# Community Group Capacity Scorecard

**Tool**

| Category | Issues | Far from ideal situation (1) | First steps (2) | Moving on (3) | (Nearly) ideal situation (4) |
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| Independence | • CBOs plan and initiate activities at community level | CBOs are existent but not present at all-in the community. Community members doubt the relevance of these CBOs. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | CBOs play a key role in organizing activities at community level. Without the existence of CBOs, development in the community would be far much less than it is now. |
| Maturity of the structures | • Structures reach their maturity stage | Even though structures are existent, they really rely on external organisations and community facilitators to conduct their activities. They only do what they are supposed to do according to the project, and don't walk an extra mile. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | Community structures are able to conduct their activities without support from external organisations. The structures take initiative in organizing meetings, identifying opportunities, and strengthening themselves |

| Resilience | • *Dealing with changing market issues (incl. prices)* <br> • *Coping with sickness and death* <br> • *Dealing with adverse weather conditions* <br> • *Dealing with natural hazards* <br> • *Dealing with other shocks* | If negative shocks occur, such as lower market prices for crops, bad weather, poor harvests, disaster, sickness or death, <u>community structures</u> lose their relevance and find it difficult to play a role in overcoming these difficulties. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | <u>Community structures</u> are capable to play a valuable role in dealing with shocks and changes in the community. If market prices turn out to be lower, or some crops fail or weather conditions are unfavourable, <u>community structures</u> support households in coping with these adversities. Especially in times of difficulty, <u>community structures</u> have proven their relevance in the community. |

| Participation | • *Internal functioning of community group structures*<br>• *Added value of interventions with group structures*<br>• *Stimulation of participation by leadership*<br>• *Attention for inclusion (gender, special needs)* | Even if there are <u>groups</u> in the community, there is no real participation in them. Leadership dominates and does not really listen to voices. Certain <u>groups</u> of people are completely left out of all platforms for decision making. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | The community has several groups and structures through which people can voice out and have influence. Such <u>groups</u> are respected and functional. Community leadership stimulates participation of members and there is attention for the voices of all groups of people. |
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| Social support | • *Groups are capable to support others* | <u>Community groups</u> come together, but only fulfil their minimal roles and do not really take an extra effort in terms of giving others extra support. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | <u>Community groups</u> actively support their group members, and community groups are perceived as important social safety nets. Furthermore, groups also actively look at the larger community, to see what role they can play of others that aren't members of a community group. |

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| Political | • CBOs collaborate with government | The community groups have no active relations with government institutions or representatives. Trust in government is low. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | There is active collaboration between government institutions and representatives. Community groups have realistic expectations of the role of government, and are actively involving them in community affairs. |
| Networks and partnerships | • Functioning of churches<br>• Functioning of CSOs, NGOs<br>• Linkages between community (groups) and government and politics<br>• Linkages with economic actors | Community groups have few active relations with the outside world. Churches and other groups are mainly inward looking, relations with government departments are minimal and economic linkages are few and only individual. | *Not defined, use intuitively* | *Not defined, use intuitively* | The community groups are linked up with wider networks. These include churches, civil society groups, linkages to NGOs, but also linkages with politics and government departments, and with business or market actors. |

# Instructions

## Sample

Because it is not possible to include all beneficiaries in the data selection, a sample is taken. These are the guidelines for making a sample:

- Each group should consist of approximately 12–15 members.
- If the group is bigger (e.g. a SHG of 25), a random sample can be made.
- For **children groups**, a smaller group of **8–10 children** can be selected if preferred.
- The aim should be to use this tool with the same groups throughout the project. The group name gets recorded in the datasheets.
- When it is not possible to use the same group, another group is selected.
- By selecting the same groups throughout the whole project phase, it is avoided that later founded groups affect the results.
- Most groups in the community are bigger than 15 members. The 12–15 members selected for the exercise may differ from year to year as long as the same group is selected.
- Make sure that both genders are included in the group, if possible.
- Take a random sample of 10% of the total number of groups, with a minimum of 8–10 separate groups. If there are fewer than eight groups, all groups should be included in the sample.
- Try to include various groups in the sample if that fits the tool. For example, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Cluster Level Associations (CLAs) or Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), youth groups or children's groups, could be included in the CSI. This doesn't apply to group-specific tools like the Family Farmer Statement and the Youth Statements.

# Facilitation

The facilitator or enumerator has an essential role in conducting the focus group discussions. The tools are participatory by nature, as groups come together to discuss different topics. The facilitator is responsible for explaining the tools well, guiding the conversation, making the participants feel at ease, and encouraging them to speak out to give their honest opinions. The facilitator does the exercise together with a note-taker. The facilitator introduces the questions and leads the discussions. The note-taker records the scores and takes notes of the reasons for giving certain scores.

All the participatory tools use the same methodology; therefore, the same instructions apply to all tools. Be aware that the target groups are not the same for every tool. The facilitator and the note-taker can take the following steps to prepare and conduct the focus group discussion:

## Preparation:
- Make sure that the tools are translated into the local language.
- The facilitator and the note-taker prepare a printed version of the tool and data form or Kobo to record the data.
- If applicable, last year's average scores can be prefilled on the data form.

## Facilitating the group exercise:
- The exercise should take approximately an hour and 15 minutes to keep everyone on board. Long discussions may need to be ended if time runs out.
- First, the facilitator introduces the tool to the group and explains what it is about and what topics it entails.
- Second, the facilitator explains the meaning of the scores. For each topic, there is an "*ideal situation*" (or "nearly ideal situation") or a "*good situation*"(4). The highest rating implies that for this aspect, no further improvements in the situation are needed or even possible. The lowest rating is a "*far from ideal situation*" or a "*very bad situation*" (1). A lot of improvements are needed to move towards the ideal situation. In between, there are two other scales: "*first steps*" or "*bad*"(2) when the situation is better than the "*far from ideal situation*", but there is still a long way to go. And "*moving on*" or "*fair*"(3) when steady progress is made toward the "*ideal situation*", but one or more

serious issues are still lacking to consider the situation *"nearly ideal"* and clear further action points can still be defined. The exact meanings of the scores are described in the tools (e.g. Food Security (CSI), score 4 = Children are consistently well fed and eat regularly). For some of the tools, the two "in-between scales" are not precisely defined but should be used intuitively; the group can discuss if the situation is still closer to the *"far from ideal situation"* or closer to the *"(nearly) ideal situation"*.

- Every group member receives four stones or beans (or something similar). After introducing the statement for rating, the facilitator invites the members to put 1, 2, 3 or 4 stones/ beans in front of them, representing their opinion.

- Most tools have **guiding principles/ questions** (considerations) for each topic or category. These questions can help the facilitator guide the conversation and clarify the topic and can help the group to determine what score they want to give. The facilitator does not need to use all questions. **The group does not have to answer all the guiding questions.** They can be seen as helpful tools in having a good discussion.

- For most tools, the statements ask about a reflection of the community instead of the individuals, except for the Farmer Family Statements (PIP). This allows the participants to better reflect on sensitive issues without becoming too personal. The facilitator should keep this in mind.

- The stones/ beans should be **placed at the same time** to avoid participants copying each other. The facilitator could count down.

- When everyone has placed their stones/ beans, the facilitator can ask people why they gave this score. In this way, there can be a discussion about the positive and/ or negative remarks that help people determine their end score. Group members are free to add or remove stones during the debate.

- Please note that the participants are not obliged to give a reason.

- The note-taker makes notes of the reasons for the partner's reflection.

- The note-taker can also make notes of possible actions that need to be taken by the implementing partner. This is for the partner's reference.

- When doing the scorecards repeatedly with the same groups, the scores can be compared to the score of the previous discussion. The facilitator should bring the old scorecards or write the last score on the form. Comparing the scores can be helpful for the discussion; this is up to the facilitator.

- During the discussion, the participants are invited to give their ideas to improve the situation for the coming year.  This is how group members play an active role in data collection, sensemaking and planning for the next steps.
- Sometimes, participants give an answer or reason to their score that does not fit the question (it may serve another question better). In that case, the facilitator can help the participants by explaining the question or referring to another question. The facilitator must be very familiar with the tools.
- The facilitator should listen well to the stories being told and see if the score corresponds to that score. The facilitator should not tell the participants to change their scores but can help decide the appropriate score by asking questions and guiding the conversation.

**Scoring:**
- When the discussion is finished, and everyone is satisfied with the number of stones/ beans placed, the note-taker or the facilitator writes the number of participants who scored a one, two, three and four and the total number of participants (because people may leave during the session).
- For example: 1 participant gives a 1, 4 participants give a 2, 5 participants give a 3 and 3 participants give a 4. The total number of participants is 13. The total score is 36 (1x1 + 4x2 + 5x3 + 3x4), divided by 13 gives an average score of 2.8. (The calculation can be done later at the office and is done automatically in the datasheets and Kobo).
- Kobo sheets and MS Word forms are available to collect the scores.

**Additional guidance for facilitating children groups:**
- The session with children should be led by a facilitator who knows the children and who is trained as a children's group facilitator.
- The facilitator should ensure the group is a safe space for children to speak out.
- A group of **8-12 children** should be sampled for the tool. Because most children's groups are bigger, a random sample from the group can be drawn every time the tools are conducted to avoid the same children getting selected every time and because children leave the groups when they get older.
- It is essential to take note of children who influence other children and to avoid that from happening.
- The facilitator should keep explaining the scoring to the children during the process, not only at the start.
- The facilitator should explain to the children that giving a score of 1 is okay to prevent children from thinking they score poorly themselves.

- The facilitator explains to the children that the information they give is safe and that their names are not mentioned.
- It is essential to include enough breaks to keep the children's attention. Games, dances, and songs can be helpful to keep them engaged.

The facilitator and note-taker should be alert to see if children need after-care after the session. This should be noted to ensure that follow-up is provided.