio announcements	5
Public meetings	12
Phones	11
Exchange visits	7
Flyers/posters	6
Total score	
14. What methods does the group use to share lessons within the group? (Learning approaches inside the group)	
Farmer field schools	7

Farmer to farmer	16
Technocrats / mentors	5
Field days	9
Mass media	5
Workshops and seminars	10
Exchange visits	11
Meetings	3
Total score	
15. What methods does the group use to share lessons with others outside the group? (Learning approaches with other groups)	
Does not share knowledge with other groups	-5
Participation in other groups' meetings	9
Exchange visits	12
Agricultural exhibitions /shows	6
By providing extension services	7
Public meetings	10
Field days	8
Mass media	4
Demonstration sites	9
Total score	
16. What methods does the group use to train others in the community? (Methodologies used to offer trainings)	
Through practice and theory	11

Workshops, seminars and lectures	13
Farmer to farmer	9
Executive officers	6
Group members training	12
Media	5
Residential courses	5
Demonstration on good agricultural practices	9
Participatory approach	8
Total score	
17. What types of expertise exist within the group? (Expertise in the group)	
No expertise	-7
Technical expertise	7
Expertise acquired in trainings and workshops	15
Professional skills (e.g. Accounting, report writing)	8
Total score	
18. What types of organisations does the group partner with? (Expertise from partners)	
No expertise dependent on partnerships	-4
Government (extension services)	17
Research institutions	7
NGOs	8
Banking institutions	3

Donors	4
Faith-based institutions	5
Total score	
TOTAL SCORE – CAPACITY BUILDING	
RESILIENCE	
19. How does the group accumulate knowledge? (Institutional memory - group knowledge accumulation)	
No knowledge repositories	-2
Record keeping	13
Group visits	10
Trainings	15
Documentation by stakeholders	4
Group activities	10
Inter-generations transfer of knowledge	6
Capacity building	7
Group reports	8
In computers	4
Filming	2
Publicity through radio (visibility)	3
Total score	
20. What mechanisms does the group have in place to take advantage of opportunities? (Mechanisms for accessing opportunities)	
No mechanism in place	-4

Constitution	10
Records	9
Depends on the popularity of the group/visibility	6
Strength of group in terms of financial capacity	6
Bank statements/budgets	5
Work plans/budgets	8
Registration status	8
Advocacy	7
Field visits	7
Through stakeholders	1
Total score	
21. What mechanisms of value addition are used by the group? (Value addition mechanisms used by group)	
No mechanism in place	-6
Income gains	9
Capacity building	7
Training	11
Acquisition of relevant technologies	7
Collaboration / networking	7
Resource mobilization	9
Total score	
TOTAL SCORE - RESILIENCE	

TOTAL SCORE - MATURITY	
Maximum total score	/1405

Annex III: Soft skills associated with each of the five principles in the maturity assessment

Principle	Associated areas for soft skill development
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups have a clear and shared vision • Groups have clear and defined roles • Group understanding of rules and regulations (constitution) • Group following and reviewing their rules and regulations • Group keeping minutes and referring back to them • Corss-learning between groups and non-members • Group inclusiveness • Leadership rules in group and succession
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation skills (internal) • Conflict management
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership skills in group executive • All group members understanding the roles and responsibilities of the leadership • Group linked to community leadership (partnerships) • Succession planning built into the groups objectives
Capacity Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership identification, engagement, management • Group communicating with the community • Group understanding the importance of record and financial record keeping • Skill identification and use in the group
Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group inclusiveness developed • Understanding of financial sustainability and skills for this such as entrepreneurial thinking • Support group innovations • Internal communication • Group understanding importance of monitoring and evaluation and how to reflect on progress