

Rural households and resources

A **pocket guide** for extension workers

SEAGA

Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis Programme



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

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FOREWORD

FAO's Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme has developed an approach to development that is centred around an analysis of socio-economic patterns and participatory identification of women's and men's priorities. Over the last few years, FAO has developed a new comprehensive guide, "Rural households and resources: a guide for extension workers" to help extension and other community-based workers to understand the management of resources within and between households, and to grasp the implications of such resource management for agricultural production, food security and rural development. It is intended to help them apply a participatory and gender-sensitive approach in their planning with, and service to, rural households. The guide pays special attention to the impact of HIV/AIDS on rural households and their resources.

In field-testing, extension workers expressed the need for a complementary pocket edition that they could carry with them to the field. The result is this pocket guide, which summarises the key points outlined in the primary guide. It highlights many of the major issues affecting rural households, and provides users with ideas and tools for collecting, analysing and sharing information about constraints, opportunities and priorities faced by communities, households and individual household members.

While many of the examples are crop-based, the questions and issues can be adapted for use in forestry, fisheries and livestock initiatives. Rural livelihoods are not separate – rather they are complex, interlinked systems of activities. Throughout, there are questions to consider in terms of the impact of HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses as these have grave implications for the food security, livelihoods and overall well-being of millions of households.

Many individuals have been involved in the production of both the comprehensive and pocket editions of the Rural Households and Resources Guide. Nevertheless, users will undoubtedly find ways to improve the guide, and any such recommendations would be highly appreciated, and can be forwarded to seaga@fao.org

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FAO's socio-economic and gender analysis (SEAGA) approach

FAO's SEAGA approach is rooted in an analysis of socio-economic patterns and the participatory identification of women's and men's priorities. The SEAGA approach uses a framework and participatory learning tools that help promote understanding about community dynamics, including the linkages among social, cultural, economic, demographic, and environmental patterns.

The SEAGA approach has three guiding principles at its centre:

- Gender roles and relations are of key importance for understanding and improving the livelihoods of rural people.
- Disadvantaged people are a priority in development initiatives. The differential distribution of wealth affects the poorest and most disadvantaged in terms of their ability to access resources.
- Participation is essential for sustainable development, and all activities must address the needs, priorities and capacities of communities, households and individual household members.

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The SEAGA approach also promotes the exploration of issues and solutions across and between three levels in society:

- The Field Level focuses on people, including women and men as individuals, socio-economic differences among households, and communities as a whole.
- The Intermediate Level focuses on structures, such as institutions and services, that function to operationalise the links between macro and field levels, including communications and transportation systems, credit institutions, markets and extension, programmes and health and education services.
- The Macro Level focuses on policies and plans, both international and national, economic and social, including trade and finance policies and national development plans.

There are many specific terms used in the SEAGA approach and materials. These are not unique to SEAGA, but build on the experiences and concepts of many participatory learning approaches that have come before. A **glossary** is included in this pocket guide to provide clarification for readers unfamiliar with certain terms.

EXTENSION AND RURAL HOUSEHOLDS: WHY CONSIDER GENDER?

Extension and community workers carry a heavy burden of work; they must be all things to all people. They must respond appropriately to the needs of rural households and carry extension messages from their ministries and others to households and communities. Their job is made all the more difficult in the context of macro-economic trends that favour economies of scale and privatisation of services. They also face the challenge of responding to the fast-paced demographic changes in rural households – in large part caused by migration, rural ageing and epidemics such as HIV/AIDS.

Such stresses impact heavily on intra-household resource management dynamics, particularly in terms of:

- labour
- decision-making
- access to productive resources and agricultural services and technologies.

All of this leads to a greater need for extension personnel to better understand the issues related to the changing dynamics of household management of resources, particularly in terms of household and individual food security, rural livelihoods and how HIV/AIDS is impacting on them. To do so, it is essential to address the gender-differentiated roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities, costs, benefits, needs and priorities of people. Understanding these differences is crucial for identifying and reaching extension clients, for effective communication and for mutual learning processes between extension workers and farmers.

Example: *Intercropping beans and maize in the same row led to an increase in bean yields in Zambia, but women were reluctant to adopt the practice since, by intercropping with maize, beans would become a man's crop and sold for cash rather than for household relish (Feldstein & Poats, 1990).*

Gender-responsive extension approaches

Extension workers are valuable links between rural men and women and policy-makers. Developing extension programmes and providing services that respond to the needs of both women and men in various agro-ecological and socio-economic contexts is a challenge to extension services. Rural women and men rarely engage in only one type of activity, but rather have many on-farm and off-farm activities, and they therefore need advice on a combination of areas including nutrition, income generation, credit schemes, new technologies and so forth. It is therefore critical for extension workers to have good knowledge about the actual and potential users of their services.

Households, resources and their management

Households are very different, both in composition and socio-economic status. They vary greatly, both from one culture to another, and within a community.

Household resource management uses the household as an entry-point to understand and address rural development challenges. But it also moves beyond the household “black box” and considers the management systems within households.

This includes:

- Decision-making dynamics and relations within the household;
- Assigning priorities to different activities and household members;
- Allocating resources and benefits; and
- Accessing and controlling resources (e.g. land, water, time, credit, labour)

Women, men, young and old, all manage resources (e.g. knowledge, labour, money, livestock, water, crops, tools, information) but they all have different access to, and control over, these resources. They also give different priorities to managing resources and benefit differently from them.

For example, different household members may not agree that selling livestock should be given priority. Similarly, income earned from such a sale may benefit household members differently, depending on who decides how the income is spent.

In order for extension services to be useful and sustainable, they must be designed to meet the needs and priorities of the community, its different households and individual household members – not an easy task! Socio-economic and gender analysis can help extension workers with this task.

Overview questions on the management of household resources

- How does a community define “household”?
What kinds of households exist?
- Who are the household members?
(age, sex, extended family, and hired help)?
- What kinds of resources exist in the household and community to support different livelihoods?
- Who uses these different resources (access)?
Who makes decisions about the use of these different resources (control)?
- Who benefits from the use of the different resources, and how?
- What are the different needs of individual household members? What are their priorities? What are their interests?
- What changes have been caused by HIV/AIDS in how women and men manage household resources and decision-making? What are the emerging needs?

Rural households and the development context

There are many external factors that affect the opportunities of households and household members to efficiently manage the available resources. Such external factors may include:

- International and national policies or plans
(for details on this please see the SEAGA Macro Level Handbook)
- Social and cultural norms
- Environmental or seasonal changes
- Legislation and customary law
- HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses

Most of these factors are beyond the control of extension workers, but it is important to keep in mind that the livelihoods of rural women and men depend upon and are vulnerable to changes in the external environment. Extension should consequently take the development context into consideration when planning and communicating with farmers to improve their livelihoods.

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Other external pressures on rural households include macro-level policies related to the management of natural resources such as land, water and the environment as well as decisions on the structure and work responsibilities of the extension services.

The challenge of HIV/AIDS is relatively new for extension services in many countries. Extension services can play an important role in HIV/AIDS prevention and in reducing the impact of the epidemic on rural households. This issue is therefore highlighted in this guide.

Extension agents are the front-line workers for rural households and can see first-hand the effects of macro-economic and other policies on farming systems and households' management of resources. If possible, extension workers should share their knowledge with higher management and ultimately the government, advising on 'safety nets' required and which groups are particularly affected.

◆ **Go to toolbox:** Village resource map and matrix and stakeholder analysis.

Development context: Guiding questions

For any issue, it is important to consider the development context and the connections, or linkages between the different levels including the macro level (policies), the intermediate level (organisations, services), and the field level (community/household issues, concerns, priorities, needs). For any issue (e.g. household food security, agricultural production), think about:

Macro level

- How do recent policies and legislation influence the community and the different socio-economic groups within it? (This also applies to different types of households and different members within households) Have there been any recent changes that may affect the livelihoods of rural women, men or youth? If so, how have they been affected?
- How do national policies provide an enabling environment for these concerns?
- How do national policies contribute to a constraining environment for these concerns? For households within the community? Members within households?

Intermediate

- How do institutions collaborate with communities? How do they identify and prioritise the particular needs of different members in different households?
- How do communities influence organisations in terms of service provision, requests for assistance? (NGOs, extension services) Are there groups in the community who have more access to them than others? If so, who are they? Women? Men? Well-off? Younger? People working in a specific sector?
- How do extension workers and other service providers link with policy-makers? Can they influence policy?

Field

- How do households manage their resources? How are work (and time-use) and responsibilities divided between women and men, young and old, by crop, livestock type, and main source of income?
- It is important to be aware of clients' sex, age, religion, culture, (think of different members within households and between households across socio-economic groups). Also think about seasonal variation in their activities.
- What methods do you use to find out information about your client group?

- How can you involve them in the design and planning of your programmes?
 - What sorts of grassroots organisations or co-operatives/farmer groups or networks exist?
 - Think about the impacts (positive and negative) your service has on other activities, other groups and institutions operating in your technical and geographical area.
-
- ◆ **Go to toolbox:** Village resource map, pair-wise ranking, problem analysis chart, stakeholder analysis.

Gender, households, livelihoods and HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS presents an overwhelming challenge to rural households and extension services in affected areas for several reasons:

- The disease is fatal and there is no cure
- Stigma makes it more difficult to prevent infection as well as more difficult to assist affected households
- The majority of the infected are among the most productive and economically active members of the community

Rural households, especially the poorest, are highly dependent upon human labour to earn an income or produce food. They are therefore also more vulnerable to impacts of the epidemic. Extension services and their employees are also vulnerable to the epidemic and its impacts in the form of sickness; absence and loss of staff; psychological strain on staff due to death of colleagues, family and clients; and new demands on extension services to meet the challenges brought about by the epidemic.

HIV/AIDS affects both women and men, but women and youth are often more vulnerable to the epidemic due to unequal power relations creating situations where it is difficult for them to control *when, with whom* and *under what* circumstances they have sexual relations. The relationships that exist between men and women can determine the spread of the disease, and must therefore be understood and addressed in order to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Gender roles are changing due to the epidemic: women and girls in households with sick members will often spend relatively more time on care-related activities and less time is thus left for tending the land, looking after animals and other income-generating activities. Men and women are affected differently by the epidemic, and a particularly important issue is that of legal rights to land and property. Widows and orphans are often deprived of any right to inherit their home, agricultural land, tools and other belongings when the husband or parents die.

At the household level, the impact of HIV/AIDS on agriculture shows itself as follows (Topouzis and du Guerny, 1999):

- Loss of adult on-farm and off-farm labour, leading to a decline in productivity
- Decline in household income and loss of assets, savings and/or remittances
- Increase in household expenditure (medical treatment, transport etc)
- Increase in the number of dependants relying on a smaller number of productive family members
- Loss of indigenous farming methods, inter-generational knowledge and specialised skills, practices and customs.

Checklists for HIV/AIDS issues in subsistence agriculture

The checklists provided here below (adapted from Barnett, 1996) can help to assess vulnerability to the impact of HIV/AIDS and provide suggestions for possible mitigation responses to lessen its' impact on a community/household. Because many of these issues are extremely sensitive, it is important to be careful when discussing them with community members and to avoid stigmatising people living with HIV/AIDS. Much of the information might be available from secondary sources (e.g. health units, HIV/AIDS networks, NGOs, etc.).

Assessing vulnerability to the impact of HIV/AIDS

Consider whether any of the following exist in the community/group/household:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry climate • Limited range of crops • Marked labour peaks in the agricultural cycle • Labour intensive processes • Absence of labour exchange between households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited substitutability between existing labour-intensive and less labour-demanding crops • Food surpluses already low • Limited opportunities for off-farm income • Insecure land tenure
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Checklist for potential responses to lessen the impact of HIV/AIDS

With the community/group/households' men and women, consider whether any of the following suggestions might be feasible ways forward to help lessen the impact of HIV/AIDS:

- Classify farming systems and households in terms of potential vulnerability to increased illness and death
- Explore labour-economising crop varieties and how these could be grown by widows, widowers or youth
- Explore labour-economising cultivation practices, e.g. inter-cropping, and labour-saving cultivation technologies, e.g. hand tillers, draught animals, and assess their appropriateness for women, men, elderly and youth - particularly people with poor health
- Encourage labour exchanges between households
- Explore ways of reducing women's work burden (for example labour-saving methods of food preparation, water and/or fuel collection)
- Explore ways of reducing post-harvest losses
- Introduce and improve poultry and small livestock appropriate to local culture to improve diets
- Use paddocks for larger stock as a way of economising on labour used in herding
- Ensure that orphaned children receive adequate education in local farming knowledge and techniques
- Be informed and share knowledge on land tenure arrangements to protect the user and the inheritance rights of widows and orphaned children
- Consider opportunities for income generation activities or formation of savings or credit groups that could support HIV/AIDS affected households
- Explore linkages with organisations working with home-based care, support to HIV/AIDS affected households and individuals and/or anti-retroviral drugs

Rural households: Constraints and opportunities

Access to resources and services is often a constraint for rural households, and will vary greatly between different household members and socio-economic groups. Women, youth and the landless are often at a disadvantage in terms of access to both resources and services, and it is therefore necessary that the extension services pay particular attention to reaching and supporting these groups. Governments face constraints in terms of how much they can and should spend on different sectors. They also face constraints due to the economic situation in which they currently hold office.

Constraints can be gender-linked. In many instances, constraints to increased productivity are the result of gender-linked differences in access to inputs and resources.

Some questions to ask to address gender-related constraints

(Adapted from Jiggins et al, 1997)

- Consider women's legal and cultural status. How does this affect the degree of control that women have over productive resources, inputs such as credit, and the benefits which flow from them?
- What are the existing property rights and inheritance laws that govern access to and use of land and other natural resources? How might these affect men and women differently? What implications will the death of a husband or wife have for the spouse and children left behind? What sort of impact will this have on their livelihoods?
- How do ecological factors such as the seasonality of rainfall and availability of fuel wood affect women's labour? Men's labour? Children's labour?
- What kinds of gender-determined responsibilities (e.g. feeding, caring for the family) do women trade against when producing for the market?
- How are extension services staffed, managed, and designed in terms of addressing women's and men's needs and priorities? Are there women and men staff members?

◆ **Go to toolbox** for more tips.

Assessing household constraints & opportunities

Labour: who does what?

- Which activities are men's responsibilities? Women's responsibilities?
- Which activities are the responsibilities of youth, children, and the elderly? Community-based groups?
- Are there children-headed households or other vulnerable or disadvantaged groups in your area? What, if any, coping strategies do they use?
- Who is responsible for what aspects of crop production? Women? Men? Children? (Think of home gardens, subsistence crops, cash crops)
- Who is responsible for what aspects of livestock production? Poultry? Small ruminants? Cattle?
- How much time do women spend on these activities? Men? Children?
- How frequently? What season or part of the season?

Access to and control over resources

- To what resources do women have access?
- To what resources do men have access?
- At what times of the year?
- How do women use these resources? Men? Other groups?
- What are the benefits? How are benefits distributed between household members?
- How do they spend their money?
- Who controls the resources and their use? What resources do women and men and others have decision-making power over?

Needs and priorities

- What are the needs and priorities of women and men farmers? What are the needs of other groups of farmers (old, young, HIV/AIDS affected households etc)?
- What extension support do they need? (see the next page for more questions)

Vulnerable groups

- Are there groups that are particularly vulnerable? (E.g. children/youth- or grandparent-headed households, people living with HIV/AIDS, poor households, people with disabilities, etc?)
- What activities do they typically engage in?
- What are their special constraints?
- What are their priorities?

Assessing extension service providers and stakeholders

Questions related to assessing extension services/organisations

- What is the demographic profile of the area? Has there been an increase or decrease in population, number of rural households? Composition of households?
- Are there groups in the community that are particularly vulnerable? If yes, why? Disabled? Youth-headed households, HIV/AIDS (or other chronic illness) affected households?
- Who supplies extension services? What are the strengths/ weaknesses of each to meet a certain need?
- Who are your clients? Men, women, youth, HIV-affected households, others?
- Where are they located and what is the social, economic and institutional context?
- What do they need? Advice on tools, low-input crops, access to credit, HIV/AIDS information/counselling, animal or fish breeding, income diversification, marketing of forest products, etc?
- To what do they give priority? Time-saving technologies, veterinary advice etc?
- What can you offer, when, at what cost?
- What can others offer, when, at what cost?

The following table might be of help in organising the information you get on services being offered to communities:

Name	Type of organisation	Services provided to rural people	Geographical area covered	Segment of population covered	Expertise available in organisation	Number of male/female staff in organisation

◆ **Go to toolbox** for Stakeholder Analysis - Venn diagram

Household resources: Water

Water is at the heart of many livelihood activities and is an important source of food and income (for example through fishing and fish processing). Freshwater is an essential input to many livelihood activities, such as food preparation, livestock and crop production. It is also an indispensable household resource for health and sanitation purposes. Water availability is often a limiting factor to production and the dry season increases the time spent on water collection - often the task of women. The SEAGA Irrigation guide provides more guidance on this topic.

Understanding gender roles in household water use is crucial to giving due attention to everyone's needs, for instance when planning water-based interventions. Both women and men should be represented in water management associations to ensure that the water needs of all clients are considered. If water is a constraint to efficient household resource management, it is important to gather data on water needs and possible solutions such as water conservation, harvesting and storage techniques. Linking up with other service providers and local groups could be useful for sharing information or explore collaboration.

Some questions to ask about household use and management of water

- What are the different water sources for households? Has the water availability increased or decreased over the years? If so, why?
- What are the different uses of water in the area in terms of community use, household use and individual use within households? What amounts of water do these different groups and individuals need?
- Which household members collect water? Who decides how water will be used for different productive household activities (e.g. home gardens, cash crops, livestock), and reproductive activities (e.g. drinking water, cooking, bathing, washing)?
- How can extension workers and communities address competing uses for water?
- Are there water usage fees? What impact does this have on different households and on different individuals in the household (e.g. women, men, youth, the old)?
- How can extension services help improve access to safe water? Which priority do women and men give to interventions aimed at reducing time spent on collecting water? What support could be given to households with labour-shortages?

◆ **Go to toolbox:** Resource matrix, activity matrix and stakeholder analysis

Household resources: Land

Knowing how land is held, allocated or divided along kinship and gender patterns is essential for extension work. The issue of access to land is highly sensitive – politically, religiously, legally and culturally – so it needs to be handled carefully.

Households and different household members have different degrees of access to and control over land as well as different ownership and inheritance rights. Ownership and secure tenure are indispensable conditions to improving agricultural activity and to supporting the ability and interest of rural women and men to engage in sustainable agriculture. Women's access is often limited to household and personal use for crops through a male family member. Their landholdings are typically smaller than men's. Access to land largely depends upon (FAO 2002a):

- Formal legislation;
- Custom and religion;
- Intra-household power relations and status; and
- Economy and education.

Some questions to ask about household use & control of land

- What is the existing land tenure pattern in the area? How are land rights obtained and distributed? Are inheritance patterns matrilineal or patrilineal? How does this affect access to and distribution of land? How does it affect different people's land use within households?
- Within households, who uses what land? For what activities? Using what tools/labour? Within households, who makes the decisions about the use of land? Who has the right to sell or give away land?
- Have provisions been made for female-headed households and for women in male-headed households to obtain land titles? Have measures been taken for women to register as tenants upon the death of their husbands?
- What are men farmers' preferences: household plots or individual plots? What are women farmers' preferences?
- How can extension services assist different household members or different types of households to improve their access to land? Which organisations could the extension services and/or men and women link up with?

Household resources: Credit, savings & income-generation

Both women and men seek opportunities to earn cash for immediate use or for savings for later use. Often, diversifying the incomes of the poorest households means using as little land and inputs as possible. It is important to remember that many, in particularly women, may only be able to commit a small amount of time to new activities if these are added to existing task and responsibilities.

Many rural men and women live in marginal areas with poorly developed transportation and communication to urban areas, so certain types of income generation activities may not be suitable for all locations. Small-scale farmers also have to compete with intensive farming that may be encouraged in new resettlement zones. Below are some questions that can be used to assess possible interventions, but please see FAO's SEAGA Microfinance Guide for more guidance on this issue.

Assessing possibilities for introducing alternative businesses

- What are the skills and interests of different household members? What is the most appropriate type of enterprise that has the greatest potential to help the household and its individual members? Is this feasible in terms of access to markets and time allocation in relation to other responsibilities that provide the household its livelihood and food security?
- What is needed to help the client(s) develop essential business skills (e.g. literacy, book-keeping, marketing, household budgeting etc.)? How can extension workers assist in strengthening different household members' skills and access to credit, other inputs or services?
- What information exists to help women and men link up with farmers' organisations and cooperatives that specialise in production or marketing? What is needed to help facilitate access to opportunities and services? Can extension or other service providers help identify feasible ventures and potential markets?
- How can rural people be encouraged to save?
- Who in the household has access to credit? What is needed to access credit (e.g. land title, collateral)? Are there community-based micro-credit schemes working in the area? Are there savings groups in or near the community?
- What kinds of indicators can be developed to measure progress against the planned objective of increased income (for whom)?

◆ **Go to toolbox:** Resource map, sources and uses of money, and stakeholder analysis

Household resources: Time & labour-saving technologies

A good understanding of time use by different household members and groups of clients can assist extension workers to plan visits, training and other activities that require the presence and time of women, men, youth or other groups. It can also help extension workers to understand the needs of women and men in terms of time- and labour-saving technologies. At the same time it can help avoid adding more work to an already overburdened household member while trying to make sure that time used on some of her/his other tasks are reduced. For more details on labour-saving technologies, see FAO/IFAD (2003) and FAO/IFAD/JICA (1998).

Some questions to ask about time use and labour-saving technologies

- How do women, men, youth in a household spend their time? How much time does each spend on agricultural activities? Cooking, child-care, care-giving? Community activities? Leisure? Sleep? Variations by season?
- How do women and men's days compare in terms of time use over 24 hours? Across different socio-economic groups? Grandparent-headed households?
- Which time of the day/year is the best for extension visits to women? Men? Youth? The elderly? More vulnerable households? the very poor?
- What are the best time of the year to hold training, field demonstrations and other extension activities that would otherwise take time from household members? Is it different for women and men? Households with sick members?
- What agricultural equipment do different household members use? Need?
- Could collaboration between people or households help save time?
- Looking at the different household members' roles & responsibilities, who requires training for a specific technology? One person? Everyone? Ensure that training is given to the person who will actually use the technology!
- What are the specific needs of youth- or grandparent-headed households? How can household members with weak health be supported?
- What information channels or support services exist to help farmers make informed choices about technologies and who in the household has access to these? Is this information unbiased? It is free of charge?
- Are there substitutions and shifts of wage/unpaid labour with the introduction of a technology? For whom? Women? Men? Children? Poorer?
- What is the effect on other stages of production and who is involved?

◆ **Go to toolbox:** Activity matrix

Nutrition and different household members

Extension workers should be aware of the developmental and cultural context as well as other situations that lead to low nutritional status of certain groups in communities or individuals in households. Good nutrition requires enough food, proper health and adequate care. Nutritional demands vary depending on age, sex, health status and activity level. During pregnancy and breastfeeding women need extra nutrients to keep themselves and their babies healthy. Good nutrition cannot cure AIDS or prevent HIV-infection, but it can help to maintain and improve the nutritional status of a person with HIV/AIDS and delay the progression from HIV to AIDS-related diseases (FAO 2002b). Women may play an essential role in feeding their family, but ensuring good nutrition is the joint responsibility of all household members, including men.

Some questions to ask about nutrition and household food security

- What is the local understanding of nutrition and household food security? What is considered an adequate diet? Does it vary by household member? How are needs met in the lean season?
- Who in the household makes decisions about food allocation within the household?
- Do all household members have access to a variety of foods (staple crops, fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, dairy products, oil, sugar, water, fish, meat, eggs, etc) all year round or which part of the year? Can gaps be filled by using existing land and household resources? Communal plots? Are there other options? Labour-saving technologies that can free labour?
- What kinds of crops/vegetables do household members grow? What kinds of livestock do household members rear? Which ones does the household consume? Which are marketed? Which wild foods does the household consume?
- Does any of the household members have extra nutritional needs (pregnant or breastfeeding women, the chronically ill)? How could these needs be met?
- Who makes decisions about different food produced by the household? Marketing?
- Who prepares the meals? Who feeds the children?
- How do members of the household store/preserve different produce? Are these safe methods? What is the quality of stored produce?
- What kind of nutrition information is available and who has access to this? Which other organisations could the extension services and the community members collaborate with to improve nutrition and household food security?

◆ **Go to toolbox:** Resource map and activity matrix

TIPS FOR APPLYING SOCIO-ECONOMIC & GENDER ANALYSIS

A socio-economic and gender analysis can yield both qualitative and quantitative information about household resources. The roles of women and men include their productive, reproductive and community roles. In planning services with rural households, it is important not to assume that all persons in the household have the same resources (access, control, etc). Women and men often have different constraints, opportunities, knowledge, responsibilities, needs and priorities in managing household resources.

Learning about such issues can be achieved through conversation or interviews with men and women individually or in groups. Much can also be learned through observation. Diagrams can simplify complex information, and ranking and scoring are tools to understand the priorities of men and women and the importance of different household resources.

It is necessary to include the views of all relevant sub-groups to obtain a full picture of a situation. Comparing information from several different sources (e.g. information from women's groups, statistics, statements by local chief) will help ensure that the information is correct.

SEAGA offers three toolkits for use at the field-level

- **Development context analysis** (tools to look at the socio-economic patterns)
- **Livelihood analysis** (tools that examine activities, resources and livelihoods)
- **Stakeholder analysis** (tools for community planning)

These tools focus on i) women and men as individuals and in groups; ii) socio-economic differences within and between households; and c) communities as a whole. Ten participatory tools have been included in the toolbox starting on page 25. The tools are most commonly used in communication with groups of people. It is recommended to have separate groups for women and men because they often have different perceptions (e.g. in ranking of resources) and contributions (e.g. different knowledge). Experience shows that it is difficult to have mixed groups in which women participate fully, even if there are no apparent norms that inhibit women from speaking. It is important to remember that specific steps need to be taken to ensure the equal participation of women and men.

Practical suggestions for planning an extension visit

When planning a field visit:

- Agree with the community or farmers on the visit well ahead of time, and ensure that they are well informed about the purpose of the visit.
- Plan a meeting in a way that makes it possible for both men and women from different socio-economic groups to participate (e.g. time and place).
- Think through the overall context or situation in the area, be clear on what kind of information you want, how the different issues should be approached and how the discussions will be facilitated (who will ask the questions and take notes). Write a list of questions to guide the discussions.
- Decide upon which tools you will use, their sequencing and if/how you will split the farmers into groups (by sex, age, larger scale vs. smaller scale, etc.)
- Prepare an introduction to the farmers about who you are, who you represent, the purpose of the discussion. It is also useful to prepare an ice-breaking tool.
- Look at your own preconceived ideas and biases about the roles of rural women and men.
- Ensure that every group has a chance to present its own views.
- Ensure that the information is shared with the community (the flip charts are useful information for them) and with other services deliverers as well as your supervisor or other colleagues.

In advance, make a list of what you want to find out about households and their management of resources. Think about:

- The importance of particular natural resources for household food security.
- Gender-differentiated access to and control over resources and benefits, and/or the factors influencing this within households.
- Identifying vulnerable groups and their particular extension needs (e.g. households affected by HIV/AIDS or other chronic illness, etc.).
- Time use among household members.
- The importance of formal and informal institutions for both rural women and men.
- Emerging needs for extension services due to changes in out-migration, diseases etc.

What to do with the analysis and the results

Analysing data assigns a meaning to the information, stories, observations, and secondary data that have been gathered. It is useful to disaggregate information by sex and age, and where feasible, by ethnic group, or other key variables in order to make sure the differences among groups can be examined and understood. The results of a socio-economic and gender analysis will probably illustrate that women and men of different ages have different needs in terms of extension services.

The pointers below could help you in your overall analysis and understanding of poor households (adapted from Gebremedhin 1997).

- Who lives in a poor rural household (e.g. male or female, young or old, landless, pastoralists, etc);
- Who heads different households;
- How certain factors, processes, and institutions maintain poverty for given group(s) of rural households;
- How such groups relate to other institutions in order to increase farm productivity, income generation, and food security;
- On- and off-farm income sources for women and men, young and old;
- The constraints faced by a given group or sub-group to diversifying their sources of livelihood (e.g. access, illness, etc);
- The causes and consequences of changes in household production, consumption and income, and the implications these have for development

Presenting results and making information available

Start with the most important information that you want to present - most people will not read thick reports or pay constant attention through long meetings. The information should be related to action, with recommendations as outlined by the rural households themselves first, then a summary of the main findings, and the next suggested steps.

Most importantly, think about the audience who will use the information:

- Do you need to prepare a short brief for a supervisor or other decision-maker?
- How can you best present findings back to a community? (E.g. think of language, visuals such as posters or drawings, through radio programming, community meeting or smaller focus group meetings, etc.)

GLOSSARY

The terms in this annex are used in the context of household resource management. Definitions may vary slightly from place-to-place, person-to-person, and depending on language and context. It might be useful to listen to local people's (men, women, young and old) perceptions and definitions of 'household' and other key terms you might use when talking with them.

Access, control and ownership (of resources): **Access** to something means having the possibility to use it, e.g. a resource such as land or production equipment. It does not necessarily imply control or ownership of this resource. Someone who has **control** over something means that he/she decides how it can be used and by whom – it does not necessarily imply ownership. Ownership can be joint (e.g. by different household or community members) or individual (e.g. by one person). **Ownership** will determine control and access to a large degree. It is not uncommon for a resource (e.g. land) to be owned by somebody while another person uses it or decides about its use (e.g. when there is an owner and a separate farm manager, etc.)

Division of labour: Work is divided between households or household members. It refers to who does what, when, how, for how long etc. and can be disaggregated by gender, age and other socio-economic variables.

Gender refers to the social, economic and cultural roles and relations between women and men, and takes into account the different responsibilities of women and men in a given culture or location and in different population groups (FAO 2003).

Gender roles are the socially, culturally and politically defined roles and responsibilities to which women and men conform. Gender roles are dynamic and can vary among different societies and cultures, classes and ages, and over time. **Productive** roles refer to work carried out by men & women that supports production (whether paid or unpaid). **Reproductive** roles involve childbearing, childrearing, cooking, etc. **Community** roles are those activities that contribute to the welfare and organisation of the community.

Household: A basic unit for socio-cultural and economic analysis. It includes all persons, kin and non-kin, who live in the same dwelling and share income, expenses and daily subsistence tasks. The concept of household is based on the arrangements made by persons, individually or in groups, for providing themselves with food or other essentials for living. A household may be either (a) a one-person household, that is, a person who makes provision for his or her own food or essentials for living without combining with any other person to form part of a multiperson household, or (b) a multiperson

household, that is, a group of two or more persons living together who make common provision for food or other essentials of living (FAO, 1999).

Household food security: A generally accepted definition of food security is access to adequate quantities of safe, acceptable, and nutritious food for all people at all times. Households are food secure when they have year-round access to the amount and variety of safe foods their members need to lead active and healthy lives. At the household level, food security refers to the ability of the household to secure, either from its own production or through purchases, adequate food to meet the dietary needs of all members of the household.

Household head is the man, woman or child recognised as such by other household members. This person makes (many of) the key decisions and has the primary responsibility for managing household matters. Prevailing stereotypes often cause the role to be assigned to an adult male even if a female household member makes the decisions and is the principal source of family income.

Household resource management uses the household as an entrypoint to address and understand rural development challenges. It focuses on management systems within households. This includes decision-making, resource allocation, household consumption, and time management in the context of food security and economic development. Engberg (1990) describes household resource management as “the process of making decisions about how to maximise the use of resources, such as land, water, labour, capital, purchased inputs, inputs produced on-farm, cash, agricultural credit and agricultural extension”.

Resources are things that help provide what is needed. Rural households and individuals within households require different resources for their farming sub-systems and activities. **Tangible resources** (things that can be seen or touched) include land, water, capital, and production equipment. **Intangible resources** include skills, knowledge, self-esteem, labour, time, group membership, etc. Basic infrastructure is a useful facilitating resource in terms of market access and is usually provided and controlled by the government. Access to a particular resource often differs for different groups of people. For instance, access to financial resources (savings, credit) is more easily obtained by certain groups of rural people (e.g. men with land title) than others (landless, men and women without land title).

Socio-economic and gender analysis looks at the different roles and relations of women and men in different socio-economic groups to understand what they do, how and why; assesses what resources they have and identifies their needs and priorities.

A **stakeholder** is anyone (individual or group) who has a direct or indirect interest in the outcome of a development intervention, or anyone who is affected by, or who affects, this intervention.

SEAGA TOOLBOX

The following set of tools is a condensed version of the tools contained in the full-size SEAGA guide, *Rural Households and Resources: a Guide for Extension Workers*. This section provides some key SEAGA questions to help extension workers as they look at households and their resources in the identification and analysis of issues with household members and communities. It is assumed that most users will have had some exposure to participatory learning tools. For those who have had little experience using such tools, it is recommended to review the full-size guide and practice some of the tools in advance. The tools can help highlight key issues as illustrated in the table below. Please note that these are only meant as suggestions – there are other tools that may also be useful depending upon the context and the scope of work. The SEAGA Field Handbook also has an extensive collection of participatory tools.

The information gathered using these tools can provide a better understanding of extension clients, their household resources, and the management of these resources as well as the needs and priorities of different households and household members. It can also be used to identify how rural people can be better involved in extension activities and to ensure participation by men and women and other socio-economic groups. Please see other SEAGA handbooks and guides for further tools or key questions for specific technical areas such as livestock and irrigation. You can obtain copies of these from FAO's Gender and Population Division.

Before using the tools with a community, it is important to remember the following:

- Be ready to introduce and explain an exercise that you would like to use with the community.
- Decide how an exercise should be facilitated and by whom and who should take notes. Avoid repetition of questions if several of the tools are used.
- Pay particular attention to households with chronically ill or otherwise vulnerable members. Avoid stigmatising any group.
- Be clear about group formation for the different exercises (just who works with whom in the group can influence the information that comes out).
- Discuss and share the results of group work in plenary, so that everyone knows what each group discussed, so avoiding conflict and suspicion.
- Allow at least 1 - 2 hours for each of the exercises.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND GENDER ANALYSIS (SEAGA)

Seaga Toolbox

Key SEAGA questions for households and resources	No.	Tool name
What are the most important resources to women and men in different socio-economic groups and how do they value them?	1	Village resource map
What resources do men and women in different socio-economic groups use, and who controls them? Who benefits from them?	2	Resource matrix
How do community members define “wealth” and “poverty?”	3	Economic ranking
Who are the most disadvantaged groups? Do HIV/AIDS and/or other chronic diseases have an impact on the community or some of its households?	4	Health ranking
Within a household, what activities do men, women, children, hired labourers, etc. carry out? How do they use their time, and how is the work divided through the days and seasons? What is the best time to schedule training or other extension services?	5	Activity matrix
What are the main sources of income for different household members? What are the main items of expenditure? What services do they pay for or are they willing/able to pay for?	6	Sources and use of money
Who are the main stakeholders of the extension services? Who are the other service providers, and what services do they provide?	7	Stakeholder analysis
What are the priority problems of rural men and women and relevant socio-economic groups?	8	Pair-wise ranking
	9	Problem analysis chart
Which activities could realistically be implemented? What role can village members, extension services, other local service providers and organisations play?	10	Community action plan

Tool 1 – Village resource map

Relevance for extension and household resource management: This tool facilitates learning about resources in a community and about women and men's perceptions and values attached to those resources. It is also useful in developing community ideas for the future.

Use: Different maps can be made to compare changes over time. Discussions can focus on main differences and causes for change, e.g. soil degradation, land distribution, inheritance and ownership, changes in access to and control over resources. Maps can also be used to show conflicts over resource use.

It is possible to focus on specific resources or relate the resources to a particular topic during the mapping exercise so that you avoid overloading the map with information (e.g. natural resources such as fodder crops, forests, land, water, fish ponds, etc.) that are the most important for household food security; physical resources (e.g. health clinics, schools, roads, bus stop) that are important for time use. Social resources (e.g. number of people of different age and gender in each household) can be drawn onto this or a separate map or be written up in notes.

Examples of questions to ask after the map is completed:

- What types of resources are plentiful? Which ones are in shortage? Which resources are used? By whom?
- Who makes decisions about the allocation of resources to, and within, households and what are the criteria used for such allocation?
- Does the village have common property? If so, who decides on its distribution?
- What are the different rights to access resources for men and women? Male-headed households? Female-headed households? Youth/orphan-headed?
- Are any of the resources especially important for households with chronically ill members, orphan- or grandparents-headed households.

Tool 2 – Resource matrix

Relevance for extension and household resource management: Understanding who uses and controls the use of different resources is essential for planning extension services. Addressing constraints and building on opportunities can help strengthen rural people's livelihoods and help identify who is likely to lose or gain from a particular intervention.

Use: The resource matrix helps us learn about the use and control of resources (e.g. natural, human, socio-cultural) – within households and among different socio-economic groups (e.g. age, ethnicity).

Examples of questions to ask while facilitating:

- Which resources do women and men (both young and the old) use? How does this differ among socio-economic groups?
- Who decides about the use of each of these resources? Who has control over the resources (the right to sell or give them away)?
- What are the differences/similarities between men and women when it comes to type of resources they use, control, and have ownership of?
- What are the implications of resource access and control for women's labour? Men's labour?
- How does the death of a male (or female) adult change the access, control and ownership rights of the remaining spouse? What happens if both parents die?
- How can extension services support rural men and women to strengthen their livelihoods? Think of disadvantaged groups, HIV/AIDS and other sickness-affected households.

Example of resource access and control from Uganda 2003

RESOURCES Number√= level of access/control. More√= more access and control.	Access to (use)		Control over (decides use)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Seeds	√	√	√	√
Pump	-	√	-	√√
Pesticides	-	√	-	√√
Water	√	√	√	√
Market	-	√√	-	√√
Money	-	√	-	√√√
Building materials	-	√	-	√√
Hired labour	√	√√	-	√√

Tool 3 – Economic ranking

Relevance for extension and household resource management: Economic ranking can help identify disadvantaged groups and better understand inequalities in a community. Health ranking (Tool 4) is an adaptation of this tool with a health approach.

Use: The tool provides learning about how economic situations and inequalities are perceived by community members, and can help extension workers and facilitators to identify poor and disadvantaged households. ***Be aware that the information generated is sensitive.*** Many people will not appreciate being classified as poor or rich, and they may not want to disclose such sensitive information.

Crop production, household food security and livestock ownership are used as indicators of wealth/poverty in the example below. Other issues that may indicate economic status are e.g. number of meals a day, school attendance of girls and boys and sources of household income.

- Issue -	Less poor	Middle poor	Poor	Very poor
Crop production, food security	produce large surplus from crop production, most of which is marketed	produce small surplus from crop production. Food self-sufficient all year.	food self-sufficient for less than six months a year. Meet food needs in deficit months by casual work	food insecure for many months a year.
Livestock	own draught animals, cattle, goats, chicken, pigs	many have a few cattle. Own goats, chicken and pigs	own a few small animals (goats, chicken)	very few or none

Examples of questions to ask while facilitating:

- How do local communities define the concepts of “rich” and “poor” (or better off, worse-off)? Are there different perceptions among different groups (i.e. women and men? Different socio-economic groups?)
- What factors characterise the most disadvantaged households and/or household members?
- Are there households that are particularly vulnerable in terms of food security, livelihood, and overall well-being? (E.g. youth/orphan-headed households?)

Tool 4: Health ranking

Relevance for extension and household resource management: Health ranking classifies households into health categories and aims at obtaining an overview of: i.) households suffering from bad health (disadvantaged groups); ii.) local definitions of health, and; iii.) how wide-spread this problem is for the community.

Use: Health ranking is an adaptation of tool 3 Economic Ranking. The criteria categories and questions are adjusted to address health issues. Let the participants define the health categories and definitions. Be aware that the information generated is sensitive, and avoid to stigmatise people with poor health, for instance people living with HIV/AIDS.

Weakest health	Weak health	Good health	Very good health
- Chronic illness - Too weak to perform x, y, z	- Often sick - Do heavy work only when not sick	Seldom sick	Almost never sick Strong
Number of households in this category	No. households in this category	No. of households in this category	No. of households in this category

Examples of questions to ask during facilitation

- How do men and women in the community define sickness and wellness? What are the main categories of health status for people in the community (e.g. weakest, good, best)?
- Is there a group/s that displays the weakest health in the community (e.g. young, orphans, old, men, women, poor, etc)?
- From what illnesses do different households suffer? Does that fit into the different categories or is it present in all categories? Which sicknesses create most serious problems for the households?
- Which households are affected by chronic illness, in what ways and why (by household head, sex, age and socio-economic characteristics)?
- How do the households with weakest health cope? Do the households with stronger health help the ones with weaker health? How?
- How can the extension services assist the households in different categories to improve their livelihoods and cope with weak health?

Tool 5 – Activity matrix

Relevance to extension and household resource management: There are many ways for extension workers to learn about how work is divided among household members; this can be helpful for planning extension activities (e.g. time of day/season for different household members to take training, meet, etc.). These include: daily activity clocks, seasonal calendars, and activity or division-of-labour matrices.

Use: The activity matrix is useful for telling extension workers more about the labour within households and provides a good overview of who does what in a community or household, and can help extension workers to target their services.

Example:

Activity	AM	AF	B	G	HM	HW	Time	Where
- land clearing								
- ploughing								
- grazing livestock								
- taking care of the sick								
- cooking								
- child-rearing								
- member - village committee								
- mending road								

AM = adult men, AF = adult female, B = boys, G = girls, HM = hired men, HW = hired women

Example of questions to ask while facilitating:

- What activities do women and men carry out separately? Together? Hint: Think of productive, reproductive (i.e. caring for sick, children, cooking, washing, etc), and community roles (group membership, maintenance of common property).
- How much time do women and men devote to productive activities? Reproductive activities? Community management responsibilities?
- How does the activity matrix compare among different socio-economic groups? What about households taking care of sick members or orphans?
- Which activities and resources contribute most to meeting the basic needs of the household? Who is involved in these activities?
- Which households have the most diversified livelihoods? Which are the most vulnerable, depending on only one or two activities or resources?

Tool 6 – Sources and use of money

Relevance for extension and household resource management: The tool can help to identify the main sources of income and expenditure for households and individual household members.

Use: This tool and the two examples below are adapted from IFAD (2002) and can be used in many different situations. If chronic illness (e.g. HIV/AIDS) is a big problem, it might be useful to have a group represent households with chronically ill members, or have them join existing groups in the community (be careful of creating stigma when forming groups). The template can be adapted to different situations, and to reflect the views of more than two groups.

Example: Ranking main items of expenditure

Main items of expenditure (according to Women's Group in Zambia)

Women's expenditure	Men's expenditure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food • school fees • clothes • medical expenses • kitchen utensils and household items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marrying a new wife/girlfriends • cattle, fertilizer and food • seed and farm implements • school fees • beer

First item listed indicates highest priority. If more than one item is listed on a line it indicates that those items are ranked equally.

Main items of expenditure (according to Men's Group in Zambia)

Women's expenditure	Men's expenditure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kitchen utensils • clothes • food • school fees, household items, small livestock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fertilizer • clothes, school fees • farm implements • medical expenses • household items

Examples of questions to ask while facilitating:

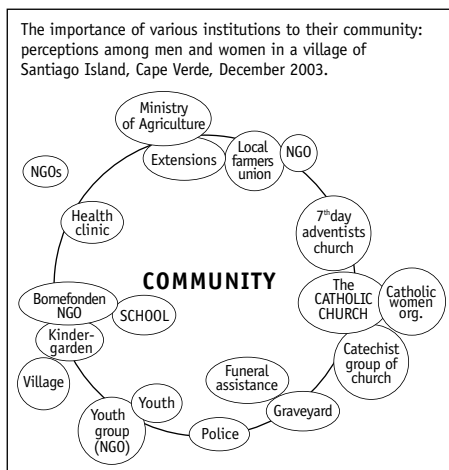
- What are the main sources of income for women and men? What are the main areas of expenditure?
- On which activities/priorities do women spend their cash income most and why? On which activities/priorities do men spend their cash income most and why?
- What about households with chronically ill members?

Tool 7 – Stakeholder analysis

Relevance for extension and household resource management:

Stakeholder analysis is useful for clarifying interests, decision-making roles and potential collaboration or conflicts between different socio-economic groups and service providers.

Use: A matrix (table) showing the various stakeholders involved at different levels (field, institutional, macro level) can be quite revealing to a community in terms of seeing who is involved or has an interest in a particular intervention or activity. Alternately, a Venn diagram (example on the right) can be used. It is best if groups brainstorm a list of potential stakeholders and then discuss what sort of interest, or stake, they think they have and their relation to other stakeholders.



Examples of questions to ask while facilitating

- Which organisations and groups work with the community? Are they organised according to economic, social, environmental, other issues? What is the relative importance of the organisations?
- Which groups assist households to overcome key constraints (e.g. related to land, livestock, sickness, nutrition, domestic violence, lack of income)? What services do they provide (information, training, projects, credit, and other kinds of assistance)?
- What groups are exclusively for women? For men? Youth? Are certain groups excluded from some of the organisations (e.g. men, women, the landless, certain ethnic groups)? If so, which ones and why? What are the implications of non-participation?
- Are there any groups that provide advice on HIV/AIDS prevention? Or on living with HIV/AIDS? Or mitigation, e.g. are there support groups or programmes for individuals or households affected by HIV/AIDS? Who has/does not have access to such services? How can the extension services link up with these groups?
- What are the linkages between local groups and outside institutions?

Tool 8 – Pair-wise ranking

Relevance for extension and household resource management: Pair-wise ranking highlights how the priority problems of different community and household members differ and where they overlap.

Use: This can show differences and similarities between women and men, across socio-economic groups, or in areas where such illnesses as HIV/AIDS are prevalent – the particular constraints faced by households with chronically ill members, those taking care of orphans, or that have lost labour.

Example

Problems	Weeds	Cost of inputs	Lack of land	Lack of knowledge
Weeds		Cost of inputs	Lack of land	Lack of knowledge
Cost of inputs			Cost of inputs	Cost of inputs
Lack of land				Lack of land
Lack of knowledge				

Ranking	Times preferred	Rank
Weeds	0	4
Cost of inputs	3	1
Lack of land	2	2
Lack of knowledge	1	3

Examples of questions to ask while facilitating

- What are the different problems identified by women and men? Which problems result from the gender division of labour or from inequitable access to resources? Which problems do both women and men share?
- What are the problems identified by different socio-economic groups? Which problems result from poverty or discrimination? Which problems do all groups share?
- Which problems relate to structural issues and the development context, such as policies, legislation, land rights, payment for services, chronic diseases?
- Which problems relate to the division of labour or constraints in the access to and control over resources such as land, water, credit, extension services?
- Are the problems related to one another?
- Was there consensus or not about the ranking of problems in order of importance?

Tool 9 – Problem analysis chart

Relevance for extension and household resource management: The tool can be helpful for analysing the priority problems of different groups and identifying areas to be addressed by the community and extension services.

Use: Once the priority problems of all the different groups in a community are identified, the next step is to bring everyone together for further analysis. This chart facilitates the presentation and discussion of problems and opportunities with the community as a whole and also service providers where relevant. The list should be short enough to allow focus on the key issues. The list of problems can be shortened by bringing similar problems together, excluding problems for which there are no solutions, and where a problem has been identified several times, listing it only once.

Example

According to	Problem	Cause of problem	Coping mechanism (how do we live with the problem?)	Gender implications	Possible solutions (How can villagers solve the problem?)
Women					
Men					
Community-leader					

Examples of questions to ask while facilitating:

- Which groups prioritise the same problems? Which priority problems are related?
- Did any of the non-community members suggest any additional causes to the problems? What are they?
- What are the current coping strategies? For men? For women? For those with disabilities? For children? For the old? For households with chronically ill members? For households affected by HIV/AIDS? For other groups?
- What suggestions do community members have to solve the problems? Men? Women? The poor? What opportunities to solve the problems were suggested by non-community members/service providers?
- Which of the solutions can be implemented locally? Which solutions can realistically be solved by extension services?
- Which solutions require other types of external assistance? Who can provide such assistance and what needs to be done to receive this?

Tool 10 – Community action plan

Relevance for extension and household resource management: This tool can help communities formulate concrete and realistic plans for implementing development activities and identify needs for extension services (and other services).

Use: The action plan builds on the problem analysis chart and discussions, and should focus on the development activities most likely to succeed.

Example

Priority problem	Solutions	Activities	Beneficiaries	Who will do it?	Costs Who/how	Duration/Start

Examples of questions to ask while facilitating

- Which plans include activities that will directly benefit women, men or both?
- Which action plans include development activities that will directly benefit the most disadvantaged (e.g. the landless)? Or most or all of the community?
- Which benefits/costs will the proposed activities imply for households with chronically ill members or households affected by HIV/AIDS?
- Are the timelines, cost estimates and responsibilities well described and clarified in the matrix? What needs to be added or clarified?
- What are the next steps necessary for rural extension workers to take in order to facilitate implementation?

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Other useful resources under the SEAGA programme

Handbooks for use at the field-, intermediate- and macro-levels have been developed under the SEAGA programme. There are also separate SEAGA guides in specific areas such as irrigation, livestock, micro-finance and the project cycle. Contact us by mail or e-mail (seaga@fao.org) for more information and/or documents, or go to the SEAGA website: www.fao.org/sd/seaga

SEAGA

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