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**Week - 02**  
**Lecture - 14**  
**Participatory Rural Appraisal & Rapid Rural Appraisal Part 4**

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**PRA report writing methods**

Two steps:

- 1. Data analysis:**
  - ✓ Analysis should be kept simple and relevant to the purpose and scope of the study.
  - ✓ If complex data are to be used, then every effort must be made to present the findings in non technical language
  - ✓ Data and info. Must be arranged according to category, issue, topic, sub-topic or question.
- 2. Report writing:**

Should have the following parts:

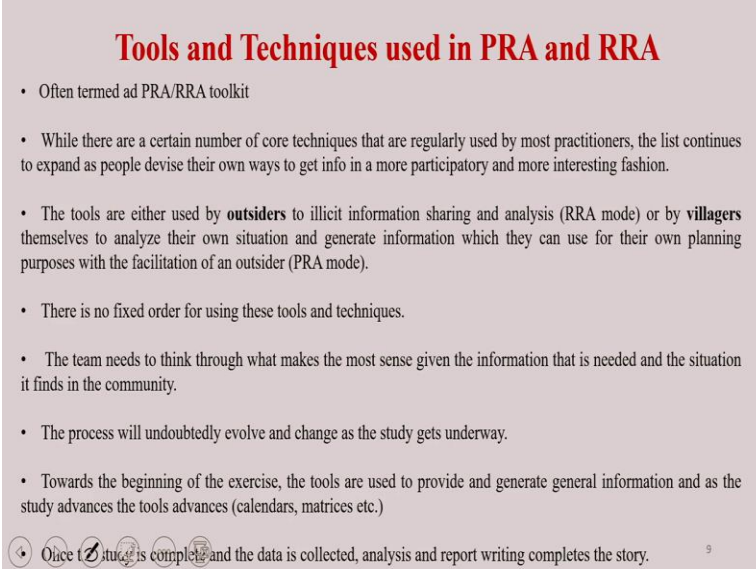
  - ✓ Problem statement ( including the conceptual framework)
  - ✓ Purpose and scope
  - ✓ Methodology
  - ✓ Data and findings
  - ✓ Implications of findings
  - ✓ Summary
  - ✓ References and appendices

Now, we will discuss about the PRA report writing methods and please note that this is one of the most important step of a successful PRA exercise because at the end of a day your entire PRA exercise outcomes need to go in the form of a report to policy makers, to decision makers. So your PRA report need to be very efficient and at the same time it should also give a good kind of experience for the people who will be reading your report.

So, two key steps in case of PRA report writing methods we should remember, one is data analysis, the data that you will be getting during the process of PRA exercise various kind of data we have already discussed. You might get lot of numerical data and a lot more categorical data so you have to decide that what kind of analysis for this data or information that you would like to carry out.

Then comes your report writing, once data analysis is done obviously you are going to get some tables some figures so you need to interpret those. Now in case of report writing we should have the following parts like problem statement including the conceptual framework; on what basis you started your exercise, purpose and scope, methodology that you have followed, the data and findings which will come from this data analysis exercise. Implications of findings mean interpretation of this data, then summary and finally references and appendices. So this kind of consolidated report needs to be prepared for a successful dissemination or outreach of your entire exercise.

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### Tools and Techniques used in PRA and RRA

- Often termed as PRA/RRA toolkit
- While there are a certain number of core techniques that are regularly used by most practitioners, the list continues to expand as people devise their own ways to get info in a more participatory and more interesting fashion.
- The tools are either used by **outsiders** to illicit information sharing and analysis (RRA mode) or by **villagers** themselves to analyze their own situation and generate information which they can use for their own planning purposes with the facilitation of an outsider (PRA mode).
- There is no fixed order for using these tools and techniques.
- The team needs to think through what makes the most sense given the information that is needed and the situation it finds in the community.
- The process will undoubtedly evolve and change as the study gets underway.
- Towards the beginning of the exercise, the tools are used to provide and generate general information and as the study advances the tools advance (calendars, matrices etc.)

Once the study is complete and the data is collected, analysis and report writing completes the story.

Now, the tools and techniques while actually carrying out this PRA exercise that you will be using at the field level. You will be using certain techniques which are very core of this exercise, some other techniques may be useful at some point of time for some purposes and may not be useful for the other.

So, the tools are either used by outsiders means people like us who are going into the village to extract the information or sharing or analysis or the tools can be used by the villagers also when you go for field visit by their own. So in doing so you are actually also enhancing the capacity of these people.

So, there is no fixed order for using these tools or techniques that we will be discussing in a few minutes. As I said that it is useful not to depend on any standard protocols. It is evolving and a

dynamic process when you go for PRA exercise and deal with the community. The team like us we need to think throughout what makes the most sense given the information that is needed and the situation that it finds in the community, we must think about that.

The process that we will be following undoubtedly will evolve with time so you might find that that one way of handling a issue has worked today probably after two days it may not be working in that way. So you need to evolve your process; situational from that point of view, towards the beginning of the exercise the tools that you are going to use are largely to provide and generate general information and with the time when you advance in your PRA exercise you will find that you need to use more specific tools and techniques which we will be discussing very soon. So, once the study is completed and the data is collected then you go for analysis and report writing as we just now discussed.

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## PRA techniques

The PRA techniques can be broadly classified under three headings:

1. Methodological principles
2. PRA techniques
3. Organizational techniques

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**1. Methodological principles**

**1. Visualization - Verbalization - Documentation**  
Diagrams, maps are created by the people by using symbols they develop or define.

**2. Sequencing**  
Different PRA tools are combined in a specific order to achieve the goals of the PRA process: building relationship with the people, empowering the people, increase their analysing and problem solving capacities and validation of the data.

**3. Optimal Ignorance**  
This means not trying to find out more than needed and not trying to measure what does not need to be measured (appropriate imprecision), or not measuring more accurately than is necessary for practical purposes. Therefore in PRA instead of exact measurement ranking and scoring are preferred.

**4. Triangulation**  
Triangulation is a principle employed in choosing different methods, locations, interviewees, team members (often a minimum of three, thus the term "triangulation") in order to improve the accuracy of the picture generated by the learning process.  
Often PRA tools are mixed instead of repeating the same tool with more respondents to reduce bias generated through the tools and secondary data sources can be used to crosscheck the information gained through PRA sessions.



Now, coming to the PRA techniques then we will discuss about the tools that we need. PRA techniques can be broadly classified into three categories methodological principle, PRA techniques and 3 organizational techniques. So methodology and the PRA techniques, hardcore techniques for which there are various tools that we will discuss and then organizational techniques that you will be using while dealing with the community.

Now, coming to methodological principle means the first point we will be discussing now. Within methodological principle visualization of the entire process is very important and how do you do that, through different kind of diagrams, maps which can be created by the people in presence of you along with the people and jointly can come up with this kind of diagrams and map, resource maps various other social maps.

Then next is sequencing; we talked just few minutes back about sequencing different PRA tools are combined in a specific order to achieve the goals of the PRA exercise, so as I said that building a rapport or relationship with the people, enhancing their capacity these are also some of our objectives within PRA, so sequencing on the basis of the objective that you have in mind are also important.

Optimal ignorance we have discussed about, triangulation also we have discussed just few minutes back.

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## 2. PRA techniques

**Direct observation** -- Observations are related to questions: What? When? Where? Who? Why? How?

**Do it yourself** -- Villagers are encouraged to teach the researcher how to do various activities. The researcher will learn how much skill and strength are required to do day to day rural activities, gaining an insider's perspective on a situation.

**Participatory mapping and modeling** -- Using local materials, villagers draw or model current or historical conditions. The researcher then interviews the villager by "interviewing the map."

**Transect walks and guided field walks** -- The researcher and key informants conduct a walking tour through areas of interest to observe, to listen, to identify different zones or conditions, and to ask questions to identify problems and possible solutions.

**Seasonal calendars** -- Variables such as rainfall, labor, income, expenditures, debt, animal fodder or pests, and harvesting periods can be drawn (or created with stones, seeds, and sticks) to show month-to-month variations and seasonal constraints and to highlight opportunities for action.

**Daily-activity profiles** -- Researchers can explore and compare the daily-activity patterns of men, women, youth, and elder ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> charting the amount of time taken to complete tasks.

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Next comes the PRA techniques. What are the techniques which often found very useful at the field level? Nothing can replace direct observation means observation like what you see when, where, who, why and how. These are the basic questions or observations that will directly come into the PRA exercise outcomes list.

Do it yourself, the participants, the communities will need to be encouraged to teach the researcher how to do various activities, it is not always the other way around. Researcher also will learn how much skill and strength are required to do day-to-day rural activities because then only we will also appreciate and understand the struggle, the issues that the community they face. Gaining an insider perspective on a real situation is very important for a successful PRA exercise. So we also need to test the day to day life of the community at least for some time.

Then participatory mapping and modelling, we need to use the local materials, sometime you can use some powders, soil, different color of soil, plants, so these are kind of local material can be used. Villagers can draw the resource map on the floor of suppose a temple, at the ground of the temple or a village office, panchayat office in front of that also they can make it so using local material they can also come up with some kind of mapping and modeling the villagers themselves.

Then comes to transect walks we discussed it earlier also transect walk or guided field walks. Here we the conductor of PRA exercise will go along with the villagers and have a transect walk across the area, rural area listen to the people, talk with the people, find the resources available

there and record through various way, notebook, photographs. If you are carrying out GPS, note down the GPS, lat-long coordinates. So all this information during the transect walk is a wonderful feeling, in fact you can build your rapport also with the entire community or the village.

Then next comes seasonal calendar; very important because seasonal calendar talks about rainfall, labor, income, type of your crops and seasonal pests, seasonal diseases. All those information will be there; ultimately this information will be required for making certain decision. Then you come for daily activity profiles, where researchers can explore and compare the daily activity patterns of men versus women, youth, elder and then because this exercise also will provide that how much time and energy that each individual and different people from different gender, different ages are actually putting behind in their community life.

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## 2. PRA techniques

**Semi structured interviewing** -- A semi structured interviewing and listening technique uses some predetermined questions and topics but allows new topics to be pursued as the interview develops

**Types, sequencing, and chain interviews** -- Individual, pair, and group interviews are combined in a sequence to take advantage of key informants and specialist groups.

**Time lines** -- Major historical community events and changes are dated and listed.

**Local histories** -- Local histories are similar to time lines but give a more detailed account of how things have changed or are changing.

**Local researchers and village analysts** -- With some training, local people can conduct the research process (for example, collect, analyze, use, and present data;

**Venn diagrams** -- To show the relationship between things, overlapping circles are used to represent people, villages, or institutions; lines are added to reflect inputs and outputs.

**Participatory diagramming** -- People are encouraged to display their knowledge on pie and bar charts and flow diagrams.

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Then comes interview; interview we talked about structured and semi-structured interview. In case of PRA, we generally go for structured interview but semi structured interviewing and listening technique also sometime used to get a pulse of your community that you are interacting with. So different types of sequencing and chains of interviews are used at individual level by making pair or groups interviews which are combined in a sequence to take advantage of key informants and special groups.

Then comes timelines, timelines actually is a major historical kind of a record of event and changes that has taken place especially suppose if you are going to analyze some area about some aspects of impact of climate change in that area certainly you need a historical background of that area and so timelines help for that.

Local history is important and it is almost similar to timelines but local history give a more detail account that how something has changed over a decade or over a century in that particular locality.

Then comes your local researchers and village analysts. They play important role; with little bit of training from your end local people can actually conduct research themselves which actually create a sense of ownership among them and you end up getting a much better outcome of your PRA exercise then you yourself doing some of the analysis.



Then comes Venn diagrams; we discussed it quite a lot. It shows the relationships between various things between overlapping circles which are used to present people, village, institutions, etc.

Participatory diagramming; yes people we often in PRA exercise encourage them to display their knowledge by drawing various kind of diagrams etc. to express that the status of resources or the struggle that they are facing to maintain the natural resources or other resources within their community.

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**2. PRA techniques**

- Wealth and well-being rankings** -- People are asked to sort cards (or slips of paper) representing individuals or households from rich to poor or from sick to healthy. This technique can be used for crosschecking information and for initiating discussions on a specific topic (for example, poverty).
- Direct-matrix pair-wise ranking and scoring** -- Direct-matrix pair-wise ranking and scoring is a tool used to discover local attitudes on various topics. People rank and compare individual items, using their own categories and criteria, by raising hands or placing representative objects on a board.
- Matrices** -- Matrices can be used to gather information and to facilitate or focus analyses and discussions. For example, a problem opportunity matrix could have columns with the following labels: soil type, land use, cropping patterns, and available resources; and rows with the following labels: problems, constraints, local solutions, and initiatives already tried.
- Traditional management systems and local-resource collections** -- Local people collect samples (for example, of soils, plants). This can be an efficient way to learn about the local biodiversity, management systems, and taxonomies.
- Portraits, profiles, case studies, and stories** -- Household histories or stories of how a certain conflict was resolved are recorded. This can provide short but insightful descriptions of characteristic problems and how they are dealt with.

**Key probe** -- A question addressing a key issue is asked of different informants, and the answers are compared.

Next comes wealth and well-being rankings, very important we mentioned it just in the previous module. Participants of the community here often asked to sort some kind of slips or cards that as a conductor you will be providing to them. So representing this community, representing various individuals or household from different economic status will actually select those slip. This technique can be used for cross checking the information about their wealth or financial status that you have got while having probably transect walk in the village or interacting with them.

So, what are the different methods of ranking we have? We have direct matrix pairwise ranking and scoring methodology. So in case of matrices, matrices we can use to gather information or to facilitate or focus the analysis and discussion. For example, suppose a problem opportunity matrix could have columns with different aspect like soil type, land use, cropping patterns, available resources and rows with following levels like problems, constraints, local solutions,



initiatives that already tried. So that is the way you can create a matrix which actually will help you to lead to a ranking of different aspect or different problem and corresponding solutions.

Traditional management systems and local resource collections; what we do here is that local people actually means the community they will collect samples for example soil sample, plant sample and this can be an efficient way to learn about the local biodiversity and how they can be managed, they probably also will come to know that how two different plant can be differentiate on the basis of their taxonomical features. So in a sense that during this exercise we not only get the information but also build the capacity of the community.

Remember that that I said in previous module PRA exercise one of the major objective is to build the capacity of the people community so that when the project period is over. When the external agency or the outsiders go out of the village they should be in a position to take care of their own village because that is the sustainability of any initiative that is, that is being taken up by government or any organization.

Next comes portraits, profiles, case studies and stories;, very important tools. Here what happened that household has different kind of history in the village level. If any one of you are from village you will definitely know it what I am trying to mean, there will be different kind of stories, different kind of events that how certain things, conflict or certain things was resolved among themselves, how two household actually fought with each other for one kind of natural resources say water or say good piece of land or something. This can actually provide kind of insightful descriptions or characteristics of a certain community and how actually they finally end up solving a issue or problem among themselves.

So, then comes the key problem that you have to get from the people. It is a question addressing a key issue that you will be asking or you will be trying to find out from the community and these questions; one single questions can be asked to various informants or various individuals to find out that when you ask the same questions to four people whether you get four different answer or you get the same answer. In a sense that you actually cross check a key issue by asking more than one person because that is important for us to know in PRA exercise that what are the key problems. Of course after that we will go for different tools and techniques of ranking of those issue which I have already discussed.