



# STRENGTHENING GRASSROOTS INSTITUTIONS IN SMALLHOLDER FARMING SYSTEMS: AN EMERGING MODEL

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Strengthening Rural Institutions  
Project

## DISCLAIMER

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Smallholder farming systems are heterogeneous, characterized by challenges that constrain their ability for livelihood improvement and food security (Tittonell et al. 2009). These households are also vulnerable to agro-ecosystem shocks and uncertainties (Lee 2005). A number of initiatives and interventions targeting smallholder farmers have had mixed results, while there is promise in some pilot sites, it is often without a clear solution for scaling up. Further, smallholder collective action has often faded out after cessation of external funding.

A stepwise process for engagement with community members is needed to support rural grassroots institutional strengthening for sustainable land management, improved productivity and creation of enterprises. It will also evolve a coalition of partnerships including platforms that will enable vertical and horizontal integration of governance. This process also entails support for effective engagement in policy processes that enable poor rural households to aggregate, mobilize, and access rural services. The ultimate and long-term impact of this process is to improve the livelihoods of rural people engaged through grassroots institutions in a sustainable way.

In order to support this process, the Strengthening Rural Institutions team has developed a Model for Strengthening rural grassroots institutions (the 'Model')

The Model is one of the outputs of the *"Enabling rural transformation and grassroots institutional building for sustainable land management and increased incomes and food security"* action research project, funded by the Internal Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and implemented by the Eastern Africa sub-regional office at ICRAF. IFAD identifies support to institutional and organizational development as a strategic issue (IFAD, 2008). The project aims at providing IFAD with the tools and approaches which will contribute to addressing some of the challenges associated with better articulation and integration of rural grassroots institutional issues into the project cycle. The ICRAF project has the following main objectives:

- To enhance capacity of variants of grassroots institutions and provide support to harness broader collective action for rural service delivery
- To improve enterprise development within the context of conservation, and community level asset accumulation
- To build a regional institutional platform for knowledge sharing, scaling up, and participation in sustainable land management policy making and development processes in East Africa

The action research project involves a number of stakeholders at the grassroots, district and national levels. It is currently at the conclusion of the group capacity development stage, with initial investigations into platform and enterprise development processes underway. The project will finalize its activities at the end of 2014. The final version of the Model will be available at that stage.



This document is intended to be the primary reference document to support the implementation of the Model for Strengthening Rural Grassroots Institutions in the East African context. Although the Model has been designed to be as adaptable to different contexts as possible, the process hereby presented originate from a research conducted in East Africa and therefore reflect the reality of a specific social, cultural and natural environment. It is then suggested to use a flexible approach when applying the definitions, steps and tools in different contexts, also relying on one's knowledge and experience of local grassroots institutions and organizations.



PICTURE 1: MASINDI, UGANDA

## 2. .OVERVIEW OF THE MODEL

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The Model for Strengthening Rural Grassroots Institutions (henceforth 'the Model') uses a participatory approach, involving individual groups, coalition of groups, partnerships, platforms, and field level steering committees, in every step of the process. As a result this development effort is locally driven and collaborative in nature, with the aim of increasing the ownership of the development process by small holder farmer communities.

The model (Figure 1) has been built through an action research process conducted in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, that developed and tested a framework to analyse, plan, implement, monitor and assess the development of greater capacity in rural grassroots institutions. As such, it is an evolving process based on lessons learned at each step of the research. What is presented in the following pages outlines the projects' current ideas, three years into the four year project, about the conceptual framework and the components essential for strengthening rural grassroots institutions.

The model has been designed with capacity development practitioners as the primary audience, and has been developed to provide maximum flexibility to tailor its content to the nuances of a specific location, and the needs of the individual groups and overarching project scope.

### 2.1 Definitions

Simple, clear language has been used where possible and for most of the manual rural grassroots institutions will be referred to as groups.

- **Boundary partners:** those individuals, groups, or organizations with whom the program interacts directly and with whom the program can anticipate opportunities for influence. These actors are called boundary partners because, even though the program will work with them to effect change, it does not control them. The power to influence development rests with them.
- **Capacity building:** the process of building social capital of organizations and institutions towards maturity and sustainability, beyond training individuals.
- **Coalitions:** a partnership of groups and different stakeholders based on a clear and specific interest areas
- **Enterprise Development:** is a process of engaging groups in activities, typically on the basis of generating income, improving food security and facilitating sustainable livelihoods.
- **External Factors:** include interrelated conditions such as policies, attitudes, fiscal, informational, political and cultural factors that impact on the capacity of groups to achieve their objectives and vision.

- **Groups:** a collective of people in rural areas working together at a grassroots level to achieve a common goal.
- **Group Capacity<sup>1</sup>:** 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 vision.
- **Group Development:** is focused on activities which advance the group, according to the values of the group. These can be achieved through trainings, field visits and many other mediums for developing groups.
- **Group Maturity<sup>2</sup>:** refers to the level of development of a group and its capacity. A mature group is considered to be a strong rural institution capable to explicitly and consistently deploy processes that are documented, managed, measured, controlled, and continually improved.<sup>3</sup>
- **Maturity Criteria:** is a standard for judgment. It adds meaning and operationality to the identified principles without itself being a direct measure of performance.
- **Maturity Indicators:** are variables or components used to infer the status of a particular criterion. They convey a single meaningful message termed as information.
- **Rural Grassroots Enterprises (GEs):** any formal or informal entity that is engaged in the transformation of agricultural and natural resource products for economic gain. In rural areas, where agriculture is the predominant employer of labor, GEs lead to greater off-farm employment opportunities, more diversified income sources, and increases in general standards of living.
- **Platform:** mechanisms for enhancing communication and innovation capacities amongst groups through improved interactions, coordination and coherence among all actors to facilitate learning and contribute to the production and use of knowledge. Platforms comprise of stakeholders and/ or collaborators of diverse social and economic actors all working towards a common objective.
- **Platform development** is a process of engaging farmer groups with various actors/ stakeholders to collectively address constraints affecting them and build capacities through identified opportunities.
- **Social capital** refers to the features of the organizations that facilitate coordination and cooperation and that enable people to bond and act collectively for mutual benefits<sup>4</sup>. It comprises both to the 'intangible' institutional characteristics as well as an organisational structure, with a leadership and a purposeful direction

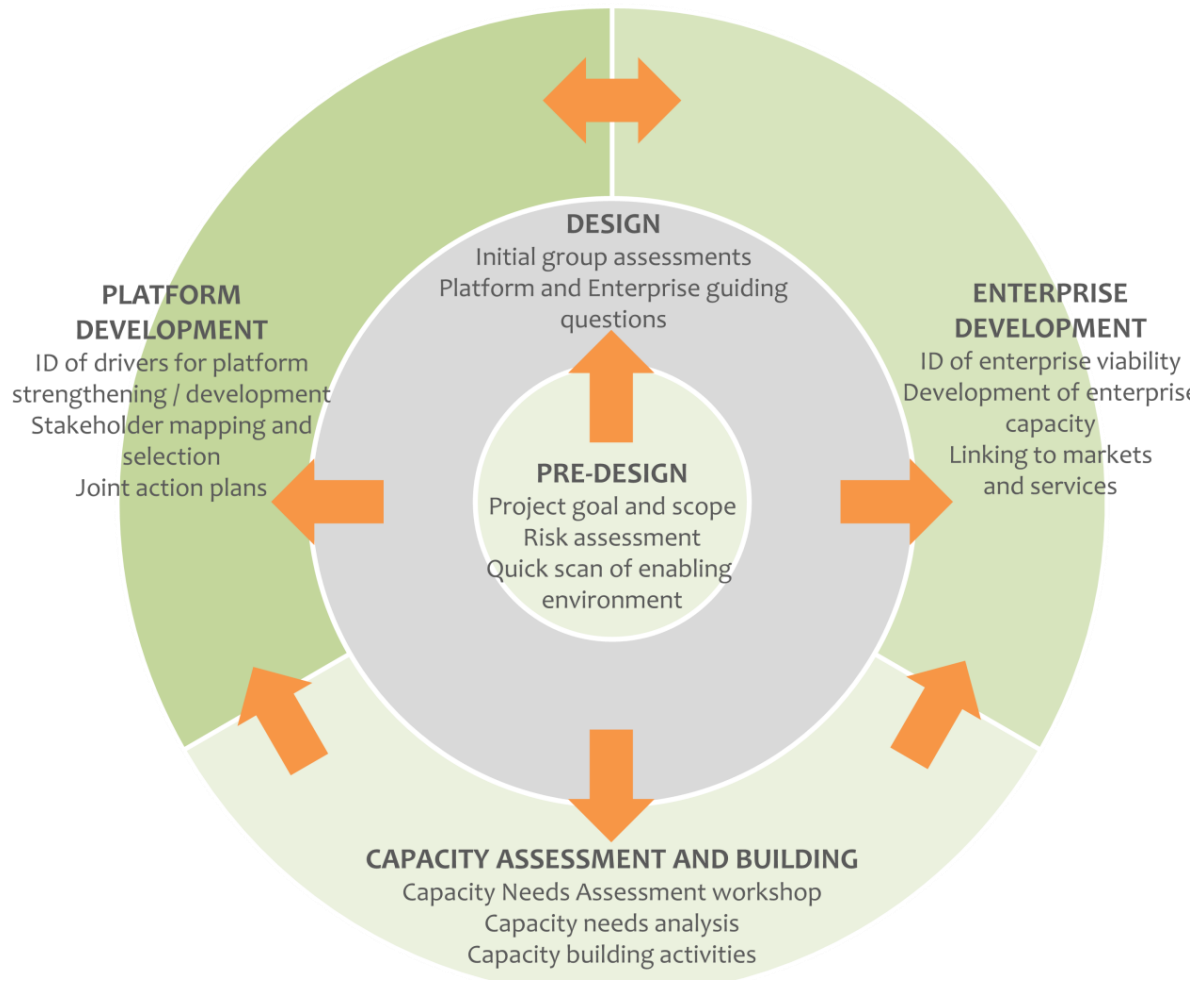
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<sup>1</sup> Adapted and modified from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/capability.html#ixzz2UsBn2FfN>

<sup>2</sup> Adapted and modified from <http://www.tutorialspoint.com/cmmi/cmmi-glossary.htm>

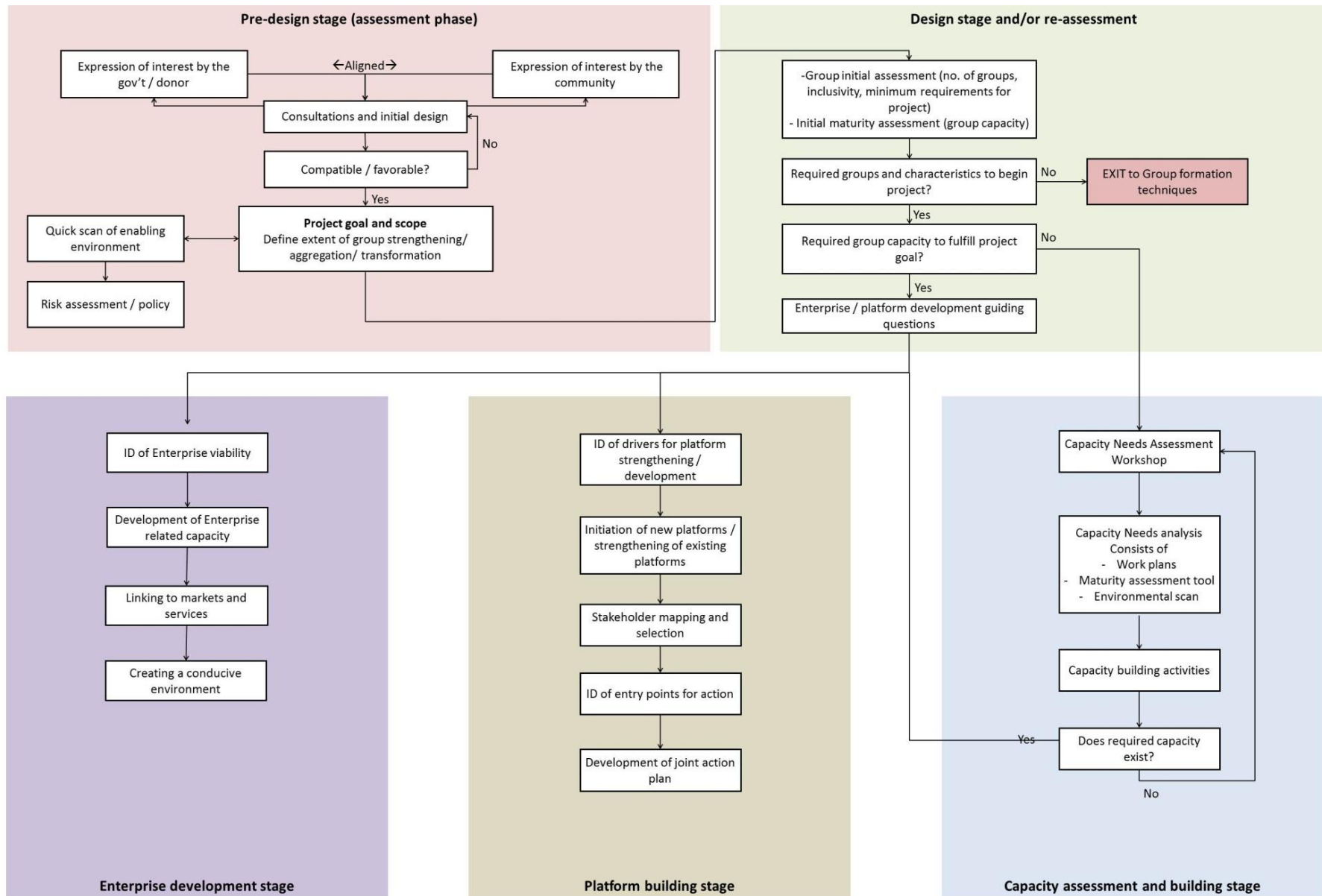
<sup>3</sup> Adapted and modified from <http://www.tutorialspoint.com/cmmi/cmmi-glossary.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Sanginga, P (2004) Strengthening Social Capital for Improving Policies and Decision- Making in Natural Resources Management, International Centre for Tropical Agriculture-Africa Highlands Initiative, Uganda



**FIGURE 1: MODEL FOR STRENGTHENING RURAL GRASSROOTS INSTITUTIONS**





**FIGURE 2: : ALGORITHM TO DESCRIBE THE MODEL FOR STRENGTHENING RURAL GRASSROOTS INSTITUTION**

## 2.2 The Model's key features

Through participatory learning at each stage of the model, shown in Figure 1., the project being designed and implemented should work with participants (groups) and boundary partners to:

- Define need for capacity development, and its role in grassroots institutional development which would define and focus the development interventions through:
  1. A diagnostic of groups development, from a temporal and spatial perspective
  2. A framework for maturity assessment and participatory capacity needs analysis
  3. The development and undertaking of group and/or site level work plans and activities that would serve as guiding documents for the development efforts
  4. The definition of a context for assessing capacity development interventions, including the key boundary partners and their influence on group development
- Implement the capacity development activities at the group level, enterprise level, and/or platform level
- Monitor and assess impact of the interventions on the groups and determine the need for further or new interventions

Each stage of the model is shown in detail in Figure 2, and described below.

## 2.3 Uses of the Model

The model is intended to be used as a guide for rural development interventions aiming at improving the capacity of rural grassroots institutions and organizations (referred to as groups from this point). It can be used to formulate strategic plans that encompass all the steps from the project scoping stage to the implementation stage, or can be broken into individual components that can be used as standalone tools for intervention. Some of the uses of the model include:

- Analysis and characterisation of groups within a project scope
- Identification and planning of capacity development interventions
- Allocation of resources based on the group and site needs analysis during the various stages of capacity development

- To fully engage participants, boundary partners and other stakeholders by showing the inter-relationship between them and the capacity development efforts

The model can be used by any project implementer or designer who wants to build capacity of groups. It can be used for both large and small scale projects. The model is intended to be flexible and it has been outlined where a step is considered important and the potential risks associated with skipping that step.



**PICTURE 2: BUNGOMA, KENYA**

### 3. DESIGN PHASE

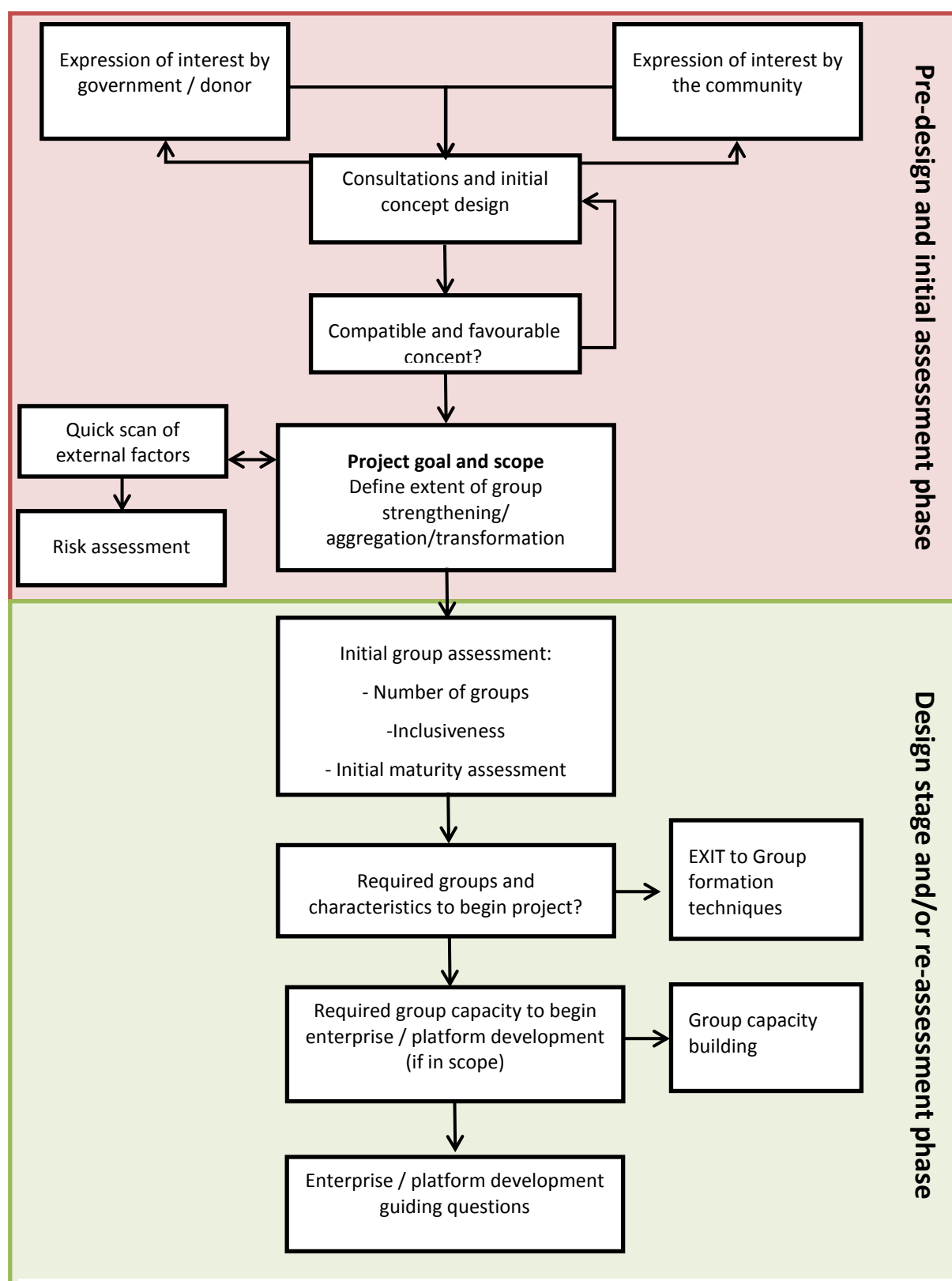


FIGURE 3: : DESIGN STAGE DIAGRAM



### 3.1 Objective of design phase

For a project or program to have good chances of being successful, the design stage needs to be carefully planned and carried out.<sup>5</sup> Design is typically done at the start of a project but as things change, the project will need to adapt and review the project implementation plan. Continually adapting the project strategy in response to new understanding and to changing contexts is key in maximizing impact. Key considerations for maximising impact of group strengthening at project design level include: involving stakeholders, completing a detailed analysis, ensuring a logical intervention strategy, identifying cross-cutting objectives and planning for capacity development <sup>6</sup>.

Figure 3, described in this section shows an approach to designing a project with a focus on strengthening groups, whether this is part of broader project objectives or the main aim of the project. The user should ensure that minimum information required to carry out a group level institutional and organisational analysis is collected at the design phase to inform important decisions on capacity development interventions. Different practitioners and organisations use different project design processes or guidelines, therefore the proposed approach should not be considered a fixed list of indications, but rather as a methodological support.

### 3.2 Stages in the design phase

Figure 3 has been divided into actions and decisions. The decisions should be made based on the information available and consider the project scope and objectives. The actions should be performed at different stages of the design process:

- An **initial pre-design and assessment stage** when overall goal and scope of the project are set as a result of consultation between the donor or implementer and the beneficiaries, and
- A **design stage** where specific project objectives are defined based on the information gathered in the first phase.

#### 3.2.1 Pre-design and initial assessment

This stage defines the purpose and boundaries of the project. These requirements may come from the funding body, management or the project team, and will be informed by the implementer's past experience in the area, strategic goals and available resources. It is widely accepted in development aid literature that the involvement of beneficiaries in the early stages of a project can enhance impact

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ewb-international.org/pdf/CARE%20Project%20Design%20Handbook.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from <http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/guide/3/3.htm#>

and increase ownership. In this step, it is recommended that the project donor, the project team and the beneficiaries meet and negotiate in order to allow all the stakeholders to jointly decide on the project goal and scope. Ideally the proposed project should reflect community identified needs with consultation taking place at the level of intended implementation such as watershed, district or national levels. This consultation is often through community meetings or discussions with representative committees.<sup>7</sup>

Once initial expression of interest or need is received by the project designers (either from donor, governments or community) and developed into a concept, the other relevant stakeholders should be consulted to ensure the concept is favourable and compatible with the initial expression of interest or need. Some negotiation may be required at this stage before an agreement is reached.

Based on the agreements, the project designers will need to:

- a. Refine the project goal and scope to match the extent of intended intervention in community capacity development<sup>8</sup>, and
- b. Run a quick scan of the external factors to assess whether these are favourable or not to the proposed objectives and activities.

## PROJECT GOAL AND SCOPE

Strengthening organizational capacity can take place for different purposes. This model takes into account four broad levels of capacity building interventions that could be found in development projects:

1. Building capacity is the main focus of the project and the scope of the project does not go beyond that
2. Building capacity is functional to develop rural enterprises to be linked to markets (i.e. for asset-based producers groups)
3. Building capacity is functional to prepare groups to aggregate in a platform or federation (i.e. for policy dialogue or lobbying)
4. Building capacity is functional to aggregate groups for both market access and platform formation

These different aims entail different uses of the model. Table 1, illustrates the sections of the model that should be considered, based on the objective of the capacity development intervention to be carried out.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/ad817e/ad817e0h.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Table 1 outlines what needs to be taken into account

TABLE 1: OBJECTIVES FOR STRENGTHENING GROUPS AS PART OF PROJECT LINKED TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective	Recommendation
<b>To build groups capacity only</b>	Complete modules to analyse groups maturity and develop a plan to enhance groups capacity (both technical and group dynamics)
<b>To build groups capacity to develop their entrepreneurial skills and link them to markets</b>	Complete all modules to enhance identified gaps in groups capacity to participate in enterprises (based on guiding questions)  In instances where group capacity is already sufficient or well known, complete only the enterprise development components
<b>To build groups capacity and aggregate them into platforms</b>	Complete all modules to enhance identified gaps in groups capacity to develop platforms  In instances where group capacity is already sufficient or well known, complete only the platform development components
<b>To build groups capacity, to develop their entrepreneurial skills, link them to markets, and aggregate them into platforms</b>	Consider if group capacity is sufficient (see above) and then either address capacity needs or move directly to enterprise and platform components

Other key considerations for project scope include:

- Project budget
- Target number and types of groups and households
- Project area (geographical)
- Project partners

By the end of this stage, the user should have developed a clear idea of scope and have a set of project objectives.

## QUICK SCAN OF EXTERNAL FACTORS

The 'external factors' relate specifically to the operating environment that groups work in, but have little or no control over. It includes both formal and informal elements of the broad institutional environment (policies, rules, cultural, religious norms and so forth) and boundary partners that can foster or hinder capacity strengthening interventions at the grassroots level. Before finalizing the project design, it is important that information about the external factors which could effect the groups are known.

## BOUNDARY PARTNERS

By identifying who these boundary partners are, and what they offer towards the development of an organization, the designer can leverage on existing resources and practices to more effectively deliver capacity building interventions.

The boundary partner review should include:

1. Identifying key partners in the local area who may influence the operation or growth of local groups and communities. These will include, but are not limited to, the following categories:

- a. Local governmental agencies and local traditional authorities<sup>9</sup>
- b. Official development institutions
- c. NGOs
- d. Private sector organizations with a key interest in developing local capacities
- e. Umbrella bodies established as partnerships between multiple partners
- f. Financial institutions

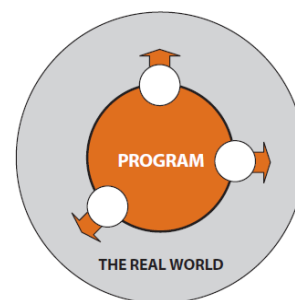
### **Box 1: Quick scan of external factors for enterprise and platform development**

#### *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: favorable 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 involve 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



**FIGURE 4: BOUNDARY PARTNERS**

2. Assessing the relative benefits offered by each key player, in terms of products or services offered that can help in the capacity development process
3. Identifying possible funding sources in the area that could be tapped for developmental activities
4. Gathering lists of training providers/sources of knowledge within the geographical area, along with what knowledge and skill training had been offered previously

The analysis of the factors include (but it is not limited to):

1. Detecting key social, economic and political trends and institutions, rules, policies and regulations that could be important to local groups and communities. These can have a formal, statutory nature (i.e. enforced policies, laws), or be traditional and informal, such as cultural and religious norms and customary law,

which often play an important role among communities

2. Defining opportunities and threats presented by the elements identified.

<sup>9</sup> 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

## KEY STEPS IN PERFORMING THE QUICK SCAN

The steps listed below are recommendations, and may be modified to suit individual needs. Depending on time and resource availability, this can be done through consultation and the use of secondary data:

1. Select a qualified assessor to conduct the scan. The assessor should ideally have:
  - a. Prior knowledge of the area and activities conducted in it
  - b. Ability to network with various boundary partners to gather the information required for the scan
  - c. No conflict of interest with any of the parties involved with the development effort
2. Undertake a background research on the area. This is to gather basic information on:
  - a. Local infrastructure
  - b. Governmental and non-governmental agencies present in the area
  - c. Other development and NGO partners
  - d. Official strategies and policies being pursued that may have relevance
3. Interview the boundary partners and other targeted participants. The interviews should attempt to cover:
  - a. Past and current activities on ground in the area
  - b. Future planned capacity development activities
  - c. Existing training and development infrastructure in place (personnel, materials etc)
  - d. Gaps in current delivery models
  - e. Capacity for future expansion
  - f. Ability and willingness to form partnerships with other organizations to better deliver development interventions
  - g. Challenges and hindrances already encountered in the project area
  - h. Lessons learnt
4. Assess the information collected. The output of this step should be a brief that highlights:
  - a. Development capacity of the area in terms of infrastructure available, and potential partners who may be leveraged upon
  - b. Major gaps, issues and threats that may hinder effective capacity building interventions
  - c. Suggested partnerships and mechanisms to deliver them
  - d. Opportunities for tapping funding and partnerships to underwrite the capacity building efforts. If the scan highlights potential risks for the projects successful implementation, it is advisable to include mitigation mechanisms at the design stage. If policy dialogue or partnership building processes are an option, these can be used to help to reduce the risks and create a more conducive setting for the project.



### 3.2.2 Design stage and re-assessment

#### INITIAL GROUP ASSESSMENT - GROUP PROFILING

At this stage, the project design team needs to consider what groups exist in the proposed project area and if they are sufficient, both in number and capacity to implement the project.

This can be completed in two ways:

- Collect secondary data, if available, through different knowledge sources (central and local government offices, baselines, reports, etc)
- 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.

Some indicators that can be used to collect baseline information about groups existing in a given area are suggested below:

1. Group name
2. Group location
3. Group affiliation (to a project, program, institution, etc.)
4. Group registration (is it formally registered?)<sup>10</sup>
5. Group typology :
  - I. By function (i.e. financial, agricultural production, etc)
  - II. By gender or age (women only, men only, youth only, mixed gender, mixed age)
6. Group size (no. of members)
7. Group age (years of existence)
8. Major bottleneck in group development
9. Trainings received<sup>11</sup>

Other considerations when looking at the existing groups are:

- Are they inclusive? Can all types of people join, influence decision making and share benefits?
- Are the target beneficiaries of the project members of the existing groups? Are women, men and youth represented?<sup>12</sup>

This data should be used to:

- decide if the existing groups are sufficient to reach the target beneficiaries of the project (as determined in the project scope)

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<sup>11</sup> Information regarding single groups can be combined in a site level list of provided trainings can complement or verify the the information gathered during the quick scan (section 2.2.1)

<sup>12</sup> 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

- Create a database of existing groups based on basic characteristics that will help selecting diversified samples for in-depth analysis
- If the number of groups is too scarce to start project activities, a group formation process (section below) will be required.

If the groups are not found to be inclusive then you can refer to sections of the [\*Facilitators manual for strengthening rural institutions through building the soft skills in rural grassroots organisations\*](#) to see what group facilitation is possible to improve their inclusiveness or form new groups, if this is not viable.

## **GROUP FORMATION PROCESS**

Many useful references exist for group development, and two examples are:

- [\*Skills farmers need for organizing and managing groups\*](#)
- [\*Establishing and Strengthening Farmer Organisations\*](#)

Lessons learnt from a project implemented in Kenya by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) <sup>13</sup> highlighted the following good practices when mobilizing communities for group formation:

- Response in terms of community participation is not always immediate. Regular information sharing and meeting with prospective group members is essential to build trust and participation
- Engagement of community resource persons needs to be planned ahead in order to include incentives for their participation in project initiatives (e.g. by introducing income-generating activities and providing adequate working tools).

The formation process can have a significant impact on the group's dynamics for its life and the speed at which it matures in capacity development. Some tips for consideration during group formation include:

- Ensure the group has well defined rules and regulations which are outlined in a constitution (the group can then be registered if common practice in project area)
- If the group fully understands the roles of both the executive (chair, secretary, treasurer etc) and the other members then they can ensure members fill their obligations and are likely to elect leaders in a more informed way
- Once leaders are elected it is helpful to train them in leadership skills
- Encourage groups to have some younger members for mentoring and sustainability
- Groups should have shared objectives and a vision which they all feel ownership over
- Groups should be encouraged to keep records and be transparent

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/pf/seeds/1.pdf>

## INITIAL GROUP ASSESSMENT – GROUP MATURITY LEVELS

During the design phase of a project it is common to visit some groups to gain an understanding of their level of development. It is suggested to visit ten to twenty groups in the project area, depending on available time and resources. Groups can be sampled by using the results of the group profiling and in consultation with local officers or well informed traditional authorities. Diversity can be ensured by selecting groups which show different characteristics in their location, function, typology and capacity just to name a few. Depending on your project scope and objective, some indicators might be more relevant than others.

Groups level of development can be described by clustering them in three maturity levels: beginner, intermediate and mature. Beginners refer to those groups 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 groups.

In the design phase<sup>14</sup> a preliminary assessment of groups maturity levels can be used to inform what activities should be carried out in the strengthening process. A more in-depth and comprehensive analysis of groups maturity levels can be done through the maturity assessment process described in section 4. The preliminary, or mini-maturity process will provide a general measure of a groups maturity level according to key indicators. The full maturity assessment process will provide a much more comprehensive baseline assessment of group maturity, tailored to the specific site, as well as identifying specific needs of individual groups and monitoring of their changes over time.

To undertake a preliminary assessment of groups' maturity level at design level, you first need to have a clear picture of 'what works' in the area. Meet experienced local stakeholders (e.g. local government, traditional authorities, etc), familiar with local smallholders organizations. Ask them to look at the questions listed in annex I and evaluate which ones are most relevant in the area. You might decide to ask all questions if time allows and the local representatives do not have specific indications or also add questions if the stakeholders have any suggestion. In the table in Annex I, there are a number of options derived from a similar exercise conducted in the SRI project area (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania). In the table answers given by the sample interviewed in East Africa have been placed in each of the columns indicating the maturity level (beginners, intermediate, mature). In order to verify whether the answers provided reflect the reality of the

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<sup>14</sup> For tailored guidelines on grassroots institutional and organizational analysis of the grassroots at design stage, you may want to refer to the 'HOW TO.....Analyse and develop social capital of smallholders organizations' a practical Note prepared to assist country programme management teams at IFAD to enhance quality of their analysis and recommendations in Project Design Reports. The How To Note is currently under review

groups you want to work with, ask the representatives to move the possible options into either column depending if they work well or do not work well in the local area. You can have multiple answers in each column. Once you have the completed table then sample a number of groups that you can meet, variable between ten and thirty (depending on time and money constraints). Use the table, as reviewed by local stakeholders, to interview each group. Ask all the questions and tick the available answers. Once the group has answered all the questions then you can either add the number of ticks in each column or look overall at the table and if most ticks are to the left the group is likely more of a beginner, if scattered or in the middle it is likely an intermediate group and if most ticks are to the right it is likely a more mature group.

When meeting the groups, it is advisable to meet at least two members together with the group leaders to ensure representativeness. If you are concerned about domineering attitudes you can ask to meet members separately. In some cultures, though, members will not accept because respect for the authorities is not negotiable. Inquiries about the cultural norms of the area before organizing meetings are recommended.

## **MATURITY MATTERS**

If the majority of the interviewed groups are beginner or intermediate in terms of maturity then it is advisable to conduct a more detailed maturity assessment (outlined in the maturity assessment phase) of all the groups in the project and facilitate soft skill development as part of the project. If all or most of the groups are mature then capacity development may not be a central part of the project and you can move to assessment for other interventions such as increase groups' capacity for platform or enterprise developments.



**Tip:** it is not advisable to develop enterprises and platforms with groups who show low levels of maturity. The Model has been tested by putting maturity assessment as the first and indispensable step to develop group capacity.

If the project scope included enterprise development and/or aggregation into platforms then more information should be collected. Certain capacities are needed in groups for both platform and enterprise developments: A list of initial guiding questions are provided below to determine if the groups have these capacities.

## **ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT INITIAL INDICATORS**

Rural Grassroots Enterprises are complex structures that require a variety of factors in order to operate effectively and sustainably. Amongst these essential factors are the presence of an enabling environment for enterprises to operate in, favourable governmental policies that support and promote enterprises, private sector presence and participation, infrastructure (hard and soft), accessible and stable markets for the products of the enterprises, support services such as legal and financial services, group internal capacity to undertake enterprise related activities,

and knowledge sharing mechanisms such as platforms and trade associations. Some of these factors will be considered in the quick scan of external factors (as shown in Box 1).

At the design stage however, focus will be on a few factors that most directly affect the forming, operation and sustainability of these enterprises, and these factors with their constituent components are:

1. *Group capacity*: This includes group's operational structure, management structures, skills and knowledge of the members, leadership competencies, and strategic planning capacity. It is suggested that practitioners use the Short form maturity tool to obtain a basic idea of group capacity.
2. *Hard and soft infrastructure*: Presence or absence of infrastructure such as roads, buildings, transportation etc. can define the sustainability and viability of an enterprise. This includes access to said infrastructure, as well as the group's ability to bridge gaps in the presence of infrastructure of infrastructure.
3. *Markets*: The availability of selling points for finished products, as well as the source of raw materials and other requirements for the group. Here we look at presence and access to markets, market volatility, availability of market information, and transparency of the market process.
4. *Support services and resources*: The availability and access to services and resources outside of a group's core capabilities, including services that directly support production, and services that support post-production processes.

The number of factors and their components being fulfilled will vary on a project to project basis, but the recommended course of action will be to have a majority of the factors and their components present. Based on the findings obtained within the project which developed this model, group capacity should be given prime importance, and the absence of capacity to undertake enterprise development should be a decision point in not proceeding with enterprise development, irrespective of the presence of the other factors. If group capacity is low or does not have the skills under point one above, then it is suggested that the project proceed with the capacity development module to build the necessary mechanisms within the group.

### **Questions for enterprise development**

In addition to the above, the following questions can be answered by representatives of the groups, preferably those with decision making responsibilities. Please get the group to be as detailed as possible with their answers.

1. What is the group's primary enterprise that the group would like to develop (existing or new)?  
(Hint – This includes new enterprises that the group would like to start, or existing enterprises the group would like to further develop. Please get the group to describe the enterprise and its nature in as much detail as possible)
  - a. If there's an existing enterprise, who, or what organizations, has the group worked with when running that enterprise?
2. Why do you want to develop this enterprise (existing or new)?



3. What is the current status of this enterprise (planning, already implemented etc?) Please explain.  
(Hint – Get the group to list as many activities as possible that the enterprise must perform, and then what the current status of each of those activities are)
4. What assets (physical and financial only) does the group currently have that can support this enterprise?
  - a. What are the primary income sources of the group?  
(Hint – List all internal and external sources of income)
  - b. What additional assets must the group acquire to support this enterprise in the future?
5. Do the group members have adequate training and experience to support this enterprise? Please explain.
6. What are the challenges that the group faces / will face regarding this enterprise?  
(Hint – Examples of challenges can include, but are not limited to, access to markets, lack of funding, lack of skills within group members, low prices for products, lack of assets, etc.)
7. What support will the group require to undertake this enterprise?  
(Hint – Encourage the group to think beyond financial support i.e. money. The group can also list all the external organizations or people that it must interact with in order to run the enterprise, such as extension agents, financial institutions etc.)
8. What is your long term vision for this enterprise?  
(Hint – Where does the group see this enterprise in the next 5 years? Does the group think it can work with other similar groups in the area to further improve their enterprise? )

## **PLATFORMS DEVELOPMENT INITIAL INDICATORS**

Platforms comprise of stakeholders and/ or collaborators of diverse social and economic actors all working towards a common objective. Platforms operate as systematic and dynamic institutional and/ or social learning processes that recognise innovation from many sources, complex interactions and knowledge flows. For the design stage emphasis will be on factors that most directly affect the initiation, strengthening and sustainability of the platforms as described below:

1. *Drivers of platform development*: Economic, social and environmental opportunities; Common purposes and objectives to be addressed; Presence of diverse economic and social actors; Multi-stakeholders and collective action driven.
2. *Types and forms of platforms*: Technological platforms; Institutional platforms; Market platforms otherwise known as enterprises; Policy innovation platforms

Factors for catalysing district level platforms: Trust, confidence and understanding among stakeholders of the platform; Equity and timely access to resources, buy-in, commitment and ownership by downstream platform stakeholders; Participatory and collective action approaches and use of learning tools; Dissemination pathways in particular, market-led pathways; Reliable information communication networking

and learning skills by stakeholders of the platform; Functional learning through joint analysis, documentation learning and sharing of best practices.

### **DECISION POINT FOR MODEL PHASES TO BE ADOPTED**

Once the project designers have information on groups and their maturity and capacities for enterprise and platform development, a decision can be made on which stages of the model should be followed, as summarised in Table 2. When designers have agreed on the phases to be completed they will need to factor this into the work plan and budget. It is recommended that strengthening of the groups is the first activity to be implemented in any project before other more technical interventions that may be covered in the project objectives.



**PICTURE 3: PEMBA, TANZANIA**

TABLE 2: GUIDING ELEMENTS TO CHOOSE ADOPTION OF MODEL PHASES

Component	Steps and tools	Time required	Skills required	Risks associated with skipping the phase
<b>Maturity assessment</b>	The full maturity assessments more detailed and can be carried out through a software. The mini-maturity tool requires one meeting and focus group discussions with the groups only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mini-maturity tool will take a 2 hours meeting with the local representatives and 1 hour per group at design phase</li> <li>Full maturity tool using MAT software will take 2 days to set up, 2 hours per group for data collection and 2 weeks for analysis<sup>15</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient knowledge and experience in data processing and statistical analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of depth and statistical accuracy if using anecdotal evidence or not empirically based tools</li> <li>Indicators to track group development in its structural maturity can only be taken from theory and might not be adequate to the project area</li> <li>Impossibility to use the MAT software and consequent need to do a group by group analysis (time consuming) or generalize (lack of accuracy)</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity needs assessment and analysis</b>	<p>Capacity needs assessment workshop and analysis</p> <p>Group Capacity Needs Assessment and Strategy Development Workshop Manual<sup>16</sup> to be used as a tool</p> <p><a href="#">Capacity needs</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four to five days (workshop) if all the modules are used. This time may be reduced if only particular modules are used depending on the existing group capacity. an average of 40 participants per</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience in facilitation</li> <li>Knowledge of the local language</li> <li>Analytical skills</li> <li>Previous knowledge of local culture/challenges/policies can help to speed up the analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple benefits will be lost: building rapport with groups, mapping the strengths and assets as well as the needs and gaps of a group/area, and developing work plans based on owned and self-identified group objectives</li> <li>Workshop provides groups with an opportunity to map their landscape and agree on their vision leading to greater ownership and sustainability of other activities</li> <li>Opportunities for the groups to learn from each other and identify opportunities for networking</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> This are just estimates base don the experience of the SRI team. The MAT software is still under development and will need to be tested further in order to provide realistic times

<sup>16</sup> Currently under revision

	<p><u>identification and assessment</u> to be used to conduct the analysis</p>	<p>workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between one hour and Half a day per group to conduct an in-depth analysis of group needs (depending on experience)</li> <li>• Two days to review common gaps and needs in one area (site analysis)</li> </ul>		<p>with other groups in the workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impossibility to link group maturity development to achievement of group goals through work plan development and tracking</li> </ul>
<p><b>Development of work plans and capacity building of soft skills</b></p>	<p>Implementation of site work plans and soft skill development in groups (depending on budget and the number of activities funded, often both technical and soft skills with additional time for facilitator to develop soft intangible/non-training skills in group)</p>	<p>Implementation time will vary from project to project. At least a year is needed for the facilitator to spend time with groups to build soft skills and then less intensive contact for 1-5 years after that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to prioritise activities with knowledge of local area and groups</li> <li>• Facilitation skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on enterprise and platform building without a solid analysis of actual group capacity to undertake these activities might result in failure for unforeseen weaknesses or lack of strong social capital to sustain the group through the process.</li> <li>• Building soft skills in the group will improve overall group function and sustainability.</li> <li>• Groups implementing own work plans with technical backstopping will reduce pressure on project to provide everything and increase ownership.</li> </ul>

## 4. MATURITY ASSESSMENT PHASE

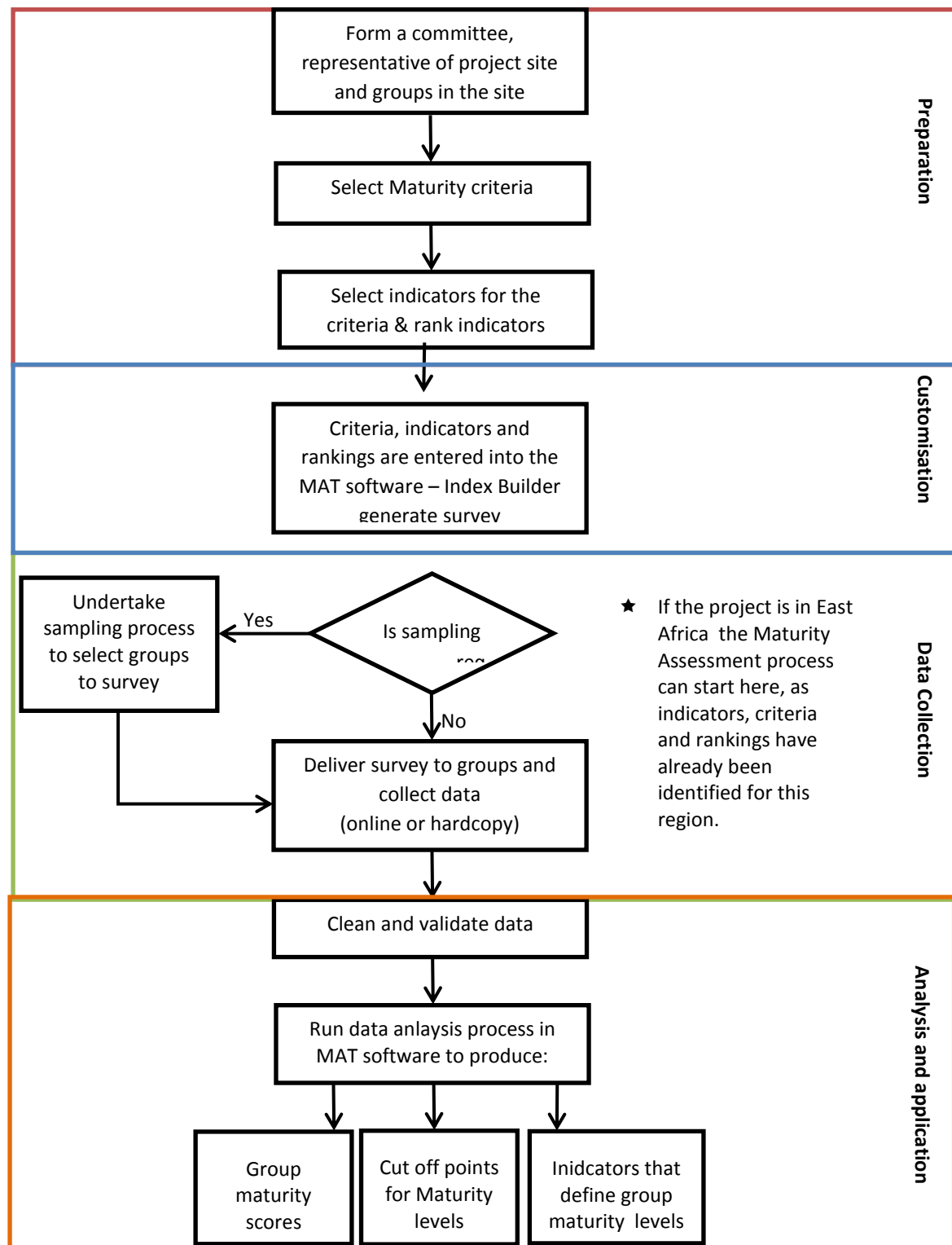


FIGURE 5:MATURITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS



## 4.1.Objective of the maturity assessment

The group maturity assessment process forms part of both the monitoring and evaluation baseline as well as providing information on the maturity level of the groups involved in the project. Maturity levels for groups are indicated as being :

- **Beginner** or in an early stage of group advancement or development with respect to functional arrangements
- **Intermediate** with a number of the group functionalities developed
- **Mature** or advanced with well-developed group structures and are likely to plan activities, document their work, practice multiple activities and have a constitution. They also have developed partnerships at a higher level than the other less mature groups.

Despite the connotations of age, group maturity does not necessarily reflect the number of years a group has been formed. Instead it refers to the capacity of the group to function effectively and sustainably.

The maturity assessment process is based on a groups responses to different criteria under the 5 principles identified to be critical in group maturity. These principles and criteria are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3: MATURITY ASSESSMENT – PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

Principle	Criteria
<b>Governance</b>	Group registration, Funding processes, Entry policy, Exit policy, Leadership succession rules, Members' terms of references, Upward mobility
<b>Management</b>	Key production/delivery and support, Group contracts and M.O.U.s with partners, Program description, Resource availability, Profit reinvestment
<b>Leadership</b>	Styles of leadership, Members' responsibilities, Influence of public perception, Organizational performance and improvement in its key business areas, Partnership performance, relationship with competitors, sustainability after ceasing of funding
<b>Capacity Development</b>	Dissemination of information and communication (to members and to the public), Organizational learning and capacity building, Types of training programs, Expertise in the group
<b>Resilience</b>	Achieving equity through heterogeneity in membership, Adaptive capacity, Accumulated asset records

Each of these criteria are measured through indicators that are ranked to reflect the characteristics of the site. For example, under the Governance principle there is the criteria of group registration which has indicators such as: internal group registration, registered with local government and informal registration. These indicators are taken from the area where the project will operate, as outlined in the next page.

## 4.2 Process for the maturity assessment

Below are steps to help you through the process of undertaking the maturity assessment. Some of these steps utilise the Maturity Assessment Tool (MAT) software, which can be accessed from.

### 4.2.1 Steps to consider

If the project will take place in East Africa the criteria, indicators and rankings have already been determined and a survey tool is available. Linking to the MAT Software and user manual will allow the project team to start this process at the data collection step below. For projects in Africa most of the criteria and indicators are likely to apply to the project site but you should start the process at the preparation step. For projects in Asia and other part of the world, greater changes to the criteria, indicators and rankings are likely to gain start at the preparation step.

### 4.2.2 Preparation

The first step is to identify which criteria are relevant to the project area and determine locally relevant indicators that can be used to assess maturity. The following process is one of the methodologies that could be employed. Other approaches may be used successfully as long as they are participatory in nature, represent the site level characteristics and produce a list of relevant criteria and appropriate indicators to test group maturity. The recommended process is:

1. Establish a **committee** that is representative of the groups in the project site and stakeholders that work with those groups (knowledgeable about the nature of the groups in the site) such as NGOs, Government officers and group representatives.
2. Ask the committee to select from the suggested **maturity criteria** list (Table 4), the criteria relevant to the groups in the area under each principle. Additional criteria can be added. Use a set of questions to prompt this discussion. Refer to the software manual<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Currently under development

3. Once the criteria list is developed, the appropriate **indicators for each criteria** are also selected by the committee. Additional indicators to the standard list (refer to the software manual for list) may be added.
4. The chosen indicators are then **ranked** according to how successful or effective each indicator is for the groups in the site. Rankings go from 1 (least successful/effective) to 3 (most successful/effective). For example with group registration, in the project area formal registration may be the most effective for the groups while informal may be the least effective. Alternatively both forms of registration may receive the same ranking score.

It is suggested that steps 1-3 above are done collectively by the committee in a plenary situation and then for the ranking, the committee is broken into smaller groups so a number of different rankings are provided.

### 4.2.3 Customization

This step uses the MAT software to produce a survey and scoring system, based on the criteria and indicators determined above.

1. The project officer should **enter the criteria, indicators and rankings** defined in the previous step into the INDEX BUILDER component of the MAT software. Refer to the software manual for assistance on how to complete this step (manual being developed)
2. The software will then calculate the **total scores** for the indicators and the indices for criteria (in other words the weighted score)
3. The **survey** can then be generated by the software in either an online format or exported for printing/ hardcopy delivery

### 4.2.4 Data collection

Before using the survey, the project team needs to design the data collection process to be used. The first step in this process is to decide if you need to survey all the groups or just a sample. If sampling is required, refer to a methodology for selecting groups to ensure that the results can be accurately generalised for the total number of groups in the project. Methodologies for sampling can be found here:

- [Wilson, I. Some Practical Sampling Procedures For Development Research.](#)
- [Ric Coe, 1996. Sampling Size Determination in Farmer Surveys. ICRAF Research Support Unit Technical Note No 4. ICRAF World Agroforestry Centre Nairobi, Kenya.](#)

Sampling may not be necessary if there are time or budget limitations, however by surveying all the groups, you can measure the changes each group undergoes over the project life.

Once you have determined the number of groups to be surveyed then you will need to consider the data collection process and decide on how you will collect the data and enter the responses to the survey. Possible options are

- Online: viable if groups have internet access. Data collection and entry will be online and will be directly connected to the software
- Hardcopy surveys: enumerators or project staff will collect data from the groups and will enter it into the software

When surveying a group it is best to have a number of members present and try to ensure there are both executive or leadership position members and normal members as well as a gender balance where possible. This way responses to the questions will represent the group better.

#### 4.2.5 Data Analysis and application

The MAT software has been designed to automatically produce several standard analysis of the data. Additional analysis of the data can be done by exporting the data set and using alternative analysis methods. The MAT software will produce the following analysis:

- Individual group maturity scores and level
- Cut-off points for the three maturity levels
- Indicators that uniquely define each of the maturity levels

#### APPLYING THE MATURITY ASSESSMENT

The maturity assessment results can be used to:

- Inform group soft skills to be built → Informs group needs assessment
- Define levels to target group capacity building activities → Inform workshop components
- Benchmark group performance prior to intervention (can be used as an M&E tool)
- Compare between groups **within the same project site.**

#### Limitations

It is important for any user of this model to be aware and acknowledge some of the limitations the maturity assessment phase possesses. While the limitations do not endanger or compromise the validity of the maturity assessment, not accounting for them may skew results of the assessment in favor of certain types of groups over the others.

1. Selecting the right people for the committee, as expressed in 4.2.2: As comprehensive as practitioners can be, it may be hard to get the right mix of people, with the requisite educational or professional qualifications in the committee.
2. Role of personal biases in determining what's effective for groups in an area and what is not. These biases can extend to the rankings as well.
3. Groups can be penalized for not conforming to the "norms", even if they are just as effective in operating and fulfilling their objectives as those that do conform to "norms"
4. Unique groups i.e. groups that work in a sector that is under-represented in the area, can be at a disadvantage, if committee members have little or no knowledge on the workings of those groups
5. The role of maturity in determining the performance of a group



PICTURE 4: EMBU, KENYA

## 5. CAPACITY NEEDS IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT PHASE

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$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{Groups} \text{Current Capacity} + \sum_{Groups} \text{Capacity Gaps} &= \\ \sum_{Groups} \sum \text{Capacity to Achieve Objectives} & \\ \equiv & \\ \sum_{Groups} \sum \text{Capacity to Achieve} - \sum_{Groups} \text{Current Capacity} &= \sum \text{Capacity Gaps (Needs)} \end{aligned}$$

### 5.1 Objective of capacity need assessment and analysis

The intent of the capacity needs assessment and analysis is to provide a comprehensive view of the issues that can be addressed through the capacity development process. The assessment also provides a thorough and systematic method to determining capacity needs and assessing existing capacity assets. The analysis facilitates a process of breaking down the components of the capacity needs of groups to identify the best ways and means of intervening to facilitate capacity development activities.

### 5.2 Capacity needs assessment

At this stage of the model, information pertaining to groups current capacities, objectives and vision will be required. The most effective way to identify the groups capacities and gaps is through a participatory workshop. It is recommended that the project team refer to the manual designed on how to run a Capacity Needs Assessment and Strategy Development Workshop.

The workshop was designed based on an appreciative inquiry process that takes participants through the four stages of appreciative inquiry namely discovery, dreaming, design and destiny. It uses participatory methods such as group discussions and presentations to enable participants to highlight common challenges they face, identify their stakeholders and how they perceive the relationship with those stakeholders. Role plays are used in the workshop to create awareness among participants on the importance of participation in group activities, communication among members, gender roles and the risks posed by the dependency on external assistance.

The participatory design of the workshop is purposeful to guide groups through the work plan development and objective setting process. Modules are organized to facilitate capacity identification and development through covering topics including an introduction to integrated development planning, followed by stakeholder analysis. Other topics include a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses,



opportunities and threats) analysis, definition of dissemination and farmer learning processes, guided work plan development and concluding with participatory monitoring and evaluation design. Through this structure, a number of outputs are achieved including group vision; objectives and strategies (SMART); assets; stakeholders; existing skills and training, and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The work plans focus on the each group's activities towards its future goals based on its relative strengths and opportunities for improvement, the environment it works in, capabilities of its partners and stakeholders and the individual wants and needs of each of the group members. The work plans also focus on the activities and strategies the group must undertake to achieve those goals and objectives.

Representatives from each group that attend the workshop are encouraged to take their draft work plans developed during the workshop back to their groups for input and amendment as required, to ensure group ownership of the plan. Groups then share their finalised work plans with the project team. These group level work plans should then be implemented by the groups as independently as possible.

The workshop should be organised by the project team, with participation from partners in the local area, and representatives from the participating groups. The workshop is designed to take five days but the project team may decide to shorten this time or approach the activities in a different format as long as the key outputs are obtained this step can be very flexible.

Methodology to select the groups to attend the workshop may vary based on project specific characteristics and region. When the maturity tool is used it is important to consider the maturity level of the groups and have representations of groups that are beginners to the mature. This will have an influence on how facilitators run the sessions in the workshop. They should bear in mind that the groups are at different levels hence the beginner groups may need more attention especially in group activities compared to the mature groups. This may also provide opportunities for the groups to learn from each other through presentations of group activities.

### **5.3 The design of the capacity needs analysis**

The methodology chosen for the capacity needs analysis for the project is based on the principles of a systematic capacity development, encompassing participatory processes.

Systematic capacity development is a broad multidimensional methodology that encompasses capacities at four levels including:

1. The individual;
2. Organisation;
3. Collaboration (networks); and
4. External factors which supports or constrains capacity development activities

Through adopting a systematic approach to capacity development, the methodology has recognised the role of groups and the collective framework they are part of. A systems perspective considers the groups as multilevel, holistic and interrelated to support a framework of whole of community development. This approach supports capacity development to be built on what exists in order to improve it, rather than to create new systems. These systems extend beyond the individual and group level, to systems of collective action, enterprise activities and platform development as explored in other phases of this model. Entrenched in this framework is the view that capacity development needs to be participatory to ensure it is focussed on the groups, empowering and non-hierarchical. The design of the analysis fosters a participatory framework in which the current capacities are identified by the groups, through the data collection steps and a systematic approach to analyse the capacity needs to support the strengthening of the grassroots rural institutions is undertaken by the project team. As a result of these considerations, the capacity needs analysis framework offers a methodology that considers the intricate network of stakeholders both at the individual, group and community level that seek to enhance their abilities to achieve their objectives, both through their own capacity initiatives and the support of outsiders.

#### **5.4.Steps of capacity needs analysis process**

In undertaking the capacity needs analysis process, it is important to assume that there are existing capacities within the group that can and should be built on.

The first step of the capacity needs analysis process is to compile all existing relevant and available data regarding the groups. This includes information that has been collected by the project team, including the quick scan of external factors, initial group assessment at design phase and the detailed maturity assessment phase. Data from the MAT software can be included in the assessment including the overall maturity score and specific relevant data. Likewise, from project team discussions, information with regards to the project expectations is obtained, often down to specific project sites. Past and current activities should also be included if they were not captured in the quick scan to ensure project activities are aligned to site priorities and are not at risk of duplicating past investment. This process also provides an avenue for engagement with potential project partners and stakeholders to support the implementation of group work plans to implement the capacity needs identified following the analysis. The main information source is the workshop outlined in the capacity needs identification step above.

The second stage of the process is synthesising the data collected. The information obtained through the workshop, particularly the group objectives, provides the framework to assess the current group capacities that are identified through the environmental scan, maturity assessment tool and the group work plan from the workshop to identify the capacity gaps. The capacity needs analysis framework follows the structure of the below matrix, by assessing the desired capacity against

existing capacity in order to identify the capacity gaps. 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 of the group.

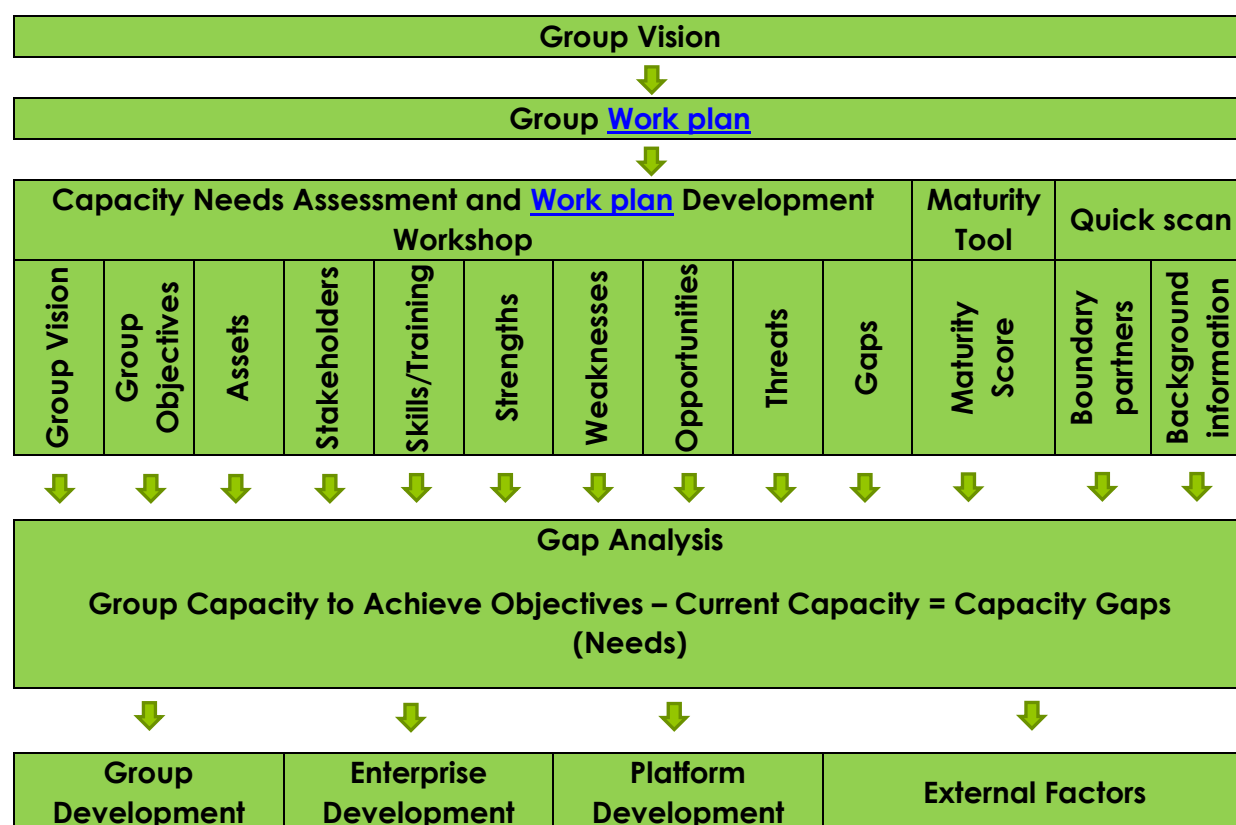


FIGURE 6:CAPACITY NEEDS ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

**Group development:** capacities identified through the process refer to the generic skills, knowledge and attributes the group requires to support their day to day activities and functioning. These are the critical skills that are imperative for the group to either strengthen or obtain in order to meet their identified objective or any future objective. Examples of these types of capacities include soft skills such as leadership, conflict resolution, negotiation, communication, to technical skills such as crop or animal husbandry, financial management and proposal writing. These skills are often obtained through trainings, field visits and mentor exchanges amongst other mediums.

**Platform development:** activities that support the objectives and vision set by groups that require knowledge sharing, up scaling and public policy participation in which they require support from other groups through the establishment or joining of platforms. Platforms are mechanisms for enhancing communication and innovation capacities amongst groups through improved interactions, coordination and

coherence among all actors to facilitate learning and contribute to the production and use of knowledge. From a group capacity development perspective, it is established that bringing parties together for sharing experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas and resources contributes to economic gains through improved productivity, services and innovation through an enabling environment.

Through group objective and vision setting exercises, many groups identify wealth generating activities and market opportunities, and as such, capacity needs with regards to enterprise development are considered. **Enterprise development** involves the process of generating income, improving food security and facilitating sustainable livelihoods. Activities in this area aim to optimize household level incomes through improved productivity, encouraged savings, investments and asset accumulation. At the household level productivity will be linked to a fostered local level collective action, it is important to consider this within the context of groups in order to achieve economies of scale.

The final consideration in the capacity needs analysis is the externalities to the group through the **External factors**. These include interrelated conditions such as policies, attitudes, fiscal, informational, political and cultural factors that impact on the capacity of groups to achieve their objectives and vision. Whilst limited force can generally be exerted to influence these factors, they are important to acknowledge as either an inhibitor or supporter of group success in achieving their goals and objectives. The value of identifying these externalities is their escalation from the group work plans through to the combined site plan as supporting evidence for partner agencies and stakeholders to address these impediments.

Depending on the nature of the project design, the capacity needs analysis process can be undertaken at either an individual group level, a site/regional level or a combination of the two. The summary of the results of the analysis compares the desired and existing capacities of groups in order to formulate a capacity development response through the group or site work plan. A key consideration in the analysis and development of the work plan is the risk of subjectivity in the identification of an appropriate capacity development response. The project team is required to discern patterns in capacity gaps to identify whether a gap is consistent across the groups objectives, or a specific capacity of little consequence to the overall strengthening of the group. Subsequently, it is important to gather a variety of perspectives and take into consideration the different points of view. It is also advised to include officers who have knowledge of the area and the groups in the assessment process.

As an outcome of this phase, each project site will have produced a combination work plan for the site, which brings together common gaps and an identification of soft skills that need to be developed across groups engaged at the site<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> An example of the *Capacity Needs Analysis Framework* example will be soon provided

## 6. GROUP CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

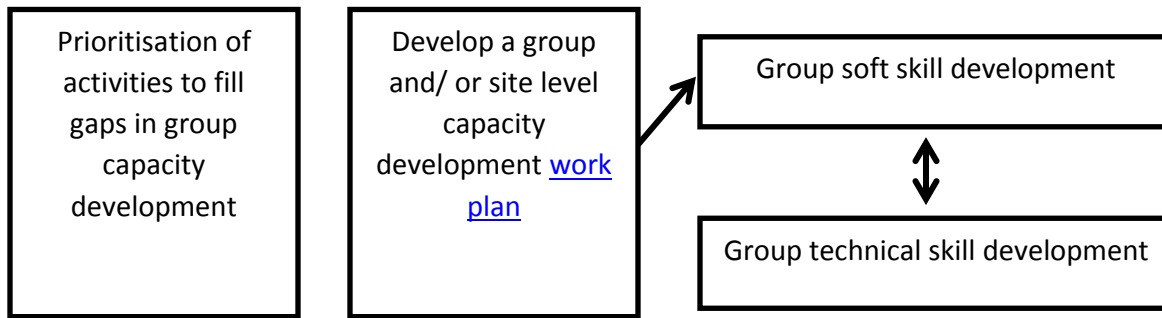


FIGURE 7:GROUP CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

### 6.1. Objective of capacity development

This phase of the model aims at building the capacity of groups in both technical and soft skills. This is to be done by implementing a work plan aimed at filling prioritized gaps by planning specific activities for the development of group capacities so they can reach their objectives. Most activities to fill these gaps will involve training, mentoring, facilitation and other information sharing methods such as field/exchange visits, farmer field schools etc.

It is important to note that while many soft skills are less tangible such as trust, communication and conflict resolution, they are often vital for groups to function well, achieve their objectives and be sustainable. Below are some ideas on how to fill the identified gaps identified in the previous phase of the model and this process should in turn relate to a rise in the groups maturity score and its achievement of its group level objectives. Some of these changes will be seen early in the project while others may take many years to develop.

### 6.2. Planning

#### 6.2.1 Prioritisation

A number of gaps relating to group development will be identified in the capacity needs assessment and analysis phase. Projects need to identify activities that will fill the gaps. The activities need to be prioritised at either at group level or at site level to cover a number of group needs in one plan.

The method used to prioritise activities (filling gaps) will vary from project to project but some guiding questions to assist are:

- How many groups are benefiting – for site level plans it is good to consider how many groups need this activity (gap to be filled) and how many will benefit?

- Cost versus benefit – what are the likely costs associated with running this activity in terms of funds, resources and time. What will be the benefits? How big are the benefits and will they be felt in the long or short term?
- Multiplier effect - 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?

With these guiding questions and any others considered relevant, the project team (including representatives from the sites) can prioritise activities informally, through group discussion at a workshop for example or more formally by assigning values to each criteria and scoring activities accordingly.

### 6.2.2 Work plan development

The next step is to establish a capacity development work plan for each group and/or site. For larger projects, work plans are likely to be developed at site level and the size of the site will depend on the project, and number of groups involved. The work plans generated should concentrate on group level interventions to increase capacity but some of the activities may also build capacities for enterprise and platform development. Table 4 outlines some of the topics and considerations for taking the prioritised activities into the work plan.

Table 4: Considerations when developing a work plan for capacity development

Topic	Considerations
<b>Activity</b>	Start with highest priority activities (can be grouped or individual)
<b>Activity lead</b>	Who will oversee the implementation of the activity/training and who will conduct it
<b>Partners</b>	Other partners that could be doing similar work that you should involve. Could they implement this activity?
<b>Extension methodology</b>	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.)
<b>Timing</b>	Should consider how activities will be staged through year and number of days, consider availability of trainers and your availability
<b>Audience</b>	Is it aimed at representatives from each group? How many? Aimed at one group only or many groups?
<b>Budget</b>	Estimate at first and give in local currency and USD. Does it fit in the project budget?
<b>Challenges</b>	List main challenges to implementing the activity if it exists and think of ways to overcome them
<b>Measure of success</b>	What will you use to record activity took place and its value? e.g. attendance lists, reports, feedback from participants, etc

Often in a prioritisation and work plan development process some of the soft skills are missed. The results of the maturity assessment process should be considered to ensure that the less tangible capacity gaps are known and that time is allocated for the facilitator to spend with the groups to build them.



Table 5 provides a list of soft skill topics that could be addressed for the groups that are scoring low for the associated principle.

Table 5: Soft skills associated with each of the five principles in the maturity assessment

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

### 6.3 Process of capacity development

The group capacity development process includes two components as shown in Figure 5.

- The first is a process to build the **'soft skills'** of the group. These include but are not limited to; communication, governance, leadership, sustainability, negotiation support, conflict resolution, inclusiveness, partnering, lobbying and entrepreneurial thinking.
- The **'technical skills'** capacity development path will build the technical knowledge and skills of the group as identified in the capacity needs assessment to assist the individual groups to achieve their goals and objectives.

Each of these paths have their own tools and resources associated with them. Both paths are likely to be required, but each will be described separately. It is likely that you will be able to implement activities under each stream concurrently, and once a capacity development work plan is established this should be studied carefully to identify opportunities for synergies and efficiencies. A range of service providers can be used to deliver the trainings and facilitation and will depend on the project area and budget.

### **6.3.1 Building group soft skills**

1. Identify the groups soft skill development activities from the work plans.
2. Identify appropriate facilitators at the site level to assist groups to develop the required soft skills. A facilitator is *"one who contributes structure and process to interactions so groups are able to function effectively and make high-quality decisions. A helper and enabler whose goal is to support others as they achieve exceptional performance"* (Bens 2000). A list of facilitator do's and don't's as well as a detailed list of skills a facilitator should have is available in the [Facilitators manual for strengthening rural institutions through building the soft skills in rural grassroots organisations.](#)
3. Identify opportunities to facilitate group development of the required soft skills. Note that this is unlikely to take the form of traditional training, but may be a series of conversations, meetings, mentoring, linking to other role models etc. They may also be combined with technical trainings, such as a training on writing a constitution as the technical training but helping the group own the constitution as developing a soft skill.
4. Undertake facilitation - Please refer to the [Facilitators manual for strengthening rural institutions through building the soft skills in rural grassroots organisations](#) for suggested processes and approaches. Also talk to other experienced facilitators at your site about how they have addressed these issues with groups successfully in the past.
5. Be sure to monitor and evaluate (M&E) the progress of groups. If a maturity assessment was undertaken at the beginning of the project, this will form a baseline for improvements over time. Also, check in with the group regularly to assess the effectiveness of your interventions.

### **6.3.2 Building group technical skills**

1. Implement work plans for technical training using appropriate trainers.
2. Ensure M&E is done for each activity, both before and after the training. Ensure that there is adequate follow up to reinforce lessons and support adoption.

## 7. ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

### 7.1 Introduction

The Enterprise development phase involves the improvement of Rural Grassroots Enterprises (GEs) and by linking groups and other stakeholders for technology dissemination, market exploration and development of viable farm enterprises, increasing marketing power of groups and addressing economies of scale of production.

Rural Grassroots Enterprises consists of any formal or informal entity that is engaged in the transformation of agricultural and natural resource products for economic gain. In rural areas, where agriculture is the predominant employer of labor, GEs lead to greater off-farm employment opportunities, more diversified income sources, and increases in general standards of living.

### 7.2. Factors influencing effective and sustainable enterprise Development

Eight key factors have been identified that must be considered for any attempt at strengthening GEs. These key factors can be broadly classified into 3 groups: Increasing capacity at the grassroots level for households and groups, linking to markets and services, and creating enabling conditions for those GEs to operate in.

Table 6: Key factors for developing enterprises in a rural setting

1. Increase Grassroots capacity	2. Link to markets and services	3. Create enabling conditions
1.1 Strengthen households	2.1 Markets	3.1 Hard and soft infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Livelihood diversification</li> <li>▪ Income diversification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving access</li> <li>▪ Decreasing volatility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promoting access</li> <li>▪ Bridging gaps</li> </ul>
1.2 Group or organizational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Market information</li> <li>▪ Transparency</li> </ul>	3.2 Enabling conditions and policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Management structures</li> <li>▪ Skills and knowledge</li> <li>▪ Leadership competencies</li> </ul>	2.2 Support services and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local government</li> <li>▪ Regulations</li> </ul>

▪ Strategic planning	▪ Production support	▪ Standards
	▪ Post-production support	▪ Taxation
2.3 Private sector engagement		▪ Licensing
▪ Building capacity		▪ Policy interventions
▪ Creating marketing networks	3.3 Knowledge sharing devices	
▪ Leveraging CSR		

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FIGURE 8: EXAMPLE OF LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE, RESOURCE INTENSITY, AND LEVEL OF INFLUENCE OF THE 8 FACTORS FOR A TYPICAL GRASSROOTS ENTERPRISE

### 7.3 Deciding on which Enterprise Development factors to address

While the above factors may all be relevant to GEs, the degree to which a project or program may aim to address deficiencies in each of those factors will vary, based on three broad criteria. Ideally, a combination of all three criteria will be used when deciding whether or not to address deficiencies within those factors. Another point to remember is that different forms of enterprises will have different variations to those shown in Figure 6.

- a. Level of importance to the rural enterprise: Some forms of rural enterprises may be able to operate without the sufficient presence of a few factors mentioned above, or may be able to circumvent the absence of a factor by changing their mode of operation. For example: Many rural areas have improper hard infrastructure such as roads, electricity etc. Certain enterprises that services local markets or that do not need electrical equipment to operate with may be able to deal with the absence of this infrastructure by using transport animals to haul their products or by using manual machines to process or produce their products
- b. Resource intensity: Certain factors may be more resource intensive to address (in terms of money, time, labor etc.) than others. Deciding on whether or not a factor is worth addressing will depend on its resource intensiveness. In most cases, a prudent return on investment approach would be beneficial i.e. choosing to address a factor based on its economic value being greater than the cost of addressing that factor
- c. Level of influence by the project: Some of these factors may be beyond the scope of what a project can effectively address. Examples include infrastructure, policies etc. The level of influence is determined by how much of a significant change the project can make in a reasonable amount of time with minimum of resources



PICTURE 5 : LUSHOTO, TANZANIA

## 8. PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT

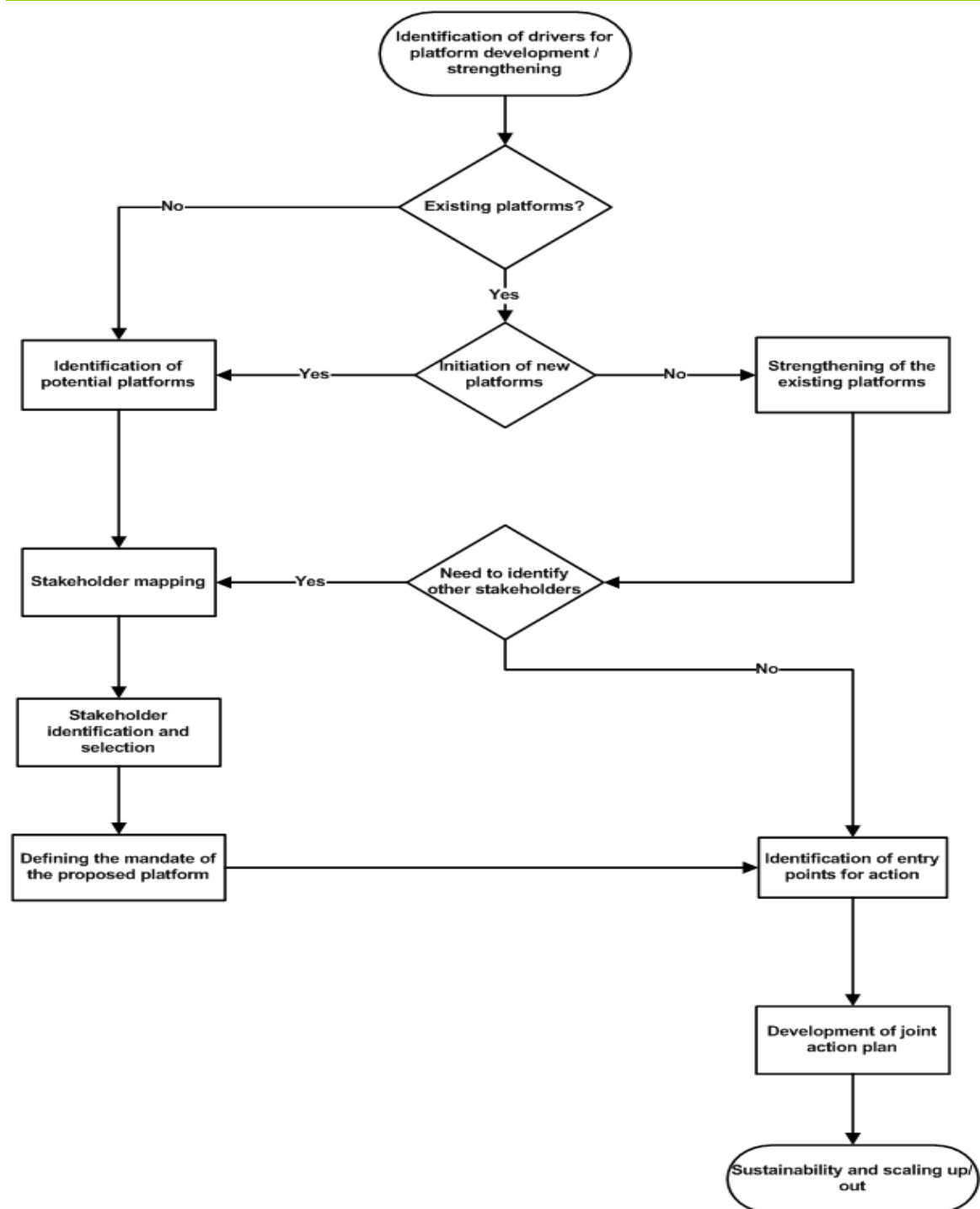


FIGURE 8: PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT



### 8.1. Objective of platform development

Platforms are mechanisms for enhancing communication and innovation capacities among mutually dependent actors through improved interactions, coordination and coherence. IPs facilitates learning and contributes to production and use of knowledge. The concept of IPs has gained ground as an avenue for encouraging and supporting the interaction between research and development. Bringing together various actors into the innovation process for the purpose of sharing experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas and resources contributes to economic gains through improved productivity and services (Nederlof et al., 2011).

Platforms can be established at various levels, ranging from local to sub-national and national levels with different objectives and functions. Interventions to support an innovation process also vary depending on the purpose of the IP and are influenced by both the initial context and the capacity of different actors involved. Typically local IPs are more action-oriented learning platforms while sub-national and national platforms could play a strong role in the overall coordination, identification & addressing of institutional and policy constraints, as well as scaling up/ out of best practices and lessons learnt. Most commonly, IPs are structured into phases which support their interventions. These phases can be broadly categorized as; initial engagement with stakeholders, through planning, implementation, learning and assessment to a final phase that ensures continuity and sustainability within a dynamic enabling environment

The key objectives of this phase are to:

- Define drivers for platform formation
- Facilitate the establishment and development of smallholder innovation platforms
- Formulate mechanisms of strengthening already existing innovation platforms
- Assess the needs and priorities of the various platform actors

Facilitate the management of these platforms

### 8.2. Requirements for platform development/ initiation

For a platform to be developed, it is important to identify the following:

- The drivers of platform formation
- The constraints that need to be addressed and their scope. For example, issues to do with land degradation, soil erosion amongst other natural resource management (NRM) issues cover a wide scope and affect all community members within the given area. In such a case, there is need to come up with a platform that will involve and engage all the affected persons in the effort of addressing these constraints.

A number of factors need to be analysed, to help identify the potential platforms, based on the following sub-headings:

- Agro-ecological and landscape level concerns
  - Benefit sharing and conflict resolution
  - Achieving economies of scale
  - Managing private-public partnerships
  - Development of niche markets
  - Enabling of vertical and horizontal integration of conservation and market development through well-defined governance processes
- Existing platforms and their mandates as these will indicate whether there is need for developing other new platforms or strengthening the existing
- Stakeholders to be involved before initiation of new platforms. This can be done through the external factor quick scan at design phase and should identify who are involved in working with the groups and what are their levels of engagement

### **8.3 Process of developing platforms**

Some basic generic steps which are vital to the process of platform development include:

- Identification of potential platforms to develop that will be useful in addressing the challenges affecting a given community and which are beyond the ability of the individual groups to address
- Defining the mandate of the proposed platform with the help of local resource persons since it is at community level that innovation through multi-stakeholder interaction is most likely to take place
- Initial local stakeholder mapping and selection - As a next step, collaboration needs to be sought with a local resource person. A further definition of the subject then needs to be made with this person. After this, a stakeholder mapping can be carried out based on stakeholders identified in the quick scan and representatives of stakeholders approached to participate in the establishment of the platform
- Joint identification of promising entry points for action - After having convinced different stakeholders to participate, a first step can be taken for analysing the entry points related to the chosen platform. Needs and opportunities should to be identified, leading to a list of promising entry points for action
- Development of a joint action plan and agreement on division of tasks - The next step would be the elaboration of a plan for joint action and the establishment of a division of roles within the platform. A joint action plan would include a component on progress monitoring, assessment of the need for change of direction and the documenting of lessons learned from initiatives taken by the platform
- Sustainability and scaling-up - Within the platform the question of how to sustain its efforts needs to be discussed and addressed at an early stage. Furthermore, the platform's ambitions and strategies for scaling-up its impact beyond the direct surroundings of the platform itself need to be clarified

## 8.4. Tools to be used for facilitation, monitoring and evaluation

In order to measure the progress of the established/ strengthened platforms, there is need for some tools and materials to be used. Some of the proposed tools and materials include but are not limited to:

- Platform establishment protocol used during the establishment phase of the platform. It should include details on the process of formation of the platform, the structure of the platform, common issues/ objective of the platform and the information sharing mechanisms
- Activity report and after action review to assist in capturing information on each activity carried out in terms of the description, objective, organizer, platform actors involved, process used and the results of the activity
- Training evaluation form to contain information on the name of the training offered, the date offered, general aspects of the training, usefulness of the training, technical content of the training, methods used to offer the training, competence of the trainer
- Inventory of knowledge sharing mechanisms to capture information on the methods used for information and knowledge sharing, information being shared, number of partners utilising, estimated potential reach amongst partners and farmers based on gender

## 9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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### 9.1. Monitoring and Evaluating

When using this model, it is suggested that the M&E activities themselves be undertaken on a two-track basis – project level and intervention level. At the project level, the M&E is concerned with high level goals and targets, such as development and delivery of products and services. At the intervention level, the M&E would look at assessing the effectiveness of the intervention methods proposed by the project team (i.e. the actual capacity building efforts). To help with implementation of M&E at the intervention level, it is proposed to make it as participatory as possible, with the onus on collecting data and partial dissemination of results resting with the partners or groups involved in the interventions.

At the project level, the M&E component is important to monitor progress on activities and outputs, make adjustments as required to project strategies, reporting to interested stakeholders, and to ensure the achievement of the project objectives and goals. At the intervention level, the M&E component will help assess the effectiveness of the intervention methods proposed, develop a sense of ownership of the capacity development process amongst the partners, and help refine strategies that contribute towards the achievement of the higher level objectives.

An important distinction between the project level and intervention level components will be in the characteristics of the indicators used to measure those components. At the project level, most indicators are expected to be quantitative indicators (such as number of people reached, date by which achieved, number of products developed etc.), while at the intervention level, the indicators will be a mix of quantitative and qualitative.

## **9.2. The importance of participatory M&E**

Individuals, groups, and other forms of rural institutions are the primary stakeholders of the project and the M&E approach should strive towards accountability to them. Positive or negative impacts on livelihoods will be based on the success of the project interventions. These stakeholders will have a pivotal role in guiding the project work towards an outcome that is successful from their perspective. Much of the data for the M&E system will be generated and gathered at the community level, and an equal emphasis will be placed on sharing the analysis of that data and subsequent learning and response. The M&E system should be influenced by the needs of the project stakeholders, and will aim to provide robust information to them on progress within their communities, and encourage mutual learning and good decision-making.

## **9.3. Using M&E tools**

At the project level, the guiding tool will be the project log frame, which will set the boundaries for what the project hopes to achieve. Clear deliverables should be set, and responsibilities must be allocated equably, and a clear cut M&E strategy document should be developed around this log frame.

At each intervention level, there are many tools that can be applied to track the progress of the capacity building efforts. The following are suggested by the project which developed this model:

- Work plan monitoring sheets – For target tracking and for strategy review at group and site level
- Training feedback sheets – To assess the quality of training or other capacity development activities provided to groups
- Short form maturity tool – To assess the progress that groups make in their maturity ratings. It is assumed that with greater capacity and better achievement of work plan targets, groups will slowly progress on their maturity ratings
- Evaluation questions – Using focused questions to gather qualitative information from the groups

- Informal data and information gathering – While structured forms of data gathering have their purposes, informal methods, such as casual conversations, drop in meetings etc. can provide a wealth of information that can be used to supplement the tools mentioned above

Using these tools you can track a groups progress in achieving their own individual work plan and the implementation of the site work plan to fill group capacity gaps and the influence of this on the group. You can also track the structural/functional maturity of the group through the MAT software each year or two as well as the groups views on their structural changes using the short form maturity tool.

The evaluation questions can provide insight to changes in the institutions change in mind-set as well as the mind-set changes in facilitators and project staff through the project.

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## **10.1 SRI PROJECT OUTPUTS CITED**

SRI Team (2013) [Capacity needs identification and assessment](#)

SRI Team (expected 2014) Group Capacity Needs Assessment and Strategy Development Workshop Manual (under review) – available in 2014

SRI Team (expected 2014) Facilitators manual for strengthening rural institutions through building the soft skills in rural grassroots organisations.

IFAD (Expected 2014) How To Analyse and Develop Social Capital of Smallholder Organizations .

Further information about the Project, the SRI team as well as updated versions of this document and all the SRI Project Outputs cited can be found at

[http://worldagroforestry.org/regions/eastern-africa/our-projects/collective\\_action\\_and\\_institutional\\_strengthening/outputs](http://worldagroforestry.org/regions/eastern-africa/our-projects/collective_action_and_institutional_strengthening/outputs)



## ANNEX I : PRELIMINARY MATURITY ASSESSMENT AT DESIGN STAGE (TABLE)

Questions		Answers		
		1- Beginner	2-Intermediate	3-Mature
GOVERNANCE				
1	In what ways is the group registered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Not formally registered <input type="checkbox"/> Group internal registration	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal/justice system <input type="checkbox"/> Civil society	<input type="checkbox"/> Local government <input type="checkbox"/> National level government
2	Under what circumstances will a member exit the group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited performance in collective action <input type="checkbox"/> Vote of no confidence in member by the group <input type="checkbox"/> Change of marital status	<input type="checkbox"/> Member's expectations of the group not met <input type="checkbox"/> Group dissolution <input type="checkbox"/> Self-withdrawal <input type="checkbox"/> Conflicts within the group	<input type="checkbox"/> Absenteeism <input type="checkbox"/> Unexpected occurrences <input type="checkbox"/> Not paying subscription/contribution fees <input type="checkbox"/> Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Conditions specified in the constitution
3	What is the basis of promotion to leadership?	<input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building <input type="checkbox"/> Holding group shares	<input type="checkbox"/> After election terms <input type="checkbox"/> Self-assessment and initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Level of education <input type="checkbox"/> Social status	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic voting <input type="checkbox"/> Performance <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills
4	Which of the following group management practices exist?	<input type="checkbox"/> No group policy/regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Government laws <input type="checkbox"/> Strength of collective action	<input type="checkbox"/> Delegation of duties <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability and transparency	<input type="checkbox"/> Following the constitutions and by-laws <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure regular meetings
5	How are group assets jointly managed? (Adherence to group governance)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not jointly managed	<input type="checkbox"/> Asset management through legal documents <input type="checkbox"/> Asset management through democratic decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Management through formation of a sub-committee <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency	<input type="checkbox"/> As specified in the Constitution and by-laws

# STRENGTHENING GRASSROOTS INSTITUTIONS IN SMALLHOLDER FARMING SYSTEMS: AN EMERGING MODEL

6	What interaction does the group have with non-members	<input type="checkbox"/> No interaction with non-members	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation is limited <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance to meetings by invitation of non-members <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary attendance to meetings allowed for non-members
7	How do group members participate in group activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Welfare support <input type="checkbox"/> Produce contribution	<input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary participation <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in kind <input type="checkbox"/> Contribution of time <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Members contribution <input type="checkbox"/> Participation by sharing ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Manual labour
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>				
8	How does the group partner with other groups/organisations?	<input type="checkbox"/> No partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimal interactions with other groups/organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Regulation	<input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships that are mutually beneficial <input type="checkbox"/> Membership, coordination, training, financial support and capacity building
9	How are group activities contracted and enforced?	<input type="checkbox"/> We don't have contracts/MoUs <input type="checkbox"/> Signing contracts	<input type="checkbox"/> Through the management committee <input type="checkbox"/> Group constitution <input type="checkbox"/> Group action plan <input type="checkbox"/> Through the help of technical offices <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding contents	<input type="checkbox"/> Through meetings
10	How are group conflicts managed?	<input type="checkbox"/> We never experience conflicts	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive committee <input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary committee <input type="checkbox"/> Group by-laws <input type="checkbox"/> Arbitrators	<input type="checkbox"/> Group meetings
11	What types of resources are available to the group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicles <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Human capabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Financial resources <input type="checkbox"/> Physical resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Human resources <input type="checkbox"/> Members 'contributions'
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>				
12	What responsibilities do the group leaders have?	<input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying for support from development partners <input type="checkbox"/> Effective management through good practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobilizing group members for trainings/meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitization of the group through provision of regular progress reports	<input type="checkbox"/> In group meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in group activities
13	What responsibilities do the group members have?	<input type="checkbox"/> No specific	<input type="checkbox"/> Payment of membership fee	<input type="checkbox"/> Respect and acceptance of

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		responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Holding shares <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term members should respect terms of office/limits	Members' contributions <input type="checkbox"/> Adhere to group's aims and main purpose	by-laws and Constitution <input type="checkbox"/> Group participation <input type="checkbox"/> Members' contributions
14	How is group participation promoted?	<input type="checkbox"/> No efforts to promote participation <input type="checkbox"/> Technology hand-outs	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to benefits according to shares and contributions <input type="checkbox"/> Group benefits (according to shares and contribution) <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders 'volunteerism'	<input type="checkbox"/> Provisions in the Constitutions and by-laws <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency and accountability
15	What level of performance does the groups partners consider the group to have?	<input type="checkbox"/> Low level	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium level	<input type="checkbox"/> High level
16	What level of performance does the groups competitors consider the group to have?	<input type="checkbox"/> No competitors	<input type="checkbox"/> Low performance compared to other groups undertaking similar activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium group performance compared to other groups undertaking similar activities <input type="checkbox"/> High group performance compared to other groups undertaking similar activities
17	How does the group perform after support from a partner or funder has finished?	<input type="checkbox"/> Low group performance after the end or change of support received by partners/funders	<input type="checkbox"/> No change	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderate group performance after the end or change of support received by partners/funders <input type="checkbox"/> High group performance after the end or change of support received by partners/funders
<b>CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT</b>				
18	How does the group communicate to the public	<input type="checkbox"/> There is no communication with the public <input type="checkbox"/> Radio announcements	<input type="checkbox"/> In writing <input type="checkbox"/> Flyers/posters <input type="checkbox"/> Exchange visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Public meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Phones
19	What methods are used to share lessons within the group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmers field school <input type="checkbox"/> Technocrats/mentors <input type="checkbox"/> Mass media <input type="checkbox"/> Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Field days <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop and seminars <input type="checkbox"/> Exchange visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer to farmer
20	What methods does the group use to share lessons with others outside the group?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not share knowledge with other groups <input type="checkbox"/> Mass media	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural exhibition /shows <input type="checkbox"/> By providing extension services <input type="checkbox"/> Field days	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in other groups 'meetings' <input type="checkbox"/> Exchange visits <input type="checkbox"/> Public meetings

# STRENGTHENING GRASSROOTS INSTITUTIONS IN SMALLHOLDER FARMING SYSTEMS: AN EMERGING MODEL

			<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration sites	
21	What methods does the group use to train others in the community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive officers <input type="checkbox"/> Media <input type="checkbox"/> Residential courses	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer to farmer <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration on good agricultural practices <input type="checkbox"/> Participatory approach	<input type="checkbox"/> Through practice and theory <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop, seminars and lectures
22	What types of expertise exist within the group?	No expertise	Technical expertise Professional skills (e.g. accounting)	Expertise acquired in trainings and workshops
23	What types of organisations does the group partner with?	<input type="checkbox"/> No expertise, dependent on partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Banking institutions	<input type="checkbox"/> Donors <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-based institutions <input type="checkbox"/> Research institutions	<input type="checkbox"/> Government (extension services) <input type="checkbox"/> NGOs
RESILIENCE				
	How does the group accumulate knowledge?	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge repositories <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation by stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> In computers <input type="checkbox"/> Filming <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity through radio	<input type="checkbox"/> Group visits <input type="checkbox"/> Group activities <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-generations transfer of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building <input type="checkbox"/> Group reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Record keeping <input type="checkbox"/> Trainings
	What mechanisms does the group have in place to take advantage of opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> No mechanism in place <input type="checkbox"/> Bank statements/budgets <input type="checkbox"/> Through stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/> Depends on popularity of the group/visibility <input type="checkbox"/> Strength of group in terms of financial capacity <input type="checkbox"/> Registration status <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> Field visits	<input type="checkbox"/> Constitution <input type="checkbox"/> Records <input type="checkbox"/> Workplan/budget <input type="checkbox"/> Registration status
	What mechanisms of value addition are used by the group?	<input type="checkbox"/> No mechanism in place	<input type="checkbox"/> Income gains <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building <input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition of relevant technologies <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration/networking	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource mobilization <input type="checkbox"/> Training