NGO-IDEAs

How do they do it?
Civil Society Monitoring Self-effectiveness

2011

An NGO-IDEAs Documentation of Field Experience

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NGO-IDEAs (NGO – Impact on Development, Empowerment and Actions)

NGO-IDEAs is a cooperation of about 40 non-govermental organisations (NGOs) from South Asia, East Africa and the Philippines and 14 German NGOs working in the field of development cooperation. It identifies and develops jointly with all partners, concepts and tools for NGOs in the areas of Outcome and Impact Assessment and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E). NGO-IDEAs is further being supported by VENRO, the umbrella organisation of development non-governmental organisations in Germany as well as PARITÄT, the legal holder of the project. The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has cofinanced the project.

NGO-IDEAs is not just another study evaluating the impact of NGOs' work – it combines research & development, knowledge management, learning & training as well as advice & coaching to initiate a collective learning process for all partners involved. Additionally, NGO-IDEAs intends to create a valuable resource base for use by NGOs.

NGO-IDEAs aims at:
- Empowering community based organisations or groups and the poor among the rural communities to use and practice impact monitoring for project management
- Empowering NGOs to further improve the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of their efforts
- Making social changes more visible for implementing and funding NGOs, thus improving development practice
- Improving public recognition of NGOs and CBOs and their contribution to development.

The examples in this publication tell stories of how NGOs have applied elements of the Impact Toolbox. They have been compiled in order to give people an idea of how the process works in practice. The intention is that people can copy and adapt them. The examples show variations of the tool application, and they report only parts of the practice that is of particular interest to this publication. Organisations made their choices in a trial and error process identifying the most appropriate use and combination of the tools. They underwent a constant process of learning, and there are still options for improvements.

1   Introduction

Bernward Causemann, Eberhard Gohl, September 2011

Why yet another publication on the impact of development aid? For decades, non-governmental and community-based organisations have been working for development and empowerment and the reduction of poverty. Many have brought about significant change in helping poor and marginalised people to improve their lives, their self-confidence and their status in society. But sometimes the effectiveness has been called into question. Positive and negative side-effects went unnoticed. Challenging questions evolved, like: How can the organisations get reliable information about the change they bring about? How can they focus on impact in their project management? How can they learn from their experience for future work? And how can they report on the difference they are making?

A group of 14 German NGOs, financially assisted by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany, in cooperation with about 40 NGOs from South Asia, East Africa and the Philippines have been developing tools that are specifically relevant for civil society involved in community development in a wider sense. NGO-IDEAs[1] worked in two phases. The first phase 2004–07 in South India developed a first version of the Impact Toolbox – concepts specific to programmes with Self-Help Groups. The second phase 2008–11 extended the approach to other regions and other sectors. At the end of the second phase, a number of publications have been produced that are how-to-guides for assessing outcome and impact.

Many of the concepts for impact assessment currently in use are of limited benefit to the practitioners. Often they are too cumbersome, need highly-paid specialists and frequently they are not relevant to issues of social transformation that NGOs work for. Many concepts are extractive and have little process use. In a nutshell: these concepts are designed for external accountability only, but not for reflecting on self-effectiveness. Many practitioners felt that solutions were needed that are more relevant for community groups and NGOs. The tools developed by NGO-IDEAs address these issues. They focus on participatory impact-oriented management, that is: the tools are designed to focus development work on the intended change, and give relevant information to become more transformative. They focus on self-effectiveness: the difference that people, community-based organisations and NGOs want to bring about. The tools are designed to empower their users to increase their awareness of the change happening around them and ways to enhance desirable change. A particular focus is on the use by poor and vulnerable people. In order to achieve all that, NGO-IDEAs uses participatory means for impact assessment.

The tools and their various adaptations have been developed in an iterative action-research process. Hundreds of NGO staff members participated in developing these tools and reflected upon the effectiveness of their work. The following examples tell stories of resistance, complications, and rich harvest: development work has become more meaningful, satisfactory, people-centred. Members of far more than 10,000 households have been involved in developing their own goals. They have been assessing themselves in relation to these personal and group goals. They have learned, given feedback, and contributed to an evolving body of experience that this publication is about.

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1   NGO-Impact on Development, Empowerment and Actions. For more information about NGO-IDEAs, its concepts and values see the introduction into all NGO-IDEAs publications, *www.ngo-ideas.net/publications*. All publications can be found there.

The stories collected in this publication are about the application of the Impact Toolbox. The idea is not so much to present the impact of NGO development work, but rather to give a practical description of how the tools have been applied, by practical description, and describe the difference they make. The examples show variations of the tool application, and they report only parts of the practice that is of particular interest to this publication, not to duplicate. Not all is perfect. Organisations made choices in a search process for the most appropriate use of the tools, learned in the process, and there are still options for improvements. The editors give some explanations and alternatives in boxes on the side.

1.1   The NGO-IDEAs Tools

Examples refer to the following tools[2]:

Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWR)
> In a process involving the community and key informants, households are clustered according to criteria for well-being. The tool gives information about the village-specific poverty stratification which can be used for project planning, as baseline data and target group selection.

Situational Assessment and Goal Establishment (SAGE)
> Groups develop goals for individuals and households; they monitor how the individuals perform in relation to these goals, usually with a group discussion. Reflection on the outcomes and action planning are integral parts of this tool.

Participatory Assessment by Groups (PAG)
> Groups develop goals for the group as a whole, and monitor how they perform in relation to these goals, usually with a group discussion. Reflection on the outcomes and action planning are integral parts of this tool.

Participatory Impact Analysis and Reflection (PIAR)
> Data from PWR, SAGE and PAG are consolidated and analysed on programme or NGO level. Data from other tools and sources are compared with this. Further elements of the tool are a reliability check of the data, cause-effect analysis and steps for programme adaptation.

The Impact Toolbox is organised along the project cycle. It also includes a Community Action Plan and considerations of how to link the tools to the general project or and Logical Framework. Compilation and analysis of the data can be done with any data-base software. In NGO-IDEAs, the international version of GrafStat[3] was used because it is easy to customise and reliable in data entry and simple data analysis, particularly in creating graphs. For more sophisticated data analysis, data export to other software is possible, so that the data can also be used for in-depth data analysis.

2   For details see *www.ngo-ideas.net/impact_toolbox*
3   *www.grafstat.de, www.grafstat.com*

1.2   The Examples

The following examples of field experience are documented in this publication:[4]

Organisation	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
KRWCDS	India	Saving & Credit women and farmer groups	PWR, SAGE, PAG, PIAR

KRWCDS has been involved in NGO-IDEAs since 2004. The KRWCDS case is about accumulated experience with all NGO-IDEAs tools building on Self-Help Groups and Farmer Associations in Karnataka, India. It shows how the tools can be fully integrated. The organisation's planning has become more of a bottom-up process. People move out of the lower strata of poverty and change both in attitude and, a little later, in their economic position.

Organisation	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
ACT	Kenya	Saving & Credit women groups	PWR

ACT runs a programme of Self-Help Groups in coastal Kenya. They use Well-being Ranking to identify the poorer families and offer them participation in their programme. Ranking is done with full involvement of the community so that the focus on the poorest becomes acceptable to all. The case is a step-by-step guide.

Group	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
St. Joseph Pakanyi	Uganda	Saving & Credit mixed group	SAGE, PAG

St. Joseph Pakanyi is a Kolping group in Uganda that works to improve their livelihood. The case describes in detail how they came to individual and group goals and how they did the first two scorings that showed some changes already. This is a step-by-step description.

Group	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
Juhudi	Tanzania	Group of Persons with Disabilities	PAG

Juhudi is a group started by People affected by Leprosy supported by Shirati Leprosy Control Centre in Tanzania. They work to reduce discrimination and improve their livelihoods. With their goals the group can assess the level of inclusion of a person with disabilities. The case has a step-by-step guide and lists of indicators.

Organisation	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
RKM	India	Pre-school education	SAGE

RKM runs pre-schools in West-Bengal, India. With parents and teachers they developed short- and mid-term goals: learning objectives for children, behaviour objectives for parents and "do's and don'ts" for teachers. The assessment of these goals led to fast improvements in performance. Additionally, the organisation could reflect much better on the change they were bringing about. The case lists many objectives.

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4   More examples are documented on the NGO-IDEAs homepage: *www.ngo-ideas/publications*. All organisations and groups mentioned have given permission to the publication of their names and experience.

Organisation/	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
SRAN	India	Pregnant and lactating mothers	SAGE

SRAN describes an example from the health sector. Pregnant and lactating mothers become involved in setting short-term goals for themselves and monitoring the changes in their behaviour and health improvement. SRAN tells the story of how this can happen and how much change in personal attitudes can be achieved.

Organisation	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
Embu Diocese	Kenya	Farmer groups, federation level	SAGE, PAG

Catholic Diocese of Embu supports agricultural groups. These groups are federated, and the tools have been tested in the federations, i.e. on a second level. This example gives an idea of the challenges that many partners experience when they introduce new tools. While the other examples describe the solutions found, this example reports the process of coming to an appropriate adaptation of the tools. Other organisations learned from this: PAG is more suitable for second level application than SAGE.

Organisation	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
BASIWASCO	Philippines	Water cooperative	SAGE, PAG

BASIWASCO is a water cooperative in the Philippines. The coop Board and management members developed goals for their members and asked a stratified sample how their current status was. Data analysis shows significant impact outside the water sector. This is another case of second-level application, and here group validation was done by the Board members.

Organisation	Country	Target group and issue	Tool(s) described
JPIC-IDC	Philippines	Housing cooperative	SAGE, PAG

JPIC-IDC supports a housing cooperative in the Philippines. This case focuses on the resources needed, and the costs involved in introducing SAGE and PAG. It offers a link to a template to calculate the costs.

NGO-IDEAs has been closely cooperating with VENRO, the Association of German Development NGOs. In 2010 VENRO published a policy paper on impact monitoring – "Quality before Proof"[5] which names four purposes of impact monitoring:
- Learning from experience,
- Steering,
- Empowerment,
- Accountability.

All examples described are rated in relation to these four purposes. The rating reflects the assessment of the NGO staff or advisers applying it. Rating is not about the tool itself. It is about the experience with the tools described in the examples.

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5   Link to the German version: *venro.de/wirkungsbeobachtung.html*
     Link to the English version *www.venro.org/628.html*

> **Structure of the examples:**
> 1. Descriptions for practitioners – A practical report on what happened: experiences, described in sufficient detail to create a lively idea of the application.
>   - Context *(Sector, region, type of project, implementing NGO)*
>   - Introduction of tools *(A brief description of the tool, or the process of introduction.)*
>   - Procedure of application *(How did it work exactly? Lists of indicators, data collection instruments, process of data collection etc.)*
>   - Changes observed *(What outcome/impact have been observed – positive/negative, intended/unintended. In some cases, the effects of the project have been described, in others the effects of the tools.)*
>   - Added value of the tools *(How did people think of the tools, how did they make use of them? – This part is mainly descriptive.)*
> 2. Reflections for leaders and experienced M&E persons – A more general explanation and background to help understand context, conditions and aims of the exercise.
>   - *Background (What is the background to the application of the tools? Which factors played a role in making it a success or, partial, failure? What did the facilitators aim at? What did they achieve?)*
>   - *Benefit of the tools (What benefit did the tools generate? What did people learn? Did they change their practice? What did the NGO learn? Has it adapted its practice since? – This part is more analytical.)*
>   - *Lessons learned (What have we learned about the tools? What can be drawn as a general lesson for participatory M&E? What advice to give for people who want to apply the same tool? What are its limitations?)*
>   - *Purposes of impact assessment (On the four purposes of Impact Monitoring in the VENRO publication "Quality before Proof", see above.)*

Chapter 3 gives an overview of options and variations which NGO-IDEAs partners developed during the process that go beyond the nine examples in this publication. It lists specific goals for more sectors and explores the specifics of second-level groups: federations and local advocacy groups. It deals with challenges like making good use of the quantitative data generated. Finally, chapter 3 describes what is at the horizon of a people-centred approach to impact monitoring that NGO-IDEAs has developed further.

A note on language: The examples describe different practice across organisations and countries. That causes a difference in language. The terms goal/objective/indicator have been used for the same thing, reflecting concrete aspirations of group members. Even the term "indicator" assumes the qualities of an objective for some, and sometimes, goals could also be considered rules or principles for behaviour.

This collection of field experience has benefited tremendously from the intensive accompaniment of partner organisations by the three regional coordinators of NGO-IDEAs: C. Rajathi (India and Bangladesh), Godofredo Limotlimot (Philippines) and George Cottina (East Africa). They have given continuous support to the NGOs involved and they have been instrumental in creating and collecting and documenting these stories of change. This publication and NGO-IDEAs as a whole, owe them much. Albert Eiden, Ralf Tepel and, from the beginning, Bertold Trittler formed the Reference Group for this publication. They have given invaluable feedback on concept and text. Martina Rithaa has helped in compiling the PWR example in a very short period of time. And last but not least, our thanks go to all the authors and NGO staff members who have contributed to the examples in chapter 2. The dedication and innovation that we have experienced with NGO-IDEAs partners have been very inspiring.

2   Field Experience: Nine Variations

2.1   KRWCDS: 6 Years of Experience with the NGO-IDEAs Toolbox

A. Susairaj and Ganesh Tantry, May 2011

● **The Setting**

◗ **Context**

Karwar Rural Women & Children Development Society (KRWCDS), founded in 1986, is situated at Karwar, Karnataka, in India. It is working in two sub-districts (taluks), namely Karwar & Joida of North Canara District mainly with indigenous population[6] at Joida supported by the Karl Kübel Stiftung and BMZ, Germany, and with fishing communities and Other Backward Communities in Karwar taluk, supported by Child Fund India and Solaris company. Its vision is to build a just, democratic, free, gender-sensitive, and poverty-sensitive, equitable and sustainable society. Its mission is Enlightenment, Empowerment, Entitlement, Enlargement, Enrichment and Embodiment through critical objective assessment, structural changes and partnership approaches.

Its main activities are Community Organization Building, Integral Awareness Building, Education, Health and Agriculture. The programs aim especially at benefitting children, mainly from the poorest sectors of rural society.

KRWCDS works much through Farmer Associations and through Self-Help Groups (SHG), women saving-and-credit groups that meet regularly and deal with all social issues.

◗ **Introduction of the tools**

In order to monitor the impact, KRWCDS had formerly adopted an organization-centred, target-centred, and staff-centred approach. This, though being a commonly accepted practice, was felt to be unsatisfactory with regard to the participation of the target groups.

To change this, NGO-IDEAs with a team of 32 Indian and 14 German NGOs was formed to develop a tool to monitor outcome and impact of the NGOs' intervention. KRWCDS joined hands with the team, and the Director, Mr. Susairaj, was one of the resource persons for the development of the tool in the first phase (2004–2007).

In this first phase – in 2005, KRWCDS experimented with three different tools – Participatory Wealth Ranking (PWR), SAGE & PAG – with five women associations of five villages with 92 families. In 2006, KRWCDS was supported by KKS and BMZ, Germany with a new project called Tribals Sustainable Development Project (TSDP) to work in 47 villages. At this stage KRWCDS applied the three tools mentioned above with 33 women & 34 farmers' associations with 520 families. When the TSDP project came to an end in 2010, with the previous experiences, KRWCDS participated in the 2nd phase of NGO-IDEAs and applied the tools in three villages, in particular with three women associations with 52 families. Now with a new project of Empowerment of Tribal Communities (ETC) in Joida Taluk, KRWCDS has once again stepped forward to develop Participatory Wellbeing Ranking in a new way.

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6   The indigenous population is called "adivasi" or "tribals" in India.

▶ **Preparation at NGO-Level**

Mr. A Susairaj, Director, trained the field staff and animators on NGO-IDEAs tools at KRWCDS Training Centre for two days in 2006. The training was mostly on a participatory basis (i.e.) applying the tool within the group to develop a better understanding of the tools. The staff in turn trained the animators, Committee members & SHG members.

The staff had a lot of doubt regarding the feasibility of the tool application, especially the "Participatory Wealth Ranking"[7] and also how to evolve the criteria for assessing poverty and wealth. It was suggested that one village is selected for the testing of the tools and also for evolving the criteria. The exercises started with Wealth Ranking after a good explanation of the tool and its way of application. The staff gained new skills in looking at the changes systematically. They started to speak with facts and figures derived from the tool. The tool helped KRWCDS staff to give value to what people think and feel, and what their imperative practical and strategic needs are. Their awareness of the project impact on individuals and the group is very important for KRWCDS.

▶ **Preparation at Community Level**

KRWCDS suggested the place, the timing, and the date for the introductory meeting, informed people and got their consent. Trainings were given to the field staff, committee members, animators, and the group. The application started with Wealth Ranking.

● **Participatory Wealth/Well-being Ranking**

The first time (in 2006) PWR was applied it was done with only one group. Along with that group, KRWCDS evolved seven criteria for poverty and wealth such as Level of Income, House Types, Number of Bread Earners and Dependants, Land Details, Loan Details, and Migration Habits. These criteria were discussed with other groups. Apart from the seven criteria above, the other groups developed group-specific indicators which were taken into consideration. Even the names of the poverty/wealth categories – Poorest, Poorer, Poor, Middle & Rural Rich – were developed by one of the groups and later applied to all the groups.

Firstly, a mock (a simulated) exercise of PWR was done in one group to gain experience. Later, the PWR was done in the groups. For those families who were absentees, the staff & the village representatives visited them at their house and PWR was done. Their results were validated in the groups. Survey format was used for documentation and a chart was used for the validation and consolidation. At that time, KRWCDS considered that poverty is based on economic factors.

The results were shared with group members and concerned staff, and they were closely cross-checked with farmers' association representatives, too, to verify the survey results and the tool applicability. Criteria were for example as listed in the following table:

> Simulations of tools, even role plays, can be very helpful in creating confidence among staff. Many NGO workers need opportunities to get accustomed with the new thinking involved in these tools. -ed

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7   For PWR, the term "Poverty Wealth Ranking" is used in KRWCDS.

Table 1: *Criteria for Wealth Ranking*

Criteria / Indicators	Poorest	Poorer	Poor	Middle Class	Rich
House types	Huts / grass huts / partly tiled house.	Live in rented houses / small house / small tiled house.	Small tiled house.	Medium size tiled house.	Own big tiled house.

The criteria / the categorization helped KRWCDS to become aware of various forms, meanings and perspectives of rural poverty through open shared reflections with the villagers.

Wealth Ranking was repeated by people in 47 villages in 2009 at the end of the Tribal Sustainability Project to identify changes in the poverty status as compared with the first assessment in 2006 and in order to assess the impact of the project. The mobility status of the poverty was analysed and verified along with other sources such as savings books, documentation of income generating projects ("IGP book"), charts, minute books etc. The people were really very happy to see & feel visibly & pin-point for the first time the improvement in their lives. The comparison of Wealth Ranking done in 2006 & 2009 was projected as follows:

Graph 1: *KRWCDS poverty mobility status*
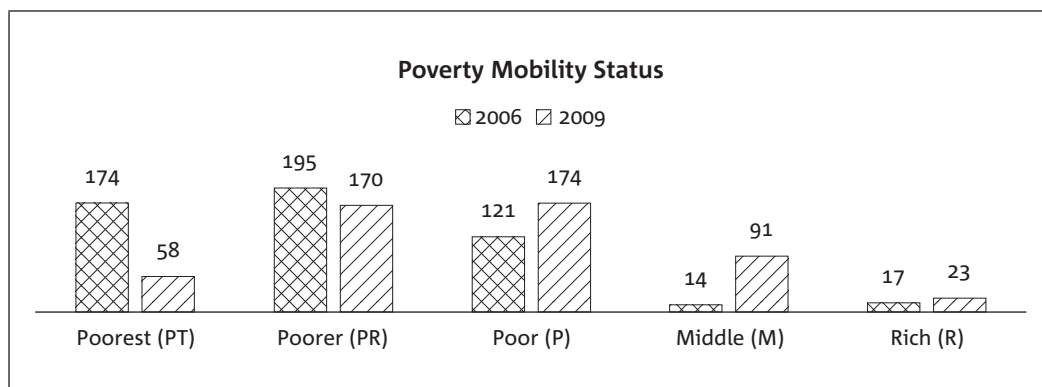
- The number of "Poorest" had come down from 174 in 2006 to 58 in 2009. However, there was not only an upward mobility: From the "Poorer" category two families of different villages have come down to "Poorest" category as the income was reduced due the bread earner's sickness. The community and the project took action and encouraged them to take up income generation activities during the following project period.
- KRWCDS as well as the people's organisation were able for the first time to pin-point in which category people have moved or remained stable. For example:

Graph 2: *Mobility of the Poorest 2006–2009*

> How to read the graph: Of 169 people in the Poorest category, 114 had moved up within three years, 95 to the Poorer category, but 18 had even jumped to a higher level.
> This is against the same criteria as applied in 2006, validated by community assessment. -ed
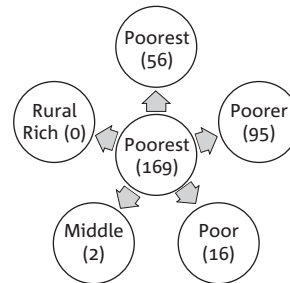
In 2006, there were 521 families – out of which 174 families were in poorest category. In 2009, 5 of the poorest families migrated and hence the survey was done only for 516 families. Therefore, of the 174 families in the poorest category, 169 remained in this area in 2009.

> " You are considering only my family income but you don't know the other expenses of my family"
> – *Radhika, Anshi village*

Participatory Well-Being Ranking (PWbR)

It was felt both by the people and KRWCDS that economic criteria alone will not reveal changes in poverty but it is necessary to consider other social factors, too. Hence, in 2010 when selecting three villages – Chaper Bothe, Joggad and Devalwada Chilume –KRWCDS and the 52 participants developed 12 criteria for Participatory Well-being Ranking such as Family Income, House Condition, Land, Cattle Assets, Bread Earners & Dependants, Educating the Children, Accessibility to Drinking Water, Kitchen Garden, Participation in Village Meetings (Gram Sabha), Interest in Participating in Local Elections (Panchayat[8]), Participation in Public Functions, Expenses for Health.

Table 2: *Criteria for Well-being*

Indicators	Poorer (Pr)	Poor (P)	Middle (M)	Rural Rich (R)
Educating the children	Up to 7th standard	Up to 10th standard	Up to Pre-University College	Up to degree
Access to drinking water	Within 1 km	Within ½ km	In Veranda	Within the house

PWbR as a combination of social, economic and political criteria helped to highlight the interconnectivity between different criteria and to analyse how they influence each other. For example, if one family has improved the family income, at least some members in that family may have an interest in participating in Gram Sabha meetings / elections having realized income / food security.

> " Four families are poorest. First we have to work on them to bring them in the next category".
> – *Shabiyabi, Devalwada village*

As in these three villages, the "poorest" had already moved up to the "poorer" category, the villagers selected only four categories such as Poorer, Poor, Middle and Rural Rich. There was another surprising experience: the stakeholders felt that the poverty reduction as the goal of KRWCDS had been taken over by Self-Help Groups.

> " No more poorest category in our village as Saira now moved to POOR" – *Rabiya Khan, Secretary, Joggad Village*

Since July 2010, KRWCDS has been implementing a new project named Empowerment of Tribal Communities, Joida, India in 39 new villages. For the Well-being Ranking, the beneficiaries evolved criteria based on Organisation, Health & Agriculture activities. Mother's Health & Child's

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8   Panchayat is a term for the local government in India.

Health is considered for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 4 & 5) and is also focused in our project villages.

Table 3: *Criteria for Well-being Ranking in a tribal community*

Sector	Indicators	Categories		
		Poorest	**Poor**	**Better**
Organisation, Savings & Credit	Joint Decision making process of husband and wife	No	50% of the decision	All the decisions
	Annual Household Income	Up to Rs 9,000	Rs 9,000 to 13,000	Above Rs 13,000
Health	Mother's Health	Physically prone to sickness throughout the year	Prone to sickness 6 months in a year	Prone to sickness once in a year
	Children's Health	Physically prone to sickness throughout the year	Prone to sickness 6 months in a year	Prone to sickness once in a year
	Access to good drinking water	No accessibility	Accessibility for 6 months	Accessibility throughout the year
Agriculture	Land holding	No cultivable land	Up to 1 acre[9]	> 1 acre
	Yield (paddy / acre) (through own land / leased land)	6 quintals[10]	8 quintals	10 quintals

◗ **Lessons Learned: Problems & Solutions in PWR**

Table 4: *Problems and solutions in PWR*

Problems	Solutions
Less awareness regarding land situation among women.	• We had a long discussion with the community when individual members were categorized into various social groups. PWR helped the people & KRWCDS to know the poverty status concretely.
People feel that everyone is poor.	
People fear that their "Ration Card" might change from BPL (Below Poverty Line) card to APL (Above Poverty Line) card.	• PWR has been exercised 2–3 times to solve the confusion.
People are confused about annual income.	• People were convinced based on the criteria developed about their status.
People were reluctant to talk about their poverty status due to castisms and dependency on the landlords.	

Lessons Learnt from PWR/ PWbR

- Identification of the most vulnerable target groups needs investment.
- Rural rich are responsible for the rural poor.
- Well-being Ranking creates involvement of the community to reduce poverty.
- Proof of results and achievements motivates the CBO to further action.

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9   1 acre is 4,046.8 m².
10   1 Quintal is 100 Kg.

● **Situational Analysis & Goal Establishment**

The process adopted for introducing SAGE was similar as for PWR.

◗ **SAGE First Phase**

In 2005, the SAGE tool was adapted by following the guidelines in the NGO-IDEAs Toolbox. But with the subsequent experience & learning, KRWCDS felt the need to integrate the society's logical frame work approach (LFA) into the tool. Once the time, place & consent of the members were fixed, the facilitators helped the individual members to analyse their present situation, to establish a list of goals (indicators) for the areas where outcomes and impacts were expected such as "Attitude, Knowledge & Skills", "Socio-Cultural", "Economic" & "Political" issues and to endorse the list. For one main Logical Framework indicator, various SAGE indicators could be derived. For example

Logical Framework IMPACT INDICATOR 1:
- **increase of family income on an average of 35 %, and**
- **decrease of dependency from financial structures with high interests from present level.**

SAGE Economic Goals and Indicators:
- **I am doing regular savings,**
- **I am involved in income generating projects (IGP),**
- **My income has increased since I joined the group,**
- **I am not taking loan from money lenders,**
- **I am not in over-indebtedness.**

Immunising all children equally means in this context: also immunising the girls. Hidden in this goal is a women empowerment agenda. -ed

SAGE was done every year starting from 2005 in five villages and 2006, 2007, 2008 & 2009 in 47 villages. In this phase the answering options used were Yes / No / N.A. (not applicable) for each indicator. As per the Logical Framework approach, women associations concentrated on Health & Education while (Men's) Farmer Associations concentrated on agricultural activities. The goals were hence set as per the activities. For example:

Table 5: *SAGE goals*

SAGE Goals for Women Association	SAGE Goals for Farmers' Association
I will give immunization equally to all my children	I know my land rights
I increased my knowledge in health issues	I increased my knowledge in organic agriculture

The results of the actual assessment were compared with the previous year's results and accordingly the groups made action plans to achieve their goals. For example the women's association comparison shows the following results (521 women in 2006 and 516 women in 2009):

Graph 3: *Women Association goal achievement 2006 and 2009*

Women Association Comparison
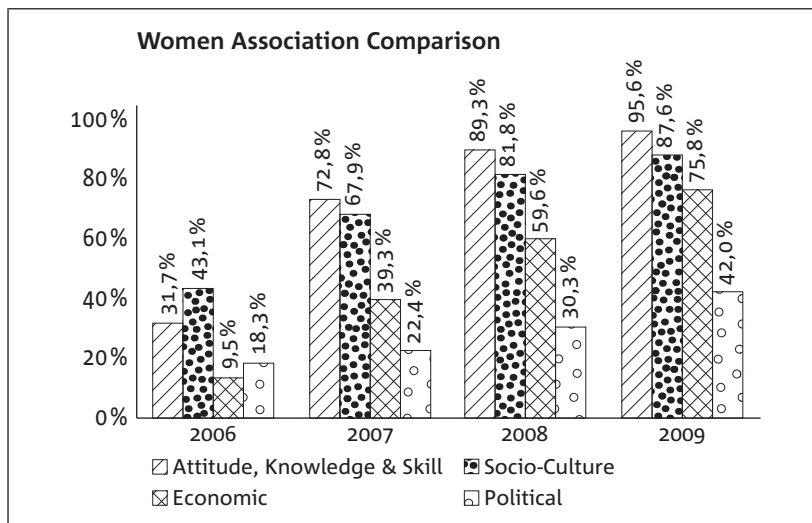
How to read the graph: The 521 women who each rated the 5 economic goals in 2006 with yes or no, rated 9.5 % of the goals with yes. This increased to 75.8 % in 2009. Goals on attitude, knowledge and skills were achieved fastest and the highest, political goals the least. The strongest increase was in economic goals (68 percentage points). -ed

The results presented below of various SAGE indicators for one main impact LFA indicator:

> "Increase of family income on an average of 35 % and decrease of dependency from financial structures with high interests from present level"

were realized and the same was shared with various stakeholders. For example, women association's results were taken into consideration as follows:

Table 6: *SAGE indicator achievement 2006 and 2009*

SAGE INDICATOR	Women members Association			
	2006	% out of 521 members	2009	% out of 516 members
I am doing regular savings	120	23 %	513	99 %
I am involved in IGP	13	2.4 %	389	75 %
My income has increased since I joined the group	5	1 %	354	68 %
I am not taking loan from money lenders	51	9.7 %	455	88 %
I am not in indebtedness	59	11 %	455	88 %
I have created assets in my name or jointly with my husband	8	1.5 %	221	42 %
I am repaying regularly loan with interest	92	17 %	354	68 %

How to read the graph: The percentage of households not in serious debt and not taking loans with high interest increased from ~10 % to ~90 %. That means that about 400 households became independent of loan sharks in a period of three years. That can be considered a strong indicator for reduction of vulnerability. -ed

◗ **SAGE Second Phase**

In 2010, TSDP project came to an end. At this stage NGO-IDEAs II came up and KRWCDS tested the updated NGO-IDEAs Toolbox. Methodologically, there were three new features:

1. SAGE was developed with a reduced number of goals, prioritising those which were most relevant for the members.
2. For each indicator, instead of yes/no questions, 4- or 5-point scales (called "sub-indicators" in KRWCDS) were developed and colours attributed to each of them. For example :

   I am working for safe drinking water as follows
   - **Within the house (green)**
   - **Within the veranda (blue)**
   - **Within 1/2 km (yellow)**
   - **Within 1 km (red)**

3. There was a process of up-scaling SAGE indicators from the 1st Phase of SAGE to the 2nd Phase. That means that indicators became more challenging. For instance:

   SAGE 1st Phase: **I AM ABLE TO SPEAK BY REDUCING FEAR & SHYNESS**
   SAGE 2nd Phase: **LEADERSHIP & ARTICULATION IN PUBLIC PLACES**

SAGE was applied in February and August 2010 with 53 women in three groups and the results were compared. Results are presented here for Attitude, Knowledge and Skills that showed a significant increase after 6 months that could hardly have been assessed in a yes/no scale.

Graph 4: *SAGE indicator achievement 2010 – Attitude, Knowledge, Skills*

How to read the graph: In the field of attitude, knowledge and skills, from February to August, the rating of goals improved. While in February many still rated yellow (middle), in August many moved up to blue (good). Green (very good) also slightly increased. -ed
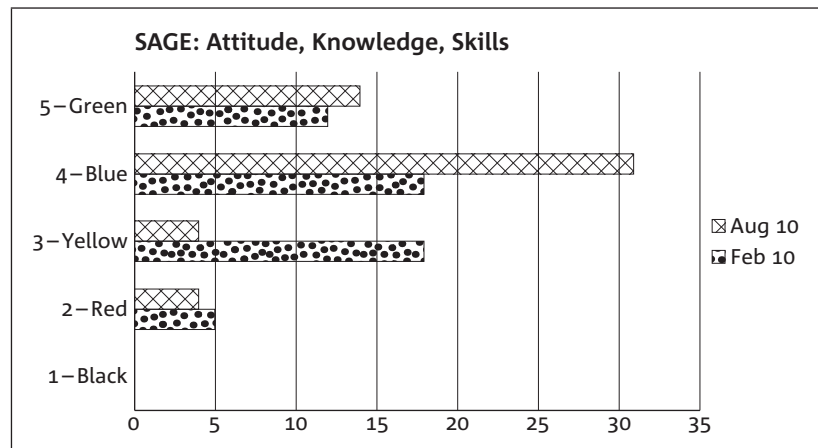
◗ **Benefits of the SAGE Tool for Individuals, Groups and the NGO**

- The goals/indicators were related to the daily lives of the individuals. This is the first tool the individuals have applied to know their previous and present status. Strong or weak areas, yes or no answers, and one-word answers were easy to deal with.
- NGO-IDEAs tools helped the KRWCDS's Regional Coordinators and Animators to monitor the impact of the agricultural collective action program with regard to income from the agricultural collective action program for 3 years (2007, 2008 and 2009).

- Realistic & achievable time-bound goals have been worked out.
- Common individual goals stimulated the individuals to work in a group.
- The periodic review of goals helped to speed up the goal achievement.
- Scoring of indicators helped to give clarity among individuals & status.

▶ Lessons Learned: SAGE Problems & Solutions

- It takes time to develop individual goals in a group.
- When elder members of the groups were confronted with indicators like "I know how to sign", indicators they felt that they could not achieve in their present age, they also felt that these things are very much essential which they have missed in their earlier age.
- In the beginning, women depended upon their husbands for answers (e.g. for loans, indebtedness etc.). Later on, however, they were able to reply independently to these questions.
- In some cases, the individual group members had given contradictory answers (i.e.) sometimes they said "No", and then they said "Yes". This happened at the initial stage. It was then not possible to complete the exercise in the group. Hence, twice or thrice the animators had to visit some families individually to collect and to verify the answers.
- Some indicators like "depending on the landlord for loans", over-indebtedness, and political literacy had confused the women to answer, because these issues were "new to them", and usually it is men who are involved in these issues. Therefore it is necessary to display the group's goals in the village and to repeat the meaning of these goals so that they can be easily remembered and internalised.
- Balance between the common project (from Logical Framework) and the individual and group goals should be maintained to improve the analysis.
- When community members are very sensitive to categorize the households (in PWR), their sentiments should be immediately respected and followed up. An alternative strategy would be to involve opinion leaders, group leaders & trained animators.

● Performance Assessment by Groups

PAG (Performance Assessment by Groups) is the tool which KRWCDS developed along with the people to facilitate for the group members the assessment of their respective group performance. In 2005, PAG was applied in 5 villages for 5 women associations. In 2007, 2008 and 2009 PAG was done for 32 women groups/associations.

During PAG indicator development, it was explained that PAG goals should be up scale the SAGE goals [e.g. how the group makes efforts to achieve individual's goals from SAGE]. For example

I am doing regular savings – individual goal in SAGE
Regularity in savings in recent one year (group goal in PAG with sub indicators done in scoring method)
a) 100 % members save regularly = 6;
b) Above 90 % = 4;
c) 70–90 %- = 2;
d) < 70 % = 0

The results from the self-assessment of each group were collected and compared to the previous years. The 32 groups clearly understood which their strong and weak areas are. On the basis of this experience, the groups realized the need for updating their action plan.

Graph 5: *PAG indicator achievement 2007–2009*
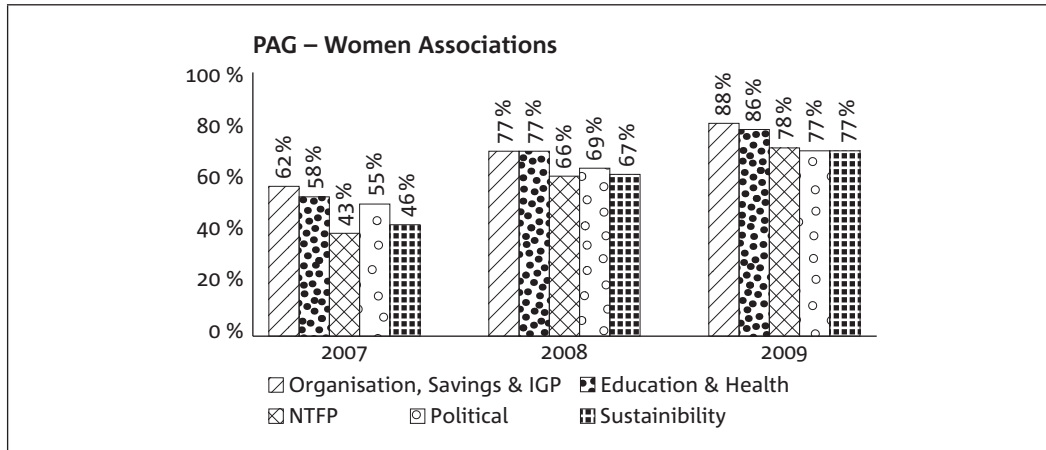
> " The Group motivated me to take up an Income Generation Activity of Cane Basket Stock" – *Laxmi S Raikar, Goyer Village*

- For example, from the above results obtained from the 32 groups, economic empowerment is visible in the first columns of each year – organisation, savings & Income-Generating Projects corresponding to areas focused in their Logical Framework (from 62 % to 88 %)

PAG in 2010

During NGO IDEAs II, PAG was implemented both in February 2010 and August 2010, after the project period. Some application elements were changed:

> " we are not that much literate & we do not know english. But we are seeing in our children's marks card that teacher's give grades like "A, B, C, D". We tell our children that they should get a grade. It also applies to our group, – we should also get a grade." – *Devalwada Village*

1. With the earlier experiences, people now used A – B – C – D as scores. For example:

   Doubling the saving capacity
100 % savings increase	A
50 % and above increase	B
Less than 50 % increase	C
No changes	D

2. The organic link between Well-being Ranking, SAGE & PAG became more obvious, e.g.,

Accessibility to drinking water (PWbR)

I am working for safe drinking water (SAGE)

Association is negotiating with govt./panchayat institutions to benefit from drinking water programs (PAG)

▶ **Benefits of PAG**

- PAG helps the groups to gauge their own status and performance.
- Poverty reduction has become the concern of the group, it came on their agenda.
- The group is helping to achieve the individual SAGE goals.
- Transparency is promoted at the grassroots' level through collective reflections & shared responses.
- A culture of learning and of validating self-assessments is very much encouraged by this tool.
- Once the people have understood the importance of the tool, they are now taking up two to three indicators and discuss them in their monthly meeting.

▶ **Lessons Learned: Problems & Solutions of PAG**

- The scoring method is not appreciated by the illiterate & ordinary members.
- Different interpretations of statements are possible.
- *Critical event* analysis may be added along with *case studies.*
- *Weighting* is very much subjective for each concerned group. It needs to be standardized when PIAR is used.

Documentation process at Self-Help Group level / NGO Level
Along with the tool application, the documentation, analysis of the data and its results, and giving feedback to the group members and other stakeholders for discussing further action also form major endeavours in NGO-IDEAs.

KRWCDS has promoted a culture at village level that the tool application results are to be incorporated in charts, and the discussions are to be written in the minute book. Each year once the assessments = application of the tools are done, the group members compare the results and set goals for their action plans accordingly. This also helped the groups to review and explain to the visitors the process and the impact of the NGO-IDEAs tools.

At the NGO level, all the details pertaining to all the groups were incorporated in Excel formats and the results analysed accordingly. KRWCDS is proud to be one of the organizations to simultaneously test the GrafStat software[11] for evaluation of the data obtained together with the NGO-IDEAs tools. From 2010 onwards, the NGO-IDEAs tool application data were analysed with that software.

The results obtained through GrafStat also help in effective monitoring at all levels and the information through NGO-IDEAs tools helped KRWCDS to identify policy corrections & strategic review. For instance it was decided in the beginning that the local contribution for income generating activities would be 50 %. However, after the PWR assessment it was felt that the Poorest are not able to pay such a contribution for taking up income generating activities. The policy was then changed as follows:

Table 7: *Local cash contribution based on poverty category*

	Poorest	Poorer	Poor	Middle Class	Rural Rich
Local cash contribution % based on Poverty category	33 %	37.5 %	40 %	50 %	60 %

11 *www.grafstat.de*

● **PARTICIPATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS & REFLECTION**

As per KRWCDS, the results obtained through SAGE & PAG should be used for participatory impact analysis and reflection in various dimensions like changes of people's poverty situation, development of indicators, time taken to achieve, cause-effect relationship (i.e. the project's contributions to achieve these changes).

As this was a new concept, in January 2011, two villages – Joggad & Devalwada Chilume – were selected and KRWCDS got the consent for applying Participatory Impact Analysis and Reflection (PIAR). The results obtained from the SAGE application of 2010 were used for PIAR.

It was decided by the villagers that the results obtained from the crucial four indicators of SAGE should be analysed in three steps:

- Summary / Aggregation of data
- Analysis of poverty status together with goal achievements and changes
- Cause Effect Analysis and the contributions to changes observed.

> KRWCDS has conducted PIAR on village level in a joint analysis by NGO staff and the groups. Graph 3 gives an example how a project-wide analysis was conducted in an earlier phase which is equivalent to PIAR. -ed

PIAR based on summary aggregation of SAGE, August 2010 Results

Indicator: I am working for safe drinking water as follows:

Table 8: *Working for safe drinking water by village*

	Devalwada Chilume	Joggad	GRAND TOTAL	ANALYSIS
No. of members	21	22	43	
Green (5)	5	10	15	For both Joggad & Devalwada, a panchayat member was selected by the group & worked along with the members to get a pipeline to a cluster of houses / in the house itself
Blue (4)	16	10	26	
Yellow (3)	0	2	2	
Red (2)	0	0	0	

Similar analysis was conducted for other indicators:

"Articulation in public places". Joggad (out of the average 7) scored highest (9) in green & Devalwada (out of the average 12) scored highest (13) in blue due to their active participation in SHG meetings, panchayat meetings and cluster association meetings.

"I have expenses on health issues". Devalwada has scored 9 in yellow due to mainly water-borne diseases and due to a seasonal pilgrimage festival when a lot of public activity took place so that contagious diseases broke out. There were four months of cold season and in summer an outbreak of scabies in children, a contagious disease.

> This is an example how KRWCDS has analysed the results of SAGE and PAG along well-being categories. Amongst the Middle and Rural Rich, a higher percentage had water inside the house. There is a huge potential for such analysis that cannot be elaborated in this article. -ed

"My income has increased since I joined the group". Out of the average 5, Joggad has scored 7 in red as the members have chosen only seasonal activities like tea shops, bangle shops etc.

PIAR based on poverty categorisation SAGE August 2010 Results

Indicator: I am working for safe drinking water as follows:

Table 9: *Working for safe drinking water by poverty category, Devalwada village*

Poverty / Well-being	Poorer	Poor	Middle	Rural Rich	Total
Within the house (green)	0	1	8	6	15
Within the veranda (blue)	9	1	15	1	26
Within ½ km (yellow)	0	2	0	0	2
Within 1 km (red)	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	4	23	7	43
Analysis					
Devalwada has scored 9 in Poorer group for drinking water indicator as the members got drinking water facilities on their veranda from the panchayat					

This is an example how KRWCDS has analysed the results of SAGE and PAG along well-being categories. Amongst the Middle and Rural Rich, a higher percentage had water inside the house. There is a huge potential for such analysis that cannot be elaborated in this article. -ed

▶ **CAUSE EFFECT ANALYSIS**

Factors contributing to the achievement of the goal were analysed systematically. That is demonstrated here again for the example of the indicator "I am working for safe drinking water".

Table 10: *Cause-effect-analysis on water access*

GROUP CONTRIBUTION	NGO CONTRIBUTION	OTHER INFLUENCES
• Identified the problem of drinking water at family level • Identified different water distribution points • Approached Panchayat • Participated during the pipeline & tap fitting • Organizing water access • Utilisation plan • People work for digging the well & pipeline as local contribution • Chaper Bothe villagers collected the water maintenance fund • From the tank, villagers have laid a pipeline connection to their house veranda on their own initiative	• Organized women association in planning & accompanied the group to Panchayat for application & negotiations • At Chapper Bothe village, KRWCDS made the community well of 20 ft. depth – connected with 500 meter pipeline to the Panchayat constructed water tank	• One of the women members became the Panchayat member • Government mini water scheme • Farmers' associations support

▶ **Benefits of PIAR**

- Periodic reviews of goals and current status at group and NGO level help to speed up the process.
- People too found that PIAR was interesting and could be done by them.

- Previously, there was a general perception that the development of the village was only possible through KRWCDS activities, but the application of this tool helped to give a proper share of success for different stakeholders.
- Reasons for change & effect of changes help us to go deep into supportive & hindering factors.

● **Benefits of the NGO-IDEAs toolbox as a whole**

▶ **At community Level**

- The NGO-IDEAs tools helped the members to identify inbuilt weaknesses, strengths and possibilities for improvement within the individual, the organizations and the system.
- These tools help the members to prioritize the tasks collectively.
- Group leadership has been motivated to take up more responsibility for their own group members due to tool application.
- Due to publicly opted policy towards the poorest by KRWCDS and *due to this tool application* the poorest gained their confidence to articulate their own situation centred views and reflections.
- Now the poorest are *accepted and respected* by others the way they are.

Tool helped group to work on Pro-poor priority

❝ I feel happy when our poorest are uplifted, as we are mutually dependent. If they are happy, we are happy." – *Laxman, Rural Rich, Chaper Bothe Village*

❝ Akkamma Chikmat was the poorest in our group as she is a widow & she has to feed three family members. It was very difficult with no income at all. She was not articulate. Before the PWR & SAGE, we did not give much thought for her, but when we saw that she is the poorest after doing PWR with no income at all, we as a group thought she has to be uplifted to a better position. We encouraged her to take up an Income Generation Project and she took bangle selling. Also when there was a scheme from the government for a post of the Govt. Kannada Higher Primary School cook, we did not compete with each other but asked her to apply & she is now working as a cook. We are now happy that from poorest category she has moved to poor category." – *Nirmala Belingatti, Devalwada Chilume village*

▶ **At NGO Level**

- KRWCDS realized various forms, meanings and perspectives of rural poverty through open shared reflections.
- Self-Help Groups & KRWCDS promoted joint ownership & leadership through PWR, SAGE, PAG & PIAR
- Helped to select the more vulnerable families.
- The tools helped to speed up development.
- The information through SAGE & PAG helped KRWCDS
  - to identify the policy corrections and strategic review
  - to build more linkages with Panchayats
  - to initiate a rights based approach
  - to work on repayment based on short term, medium & long term basis
  - to initiate community based marketing mechanism to save tribes from exploitation

- NGO-IDEAs tools not only have strengthened KRWCDS in making policy decisions, but also in making strategies for implementation & monitoring.
- The monitoring of outcome & impact system changed from staff & external resource persons to a people-centred system.

▶ **Benefits of these tools in development work**

- This development tool has initiated a *continuous process of validation* in the community itself, within the groups *and between all stakeholders, e.g.* by *sharing (written) reports, and responses to all stakeholders.*
- It encourages participation of individuals, groups and cluster level associations, Apex Bodies (e.g. federations) and NGOs. So it is jointly managed.
- To realize full autonomous management, people need time, trainings and further practices.
- It is both a "subjective & objective" tool.
- It 'enlightens, empowers and enriches' the people.
- The NGO-IDEAs tool can be used as a regular monitoring and evaluation system.
- The tool contributes to more convergent planning of development projects.

▶ **Lessons Learned**

About the tools
- Within the same concept, the tool may be modified as per the context.
- This developmental tool needs *to be applied one at a time and not all together at a time*. The participants get confused and consequently the quality of the results will be very much affected.
- The fruits of the tool could be seen only when the people own the tool.
- KRWCDS wishes to adopt this tool in all its projects according to group situation.

About the process:
- Training may be organized on the pictorial visual forms, graphs, etc. to facilitate the process of filling the forms by the illiterate.
- The tool has to be part and parcel of the whole project cycle to improve implementation & to be cost-effective.
- Additionally, case studies should be prepared, critical event analysis etc.
- Short term / long term goal to be developed as per the Results Chain (output / outcome / impact).
- The tools should be more open to explore other than anticipated outcomes and impacts.
- A team of regional qualified persons may be appointed and their services should be made accessible to the weakest organisations to strengthen them and to broaden the use of this development tool further. This should happen in all kinds of new thematic areas (not only regarding savings & credit but e.g. also regarding insurance, asset creation, social safety nets, emergency management or political empowerment, marketing, agriculture, caste structures, water management, energy issues).

◗ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Rating	Examples (how)
Improving the learning and actions based on the learning	3	PWR to PWbR – Economic to Socio Economic Criteria for Poverty Ranking
Steering project management and community participation	4	LogFrame Indicators integration in NGO-IDEAs tool
Empowering the community	3	Empowering pro-poor by rural rich prioritisation (e.g., first preference for the Poorest for Income-Generating activities)
Upward accountability	4	Designing & understanding of relevant indicators at all stake holder's level

2.2 ACT: Well-being Ranking in Mtwapa Women Empowerment Programme

Nancy Kireu & Betty Kitsao[12], August 2011

● **Experiences: Description for Practitioners**

◗ **Context**

ACT[13] (former Pact Kenya) is a capacity building organisation which facilitates institutional development of civil society organizations through capacity development and grants.

Under the women empowerment sector, ACT introduced a Self-Help Approach in Mtwapa, a town in North Coast in Kilifi District, in 2006. ACT realised at that time that women are not reached well with the natural resource management project they were running. They heard about the Self Help Approach Program of Kindernothilfe, a German NGO, and decided to join it to strengthen the women empowerment in the project.

Currently, the programme is working with 125 Self-Help Groups (SHGs), each of the groups having between 15 and 20 members. Very poor women are empowered, mainly economically, but also socially and politically. Group members are trained by competent community facilitators in areas like leadership and business skills, conflict resolution and advocacy, and are starting income generating activities at an individual level, based on an internal-lending system within the Self-Help Group.

In addition to the SHGs on village level, eight Cluster Level Associations of Self-Help Groups (CLA) and one Federation of CLAs were established by the community through facilitation of ACT. The CLA brings together groups in a certain area with the objective to address common issues affecting all their groups and members. It establishes linkages with other resource and service providers and bears the duty of protecting the rights of children and the community. The Federation as an umbrella body seeks to bring social transformation in the community and aims at strengthening and uniting efforts of the SHGs and CLAs on a higher level. It is lobbying with the Government and other civil society players to bring policy changes,

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12 The authors thank Martina Rithaa of NGO-IDEAs for the great support she offered in editing this text.
13 ACT: *www.actkenya.org*

raising awareness of people's and community's general development needs, as well as advocating for human rights.

The SHG approach as a project need Well-being Ranking to;
- Understand the community
- Understand their perception of poverty
- Identify the target group

◗ **Introduction of the Tool**

Participatory Wealth Ranking (PWR) has been applied by ACT since 2006 as part of its Self-Help Approach. It is used as a tool to identify the neediest households within a location, the poorest women in a community, and helps to organise them into groups. This way it is ensured that the services of ACT reach the designated target groups – the poorest women in the community.

> ACT has also applied SAGE and PAG for groups and PAG for umbrella bodies to a large extent. This report focuses on PWR. -ed

Facilitated by ACT, the community discusses and understands what poverty means to them. It is involved in classifying the families into different categories of well-being, and therefore identifying the poorest households and prospective members of the SHG within the community. Existing knowledge, information and experience of the community are used to assess their situation and status of well-being. This is done by Social Mapping and Well-Being Ranking. Since 2009, ACT includes systematically well-being criteria in the tool and applies Well-being Ranking.

Once the SHGs have been formed, admission books are introduced and are used for collecting household baseline data. The admission books carry information which are typical ones from the Well-being Ranking and which are monitored annually to track changes, which help the organization and the SHGs to monitor the outcomes.

The PWR tool is described among others in the NGO-IDEAs Toolbox and a Kindernothilfe Self-Help Group Training Manual.

◗ **Procedure of Application**

The tool was introduced to the Self-Help Group project officer in a course in 2006, conducted by a Kindernothilfe consultant from India, which included theory and practice in selected locations. Later on, competent project officers trained community facilitators to apply Well-being Ranking within their communities. Community facilitators are women from the Self-Help Groups who have shown particular competence. For a small stipend, they train the groups and support them in implementing the Self-Help Group Approach.

Data Collection instruments used within the Well-being Ranking process included transect walk, Social Mapping and Wealth Ranking. The methods were triangulated to validate the outcomes and ensure the neediest women were identified and recruited to the SHG.

The application process included the following steps:

Step 1 – Introduction/access to the field
Community leaders were informed about the concept and got involved in the process through the project officer who met with the local leaders and government officials, introducing the

SHG project and ACT. The leaders recommended an elder to assist the project officer by mobilizing the community to conduct the Social Mapping and the Wealth Ranking process.

The project officer met with the village elders to confirm their understanding of the project and ask them to assist in the PWR exercises supporting the selection of poor households within the community to be visited.

Step 2 – Getting familiar with the location
In a meeting, the whole community was given an orientation on the purpose of ACT's intervention, and specifically about the purpose of the Well-being Ranking. The community facilitator conducted a transect walk of the community and home visits, initially with the elders, and then assisted by community members. Households were selected on the suggestion of the elders and upon appearance: Houses that gave the impression that these needed special support were visited upon the initiative of ACT staff members. About three quarters of the houses were visited. The transect walk aimed at getting familiar with the location and understanding the culture, resources and challenges met by people in this community. Basic information on the households were collected, and a household list, containing the names of the household heads, was drafted.

The approach was inquiry by friendly and interested listening, understanding and learning. All areas of the community were visited to cover all socio-economic strata. The people, the houses and the amenities in the community were observed with relation to their social and economic condition, past interventions, leadership style and community development organisations and their activities in the community.

Step 3 – Home visits
The women of the households visited were then invited to the Well-being Ranking meeting. The participants represented all sectors of the community, representing different socio-economic sectors of the village.

Step 4 – Well-being Ranking of the community
The community facilitators invited the women of the visited homes to a central place within their locality to facilitate the Social Mapping and Well-being Ranking.

a) The Social Mapping exercise was used to present information on village layout, infrastructure, wealth and other. The group was asked to draw a map of their village on the ground, using roads to divide the community. They then symbolically represented the features of their village, e.g. major institutions and important sites on the map (using stones, leafs or sticks). Finally, the participants were asked to place their names, written on cards, on the map in the locations where their homes were in relation to the important sites.

b) *Well-being Ranking* exercise: To begin with, the project officer explained the different dimensions of poverty and worked out criteria for the dimensions with the participants. At this stage, the terms rich or poor had to be avoided, as the participants would not have felt free to identify themselves as poor. Instead, talking about the low income comforted them. Accordingly, poverty classes identified were named as: high income, middle income and low income. The women were then asked to assign different criteria/characteristics to describe each of the three identified poverty classes not gauging themselves against regional or national poverty standards, but by their village standards. The characteristics were drawn on cards, then named as 'indicators' and listed on a grid drawn on the ground (see table below).

> In the classical approach to Wealth and Well-being Ranking as described in participatory rural appraisal, key informants rank the households first. Criteria are developed afterwards. Here it is the other way round: Criteria are developed first. Then households are assessed. If respectfully done, this makes it possible to do the ranking in a community meeting which in turn leads to activation and to solidarity with the poorest. Some NGO-IDEAs partner have used the ranking approach while most started with classification. -ed

Table 11: *Example framework for the Wealth Ranking exercise*

Status	High income	Middle income	Low income
Indicators	A stony walled & iron roofed house	Muddy walled with iron roofed house	No house or tattered makuti (grass thatched) roofed & muddy walled house
	car and motorcycle	Bicycle	No car, nor bicycle.
	land – more than 5 acres	1 acre piece of land	No land, live as a squatter or with less than quarter of an acre.
	live stock – 5 cows and 10 goats	1 cow and 5 goats	No live stock, maybe has a 1 or 2 chicken or none at all
	Children going to school stress free	Children attend government schools	Children do not go to school or if they do with difficulties
	Good nutrition – 3 x a day quality meals	At least can afford 2 meals a day	They feed less than 2 x a day and not necessarily on nutritious food.
	Level of education – above form 4.	Education level is up to primary school.	In most cases the poor do not attend school so the level of education is usually low
	Dresses well and generally lives well without financial problems.		

Participants then used the indicators to define the wealth status of all community members, also those who were not present, based on the socio-economic condition of their household and in relation to the community. They placed the names of community members that were written on cards besides the picture they see fit their situation.

After placing the cards, they were asked to explain their decision. This was discussed with other participants, if these did not agree, and cross-checked with the developed grid. That led to validated assessments and ACT staff members gained further insight in the community and the situation of the individual households.

Step 5 – Validation of Results
Finally, the community facilitators cross-checked the information gathered from the transect walk, Social Mapping and Wealth Ranking of the community. The programme was then able to recruit the poorest women for the first stage of the SHG project, formation of groups.

Step 6 – Monitoring of well-being
From the groups we use the household baseline data indicators similar to PWR to monitor & analyse the development towards this indicators.

Examples of indicators from admission books:
- Level of education
- Land ownership
- Ownership of livestock
- Family income
- If one is engaged in a profitable business
- Type of house
- Percentage of primary school aged children attending school.
- Attendance of public meetings.

◗ **Added Value of the Tool**

For the women who are prospective SHG members, Well-being Ranking can provide the foundation of empowerment and development, which are the pillars of the Self-Help Approach.

Women Empowerment: The Well-being Ranking empowers women through sharing of personal information and production of knowledge. This is facilitated by common mapping of the community, discussing community issues together and sharing common challenges. Women are encouraged to get out of their homes, describe and understand their community, how they (their home and family) fit into the community and how other women are positioned and related to them in terms of wealth in the community.

Women Development: The Well-being Ranking initiates the journey to the women's development as it raises awareness on the challenges for future developments to the participants. It forms a baseline on the status of the women (economically, socially & politically). Women see the indicators of wealth as they rank the wealth of the community. Seeing they are at the bottom of the rank can develop a kind of awareness and also ambition to reach another status. Community members who have developed a better wealth status, for example replaced the roof on their house or bought a goat, become role models.

Community Development: By establishing a well-being profile of the community, in which community members themselves define the criteria, awareness on the main factors influencing well-being and quality of life in the location is being created. This builds the ground for community based planning and to set adequate goals for poverty reduction.

● **Reflections for Leaders**

◗ **Background**

- Training of facilitators – This is conducted in a workshop setting and the topics include; Social Mapping, criteria selection and assessment of the well-being outcome with the social map information. The Program Officer then follows up the community facilitators as they go out to implement. This is done through a mentorship approach.
- *PWR needs to be sensitive at identifying the poor women* and therefore:
  - In the initial stages of a project the transect walk must cover all corners of the villages to ensure you know people and identify your target group. This may take a long time and is influenced by available resources. To assist full account of the community, more than one key informant should be involved in the transect walk, to avoid that areas are left out, or only families and friends of the key informant are visited, and finally the most neediest are not involved in the Social Mapping, and not discussed in the Wealth Ranking exercise.
- *Wealth ranking* is a sensitive subject for the poor.
  - Members might fear or are not willing to disclose their wealth status. Some members found it difficult to disclose information about them in order to rank themselves in the grid. Therefore, it is important to make members of the community feel safe in the group and to other group members to speak for them and provide this personal and sensitive information.
- Other community members might place themselves in a lower poverty category, so that they can be recruited into the SHG and benefit from the project. Other participants of the Wealth Ranking, however, might not be willing to correct this in the discussion. This leads to groups which are not homogeneous. Experience shows that members of different wealth status eventually leave the group or disrupt the group and cause the group to stop.

- Self-selected groups must understand benefits of the project and conduct a Well-being Ranking before group formation to ensure they are poor and have affinity with other group members.
- *Triangulation* of methods is important and increases the chance to select the neediest members of the community into the Self-Help Groups.

● **Benefit of the tool**

For ACT's work, the Well-Being Ranking has particularly the following benefits:

1. Project officers are provided with an in-depth situation analysis and baseline giving orientation in the community and its people and raising awareness to issues of concern within the community. Feasible project/SHG goals can reveal at this stage what may be different from other communities.
2. It ensures that you work with the right people because it is verified and validated in a participatory way by the community.
3. Through application of the tool, the organization is able to reach the targeted people in the community i.e. the very needy. It uses this information to develop project proposals.
4. It helps the organization to mobilize and motivate people to participate in development processes.

◗ **Lessons Learned**

Well-Being Ranking tools offer a *solid baseline and starting point for the empowerment and development of women and SHGs in general*.

Before you proceed to use the PWR tools, the *community leaders/local government and elders* assisting you to find poor women *must fully understand the self help nature of the project* and benefits to the community. They should be aware and compare the project to similar projects for better understanding.

Understand to what extent have people changed their status.

The PWR methods are recommended to assist the group formation in the Self-Help Approach. Since 2009, the Cluster Level Associations have been forming the new groups, not the project officer. A self selection process often occurs where women hear about the Self-Help Approach, and then approach Association members. The Association members will be trained how to use Well-Being Ranking as a method of recruiting.

◗ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	3	Learning & awareness about own situation and that of others.
		Understanding of poverty by the community
		Annual review of household baseline data
Steering by NGO	3	Helps identify target group
		Program identification
		Get to know the community well
Empowerment of beneficiaries	4	Homogeneity of the groups
		Stability of the groups
		Awareness on own situation
		Creates high motivation to do something
Upward accountability	4	Target group validation
		Establishes program focus
		Household baseline data – give annual data of progress of all SHG members.

2.3   St. Joseph Pakanyi: Setting Goals in a Kolping Group

Bernward Causemann, George Cottina[14], December 2010

● **Experiences: Description for Practitioners**

◗ **Context**

The St. Joseph Pakanyi group is a Kolping family, linked to the Uganda Kolping Society (UKS). It is based in Masindi District in Hoima Region in Western Uganda. The group has 30 active members. The group saves regularly and gives loans to its members. They promote keeping of pigs, goats and cows as individuals and work in agriculture and kitchen gardens. The group discusses problems and links to government services.

● **Introduction of Tools**

PAG and SAGE are tools in the NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox. Groups develop goals which their members want to achieve and they develop a system of scoring. They score and discuss their status regularly. PAG establishes group level goals, SAGE is about goals that all members should achieve individually.

● **Procedure of Application**

In a first meeting in April 2010, PAG and SAGE were introduced by four staff from UKS National Office to the 13 members present. Introduction of the tools started with performance

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14   The authors thank Noeline Kisembo and Boniface Tukwasiibwe of UKS for additional input to this text.

standards for a strong group. Members brainstormed what goals they considered to be impor-tant. They included:

- Regular savings
- Loans Committee for processing loans
- A bank account for financial transactions
- Borrowing by members
- On time repayment

> The staff started with the perform-ance goals because these were im-mediate and important for achiev-ing their impact level goals. -ed

The staff helped to measure their current performance to see if they have a strong savings and credit scheme, using a scale of 1–10. Members used stones to rank themselves. They then re-solved to work hard and achieve the performance criteria in order to become a very strong group.

Staff then led the group into another discussion – when they have become such a strong savings and credit scheme, what do they want to achieve, each one, in order to live a better life than currently?

A local expression of a farmer was used: When a farmer goes to the garden to dig in the morning, he/she will set a target of how far they want to reach before the end of the day and this is his/her goal for the day. Staff asked members what they wanted to achieve by being members of Kolping Society and a Savings and Credit Group. They listed items related to their wellbeing. Staff probed further and they listed what they thought are indicators of being well-off. Out of those indicators they constructed the following goals:

1. I have a decent home with the following features …
2. I have enough food for my household as shown by crops in the garden
3. I have more than one income generating activity
4. My children are educated
5. Tangible assets that could be converted into income built at each household

The goals and indicators are listed in the annex.

Again a simple scale of 1–10 was used to assess how each of them scored. Scores for enough food at home were:

Table 12: *Table: Scoring on goal "enough food at home"*

No.	Scale and number of scores on the scale (1–10)												
	Indicators	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total members
2.	Enough Food at Home			1	1		1	2	1		7		13

> It is advisable to capture the names: Who has scored how? That will help in future with the reflec-tion on change. -ed

In September 2010, the group rated its members again against the agreed goals.

Step 1
The facilitator introduced the session by asking the participants to re-member off-hand the goals they had set – without looking at papers. Members shared the goals.

Step 2
The facilitator then asked the secretary to read the goals from the previous session. During the brainstorming, members had remembered most goals, but not all. Two goals came up that had actually not been on the agreed list: a) Members should have a bank account. b) Members need to

> It would have been possible to add the new ideas to the list of goals. The group decided not to do that because these relate to the general rules for Kolping families which were not included in SAGE. Keep-ing the rules separate from SAGE helped to focus on higher-level change, rather than just compli-ance with rules. -ed

attend meetings regularly and apply what is learnt. There were members at this meeting who had not been in the meeting when the goals were set.

Step 3
The facilitator explained again the process of scoring and how the goals were set. Before scoring, members were asked if there had been any changes since the last assessment. Some members gave examples of changes that had occurred. One member said her savings had doubled due to the advice during the goal setting meeting. Two reported an increase in the number of pigs or cows.

Step 4
Some members drew the scoring sheet (see photo). They used three models of scoring, as described in step 5.

Recording the scores.

Not many groups use different systems of scoring. It requires a higher level of education and the group needs to be prepared to spend much time on it. -ed

Step 5
For scoring, some people stood up and scored, ticking (yes) or putting an x (no). Others would say their position and the facilitator scored. For the type of house, they had 11 items to score. Then they counted how many of the features of a good house each group member had. The lowest had 5, the highest was 9.

Three goals were clearly defined in such a way.

For other goals, the scale was not defined, so they would just score between 1 and 10. And for yet other goals, they would just tick yes or no.

Here, staff had to make a decision: Do they want to go with the group's opinion or do they want to challenge it? They challenged and a good resolution was found: they ask experts. This incident shows the maturity of the relation between group and NGO: They can differ in opinion and find solutions. -ed

Step 6
After all group members had scored a goal, they discussed and verified or challenged individual scores before going to the next goal.

The housing was debated at length. There was one condition that nobody met. Nobody had a rubbish pit because people take rubbish straight to the banana farm. So it was discussed if that condition should remain as a goal. The facilitator emphasised that it is more hygienic to have a rubbish pit. Members objected saying that most of their rubbish was perishable and taking it out would not lead to a stinking pit. It was

then agreed that the Kolping staff would discuss this question with sanitation personnel and come back to the group.

Another discussion was on the floor. Initially the condition was cement floor. Some members felt it did not have to be cement to be good. After discussion, the condition was changed to cement or compacted floor.

The goal "Tangible assets of each household" was discussed as everybody had scored "yes". So members asked: Have we improved? The score did not make that clear. The goal was therefore changed to "Has my asset base increased since the last scoring". Assets were defined as goods or animals that one could convert to money if one had a problem.

> The new goal on assets does not differentiate between a situation where assets remain stable and where they decline. -ed

After this discussion the group members were asked how they felt about the process (see "added value" for details). Kolping staff said later that the level of discussion at this meeting was higher than at the first scoring.

◗ Changes Observed

One member had increased his assets, but his income was reduced. Members debated why. He had bought more cows and therefore had to hire extra herdsmen which led to him making a loss. Fencing was suggested as a solution.

A comparison between first and second measurement shows a positive change on some goals. For example on the goal of a decent home, in the first measurement no member scored at ten. They ranged between 3 and 7. At the second measurement, there were some items where members scored 100 %, (like nice compound). All members scored above 70 % at the second scoring on food grown, apart from millet, unlike the first measurement when four people (30 % of the respondents) scored below 7.

On the performance goals agreed upon there were evident changes:
- The group had mobilised 200,000 Uganda Shilling (50 Euro) separately to open up a bank account to streamline their financial operations.
- From the first to the second meeting, they had doubled their group savings.
- The leader reported regular attendance of meetings as evidence by all previous members turning up with 2 new members added.

◗ Added Value of the Tools

One member said they had greatly improved on some points which was very motivating. One member had sold two of his four cows to pay school fees. He felt his asset base had increased because he had invested in education. This led to an intensive discussion. People convinced him that his situation had not improved, that assets were to safeguard against emergencies and that he needed to find other sources to pay school fees.

One member said that after the introduction of the tool she now always looks at two questions: How do her actions help to improve her? Am I making any progress? Members have started working with clear goals which they want to achieve. There is enthusiasm among the members to see themselves moving from one step to the other, that is seen as positive progress.

● **Reflections for Leaders and Experienced M&E Persons**

  ❱ **Background**

Kolping families start from the Church. Members' status is very different. Some are fully employed, others live from little businesses. The range of assets was from owning a few chicken to owning a vehicle and a plot of land. People accept this range of difference in the group. That span might explain why it was difficult to adopt the scale for income.

There were no averages calculated in the group, except when it was very easy. Calculation can be done by the NGO staff outside the meeting.

● **Lessons Learned**

The second assessment was a lot easier and faster than the first one. In the second assessment the group revised the goals. That can be expected and shows that people take ownership of the tool. Other groups actually revise much more.

  ❱ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful"– rated by Uganda Kolping Society staff.

Purpose	Level	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	CBO, NGO	4	The scores clearly show areas that need immediate improvement.
Steering by NGO	NGO	4	There is more effort by management to focus on impact in project implementation.
Empowerment of beneficiaries	CBO	5	Beneficiaries can now visualise the changes they want to see in their lives and work towards the goals set without any external push.
Upward accountability	NGO	4	Our reports will focus more on impact unlike before when we would submit outputs or results.

▶ **Annex**

SAGE Impact Goals and Indicators for Pakanyi Kolping Family

1. I have a decent home with the following features
   a) A toilet
   b) Bathroom
   c) Roofed with iron sheets
   d) Well painted
   e) Nice compound
   f) Plates rack
   g) Hanger for clothes
   h) Rubbish pit
   i) Urinal
   j) Clean environment

2. I have enough food for my household as shown by gardens of the following foods
   a) A garden of millet
   b) Potatoes
   c) Cassava
   d) Matooke (Banana)
   e) Beans
   f) Green vegetables

3. I have more than one income generating activity

4. My children are educated and it is manifested by the following
   a) Children are being promoted to the next class
   b) Children in tertiary institutions graduate
   c) Children's performance at school tracked

5. Tangible assets that could be converted into income built at each household

Reflections on what are Basic Needs

On the goal "I have more than one income-generating activity (IGA)", the group was asked during the second scoring: What does it mean for your household to have this activity? People said it should lead to an increase in the household income. One should be able to meet all basic needs from household income and save or acquire assets. The goal was therefore changed to "I have a viable income-generating activity". This was to be scored on a range from 1 to 5.
1 = I have started one or more IGA
2 = My household income has increased as a result of the IGA
3 = I can meet most of my basic needs from my income
4 = I can meet all my basic needs
5 = I have enough income to save and acquire additional assets

The scoring created a lot of debate on what is meant by basic needs, and if one can save even before meeting all basic needs. Eventually people agreed to postpone the discussion on this goal to the next meeting.

2.4   Juhudi: Group Goals by Persons with Disabilities

Bernward Causemann, George Cottina, September 2010

● **Experiences: Description for Practitioners**

❚ **Context**

Nyahera is a village in Rorya District, Mara region in North-West Tanzania. The Juhudi group consists of a mix of people with different disabilities (PWD) but was started by People affected by Leprosy and has non-PWD members. The founding members had lived in a leprosy camp of Shirati Leprosy Control Centre (SLCC) which had also facilitated their reintegration into the community. The group was formed in 2008 as a result of the reintegration programme. They were reintegrated back to their ancestral land where they were accepted (this followed a sustained anti stigma education by SLCC Maisha Mazuri project from 2007). The members were helped to put up houses and get their children educated.

The group started in 2008 in order to improve their livelihoods, they do saving and credit. They have saved a total 450.000 TSh. (about 200 Euro). They meet to fundraise to start projects. They have a goat rearing project and they run a small cereal store.

The group started with 12 members and grew to 18; about half of them women. Two old members are unable to fend for themselves. The group supports them with food.

❚ **Procedure of Application**

Staff of Shirati Leprosy Control Centre went to the group because they wanted to get more information about the changes that were happening. The group agreed to participate in the exercise.

Step 1
The facilitator asked the participants: Why did you join this group? This was a quick brainstorming session. During this they also talked about what they expected to get out of the group.

Step 2
A discussion followed around how the group could help to meet these expectations. The discussion also covered what kind of group they wanted to be; how they would define a strong and successful group. Some points were written on a flipchart.

Step 3
Participants were asked: If this is a strong group, what does that mean to you as members? The group brainstormed. When aspects were missing or the group needed some support, other questions were asked: What does the group mean to your community? What does it mean in terms of your skills, your status in the community as a PWD, your economic situation? How do you ensure that the group remains a viable vehicle to achieve what you want to achieve? All this led to more discussion and helped to introduce the concept of setting goals.

Step 4
After this brainstorming session, the ideas were grouped together and merged. Members prioritised those they really wanted to work towards. These were then written as goals. This needed

some reformulation when people did not give them as goal statements. During this process the facilitator helped to group the goals in the following sections.

Economic goals:
* Members have increased confidence and skills to do business.
* Members save regularly.
* The amount of saving is increasing.
* Members take loans for business purposes.
* Members practice improved agricultural practices that they learned from extension workers.
* Members reduce dependence on Maisha Mazuri, the SLCC project, for daily survival.
* The group can support its most vulnerable members without them resorting to begging in the community.

Inclusion goals
* Other community members are attracted to their group.
* Members participate fully in community events.
* Members feel the rest of the community value them.
* Members are elected into community positions. (Currently they have two members in leadership positions, the chairperson of the Tanzania Leprosy Association and a representative in local government.)
* Children of members attend school regularly without experiencing any discrimination.

They initially set five practical goals:
* Work towards having their office to meet and use as bulk cereal store.
* Develop a milling unit
* Rehabilitate an existing community water point and sell water to the community
* Set up a milk collection store and resell it to hotels and individuals (this goal was achieved in 2011).
* Develop group farms.

> The government of Tanzania has special funding for groups of Persons with Disabilities. Any member could benefit from it. Non-PWD could be interested in joining, but they will have to overcome the stigma that is associated with such groups. If other community members are attracted to the group, the stigma is lower and reduces further through ripple effects. Juhudi is not the only group with non-PWD members. -ed

They want to do all this from their own resources.

◗ **Changes Observed**

The group is now recognised by the local authority as a credible organisation contributing to the community development. Following their new approach to setting personal and community change goals, the local leader now treats them as important agents of change and attends their group meeting. "Unlike before, today we now have a clear focus we can now write to our leaders to attend our meetings and they come."

A group member has been elected as Mjumbe (local councillor) by the government. This is being seen by the group members as even greater appreciation and acceptance and recognition of their contributions to the good of the community

More people want to be associated with the group, especially the able bodied. The group is hesitant as they feel that these new members might make it harder and put pressure on the current membership. For example some who have been accepted are saving bigger amounts.

❱ **Added Value of the Tools**

The exercise made people realise that they can have control over development and can achieve certain desired changes and are less dependent on outside help.

Members have adopted this concept in their daily lives. For example, one of the group members is now a community health worker after setting goals of empowering herself.

The goals set also make it easy to discuss the group activities and achievements, especially when sharing and explaining to family members. The family members clearly see what members are achieving and are more supportive. One severely disabled member who had to be brought to the group meetings by group members is now often supported by family members and neighbours to reach the meeting venue.

Clear goals and sharing previous achievements have made it easy to leverage additional support. The group has, since it started PAG, received recognition by the district as doing well and received what they consider "a prize" from the district government, a loan of 500,000.00 TSh (about 220 Euro). The loan was given in October 2010.

Setting the goals made members and the NGO realise what was really important for them, what they desire. The groups are able to identify their problems and formulate solutions. This makes it easier to track their progress.

● **Reflections for Leaders and Experienced M&E Persons**

❱ **Background**

When people talk about what the group means to them, they also talk about what they aspire to achieve. If they talk about "opportunity to save regularly", it becomes possible to set a goal "everybody saves regularly".

Persons with Disabilities, and Persons affected by Leprosy in particular, experience discrimination in many ways. An underlying issue in these groups, therefore, is inclusion: Fully participating in the community affairs and having control of their lives as far as possible. This shows in the goals they set. Goals like "members feel the rest of the community value them" address that directly. Goals like "members practice improved agricultural practices that they learnt from extension workers" address a dependency attitude that can develop with disabilities. And goals like "members take loans for business purposes" address not only own initiative but also discrimination that people often experience when others feel they would not be capable enough to take a loan.

This group has in its goals addressed many issues of inclusion that they experience in their lives.

❱ **Benefit of the Tools**

The use of the tools has made the work of the NGO extension staff easier as it is easy to know where to start, how to assess and assist the group, identify the group's problems and what they have gained. SLCC also has this experience with other groups that have set their own goals.

SLCC has now changed its approach from just routine supervision to focus more on how the groups have changed their way of life and whether they have any improvements in quality of life. This also helps with reporting change.

▶ **Lessons Learned**

This was a strong and cohesive group. That made it easier to come to common goals. The process of developing group goals can say something about the strength of the group. Well consolidated groups find it easier to come to joint goals.

Should groups develop goals themselves or should they be standard for an NGO? The experience from East Africa shows: if groups develop the goals themselves, this is a very empowering process. It should be promoted, even if some are not relevant to the NGO. The comparison of many groups is possible. These exercises can lead to more standard indicators. Question: Is it good to have both PAG (group goals) and SAGE (common goals for group members), or should they be combined? Sometimes PAG has gaols that are really group goals ("The group can support its most unable members without them resorting to begging in the community."), in other cases they use PAG with objectives that are on the level of group members and could be included in SAGE ("Members save regularly.").

▶ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Level	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	CBO	5	The CBO has learnt which goals are more challenging and re-strategise for them e.g. it enabled them to realise it would be difficult to achieve one of the goals as it needed more money. The group decided to start other projects to realise the big goal.
	NGO	4	The NGO understands the group and how they have improved and thus focuses its visits to assessing change. This is an easy way of evaluating their effectiveness.
Steering by NGO	NGO	5	Provides management information that feeds into staff work plans. Staff is now also required to set goals referring to change in the community thus emphasising higher level results.
Empowerment of beneficiaries	CBO	4	Members regularly question the value of the activities we carry out with them and feel more confident in the community.
Upward accountability	NGO	5	Helps in aligning the reports with the change objectives set at the beginning of the year and quarterly and thus helps to account. The group goals become the staff's and the project's performance targets.

2.5   RKM Narendrapur: Goal Setting and Monitoring in Early Child Education

Swapan Dolai, Rakhi Ghosal, Shakti Haldar, Abhijit Natta[15], August 2011

● **Experiences: Descriptions for Practitioners**

▶ **Context**

Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad (RKMLSP), the rural and urban development wing of Ramakrishna Mission (RKM) Ashrama in Narendrapur, close to Kolkata, is a faith based NGO working in Human Resources Development through education, natural resources management, water and sanitation, health, nutrition, solar energy, empowerment of women, mother and child development, and indigenous development in 12 districts of West-Bengal, India, with rural population through community based organisations.

The NGO-IDEAs Toolbox was applied in an Early Child Education project in Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur and Murshidabad districts. The project objectives are:
1. To prepare 3–5 years old children for formal schooling,
2. To initiate basic literacy and numeracy knowledge through relaxed learning situation,
3. To initiate discipline and culture from a very early stage.
Each Early Child Education Centre (ECEC) has two teachers for 30 children. They are part of the Village Youth Organisation (VYO), an RKM affiliated community based organisation (CBO) which takes over the role of project implementation, including regular monitoring and evaluation. The project is instigated under the guidance of RKM, Narendrapur. The RKM supervisors advise and accompany the educational work of the ECECs.

Currently there are nearly 400 ECEC's sponsored by RKMLSP run by the local RKMLSP affiliated Youth Organizations and supervised by RKMLSP itself. These centres are spread over 12 districts of West Bengal.

▶ **Introduction of Tools**

Initially, the RKMLSP NGO-IDEAs Team, now to be referred to as we, participated in a workshop on NGO-IDEAs in Bangalore organized by German Agro-Action (GAA, the present Welthungerhilfe, Germany) in 2006. After the workshop we shared the experience with RKM management and field supervisors through a one day workshop at Narendrapur. Subsequently, nine field supervisors participated in three workshops at RKM, Narendrapur in 2006–7, for developing their knowledge & skills about NGO-IDEAs. The NGO-IDEAs tools PWR, SAGE and PAG were then applied in the Savings & Credit sector for self-help groups (SHGs); the results were shared with one of our funding agencies, GAA.

In the second phase in 2009, we extended the application of tools in the Early Childhood Education programme with the capacity building support and guidance from NGO-IDEAs Regional Office. We organized a three day workshop with the teachers and supervisors of Early Child Education Centres and staff members from the management level. The toolbox was tested in 5 Early Child Education Centres; the field-testing experiences were shared in a workshop at RKM, Narendrapur with the teachers, supervisors and management staff members. Finally we applied PWbR and SAGE tools in 148 ECECs.

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15 The following persons contributed to this process in addition to the authors Ms. Shibani Bose, Teacher, MLTC, ICDS, Ms. Minakshi Maity, Programme Assistant, Child Development Programme, Ms. Subhra Santra, Programme Assistant, CDP.

◗ **Procedure of Application**

The process to apply SAGE can be summarised as follows:

Table 13: *SAGE process*

Day 1 – in the field:	Introduction and application of Well-being Ranking
Day 2 – in field (15–20 days later)	• With the teachers-parents group we did a situation analysis, based on the PWbR and on other needs and problems. – Goals were established and indicators developed at two levels: – learning objectives for the children • behavioural/supporting objectives for the parents for improving the learning objectives of the children • These goals were discussed in detail and set with the teacher-parent group.
Day 3 – in field (about 15 days later)	• An orientation workshop was held with a group of 30 teachers on how to apply the NGO-IDEAs approach • The specific goals ("do's and don'ts") for the teachers were developed in a participatory debate.
Day 4 – in field (about 15 days later)	• 1st SAGE assessments of each of the children, the parents (mothers) and the teachers, with reference to each of the respective objectives. • Results were then analysed with the teacher-parent group for finalisation.
regularly	• Initially, the interval of SAGE assessment had been planned to be every 6 months, but later it was felt that it would be more useful to assess the own performance once every 3 months.

SAGE Goals/objectives:

The SAGE goals/objectives below were developed for the children, mothers and teachers of Uttarkatal village (as an example): The children are between 3–5 years of age, so the mothers group and the teachers set the goals/objectives for the children and also for themselves.

Learning objectives for the children
1. I actively participate in regular prayer
2. I keep shoes, water bottle, tiffin box etc in the proper place
3. I obey the teachers' guideline
4. I can tell story, rhymes etc.
5. I can recognize animals, birds, flowers, fruits vehicles, vegetables from the pictures
6. I can identify vowels & consonants in the Bengali alphabets
7. I can read & write the Bengali alphabets
8. I can read & write words & sentences in Bengali
9. I can read & write A to Z
10. I can read & write 1–50/100
11. I can identify the preceding and the succeeding number
12. I can recognize and count Rupee & Paisa
13. I understand about day, month, year and seasons
14. I can add and subtract numbers
15. I can recognize colours
16. I can recognize the different parts of the body
17. I wash my hands with soap before eating food & after going to the toilet

> The goals for children combine aspects of behaviour and competencies. -ed

Behavioural objectives for the parents

1. I send my children to school regularly on time
2. I send my children to school with the proper uniform
3. I send my children clean and tidy
4. I provide the necessary teaching materials regularly for my children
5. I regularly teach my children at home
6. I regularly monitor my child's progress in health & education
7. I regularly participate in mothers meeting / awareness camp
8. I participate in different programmes of the organization
9. I pay the school fees on time
10. I try to understand the course curriculum of the centre
11. I regularly follow the weekly diary of my child
12. I respect the teachers of the centre

> The goals for parents focus on creating a good environment for the children's development. -ed

"Do's and don'ts" for the teacher

1. I arrive at the centre before the scheduled time
2. I arrive at the centre with the proper uniform
3. I maintain a friendly attitude with the children
4. I regularly check the children for trimming nails, brushing teeth, cutting hair etc.
5. I use child friendly methods of teaching
6. I teach the children with practical demonstration
7. I communicate with the children's' families at regular intervals
8. I participate actively in the mothers' meetings
9. I communicate with the organization regularly
10. I keep all the records regularly & submit them on time

> Do's and don'ts could be considered rules or principles. In many groups and programmes, the compliance with principles becomes an objective. These principles usually are of high relevance to the target group. -ed

Graph 6: *Chart showing children's performance*

Example of a chart showing the children's performance.

Please note the total scores for each child (last line) and for each learning objectives (last two columns) which include a percentage calculation

The results of the first assessment, see above, shows the status of each child, mother and teacher against their set goals/objectives. They all understand well and discuss where their focus and actions are required to improve the children's education.

The mothers understood that they must bring their children regularly on time to the Centre. So they involved their husbands to support sending their children to the centre. The teachers understood well the areas where they should give their full attention, what they should do and what they should not do as a mandatory. The students become much closer to the teachers not only during their stay in the centre but also outside of the centre.

An analysis was made by asking:
- Who were the children performing very well?
- Who were the children performing not so well?
- What contributes to a good performance, what hinders it?

For each goal, the percentage of children achieving this goal was calculated. To analyse the assessment, the following questions were discussed:
- What contributed to a good achievement of this goal?
- What hindered a good achievement of this goal?
- What actions are required at different levels?

It showed the different performances of the parents. An underlying competition had been observed among the mothers with respect to presenting their children in the centre with the proper uniform, in a neat and clean condition, in understanding the course curriculum, in preparing their children for homework etc.

To find out the strengths and weaknesses in the parents' achievements and validation of the data, cross checking was carried out with the children. Child friendly methods/materials (English and Bengali alphabets and numbers made in plastic materials, picture posters etc) were used to assess the learning/behaviour quality of the children. Thus, the mothers/teachers got an understanding on the best way to support the children.

The teachers were also assessed; they showed a high achievement of the goals.

After these discussions, a community based action plan was developed individually for parents, teachers, VYO, supervisor and for RKM.

◗ **Changes Observed**

The stakeholders' participation improved once they had understood the procedure and benefit.

After the goal setting and the first assessment, the following changes were observed:

For the children some visible changes, such as:
- Increased active participation of children.
- Improved children's personal hygiene.
- Improved learning of the children: e.g. before they just knew one or two names of flowers, afterwards they easily knew 5 flowers.

Before applying the toolbox, many children came to school late. After this exercise most of them came on time. Before their attendance was irregular, after it it was daily. Before, the children got no help for their learning at home. After the first application, the mothers started helping the children to do their homework.

The mothers of the erratically attending children involved their husbands in sending their children to the centre. Parents became more and more involved in the network of centre-

children-teacher and the CBO. The staff members noticed hidden but healthy competition among the parents to achieve the goals they had defined and agreed. After the first application, in some families the men took over more responsibilities, i.e. parents started sharing responsibilities. Before, only the mothers were involved in child education, looking after the household and also bringing their child to ECEC centre, after the goal setting the mothers shared and encouraged their husbands to share the responsibilities and some fathers got involved.

The teachers now easily recognize the areas which require more detailed attention. Before the teachers sometimes came late and without proper uniform; since this exercise, they have always arrived 10 minutes early, and with a neat uniform. Before, only one teacher supported the administration of the centre, now both teachers are involved. Before, only one teacher was active in the mothers' meeting, now both teachers are involved. A "healthy competition" has started among the teachers and mothers.

The supervisors' monitoring changed: before the tool application, they just went to see and discuss without concrete data and plans, now they monitor, discuss and guide teachers based on the accurate data from SAGE results. Before, their monitoring results were only shared with the teachers, now it is also with the mothers. The focus now is more specific on the problems.

Initially, the supervisors' visits lasted between half an hour and one hour; now they last 2–3 hours. This however is not considered an increased work load, but it is more satisfactory because the consultation is more qualified, and so the satisfaction is higher: "To see the changes in the children is more joyful to us. So, spending more time in monitoring I feel is not a workload, it is worthwhile and also a pleasure seeing the changes in the childrens learning." – "Before we just talked with some children to get an impression of their situation, but now we have an overview on all the children."

▶ Added Value of the Tools

The added value of SAGE was immediately visible to all the stakeholders, even directly after the identification of goals (and not only after having used SAGE for monitoring). Each of them felt encouraged by setting the objectives and by discussing and agreeing them in the group. They became clearer about the small children's learning objectives and their possible own contributions to support them. Moreover they experienced:

Parents …
- understood the actual performance of their children,
- understood what their children lack and need,
- understood how they could better contribute to the learning of their children,
- became aware of the changes of the children (with regard to each learning objective),
- spontaneously participated with arguments – discussion among themselves,
- participated in the cross-checking of results through opinion survey by the community members present there.

This means that SAGE was well accepted once it was understood. And the high level of understanding was reflected through their high level of participation.

Teachers …
- easy to understand each child and their specific actions and reporting the child's progress report and data,
- understood some reasons for high or low performance of children,
- could make the parents aware of their own potential to support the children,

- were able to advise the parents more appropriately/specifically,
- got feedback about the centre's performance.

From the SAGE result, the teachers are now able to take special care (regarding specific learning objectives and problems) for the poorer children. Hence, the teachers can adapt their planning to achieve the goals.

The community based organisation (VYO) …
- came to understand the actual position of the centre better,
- is now able to monitor the centre accordingly, based on clear objectives and facts,
- can submit reports on the centre according to the background of actual facts.

The supervisor (RKM Representative) …
- can better identify problems of the children's situation and discuss them with the CBO when organising a cluster level meeting, to find solutions,
- has a clearer picture on each child and can now analyse together with the teacher how to support them where necessary,
- has more acceptance from the mother as she has more accurate data; feedback to mothers has improved,
- has concrete, more reliable data on the centre to adopt more appropriate measures if necessary,
- has more confidence and can submit report to office with actual data.

● **Reflections for Leaders and Experienced M&E persons**

◗ **Background**

Before applying the tools in the ECEC's, many attempts and tests had been made by RKM, both in the savings and credit sector and in education. It took a long time to teach the staff and to make them understand the process of application and the potentials of the tools and their developing. For the staff it was key to understand that the goals had to be specific for each of the different stakeholders – children, parents, and teachers.

The teachers' understanding and conviction that the NGO-IDEAs tools would be useful for their work was decisive for the break-through of this approach in RKM. The sharing of the experiences from the field, seeing the conviction of the staff, convinced the RKM management to mainstream the NGO-IDEAs tools.

◗ **Benefit of the tool**

Reflections and benefits at community level

Community participation to achieve the goals increased. The quality of the centre (teachers' contribution, parents' participation) has increased as each child is assessed appropriately, and the support to the children (or each child) is custom made.

The demand of the community to send their children to the centre has increased, more children are coming, and the centres and their quality are growing. Before teachers went to the parents for enrolment; now parents are coming to the centre for admission.

The centre's requests to the community are increasing, e.g. for financial contributions for developing the infrastructure (additional space, decorating of the centres) to accommodate increased numbers of children.

Reflections and benefits at NGO level

Through the tools, RKM can understand the actual progress of the centre with relevant and tangible data. The NGO can focus more on the low performing centres (if needed RKM and the centres can change their planning & actions accordingly), and on more specific issues. Finally, RKM can submit better reports because the stakeholders can be more specific on demonstrating the effectiveness of their project.

As a result, RKMLSP found the tools so relevant and helpful that they have started promoting them. The NGO-IDEAs concept will be adopted in another project on "Empowering the Downtrodden Women through SHGs" for impact assessment monitoring and evaluation in 2012. Moreover, RKMLSP has already discussed it in an open forum of all the Secretaries of the RKMLSP affiliated Youth Organizations in June 2011 so that these Youth Organisations can adopt it and practice it. Besides, the RKMLSP NGO-IDEAs team will organize a Review and Reflection workshop in the first quarter of 2012 at RKMLSP premises to share their experiences with the Management of RKM and the staff members of other RKM offices to make them aware of it and to promote it. In addition to this, RKMLSP will participate actively in developing a State Level Resource Centre along with other NGO-IDEAs partners in West Bengal, particularly SRAN, Nimpith and Leprosy Mission, Baharampur, Purulia. Moving forward, RKMLSP will develop project proposals based on this system of impact monitoring and evaluation.

> Many NGOs have started applying the tools in more projects and spreading them to other NGOs. -ed

▶ **Lessons Learned**

The use of the local language was decisive for getting the NGO-IDEAs concept understood. Specific hand-outs had to be prepared. The display of the chart (poster of the SAGE results) in the centre was helpful to visualise to the parents and teachers where the children stand, and to encourage the "healthy competition". The utility of some teaching-learning materials (e.g. coloured letters, picture posters) was shown, thus they can decide which materials are more appropriate.

The assessment intervals had to be changed from 6 months to 3 months in response to the parents' increased interest, and to react more quickly to current needs. It is reported that changes are already visible after less than 3 months. As per need, the Action Plan could be modified within the operational time-period of the centre (3 times in between April and December, excluding the 1st quarter, January to March every year).

Comparison between the trials and the 1st assessment with SAGE
It was decisive that RKM had carried out some trials before applying the tools. After these trials, the application was …
- easier in terms of acceptance by students, mothers and CBOs (students reply more freely, laughing,…),
- easier in terms of application,
- better understood by the applicant and the other stakeholders with regard to the methods,
- more specific and more results-oriented,
- less time-consuming,
- increasingly accurate.

◗ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Level	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	CBO, NGO	4	It promotes the learning of teachers, parents, CBOs, and supervisors. These stakeholders are moreover sharing their learning.
Steering by NGO	NGO	4	It helps to check the management action plans, the achievement of goals, taking action on a priority basis, based on concrete data from the field.
Empowerment of beneficiaries	CBO	3.5	Parents: are setting the goals. Self-confidence increased, parents understand the present status of their children, they can understand their position and their role; the mothers can influence the rest of the families.
			Children: are listened to more. Their learning has improved in many respects.
			Teachers: The tool helps them to develop their status. They can improve their empowerment, and the status of their centre is increasing.
			CBO: Based on the data, the VYO conducts more competent discussions with the teachers and parents. The VYO is now empowered to make action plans bottom-up.
Upward accountability	NGO	5	Before application of the tools, the supervisors' reports did not contain any hard data. Now they have actual data from the field.
			The NGO can forward these figures to the funding partner.
			Reporting takes less time. From CBO level to NGO level the reporting format, analysis, actions and reflection are defined and it is easier to report the facts.

2.6 SRAN: Individual Goals with Pregnant and Lactating Mothers

Dr. Manasi Chakraborty, Sri Tarun Kanti Das and Ms. Dripta Roy Choudhury, May 2011

● **Experiences: Description for Practitioners**

◗ **Context**

Sri Ramakrishna Ashram Nimpith (SRAN) is a faith based NGO working for the regional development of the Sundarbans, a group of islands in the Ganga delta in West Bengal. SRAN's vision is "Sustainable rural development encompassing all sorts of resources in a compatible and rational way through active participation of rural communities."

Since 1961, SRAN has promoted formal education for the children from the Sundarbans, developed rural livelihood intervening on agriculture, fishery and animal resources and other 'off' farm activities, and provided health services of all kinds for the poverty stricken and disadvantaged rural people of Sundarbans, focussing particularly on women and children. Preference is always given to improve the situation of marginalised sectors.

Due to their low level above sea level, the Sundarbans are regularly hit by typhoons and frequently flooded by sea and rain water, causing the loss of several human lives, animals,

houses and complete livelihoods. As a result, the islands have a very poor infrastructure. Professional medical services are completely lacking. To reach a hospital, people first have to take a boat to the mainland harbour, and then about 3 hours by car to reach Calcutta. In emergencies, like birth complications, this long journey is hardly physically or economically feasible.

◗ **Introduction of the Toolbox**

SRAN has been working in the health sector for the last 15 years. The Nutrition Security Project is being implemented jointly with the Mother and Child Care Programme funded by Welthungerhilfe, Germany, since 2008 in two villages namely Banashyamnagar and Laxmipur in Pathar-pratima block of south 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. As this programme is working with pregnant and lactating women for a short period only, SRAN was specifically looking for a tool to identify and assess project outcomes in the short term.

SRAN is now applying "Participatory Well-being Ranking" (PWbR) and "Situational Analysis and Goal Establishment" (SAGE) in the two groups, Pregnant and Lactating mothers in Banashyamnagar village. In PWbR, groups explain their socio-economic status and accessibility to health care drawing pictures for clustering their households. In SAGE, the groups develop goals which members want to achieve and check their status periodically. SAGE was used twice with the pregnant mother groups and a comparative analysis was made to enable the women to see the difference between their initial and their actual attitudes and behaviours.

Preparation at NGO level

In 2008, two members of staff, received training at OUTREACH organized by Welthungerhilfe, Germany, on the four tools outlined in the NGO-IDEAs Toolbox. In June 2009 the same staff attended the Regional Workshop of NGO-IDEAs II project in KKID, Coimbatore. Continuous orientation training, follow-up technical support and encouragement have been given by the NGO-IDEAs Regional Coordinator on application and development of PWbR and SAGE tools in the health sector.

The trained staff delivered a two day training programme to eight management and field level staff on the principle of "learning by doing". During training emphasis was given on goal setting, indicator development and mock application of the tools within the group to get a clear understanding about the tools among the group members.

The team members who were very accustomed to using the traditional system of monitoring and evaluation showed a suspicious attitude towards the application of the tools for tracking impact of a particular project, from the grassroots' to NGO level.

One team member asked why the goals should be updated during the SAGE application if the project goal was developed during project formulation. Again they were quite sceptical about the participation of the target group to their low level of education. PWR was seen to be very much linked with savings and credit projects; how would the same be applied in health projects? All the problems raised during this training session were not solved at that time. On consulting the same issue with the Regional Coordinator of NGO-IDEAs at KKID, and after the first application of the tools at Damkal village, the staff received a good understanding and developed confidence in handling of the tools.

❿ **Procedure of Application**

Preparation at community level

The tools were applied amongst the beneficiaries of SRAN's on-going nutrition project in Banashyamnagar village. The mothers who were attending the Medical Camp[16] are classified into two groups based on their current status: Pregnant Women or Lactating Mothers, as their goals are different. These two categories of nearly 100 women were divided into sub-groups each of 15 to 20 members.

In December 2009, a meeting was convened in Banashyamnagar village to discuss with the two groups the application of NGO-IDEAs Toolbox. The objectives of Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWbR) and Situational Analysis and Goal Establishment (SAGE) were discussed in detail. SRAN staff explained that this tool is an impact monitoring tool which helps identify any problems and possible solutions and to track impacts induced by the project. The women clearly understood that they would have an opportunity to express their individual views and the opportunity to modify their knowledge or attitudes to achieve their goals. Realising the benefit they agreed to participate in this exercise, two members raised the following concerns:

1. It is difficult to attend a meeting for 3 to 4 hours at a stretch during pregnancy, especially in the advanced stage.
2. Illiteracy or semi-literacy may cause a problem for their active participation particularly in the case of indicator fixation and expression of their status.

During a lively discussion it was agreed that the tools would be applied with a view to involving the mothers for a limited time only. To indicate their status, bindis[17] of different colours would be used in order to make the changes among the different women visible. This self-assessment would also motivate them for their spontaneous participation all along the process.

Situation analysis & goal establishment (SAGE):

In January 2010, Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWbR) had been used in Banashyamnagar village. In May 2010 the SAGE tool was first applied to the same groups where PWbR had been introduced.

Step 1
The session was introduced by the SRAN staff by asking the participants to express the goals they wanted to achieve in the on-going project. The facilitators gave the following examples to encourage ideas among them:

"An order has been placed to a tailor to prepare school dresses for 30 students of class I, which are to be delivered on day 10. What does the tailor do to complete this activity within 10 days? He or she at first has to set a target to prepare the number of dresses per day so that he/she can supply the dresses on the day of delivery as agreed upon. This is his or her goal for the day."

Likewise staff asked the women what they wanted to achieve when participating in the nutrition security project. They brainstormed and listed the goals on the flip chart and later displayed in front of them. The facilitator helped to develop indicators against each goal as listed below.

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16 The Medical Camp is a capacity building event for the pregnant women and lactating mothers.
17 The bindi is a small coloured dot sticking on most women's forehead.

Table 14: *Goals fixed by pregnant mothers*

Goal	Indicator
Enhancement of Knowledge & Skill	I know that proper medicine, extra food and plenty of water should be taken after delivery
	I know the birth weight of my baby should be 2.5 kg
	I know water and honey should not be given to the new born baby
	I know colostrums[16] should be given to my baby
	I know only breast milk should be given up to 6 months of age to my baby
	I know weight gain is an important factor of maternal health status
	I know what is Janani Surakha Yojana (Mother Protection Scheme)
	I know weaning should be started at 7 months of age of my baby
	I took extra amounts of food with additional leafy vegetables
	I cultivated green leafy vegetables in my backyard nutrition garden
Adoption of proper health and hygiene practice	I attended each Medical Camp for periodical check-up during pregnancy during the last two months
	I consulted with doctors at nearby hospitals / quack doctors during complication
	I took medicines (supplementary) during pregnancy during the last two months
	I took all vaccinations during pregnancy
	I avoided heavy work load during pregnancy
	I took rest in the afternoon for 2 hrs and 8 hrs at night
	I got assistance from trained Traditional Birth Attendants
Improvement of maternal health status	My body weight is increasing every month
	I can feel the movement of my foetus
	I use the service of the Mother Protection Scheme
Reduction of complication during pregnancy	I have no complaint of nausea / vomiting / breathlessness / toxaemia /anaemia / other complications
	I recover from pregnancy related problems after attending the Medical Camp & by consulting doctors.

Step 2

The facilitator asked the participants to score their achievements with regard to each of these goals. Initially, a 10-point scoring technique (1–10) was used for rating the status of individuals for achieving the goals. During the SAGE exercise, the facilitators observed that this was not convenient for the mothers. After discussion with the mothers and the village, the health workers came up with a new idea. Normally the government health staff use colour to report on the nutritional status of children to the parents. Then the facilitators and beneficiaries selected different colours of bindi to show their status towards achievement of the goals.

Many NGOs simplify rating by using symbols, like in this case with colours. The meaning of symbols needs to be well recorded or culturally well known so that people still understand the meaning a few years later. Alternatives to colours are the locally used school marks, using seeds or stones on the ground, and the value of gold/silver/copper/scrap metal. -ed

  ⚪ Green colour indicates – I do
  ○ Yellow colour indicates – I do sometimes
  ⚫ Red colour indicates – I know but do not practice
  ● Black colour indicates – I never do

18 The milk secreted for a few days after birth and characterized by high protein and antibody content (source: Merriam-Webster)

The mothers themselves decided that the green should represent positive and black for a negative performance. Additionally, the facilitator added yellow to represent that the practice is not regular and red means that they are aware but do not practice.

Step 3
A matrix was prepared listing the goals (in the first column) and the mothers' names in the first row. Then the participants were asked to rate their status by putting different colours of Bindi for each of the goals, (in the respective column) under their name.

> In the meeting hall a buzzing sound was always heard as they had been whispering among themselves after identification of their practice gaps easily.

Step 4
After completion of this rating, the facilitator led a discussion to analyse the gaps between their actual rating and the achievement of the goal with regard to knowledge, attitudes and practices. The participants even identified their difficulties to achieve their goals and suggested solutions that would need to be done to reach the target goals.

Step 5
This entire process was documented for analysing the situation, planning actions to be taken and to update the knowledge of the group in achieving the goals.

▶ **Changes Observed**

An interesting observation has been found during the first assessment of SAGE: Arati, a mother-in-law, was initially reluctant to give additional amounts of food to her under weight daughter-in-law during pregnancy due to fear of an over weight baby which may cause problems during home delivery. Identifying the knowledge gap the NGO staff counselled repeatedly on the importance of weight gain during pregnancy. During discussions about the reflection of the SAGE application with the community, Arati found her neighbour's daughter-in-law, Sonali, was achieving weight gain because of having green points in the indicator of additional food intake. Then Arati became motivated and allowed her daughter-in-law to take additional food.

Reactions of mothers

> Bandana said "I had a safe delivery as I had been under constant care of trained Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) since first trimester"

> Dolon shared "I can easily visualize my status and understand that I should take extra food during pregnancy for a healthy baby. The birth weight of new born baby is 2.8 kg"

> Malati said "The tool is very helpful to us. I changed my food habits and increased my intake of green leafy vegetables during pregnancy"

● **Reflections for Leaders**

◗ **Background**

This SAGE application is remarkable because it does not build upon permanent but on short-term groups because the pregnant women and lactating mothers are in this specific situation for only a short time.

Only having a short period to achieve outcomes or even impacts was a big challenge for SRAN: how could such monitoring be organised? And how could participation and ownership for this project be created?

The NGO-IDEAs Toolbox provided a good solution:
- SAGE was a fully appropriate tool for this purpose.
- PAG had to be excluded as no permanent groups had been formed where it would make sense to set goals for the group as a whole.
- PWR (its application is not described in the example) was helpful to identify the neediest families; for the subsequent project implementation, the PWR helped to address the project services more towards the poorest, and to give them additional support where needed. PWR had initially been used only with economic criteria, but SRAN soon took up the idea of other NGO-IDEAs partners to extend the ranking to non-economic criteria, especially to health and nutrition related aspects, and thus to improve the initial situation analysis. The previous Wealth Ranking (PWR) approach was then called Well-being Ranking (PWbR).
- PIAR had at the time of documentation not yet been fully applied. However, at group level, they made the basic analysis:
  - Which women were performing very well, and which ones had difficulties and needed more support?
  - Which goals were easily achieved by all the women, and which ones needed more support?
  - What was the difference between the first and the second assessment? Who or what had changed – or not?
- The analysis of monitoring results at NGO level with PIAR was easy. Even the handling of huge data was possible, including aggregation of data and disaggregation according to poverty status. These results are useful for planning at micro level.

The report shows the learning processes to identify the best ways of tool application. And this learning process is still going on to find more efficient solutions.

◗ **Benefit of the Tools**

The SAGE tool is very effective to the NGO staff because it helps to monitor the performance of beneficiaries through a participatory approach. By application of the tool the knowledge gap becomes easier to be identified. This helps to counsel every individual to improve the mothers' health and nutritional status. It leads to positive changes for the mothers which can be observed even within a very short period. For the pregnant and lactating women it was easy and extremely helpful to visualise where they stand and where they should go to with regard to their health knowledge, attitudes and practices. The "healthy competition" motivated them to perform with all goals; and this even convinced many of the mothers-in-laws, too, to develop new knowledge and change their attitudes.

▶ **Lessons Learned**

At Community level

Previously the project would have been evaluated in a conventional way to assess the impact of the project but several loopholes were observed and intended changes have not been recorded due to poor participation of the target beneficiaries. The poor participation is attributed to the illiteracy or low level of literacy, shyness and poor socio-economic condition and outlook. This problem calls for this tool which ensured the participation and involvement of beneficiaries in the process. At the initial stage of application of the tool, the participation was not spontaneous. During the second assessment, the mothers participated actively.

The use of colours made it easier for them to understand that they need to score more green to achieve their goal; so it became easier to visualize and to assess their status independently. That in turn motivates them towards positive change. It is also observed that the group members were putting comments and trying to motivate the members who don't mark green. By this process the women got empowered for self-motivation.

Spontaneous participation by each member during the process of assessment opens the scope for the expression of individual opinion to a great extent. It empowers them to measure the changes in their attitude and practice by themselves. During the exercise it creates an environment of healthy competition as well as acting as self-motivating factor to achieve the goal.

❝ Earlier I had a misconception.
Later I changed my mind and allowed my daughter-in-law to give the colostrum to my grandchild.
I also allow my daughter-in-law to take additional food after delivery.
My daughter-in-law and grandchild are now physically healthy.
I am happy.❞
– *Malati (Mother-in-law)*

At NGO level

The application of the SAGE tool demands an extensive thorough process of facilitation when the goals are set by the beneficiaries. The participatory approach has an influence on the project activities, it is helpful for activity planning but it also demands flexibility from the NGO staff.

Knowledge and skill development goals and indicators should be included in the health sector during formulation of the Logical Framework plans. An understanding should be reached between funding agency and NGO to consider relevant SAGE indicators in the Logical Framework, this will make outcome monitoring and reporting easier.

The participatory approach of the NGO-IDEAs Toolbox is effective for monitoring the project activities. Without heavy paper work, the trend of positive or negative changes about the attitude and practice can be visualized easily. Identification of knowledge and practice gaps become simplified with application of the Toolbox. This led us to select the area of intervention for tracking down the impact of the project more efficiently. Proper documentation and reporting has also been convenient to the NGO management and sponsoring partner.

The entire experience of NGO-IDEAs Toolbox has been shared with the management level staff of Zonal Project Directorate, Zone II, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi and Department of Sundarban Affairs, Govt. of West Bengal. They have highly appreciated and shown interest in the application of the Toolbox in the different projects.

The Farm Science Centre (KVK)[19] is applying the tool in cooperation with SRAN in the Nutrition Security Project funded by Sundarban Affairs, Govt. of West Bengal.

▶ **Purpose of Participatory Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Level	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	CBO, NGO	4	The scores clearly indicate areas that need intervention.
Steering by NGO	NGO	4	This tool is effective for constant monitoring of the project activities as well as performance of the target group. In this way it helps to guide the project towards achievement of its goals.
Empowerment of beneficiaries	CBO	5	Beneficiaries can now visualise their present status and also changes they want to see in their lives and aim to motivate themselves to achieve the goals.
Upward accountability	NGO	4	Reports will from now on focus more on intended and unintended changes where earlier it reflected only the output and results.

2.7 Embu: Setting and Scoring Goals in a Federation

Jonas Wipfler, October 2010

● **Experiences: Description for Practitioners**

▶ **Context**

Embu is a town in central Kenya in the Mount Kenya Region. The department for Social Services of the Catholic Diocese of Embu implements projects in different sectors. The IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme) in the sector of rural development works with groups of 20 members which are trained by competent project staff and which start income generating activities based on a micro finance system. Most of the farmers breed livestock. As a monitoring and empowerment approach, the NGO-IDEA tools PWR, SAGE and PAG are applied within groups of the project.

In addition to the groups on village level, the communities felt the need to establish a federation, an umbrella body, to strengthen and to unite their efforts on a higher level. As a result, newly founded Community Based Organizations (CBO) bring together groups in a certain area with the objectives of improving the quality of animal breeding, promoting joint marketing and being a visible actor in local politics.

The Kanguga CBO has 11 groups as members. As some groups of the Kanguga CBO are using NGO-IDEA-Tools in their project planning and monitoring, they wanted to adapt these tools for the level of the CBO to show how groups who haven't been using the tools up to now

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19 KVK – in English – Farm science centre – is a project funded by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Government of India. The objective is to cater for the needs of the farming community through a multidisciplinary team from a particular place. Govt. of India aims at establishing one centre in each district of the Country.

could benefit. By using NGO-IDEAs the CBO itself plans to focus on its objectives and to start monitoring their own activities in future.

◗ **Introduction of Tools**

During a meeting of the CBO, a facilitator who had applied the tools several times on group level adapted the tools SAGE and PAG for the use in this CBO.

Both tools are used to measure the achievement of objectives, which were phrased by the groups themselves. Applied in group discussions SAGE and PAG as tools initiate participatory processes in which the group members valuate their own actual situation on a scale of yes and no (SAGE) or the progress of the group as a whole (scale: 0–10, PAG). Categories of the valuation are the economical, social and political progress in the local context of the groups.

Due to simplification needs of the data collection and analysis, IRDP established standardized templates on group level. These templates were also used as a basis in the application of the tools on CBO level.

The tools are described in detail in the NGO-IDEAs Toolbox.

◗ **Procedure of Application**

The tools were introduced to the CBO in a two days workshop. On the first day SAGE was applied, on the second one PAG. On both days 30 persons belonging to 11 farmer groups attended the CBO meeting.

The facilitator introduced the general idea of SAGE to the CBO representatives and especially to those groups which hadn't applied this tool up to then.

A. Application of SAGE:

Step 1
The standardized template for SAGE on self-help group level was introduced and discussed as a framework for the application on CBO level. The representatives of the groups agreed on the use of the same top categories such as 'group performance, economic, social and political progress', but wanted to adapt it to the higher level.

Step 2
Moderated by the facilitator, the group representatives decided on reasonable categories for the CBO member valuation.

Step 3
Each of the 11 groups scored their own performance by saying yes or no. The categories were set as questions like "the group members are attending regularly in the CBO meetings".

Step 4
Since one of the objectives of the CBO is the improvement of the production of goat milk, the scale was changed in one case to integrate the question: 'How many litres does your group produce per goat per day on average?' This way, an element of the existing monitoring system was included in SAGE.

Step 5
The scorings were noted on a black board and the results were discussed in the CBO.

Step 6
The CBO decided in future to focus on those issues that showed a weaker scoring.

Step 7
People were asked: What they think about this process?
The exercise itself lasted about one and a half hour.

B. Application of PAG:

Step 1
PAG was introduced to all participants and for the scoring, a scale from 1 to 10 points was defined.

Step 2
Using the standard goals for groups, the CBO members formulated statements that would reflect the specific goals of the CBO. The areas of interest were group performance, economic, socio-cultural and political status and progress of the CBO. The facilitator tried to focus the discussion on achievable objectives for the CBO which could give an orientation. 11 statements were agreed.

Step 3
For each newly formulated statement, all CBO members present had to agree on one score. For example: 'The CBO has a steady source of income to undertake its activities.' and 'CBO groups are confident and participate in public forums'. The facilitator guided the discussion and specified the statements which were needed. Each statement was given a score. The CBO members discussed how to formulate their statements the best way possible to cover all goals within their work. Depending on the statement it was a lively discussion and a consensus was found in a constructive atmosphere.

Step 4
After scoring on 11 different statements, the CBO discussed the results and made a plan to strengthen the weak areas. A short agenda was phrased for the next meeting and long-term objectives were identified through this process.

▶ **Changes Observed**

Key successes: "Why we say we have moved"
- The CBO as an umbrella organization had devised its own constitution but due to the application they now have a set of indicators to prove the achievements of their objectives.
- The discussion within the CBO helped to focus on main areas of interest and planning the next steps forward. Especially those areas in which poor results were achieved, are taken more into account. Due to the discussion on the application of PAG, the CBO developed the desire to be also an active and visible actor in community development, which had not been the case before.
- The exchange between groups coming from a certain area was intensified. For the first time the groups could compare their milk production on CBO level. That way possible exposure visits to the successful groups were discussed.

- With the results of the SAGE application, each group of the CBO got the opportunity to set their own performance in relation to the performances of the other CBO member groups. This comparison can be a basis for discussion on needed steps in future as well as a source for motivation for their next actions.

Key challenges: "What we still need to overcome"
- The standardized list of goals for the village farmer groups limited in some cases the members' creativity to adapt the tools for the CBO level. As a possible solution the objectives developed by the CBO itself and written in its constitution could be taken as a basis for phrasing categories (which was done in the application of PAG as a consequence of the SAGE application).
- On a higher level the size of a group can be a challenge. Thirty persons as was the case in Embu are too many to assure a constant participation of every participant.
- As the representatives of the groups on CBO level aren't meeting very frequently, the knowledge about each other is less and so the possible discussion on the status of a group cannot be conducted the way it could in village groups where they know each other from everyday life.

> NGO-IDEAs partners have both worked with different goals per group and standard goals for all groups. Standard goals have sometimes been developed in a highly participatory way by umbrella bodies like federations. Standard goals make it easier for a project to compile data and compare groups. Participation is enhanced if each group has its own goals. A compromise could be to have a few standard goals while most goals are set be the group. -ed

◗ **Added Value of the Tools**

During the process, the awareness of the CBO members was raised regarding the importance of their own role as active participants. When the results were analysed, the challenges for the future development of the CBO were clearly visible for each member and accordingly a plan of action was discussed. All in all the process led to a more focused, a more detailed plan of the current state of the group and the way forward. Especially weak areas were identified and a comparison between different groups made clear which tasks the CBO had to deal with.

In the discussion after the application, the group emphasised that the tools help to focus on a long-term perspective of their activities. That way, planning and empowerment can be combined.

● **Reflections for Leaders and Experienced M&E Persons**

◗ **Background**

The influence of the scoring scale on the responsiveness of the group has to be taken into account. In the application of SAGE a strict yes/no-scoring is easily understood by the participants, but can lead to an undifferentiated scoring if there are values in between. In the same way to define a 1–5 scale in the PAG application was a relatively unreflected decision of the group.

In the case of Embu, the existing standardized templates for self-help groups were not easily adaptable to the CBO level. So for each level a matching set of questions needs to be newly phrased.

On CBO level, PAG seemed much more adequate for the planning and steering needs of a CBO.

As mentioned above (step 4, SAGE): it is possible to include data from the existing monitoring system into PAG – such as milk production or other quantitative data. Thus a link be-

tween qualitative data via PAG and quantitative data from the conventional monitoring is possible.

After the application, the group was focused on more issues than before. For example, the CBO decided to implement a fund for emergencies on CBO level to be prepared for unforeseen events. Therefore the planning of the steps forward should be noted as precisely as possible in a way that this awareness processes are not lost in the every-day life.

◗ Benefit of the Tools

This description relates the experiences at the introduction of the tools that, to our knowledge, had never been applied elsewhere in this form. This was quite challenging. Nevertheless, at these initial stages group members became more focused and valued. A replication after some time can enhance this process apart from generating data about effectiveness. -ed

Even within the structure of an umbrella organization, setting objectives and proving progress is important. The tools are useful to structure the work of the CBO.

The tools combine two different aspects: on the one hand a group can set up the basis for monitoring and steering a project. On the other hand the process itself can help to change the attitude of the participants within the process. Reflecting on their own objectives as individuals and as a group show the participants how valuable they are as parts of the group. They can set categories and scores by themselves and while applying can assess to what extent they are capable to achieve their objectives. At best, applying the tools help the groups and individuals to get an idea of their ownership of the projects.

The CBO members emphasised the wish to apply the tools again to learn about their progress up to then.

◗ Lessons Learned

It took some time for the participants to get used to the procedure and to develop their own questions and categories. After application some group members said they wanted to improve the categories and to have another round in the near future, to adapt the tools to their needs – this first time, they needed time to learn to know how it works.

On the level of an umbrella organisation such as this CBO, the tendency to answer in a socially desired way seemed to be stronger than in self-help groups on village level: especially in the application of SAGE which is a tool that works best in groups, in which everyone knows the others well, but on CBO level it is unlikely that members have sufficiently good knowledge of each other. The comparison of different groups on CBO level as done during SAGE application can also be challenging due to socially desired scoring.

In addition, in such a constellation scoring 'no' on a yes/no scale is not that easy comparing to having a wide range of possible scorings (1–5 or 0–10), where a scoring of '1' or '2' is not such an absolute statement.

Enough time for reflection should be given within the process – the CBO in Embu discovered during the process, that they needed to amend new objectives to the already formulated ones. That way, existing activities were aligned in a new kind and more focused on the outcome. This process took some time to come to a result.

❱ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	4	High learning effect, testing the tools in a new framework
Steering by NGO	3	The main focus of the NGO is still on the SHGs in the villages. This pilot on CBO level was nevertheless important to raise the awareness for the application of the tools in the individual groups of the CBO.
Empowerment of beneficiaries	4	As the standardized templates were left aside, the CBO members were free to create new categories – that way the beneficiaries had the chance of really owning the process.
Upward accountability	3	On CBO level it was the first tool concerning accountability. As this example was more a pilot, next surveys can give more details on the issue of accountability.

2.8   BASIWASCO: Applying SAGE and PAG in a Water Cooperative

Hazel Ocdenaria with contribution from Godofredo Limotlimot, February 2011

● **Experiences: Description for Practitioners**

❱ **Context**

Barangay[20] Sinobong, a village in the southern part of the Philippines, has a local group that has been operating the water system of the village. Barangay Sinobong Water and Sanitation Association (BASIWASA) was organized in 1989 by the local government of the town of Veruela, Agusan del Sur, Philippines. BASIWASA was formed in order to manage the water system constructed by the local government some 22 years ago.

However, in the 22 years of existence, BASIWASA was notably weak in managing and operating the water system. It had been confronted by the following problems: lack of managerial competency of the BASIWASA officers, absence of financial systems, weak collection of monthly fees, no funds for the maintenance and repair, and limited water supply services which only reached up to shared communal water taps (faucets, level 2 water supply according to Philippine categorisation). Only 10 % of the total population of Sinobong benefited from the water services and the rest sourced out their drinking water from the river and from collected rain water.

It was in June 2009 when a non-government organization (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation – Integrated Development Center, JPIC-IDC[21]) saw the need to assist in strengthening the group and improving the water system services. The improvement of the present water system was about enhancing the gravity-run water system that will provide the community with safe and clean water to the households. The NGO facilitated the rehabilitation that was composed of the following phases: (1) construction of intake box, (2) replacement of old pipes and

20   Barangay is the smallest political division in the Philippines.
21   *www.jpic-idc.org.ph*

laying of new galvanised iron pipes, (3) construction of a reservoir and (4) expansion of the water supply to reach 500 households. On the other hand, BASIWASA was reorganized and in Feb. 19, 2010 re-named as Barangay Sinobong Water and Sanitation Cooperative (BASIWASCO). The Cooperative is still currently finalizing the required documents for eventual registration with the government's Cooperative Development Authority.

BASIWASCO officers have been capacitated and an operational system was then installed. As it increased its self-management and problem-solving capacities, the NGO gradually exited. Along with the aid is its commitment to vigorously install community water points (Level 2) and water supply into households (Level 3) that would benefit the constituents of Sinobong and its neighboring villages out of its own funds. From the approximately 100 members of BASIWASA in June 2009, BASIWASCO has now more than 200 members.

◗ **Introduction of Tools**

In a facilitated process, by using the NGO-IDEAs tools, BASIWASCO's vision and future directions started to take shape. BASIWASCO through its Board of Directors and Management members shared their objective to improve, expand and sustain the operation of the water system so that the next generations will still be able to benefit of safe drinking water. The group has come up with 7 goals and was then given the opportunity to rate to what extent they have achieved each goal. Each individual was asked to assess each goal on a numerical scale (1–5).

◗ **Procedure of Application**

The external facilitator from NGO-IDEAs was introduced to BASIWASCO officers to help them determine their desired direction and identify as to what concrete steps they have to take in order to fully achieve their goals in a period of 3 years. The period of 3 years was agreed upon by the group.

Step 1
About 15 people were asked: What they want to achieve in 3 years in connection with their operation and management of the water system. The group collectively trimmed down the number of objectives they wanted to set for BASIWASCO and collectively formulated 7 goals. Furthermore, they constructed the vision and mission of the group through the output they had during the Workshop.

Basically, they wanted to improve the socio-economic condition of the community by providing potable water to at least 500 households, contribute to reducing water-borne diseases among the constituents and directly or indirectly providing additional income to the officers and even to the members.

While the discussion and publications of the tools has been in English, the implementation was in local languages. That is why the Cebuano version is documented on the next page. Field workers need standard translations. Their work usually becomes much more difficult if they have to translate themselves from a manual in English language. -ed

Table 15: *List of water cooperative goals*

Group Goal No.	PAG Goals	
	English	Cebuano
1.	500 households within Barangay Sinobong benefit from the guaranteed safe water supply at the minimum of 10 hrs. daily	Makabenepisyo ang lima ka gatos (500) nga panimalay sulod sa Brgy. Sinobong sa garantisadong limpyo ug labing minus dyes oras nga suplay sa tubig kada adlaw (level 2 & 3 water supply)
2.	Additional income to the active members of the cooperative because of its capacity to give honorarium	Madugangan ang income sa mga lumilihok sa kooperatiba tungod sa kapasida niini nga mohatag ug honorarium.
3.	Additional income of each member because of the benefits given by the cooperative like dividend and patronage refund	Madugangan ang income sa mga myembro tungod sa mga benepisyo na mahatag sa kooperatiba sama sa dibidendo ug patronage refund.
4.	Additional income of the family because there is enough supply of water to be used for different and additional livelihood.	Madugangan ang income sa pamilya tungod adunay bastante nga tubig nga magamit sa nagkalainlain nga dugang kapaninguhaan o kapanginabuhian
5.	Twenty-five percent (25 %) additional income will be added to the fund every year.	Bientesingko porsyento (25 %) ang madugang nga income ngadto sa pundo kada tuig.
6.	Growth and smooth management of the cooperative because all members have a clear understanding of its operation system.	Milambo ang kooperatiba ug hapsay ang pagdumala niini tungod ky ang tanang myembro adunay klarong pagsabot sa sistema sa pagpadagan niini.
7.	The number of those who get sick from water-borne diseases is reduced.	Makapunod ang ihap sa mga nagmasakiton (gikan sa sakit nga makuha sa hugaw nga tubig; water borne diseases)
Individual/ Personal Goal No.	SAGE Goals	
	English	Cebuano
1.	My family & I enjoy good health always by giving exact/complete nutrition everyday in order to lessen or prevent different diseases.	Ako ug ang akong pamilya makaangkon ug maayong panglawas sa kanunay pinaagi sa paghatag ug insaktong nutriyon sa matag-adlaw ug mapakunhod/malikayan ang lain laing mga sakit.
2.	My family & I benefit from the continuous supply of a guaranteed safe water to prevent water-borne diseases.	Ako ug ang akong pamilya gusto makabenepisyo sa makanunayong suplay ug garantisadong limpyo nga tubig aron malikayan ang mga sakit nga makuha diha sa tubig.
3.	My family & I live in a clean house.	Ako ug ang akong pamilya magkinabuhi nga limpyo ang panimalay.
4.	My family & I are able to lighten and fast track household chores like in preparing the children for school.	Ako ug ang akong pamilya mapagaan ug mapadali ang mga gimbuhaton sulod sa panimalay sama sa pagpangandam sa kabataan sa pagskwela.
5.	My family & I have an alternative livelihood aside from farming in order to provide for our needs.	Ako ug ang akong pamilya makabaton ug laing kapaninguhaan gawas sa pagpanguma aron mahatag ang tanang panginahanglan sa among kabataan.
6.	My family and I have more time for recreation like family picnic and others.	Ako ug ang akong pamilya makabaton ug dugang panahon sa paghugoyhugoy sama sa pagpiknik ug uban pa.

Rating System:
5 – Kompleto ang nakab-ot   **(fully)**
4 – Sobra sa Katunga ang nakab-ot **(sufficiently)**
3 – Katunga ang nakab-ot   **(half)**
2 – Gamay ra ang nakab-ot   **(little)**
1 – Walay nakab-ot   **(not at all)**

Step 2

In a subsequent meeting, the officers were given an assessment sheet: a 1-page form which stipulated the goals with the corresponding numerical scale of 1–5, written in vernacular. Under each rate is the meaning of each rating. Individually, they were asked to rate after the facilitator had re-elaborated again the meaning of each rate in relation to each goal. The NGO staff then collated the result of the assessment/rating of the 15 officers of BASIWASCO.

A graphical presentation (produced in using MS Excel) showing the results of the assessment/rating done by the 15 Officers was validated by them in one of their regular meetings. Some goals were discussed and revised. It was then agreed that members will be randomly selected to participate in the 1st survey.

Step 3

The NGO staff with the help of 4 officers of BASIWASCO then facilitated the 1st survey, having 55 randomly selected members as respondents. The 1st survey covered 10 % of the total population of the village. The facilitators scrupulously explained the process and the purpose of the survey to the respondents and asked them to assess the current status of each goal using the scale (1–5).

Step 4

The 55 survey forms were then collated using the GrafStat questionnaire program. After all survey forms were entered into the program, the result of the survey can now be viewed in a graphical presentation which could be easily understood by the respondents and by the NGO.

Graph 7: *Effects of water access, survey 2010*
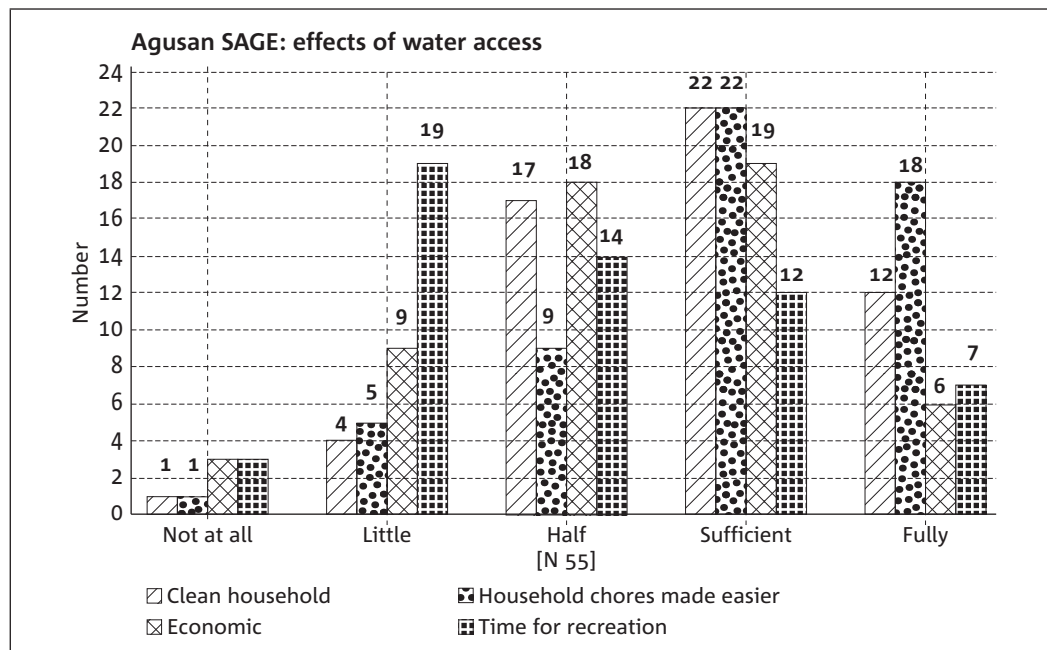
Step 5

The BASIWASCO officers and some of the members were convened with the facilitator and the NGO staff. In a small group, BASIWASCO members and officers were asked to interpret each graph which represents the results of assessment of each goal. "Household chores made easier"

was rated highest, "Time for recreation" lowest. The graphs demonstrated what areas BASIWASCO needs to improve on and give much priority. They were also given an opportunity to question and affirm the results of the 1st survey and discuss in small groups the factors that contributed to the achievement of goals as reflected in the different ratings. Some goals were discussed and refined. The whole process of reflection and discussion on the results of the 1st survey took 3 hours.

Step 6
People were then asked what they feel and think about the whole process.

Step 7
BASIWASCO finally formulated a plan of action building on these results.

Step 8
The survey was repeated after a year and results were compared. The results were discussed by the Board.

◗ **Changes Observed**

Key Successes:

All 500 households have access to water supply in community water taps for maximum 10 households per water tap, 200 have an installation in their houses. Others think of getting the installation at a later stage when they can afford the installation fee.

There was a strong reduction of water-born diseases, confirmed by the comparison of the surveys in 2010 and 2011. The nurse of the local clinic confirmed that no cases had been reported there anymore after in the baseline in 2009 diarrhoea had been the 5th most frequent cause of illness in the village. People spend less time doing household chores, some earn an income and some who had not yet received their own water supply secured water from their neighbours. Children spend less time preparing themselves for school in the morning.

The water supply in or close to the home made it possible for people to take up extra businesses. A comparison of the surveys in 2010 and 2011 shows that this opportunity was taken up by more and more people and led to an increase in income. In 2011, 26 % of respondents confirmed that this was "fully" the case (2010: 11 %).

Graph 8: *Additional income from businesses started because of the water supply*
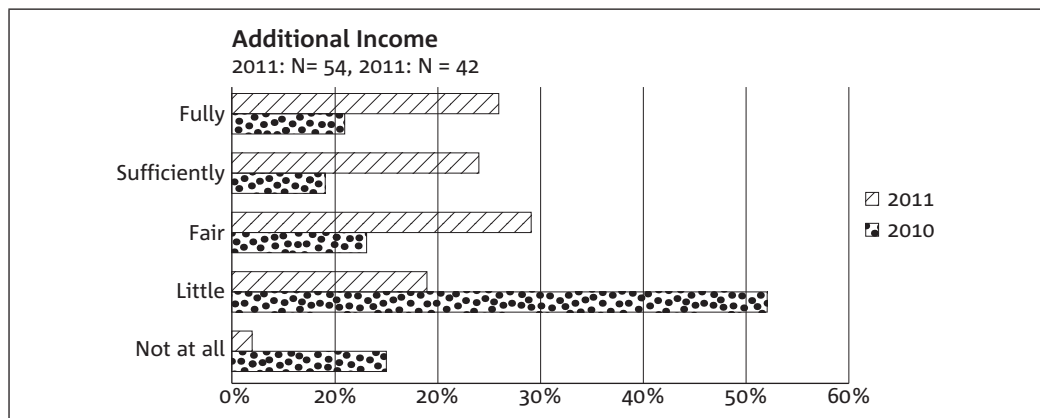
The cooperative leadership thinks of expanding the water service to four neighbouring villages.

Key Challenges: What BASIWASCO needs to prioritize in the future
1. Additional 25 % will be added in the fund every year. With this expressed as a goal, they will always have a chance to look at it in regular meetings.
2. Additional income to the active members of the cooperative because of its capacity to give honorarium.
3. Additional income of the members because of additional benefits given by the cooperative like dividends and patronage refund.
4. Additional income due to sufficient water for different income generating activities

◗ **Added Value of the Tools**

Before the introduction of SAGE and PAG, BASIWASCO as a group had only a vague idea of what they aim to achieve with regards to their water system, i.e. to improve the services of the water system. They also had a general idea of why they have organized themselves into a cooperative, i.e. to have a sustainable vehicle for economic improvement. These aims or purposes were so general that they did not even bother to write them down. This has changed dramatically for the leadership because of the application of SAGE and PAG. Graphs showing their goals were even posted inside their office.
1. The organization was able to refine their vision and mission.
2. The management members had the experience of reflecting on and discussing about what, in clear terms, they really want to achieve. This experience has made them realize that their meetings will not be boring anymore. There will be no more excuse of postponing a regular meeting just because there is no substantial point in their agenda. They have expressed that the goals both in PAG and SAGE will be material for discussions in their regular meetings.

● **Reflections for senior practitioners**

◗ **Background**

The original SAGE and PAG have been developed in India for groups of about 20 members. But BASIWASCO has 200 members and serves more than 500 households. There are about 20 members of the management team alone. The approach to SAGE and PAG therefore had to be different than in smaller groups. It would have been too difficult to facilitate the participation of 200 members. Only a sample could therefore be asked. The information was meant to inform the management of the cooperative whether the goals had been achieved. The sampling was done randomly ensuring that all 12 puroks[22] of the barangay are well represented. The goals were distributed to the other members through the management members of the coop.

The goals that were developed related to the impact of the water programme for the community members. The management committee used these same goals to assess their own work and to see where they needed to take action.

22   A purok is a sub-division of a village.

◗ **Benefit of the Tools**

As BASIWACO is a cooperative, they formulated their vision according to the standard vision statements provided by the government's Cooperative Development Authority (CDA). They had to formulate their coop vision as requirement for registration with CDA.

During the session on SAGE and PAG, the group successfully formulated their group's vision and mission statements. They even formulated the purpose for which their group is in existence in relation to the management of the water system. Their purpose statement after the discussion is: *To provide drinking water to every subscriber-household at least 10 hours a day, 365 days a year.*

BASIWASCO realized its role of contributing to the overall health condition of the people in the village. Before, the idea in their minds was that BASIWASA was organized to take charge of the maintenance of the water system and do the monthly collection of fees. But now, BASIWASCO is recognized by the municipal local government as an efficient and effective local group that contributes in the improvement of the living condition of the people.

In the assessment of the extent of achievement of the seven goals of the group, the discussion brought the group into examining what they really desire regarding the goal statement: "My family and I have more time for recreation like family picnic and others." There was a discussion that people tend to spend their recreation time with friends, not with family. One of the participants insisted that that should not be what the goal is about. The primary objective should be to spend the time with family. Since others countered that that is not the tendency especially of the male members of the household, they decided to, later on, look for activities that will enhance the spending of time with family members first. In fact, they came to realize the need to emphasize on family values. The Coop will plan for sessions regarding family values.

◗ **Lessons Learned**

The experience of BASIWASCO with the Tools has revealed that

1. Using the Tools provided the cooperative with opportunities and chances to regularly check and discuss the progress of their actions during regular meetings. The assessment of goals for the cooperative they have formulated in PAG can always be tackled in the regular meetings of the Board of Directors and the Management Team. There will always be an item to discuss in regular meetings aside from the usual items in the agenda.
2. The discussions become opportunities for the group members to reflect and share their thoughts and insights with regards to their own development. They become empowering, giving the group the experience of arriving at ideas and conclusions they would never have thought of.
3. The group meetings have become more interesting and more productive. While as a coop, their policies talk of regular meetings, there were times when they did not know what to talk about in these meetings. With the introduction of the Tools, the group looks forward to the scheduled meetings which will incorporate assessment and discussion of results of assessment of, at least, a couple of their goals.
4. Finally, with the experience of productive discussions, the group now realizes that group discussions are an effective way of resolving conflicts and in moving the group forward to the achievement of their development goals.

◗ **Purposes of Impact Monitoring**

The tools described are rated by the practitioners on the four purposes of impact monitoring defined by VENRO: "1" is "very little use" and "5" is "very useful".

Purpose	Level	Rating	Reason for rating
Learning from experience	CBO, NGO	4	Helped NGO and CBO to set a shared direction for the next 3 years and the different roles they take.
Steering by NGO	NGO	5	It gave a deeper understanding of the NGO's role and their responsibility to the stakeholders.
Empowerment of beneficiaries	CBO	5+3	For the leaders: 5, for the members: 3. The tool has not maximised the empowerment of members but concentrated on the leaders.
Upward accountability	NGO	4	The tool can show the impact on the beneficiaries in reporting.

2.9   JPIC-IDC: Resources Needed for Impact Toolbox Implementation

Bernward Causemann, Godofredo Limotlimot[23], May 2011

Imagine you wanted to introduce SAGE and PAG in a new project. Or your organisation wants to introduce these tools. What resources do you need? This article describes the resources that JPIC-IDC[24] needed to introduce SAGE and PAG in a cooperative, the St. Arnold Janssen Housing Cooperative in Mactan, Philippines.

The housing cooperative is a group of 168 households who have been resettled after living from a dump site before. They live in one vicinity, have to pay their housing loans and are busy with income generation activities. They have an association and a cooperative, and the respective governing structures.

The officers of the cooperative have been trained to implement SAGE and PAG. 148 households take part in SAGE and PAG. The households are organised in groups of 10–12 families that live next to each other. There are 16 family groupings. The household heads meet regularly. Three groups form one zone. There are five zones. The cooperative has an office and a meeting hall. The leaders decided that they would have the same goals for all groups and households. The flow of activities was geared towards that. If each group sets its own goals, the design needs to be different.

◗ **Resources available before starting**

Table 16: *Resources available before applying NGO-IDEAs tools*

JPIC had a number of resources available before it started the first activities	Specify what applies to your case; or what effort/support is required to reach this situation
A leadership that supports the approach	
Staff who know how to implement the tool	
Staff who are competent enough to modify the tools according to the situation of the project	
A donor who supports the approach	
An adviser external to the project who could support in the implementation (in the following counted as staff – it could be a consultant or a specialised M&E officer)	
A clear idea of what you want to achieve with the approach	
There is a community-based organisation, a cooperative or an association with structures that meet, discuss issues, have the authority to take decisions and can mobilise people. Much of the preparation was done through these structures and is not counted as time needed for these tools. The whole analysis of what the data meant beyond the individual groups was done here and is not considered part of the time.	
Staff assigned to the project that has enough time to attend the meetings, introduce issues, help to solve problems, give guidance and act on concerns that emerge from the analysis	

JPIC secured the financial resources through the support of Karl-Kübel-Stiftung, Germany. The funds are crucial to the success of such an initiative and need to be secured before the start. They should be included in the plan for the M&E system of the organisation at fund-raising stage, or they can be included in the training budget.[25]

◗ **List of Activities**

The following activities were conducted up to the first scoring of goals:

A – Introduction: The concept and tools of NGO-IDEAs are introduced in a meeting of community leaders, about 35 persons. Vision/Mission/Goals of the association are reviewed and a Participatory Well-being Ranking is conducted. It is agreed to proceed with the tools. All housing groups are represented. / This is 3 days stay-in, to ensure concentration.

B – Setting of goals: The same group of leaders decides on the areas to be assessed ("goals") and concrete aims and principles ("indicators"). This is for both SAGE and PAG. / 35 leaders, one day

C – Validation: The results of the goal setting are validated with the community. Do those who are not among the leaders agree to the goals and to the approach? / 80 persons take part, ½ day

25 On www.ngo-ideas.net you find a longer version of this text with an Excel template. That helps to calculate the funds needed until the first scoring is completed.

D – Formulation of the tool: At the meeting, the leaders decide which of the goals are group goals or aims and which ones are individual goals. That difference had not been made before. Also, the scoring matrix was created: A 4-point score from "very poor performance" to "very good performance". PWR was revisited / 35 leaders, one day

E – Pretesting of the tools: The leaders tried the tools: They applied them amongst themselves to see how they could do this in their groups. Processes were clarified and problems resolved. / 35 leaders, 2 days sleep in

> It is crucial that group members understand the goals and make them their own. That usually does not happen at the first rating yet because many people are not used to goals. Some organisations therefore have a validation meeting a few weeks after the setting of goals or the first scoring. -ed

F – Scoring of SAGE: Groups come to the community hall to score. They rate their own performance against the SAGE goals. One staff member is present at the meeting, attending to three groups at a time. Experience shows that this did not give enough time for reflection. But in a second scoring, when people are more experienced, more reflection on the results should take place. / 150 people, in zonal meetings 3 groups of 10 people at a time, 2 hours for one group

G – Collation of SAGE data: Leaders come together to count the scorings. The totals were entered into a computer and percentages calculated. / 15 people, 3 hours

H – Promoting reflection meeting: The first scoring had still been a little mechanical. That means: people were more concerned about getting used to the tools than deriving meaning from them. They had to get used to the tools and did not debate intensively. The reflection that can lead to new insights and action did not yet take place to the desired level. At this meeting, leaders were therefore trained in how they could use the tools to create a culture of reflection. / 35 leaders, half a day

I – Scoring of PAG: As with SAGE, but survey has not yet been done

J – Collation of PAG data: As with SAGE, but survey has not yet been done

K – Analysis of collated data on community and NGO level: This can be done in other meetings. But it needs time of the community and of staff. It normally leads to important insights and an adjustment of the programme that should make it more relevant and effective. It is not calculated in the template.

After the first application:

L – Re-application: Half a year or a year later, the scoring will be repeated. Steps F, G and K are done again. People compare the current with the previous scoring for their groups and reflect on the results. They might adjust some goals. The leaders compare the results for the community over time. This can lead to more adjustments. All this needs guidance and resources that need to be planned for.

3 Conclusions: The Horizon

Bernward Causemann, George Cottina, Eberhard Gohl, Godofredo Limotlimot, C. Rajathi, September 2011

The examples of the Impact Toolbox application show: The tools can measure effectiveness. They are suitable for creating higher validity data for seemingly intangible change. They bring about more empowerment of disadvantaged people. And they enhance the effectiveness of development programmes.

Well-being Ranking has created the awareness that poverty is stratified: While most people in a rural setting would, rightly, consider themselves poor, there are great differences. Well-being Ranking makes this visible to everybody in a systematic way. It is this systematisation and its visual depiction that causes change. Those rated lower develop a desire to move to higher levels. Many become more active. And those rated higher feel an obligation to help the poorer. They can be given preferential treatment, advantages when choosing jobs or first preference on disbursing loans. They can also be challenged to take action themselves. There is an inherent altruism in societies that is not considered in many development interventions, but shows itself spontaneously after a Well-being Ranking. A common responsibility develops to focus on poverty alleviation. For NGOs, the focus on poverty differentiation village by village has changed their perception of poverty and made them change their policies, like in the case of KRWCDS to focus more on the poorest, or even base the intervention on this analysis, like in the case of ACT. Consolidation of the data has high potential to generate information on poverty-specific impact. KRWCDS presents a small example.

Applying individual and group goals has empowered group members to take more responsibility, become more active and focus on being more effective. It is a general observation that group members became more involved in the groups. The level of group solidarity increased. New leaders emerged. In the saving & credit and the livelihood sectors, economic improvements and behaviour change on social issues like family relations and health could be observed (e.g. KRWCDS, St. Joseph Pakanyi, Juhudi). In the disability sector discrimination was reduced (Juhudi). People made better use of health programmes and overcame cultural obstacles (SRAN). Engagement of children, parents and teachers in pre-schools increased (RKM). The Board and management of a cooperative became more responsible (BASIWASCO). The leadership of a federation of farmer groups became more focused even at the initial stages of application (Embu Diocese).

The NGO-IDEAs process over the past years has shown these effects not just for the organisations presented in this publication, but, to a larger or lesser extent, and in variations, for all partner organisations and most of the groups involved. It applies to many sectors. Organisations learn from it. And the effects come in many variations.

There are mainly six factors that lead to this activation:
1. Situational analysis: Discussing goals goes with an analysis of the reality. People become more acutely aware of the situation they live in.
2. Setting goals: People become more determined to do something in order to get what they want to achieve.
3. Responsibility: As these are their own goals, people take more ownership and become more responsible in achieving these goals.
4. Rating and comparison: Assessing which goals they have achieved more, and which less, needs thorough thinking about the goals. That makes the goals better understood and emphasises their importance.

5. Reminder: Coming back after some time, discussing the goals again (for validation and rating) and a second rating emphasises the importance of the goals.
6. Legitimisation to act: As these are jointly agreed goals, group members feel they have a right to pursue them also when others are against that.

The experience of NGO-IDEAs also shows: Poor people can bring about change if they are provided with effective concepts and are supported by programmes that take up their concerns. Changes in attitude and behaviour that are within the decision-making power of people themselves can bring about quick change that encourages them to continue and take on more difficult challenges. Building on this, they reach out to others and they can finally make local government more accountable – and even make this part of their goals.

But this is not easily achieved. It often requires a re-orientation of the development approach and the M&E system. The JPIC-IDC example gives some idea of the resources needed. It is more than the staff and finance to introduce a new tool. It requires a participatory approach which accepts that the responsibility for setting priorities lies with the community and the individual household. That has been a re-learning for many NGO workers involved. It required trial and error, perseverance, learning from failure and accepting guidance. Some had to learn the principles of Participatory Rural Appraisal anew. But it was also visible from the beginning that there was something in it that was worth it. Commitment – and spread – was beyond expectations. A Ugandan NGO M&E officer put it this way: "We are now emphasizing the bottom-up. Gone are the days when we did the top-down."

The NGO-IDEAs tools have been a ground for re-learning for community people. Often they are not used to think in terms of goals in the development context, let alone of goals they want to achieve themselves. Frequently, they expect activities and plans or merely some inputs. To think in terms of goals, and develop them by themselves, is a change that needs some re-adjustment. This does not work at the first meeting. It needs careful explanation, exercise, and a validation a few weeks later, a re-assessment after a few months, until the goals are fully understood. But when they are understood, people take them up as something that can change their lives.

While the tools have a strong mobilising effect among communities, they also generate relevant data on social and economic change. This data is particularly reliable because in most cases it is generated with group validation. Especially change in attitudes and practices can be recorded within a short period of time, but the effects become particularly impressive over a longer period, as the case of KRWCDS shows that have started first data collection in 2006. SAGE goals like in the case of peace groups in Kenya (below) can also be very useful to specify objectives in Outcome Mapping. But quantitative data compilation and analysis on the NGO level remains a challenge that is described further below.

The NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox is not only about monitoring effectiveness. It is about an orientation of development work towards impact. That encompasses all phases: from planning to evaluation. Accepting that tools were introduced with the aim of impact monitoring as well as planning was a challenge to some. But the increased efficiency of development work – field workers turned from an implementing more into a facilitative mode and could report about greater achievements – convinced NGO workers and leadership over time.

▶ **Sectoral goals**

One of the aims of the second phase of NGO-IDEAs was to establish the tools in more sectors, regions and project types. That has been achieved in many sectors. The examples presented in this publication are about the saving-and-credit sector which in practice includes social and economic issues, like personal awareness building, education and health. Other sectors are

agriculture, livelihood, Persons with Disabilities, water, housing, pre-school-education and maternal health. NGO-IDEAs will present additional examples online from more sectors like social work and human rights.

There are some limitations. The NGO-IDEAs approach has been tested so far only in relatively stable contexts, not in environments of armed conflict or natural calamities, nor under conditions of extreme repression. Furthermore, the tools are available only in English and increasingly in some local languages.

No obstructive power relations have been reported. But otherwise, the tools have been tested with a wide variety of target groups. They have been successfully applied also with children and with very disadvantaged people.

For each context, different goals are relevant. Groups tend to focus on the very objectives that are of particular relevance to their situations. As goal development has proven to be difficult in the initial stages, some examples are being presented here. The following goals have been developed by groups from different sectors:

Peace work. In a context of election-related ethnic violence in Kenya, peace committees developed goals to reduce tension and the likelihood of violence.[26] Some of their individual SAGE goals were:
- "Reduced suspicion, mistrust and negative attitudes towards other committee members"
  - as the committees are mixed, the trust needs to be built in the committee first.
- "I trade with members of all ethnic communities"
  - a sign of reconciliation in a society where one community sells on one side of the street and the other on the other side
- "I take my children to a school that performs well that is not within the comfort of the tribal lines"
  - a sign of trust if one sends a child to a school that is situated in the area of another community
- "I freely and fearlessly visit towns dominated by one particular community where there were no-go-zones during the post-election violence"
  - a sign of confidence to go into an area that could not be visited for some time

Some of their group PAG goals:
- "Internally Displaced Persons resettling back to homes from the town centers and transit camps to the original farms (displaced people traveling from transit camps to farm their land)"
  - resettlement is a sign of trust.
- "There is enhanced inter-tribal information sharing on triggers e.g. cattle rustling"
  – some incidents, like the theft of cattle, easily trigger violence. If these are quickly reported from one community to another, the potential to stop such violence increases.
- "The group implements economic empowerment projects that reinforce interethnic cooperation (connector projects)"
  - jointly working on economic projects like milk storage accessible to all communities increases the likelihood of cooperation against violence, too.
- "There are reduced episodes of anonymous leafleting of communities warning "foreigners" to leave the area"
  - the distribution of leaflets has been one of the triggers for displacement. Their reduction indicates an increased safety level.

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26 For a case of peace work in Kenya, see the example of the Diocese of Nakuru on *www.ngo-ideas.net*.

- "The community is empowered enough to isolate tribal issues from general insecurity"
  - there is general crime. People need to understand it as such and not interpret it as a tribal issue.
- "Victims and perpetrators freely discuss issues in the same group"
  - discussing violence shows that reconciliation is possible and retribution less likely.
- "Rehabilitation of bridges destroyed during post-election violence"
  - bridges not functioning disrupt commerce between communities and severely impair police responses to attacks. As the communities do not build bridges on their own, this is an advocacy goal.

Persons with Disabilities. In East Africa, a number of organisations worked with groups in the disability sector and explored how the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities could be assessed with the NGO-IDEAs tools. They developed a ranking of indicators that were all derived from goals developed by PWD groups.

Table 17: *Goal – PWD are fully accepted by the local community*

Rate		Indicated by, for example ...
10	very high	PWD are assisted in travel to community events PWD are assigned roles and responsibilities just like others Other community members ask to become PWD group members
8		Community members buy from PWDs' businesses PWD's children are not discriminated against in school PWD get preferential access to health services
6		Community members treat PWD in a friendly manner PWD get equal access to health services PWD are accepted in adult functional literacy classes
4		Community members express pity to PWD PDW's children are accepted in school but discriminated PWD are not excluded from community events
2		PWD are not called bad nick-names PWD are ignored, and excluded from some services
0	Very low	PWD experience much hostility and are excluded from services and participation

Commercial sex workers. The Diocese of Nakuru in Kenya in its social development programme has facilitated a process of goal development with rehabilitated commercial sex workers. Apart from goals about income, health and the education of their children, they also developed goals that were specific to their situation.
- I do not practise commercial sex business
- My language is polite and appropriate
- My dressing is respectable and appropriate
- My children are accepted in the community; and not discriminated against.
- The community purchases goods and services from my business/IGA.
- Other women approach me to teach them skills of running a business/IGA.
- I am accepted at the Church and in other community groups
- I am normally invited to attend meetings and other functions, e. g weddings.
- I am invited to give talks on behaviour change.

It can frequently be observed that groups do not capture all their aspirations in their goals, and that goals change. This programme is a case in point. During a visit commercial sex workers

said that one of their aspirations was also to be accepted by their families again. And they made successful efforts to convince girls not to engage in commercial sex work, and prevent transmission of HIV.

Street Children. Children that are ill treated by their families form gangs on the streets of Davao in Southern Philippines. Tambayan, a local NGO, has been working with them for years.[27] Developing goals with these street children needed a lot of patience and creativity, but finally paid off because the children developed much faster than they used to the years before. Many of their goals referred to their families so that Tambayan completely changed its way of working with the parents. Some of their goals were:

Peace in the Family
- No bickering when we get home
- Together we do our respective house chores
- We go to church together every Sunday
- We show that we care for each other in the family

Family members understand each other
- We do not shout when talking to each other at home
- All family members eat together during meal times
- I get support from my parents in terms of money for transportation to Tambayan, for food, for clothing and school allowance
- My parents give me advice
- Parents look for me when I cannot come home as expected
- They allow me to go somewhere
- They prepare food for me
- They monitor my class attendance in school, a sign that they care for me

Happy family
- Respect is shown among family members: children kiss the hand of the parents, parents do not shout at children especially when eating at table, parents do not call us "good-for-nothing", "whore", "stupid", "worthless"
- No more violent quarrels in the family
- My friends are entertained at home
- My family does not quarrel anymore with the neighbours
- Family members become demonstrative of our affection for each other
- We sit together when watching TV

Similar goals were set around "The neighbors show us some respect" and regarding the group: "We make friends not only among us in the peer group but even with those in the rival gangs." "No more demeaning loud talk and use of curses" "Avoid touching others' private parts like breasts and butts." "Know how to protect oneself from sexual advances leading to sexual abuse." and finally: "We will finish at least this school year."

More than groups. Most of the examples in this publication work with a group approach. But it can also be applied to individuals, like in the case of SRAN in this publication or in a family approach.[28] In some cases, the NGO-IDEAs tools had direct influence on local government, like in the case of World Vision Philippines where, starting from North West Leyte, the application

27 For Tambayan's goal development with street children, see *www.ngo-ideas.net/publications*
28 For the application in a family approach, see the example of DIPSHIKA on *www.ngo-ideas.net/publications*

of Well-being Ranking has a profound influence on the distribution of social welfare funds to the poorer sections of the community. In Uganda, groups of Persons with Disabilities set being visited by agricultural extension workers as one of their goals against discrimination. They were facilitated by the government's local disability officers.
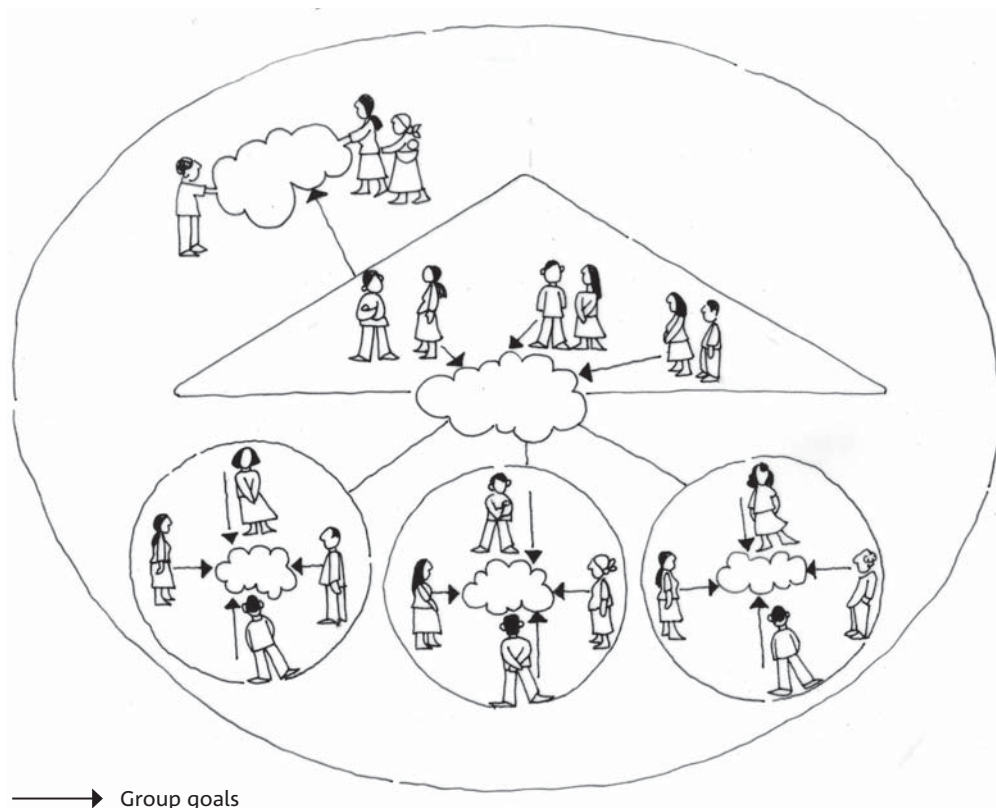
▶ **Second Level Groups**

The way SAGE and PAG have been designed, they are for all kinds of self-help groups: people who have come together to jointly achieve something for the group members. They develop goals for themselves, like better health, income, greater confidence, self-awareness and access to resources for the members. Mature groups also have a few goals and activities in which they achieve something for the wider community. They might aim to get medical services to the whole village or work for conflict resolution also with people who are not group members. Groups of Persons with Disabilities aim to reduce the stigma of Children with Disabilities and link them to medical services. But such goals come secondary. The graph below pictures this.

Graph 9: *Goals for primary groups*

⟶ Group goals
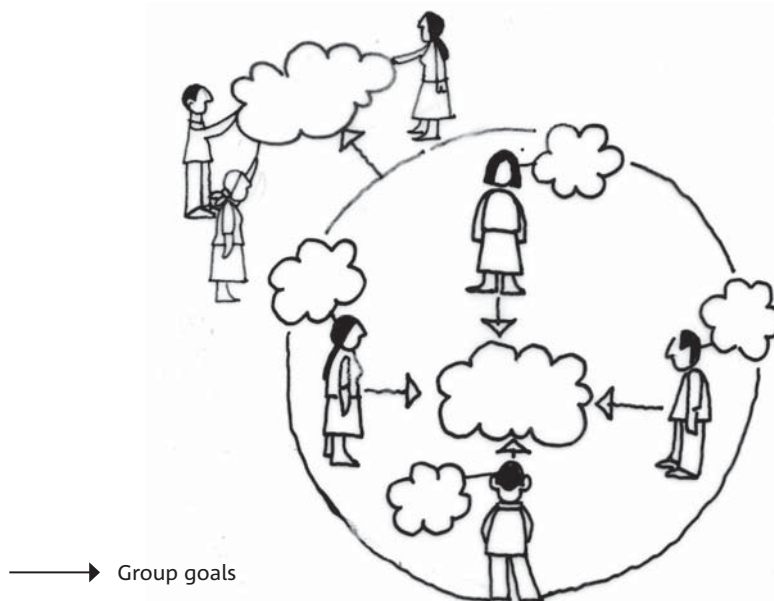
When these groups form representative umbrella bodies (like associations, federations), the picture changes like in the case of the Catholic Diocese of Embu in this publication. The groups of representatives can also set goals for their members and the whole group. But the goals are different. They refer to the member groups of the federation (the primary groups, and their members): this means helping the self-help groups to run well, giving new input and ideas to the groups, solving conflicts. And they have more goals regarding the community as they represent a larger number of people. Only some goals are for the group members, like leadership skills and conducting the group meetings.

Graph 10: *Goals for secondary groups*

Group goals

In grassroots human rights work, the picture is similar to the second level groups but without primary groups. Advocacy groups, like Peace Committees, Justice and Peace Commissions on parish level or environmental groups, have goals that are relevant to the whole community, like in the case of BASIWASCO in this publication. Only few goals are for the group members, in-sofar as they increase their capacity to do their work for the community. When establishing goals with these groups, we need to facilitate the process in such a direction that groups find goals that are relevant to their members and to the group's purpose. Experience so far shows that PAG is more relevant than SAGE for second-level groups.

◗ **Challenges of Participatory Numbers**

NGOs are increasingly expected to report on their work with quantitative data. Even though sometimes these requirements are exaggerated, quantitative data often helps to know what is happening, to check the qualitative assessment and inform good decisions. This, however, only works when the data are good.

NGO-IDEAs generates "participatory numbers"[29]: target groups produce and analyse the data themselves. NGOs collect these data for PIAR. The experience shows that there are several challenges. Many NGOs are not practiced in dealing with figures. Many of their staff are

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29   Robert Chambers, Revolutions in Development Inquiry, Earthscan, London, 2008, p 105-132

not "numbers people" – they prefer to look at social or technical issues, not at figures. Few have a thorough training in quantitative data collection. They are skilled in other fields. And the finance people know figures but are often not familiar with the programmes. So if it is difficult to get good quality figures, how can that be improved? And how many data should we expect?

This section explores the obstacles for NGOs to analyse quantitative data. It does this on the example of data that is being generated by PWR, PAG and SAGE. Data analysis consists of a variety of tasks. Many of these tasks are normally performed by specialised M&E staff or external consultants. We have cases where this process works very well. But often people are challenged. The following tables list the tasks and the challenges that non-specialised NGO staff frequently experience. The following section will look at how these tasks can be made easier.

Participatory numbers starts with people and groups. Collecting these data in a systematic way is the first challenge and entails a number of tasks.

Table 18: *Quantitative data collection*

M&E task normally done by M&E specialists or evaluators	In NGO-IDEAs frequently done by	Some challenges	Alternatives and possible strategies
Indicator development	Development of goals: field staff and communities	• Goals do not always meet ambitions of people • Goals refer to group rules but not to the expected changes in their living conditions • Goals should be linked to logframe indicators	• Standard goals, i.e. the same goals for all groups • Sample goals to choose from • Capacity building in participation
Design of indicator assessment sheets	Programme staff	• A chart model has to be found which can be easily understood by the group members • Excel sheets can hardly be fed into a document	• Design and testing of several chart models • Personal diaries, group diaries
Data recording: design	Programme staff	• Staff has little experience in how to design a sheet and train field staff on it. Errors in application ensue (also common even among researchers).	• Design and testing of several chart models
Data recording: activity	Field staff	• The data needs to be cross-checked for accuracy (a challenge also in research)	• Questions for data quality control are inserted in the Impact Toolbox and people need to be trained on it • Control mechanisms by NGO's M&E personnel

When the data are collected, they need to be entered into a computer. A number of challenges lie ahead.

Table 19: *Quantitative data entry*

M&E task	In NGO-IDEAs	Some challenges	Alternatives and possible strategies
Questionnaire design for data entry	Programme staff	• Frequently, too much data is asked for. So much data is difficult to handle. Much could just remain in the groups.	• Improve the explanations on prioritising indicators and train people on it • Advise NGOs to limit the number of data collected • Include only a few selected data in the reports
Adopting or adapting new IT programme for data entry	Programme staff	• Creating GrafStat questionnaires or any database entry form needs an understanding of different categories of questions, which is a challenge. • People have problems understanding GrafStat or using Excel in a way that aggregation becomes possible	• Encourage analysis by hand, without computer. Praxis shows that groups can do this, and it is empowering • Develop model questionnaire • Involve specialists for IT or data analysis • If the questionnaire does not change over time, using MS Access / MySQL would be an option
IT data entry: activity	Field / programme staff	• Easy with GrafStat • Error prone with Excel	• Encourage analysis by hand, without computer as a learning experience • Enter only a few selected data into the computer
Control data quality	Programme staff	• Requires skills in data management	• Sample control of data sheets • Compare totals of group with records from field

With the data entered, they need to be put to use. There are so many options that good choices need to be made.

With the idea that NGOs collect SAGE/PAG data, aggregate and analyse them (PIAR), they need a relatively high level of analytical skill for social dynamics and for statistics. Few NGOs have such staff. Most can collect and report data well, but frequent discussions around PIAR showed that many feel that it is difficult for them to analyse statistical information of this kind. Two skills would be needed: To ask the relevant analytical questions and to deal with figures in their various aspects. In order to gain such skills, NGOs would need to employ expensive and highly-skilled staff. Another possibility is to invest in external support for developing the relevant analytical questions and training staff. But such staff will easily find better paid employment elsewhere after the training, and not all staff members want to learn that, after all they want to work with people, not numbers.

On the other hand, a sound collection and analysis of the data is in the interest of the programmes, because they can learn from it and improve performance. It is now also expected

Table 20: *Analysis of quantitative data*

M&E task	In NGO-IDEAs	Some challenges	Alternatives and possible strategies
Statistical data analysis, creation of graphs	Programme staff	• Basic analysis easy with GrafStat, but limited. Excel: more options, but not with current way of recording data, and error prone	• Encourage analysis by hand, without computer • Involve finance staff • Export GrafStat data into SPSS and let specialists do the analysis
Interpret data or graphs	Programme staff	• People need to learn to interpret data. They sometimes miss the hidden meaning of figures.	• Emphasise the importance of asking analytical questions • Review the proposed questions • Prioritise, add second priority questions • Develop experience
Put statistical information into context	Programme staff	• How valid are the data? What do they mean for the programme? People need to learn to see the context of the data.	• Additional to questions regarding data quality, introduce questions on validity and representativeness to be discussed with the group / CBO / NGO staff
Decide what reference data to use for triangulation of data	NGO leadership	• People often have no questions that they want to have answered • No idea of what to look for • Difficulties to do a comparative interpretation of data from different sources	• Emphasise the importance of asking analytical questions • Review the proposed questions • Get an external perspective for these questions

by many funding agencies who expect reliable reports also in terms of numbers – partly because they are pushed by their back-donors. All issues listed above have a bearing on the reporting.[30]

There are even more challenges ahead: The NGO-IDEAs tools generate data that can be linked meaningfully to the existing M&E systems particularly with objectives and indicators from Logical Framework logics. Parts of M&E might become superfluous because the new tools provide better data, so the M&E system needs to be adapted. And another opportunity arises: M&E systems could be reviewed to see if they are actually geared to assess NGO vision and mission. Some organisations have made the NGO-IDEAs tools part of their Planning and M&E systems already. Others are in the process.

This is a challenge for any NGO that wants to make meaningful use of quantitative data. And donors are faced with the challenge that the data quality might not be as good as they expect. In many NGOs, quantitative data analysis, data quality control and qualified reporting need to be supported beyond the end of the NGO-IDEAs project. But what kind of support? What would be the best strategies?

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30 Reporting internally and to funding agencies is not included in the list because it is not necessarily an M&E specialist task.

Guiding ideas to overcome these challenges

By assuming that all NGO-IDEAs partners could do a mathematical PIAR in a meaningful way we have under-estimated the challenges. One reason is that we did not take into consideration that people learn on different levels: We distinguish:[31]

Adaptive learning. People and organisations learn applying something that they have been taught.
- That is how most organisations applied PWR, SAGE and PAG

Reflexive learning. People and organisations apply what they have learned also to other situations on a needs base transferring experience from one situation to another.
- In PWR, SAGE and PAG, many did this, but we could see the difficulties, and often people applied tools in a way that was not yet adapted, ran into difficulties and overcame these problems on their own or with guidance from the regional coordinators. Reflexive learning often requires peer or external counselling.

Reflected learning. People and organisations plan what they need to learn based on past experience and expected future challenges. They design their data collection and training targeted for this purpose.
- For instance: Deciding which questions to pose for the analysis of data, and then collecting data specifically for these questions, is on the reflected learning level. As described above, that was a challenge. Reflected learning often requires dialogue with others, funding partners and other NGOs on a national level.
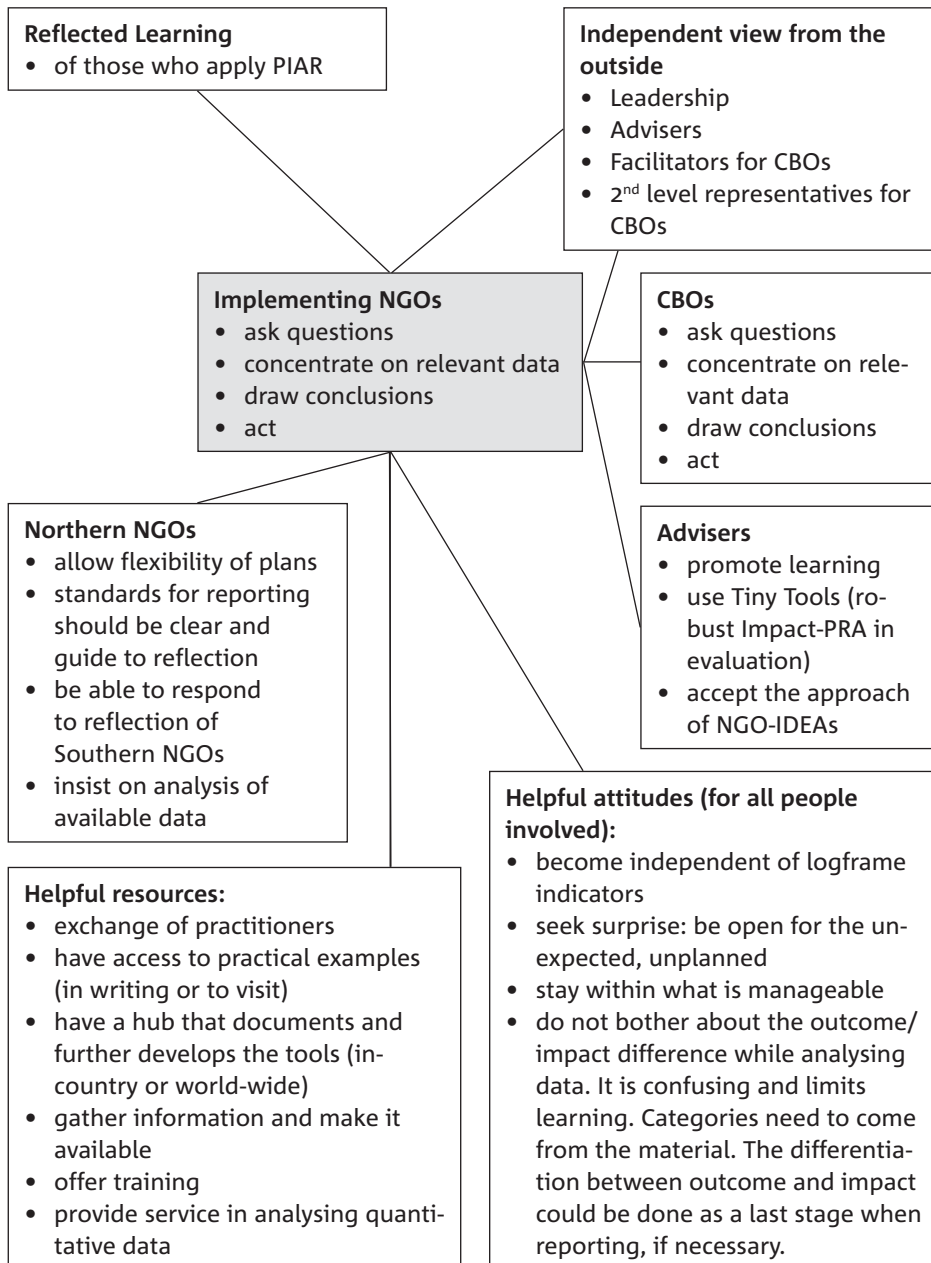
Possible strategies

Reflected learning requires a high level of skill and experience. All NGOs involved already practice reflected learning in many areas of their work. But this is about data analysis. Many of the PIAR tasks require reflected learning in fields where most people have not been trained well and gathered little experience. If we train people without the necessary background on data analysis, it will mean that they learn on the adaptive or reflexive levels – but for meaningful data analysis in PIAR, they will need to do reflected learning. So how can organisations profit from reflected learning concerning the data generated in NGO-IDEAs?

- Get external assistance: One possible strategy is to develop linkages with M&E/data analysis/research specialists, make them knowledgeable on NGO-IDEAs, and have them coach NGOs on the whole data analysis process. This could be done by service NGOs or by consultants. That has its own challenges: Specialists need to be found who really have the skills, can coach an organisation and do not try to take over this work but develop the capacity of the organisation instead.
- Refrain from statistics: Another option is to have organisations do little statistical data analysis and just have the data ready for external evaluators who do data compilation and analysis as part of their job. This strategy is not very attractive as organisations have to do work that will pay off only after a long time.
- Involve your M&E specialists: Some NGOs have, or develop specialised M&E personnel. These people need to become involved here.

31 GTZ 2009: Capacity Works, p215–216

- Develop local good practice: As associations of local development, NGOs are encouraged to develop good practice examples how data analysis and reporting can be implemented, in dialogue with funding partners, and offer training for it.

Graph 11: *Conditions for a successful PIAR*

Reflected Learning
- of those who apply PIAR

Independent view from the outside
- Leadership
- Advisers
- Facilitators for CBOs
- 2nd level representatives for CBOs

Implementing NGOs
- ask questions
- concentrate on relevant data
- draw conclusions
- act

CBOs
- ask questions
- concentrate on rele-vant data
- draw conclusions
- act

Northern NGOs
- allow flexibility of plans
- standards for reporting should be clear and guide to reflection
- be able to respond to reflection of Southern NGOs
- insist on analysis of available data

Advisers
- promote learning
- use Tiny Tools (ro-bust Impact-PRA in evaluation)
- accept the approach of NGO-IDEAs

Helpful resources:
- exchange of practitioners
- have access to practical examples (in writing or to visit)
- have a hub that documents and further develops the tools (in-country or world-wide)
- gather information and make it available
- offer training
- provide service in analysing quanti-tative data

Helpful attitudes (for all people involved):
- become independent of logframe indicators
- seek surprise: be open for the un-expected, unplanned
- stay within what is manageable
- do not bother about the outcome/impact difference while analysing data. It is confusing and limits learning. Categories need to come from the material. The differentia-tion between outcome and impact could be done as a last stage when reporting, if necessary.

◗ **Way Forward**

The challenges in quantitative data have two implications on evaluations and on the efficiency of development inquiry.

External evaluation can play an important role with the NGO-IDEAs tools. While programmes do continuous analysis, evaluators can do comparisons over a longer period of time and more in-depth. They can also check the reporting and control systems and thus comment on the reliability of the organisation's M&E. To be relevant to NGO-IDEAs, they need to value participatory numbers and be competent enough to have a critical look at them.

Secondly, evaluators can provide an external view also in a qualitative way. They can discover new aspects and open up new avenues. This requires from the external evaluators that they accept to use the organisation's data and experience and value people's perception of change and attribution. They need less time for their own data collection and can concentrate on analysis which would make evalu-ation more efficient, and potentially also more relevant. Experience with external evaluation of pro-jects using the impact toolbox tools has not yet been made. Establishing good practice is a challenge for the future.

There are two principles in Participatory Rural Appraisal (coming from Rapid Rural Appraisal) that need to be revived to make impact monitoring viable: "Optimal ignorance. This refers to the import-ance of knowing what it is not worth knowing. ... Proportionate accuracy. Orders of magnitude, and directions of change, are often all that is needed or that will be used."[32]

The Impact Toolbox started from Participatory Impact Monitoring [33] (PIM), a monitoring concept that based its impact assessment on the expectations and fears of community members and on separate monitoring systems of communities and NGOs. PIM was developed in the 1990s and applied by some organisations around the world. It has taken 15 years to have this concept adapted to goal setting with concrete objectives for different sectors and types of projects in NGO-IDEAs. While it is an outflow of PIM, the outcome of NGO-IDEAs presented here is yet another beginning. The tools are still to be translated into other languages. They have not yet been applied in many sectors and in interventions like networking. The Impact Toolbox is designed for community development in the wider sense. It is not for interventions like budget support or national level advocacy.

But NGO-IDEAs has produced more. It has published "Monitoring Self-Effectiveness. A Manual to Strengthen Outcome and Impact Oriented Project Management" for continuous observation of effects and context of development interventions in a structured way. The Manual helps not only to place the Toolbox in the wider context of a programme's M&E system, but also to monitor interventions that the Toolbox is not designed for. NGO-IDEAs has also developed the concept of Tiny Tools, short PRA-tools that specifically give information about change and its causes.[34]

Impact Toolbox, Manual and the Tiny Tools are for impact assessment built on the perceptions of the people involved, designed for direct utilisation and thus generating relevant and reliable information that is hard to obtain by other means. This approach has high potential for learning more about impact in planning, monitoring and evaluation. It will be worthwhile to further develop this potential.

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32 Robert Chambers, Revolutions in Development Inquiry, Earthscan, London, 2008, p74
33 Dorsi Germann, Eberhard Gohl, Participatory Impact Monitoring, Eschborn 1996
34 For Manual, Tiny Tools and some examples of NGO-specific impact assessment not building on the Impact Tool-
    box, visit *www.ngo-ideas.net/publications*

4   Annex

4.1   Abbreviations

ACT	act, change, transform (formerly PACT Kenya)
BASIWASCO	Barangay Sinobong Water and Sanitation Cooperative
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (German Federal Ministry for Development)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation (of PWD)
CLA	Cluster-Level Association
ECEC	Early Childhood Education Centre
ETC	Empowerment of Tribal Communities
IGP	Income-generating project
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
JPIC-IDC	Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation – Integrated Development Center
Kg	Kilogram
KRWCDS	Karwar Rural Women & Children Development Society
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGO-IDEAs	NGO Impact on Development, Empowerment and Actions
PAG	Performance Assessment by Groups (NGO-IDEAs tool)
PIAR	Participatory Impact Analysis and Reflection (NGO-IDEAs tool)
PIM	Participatory Impact Monitoring
PO	People's Organisation
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
PWR	Participatory Wealth / Well-being Ranking (PRA and NGO-IDEAs tool)
PWbR	Participatory Well-Being Ranking
RKM	Ramakrishna Mission
RKMLSP	Ramakrishna Mission Lokasiksha Parishad
Rs	Rupees (currency of India)
SAGE	Situational Assessment and Goal Establishment (NGO-IDEAs tool)
SHA	Self-Help Appraoch
SHG	Self-Help Group
SLCC	Shirati Leprosy Control Centre
SRAN	Sri Ramakrishna Ashram Nimpith
TSDP	Tribals Sustainable Development Project
UKS	Uganda Kolping Society
VENRO	Verband Entwicklungspolitik Deutscher Nichtregierungs-Organisationen (Associa-tion of German Development NGOs)
VYO	Village Youth Organisation

4.2   Authors

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Publications

In order further to document and share the results of NGO-IDEAs, the following publications have been released

- **NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox**
  The Impact Toolbox describes simple tools for participatory planning and monitoring of grassroots' projects. It is designed to enable NGOs, groups and group members to steer a project to enhance positive outcomes or impacts, and reduce negative ones.

- **NGO-IDEAs Tiny Tools for Impact Assessment**
  The "NGO-IDEAs Tiny Tools of Impact Assessment" present easily applicable tools, which help to assess changes (outcomes and impacts) and its causes with only one single application. They can be used for external evaluation as well as for self-assessment of projects.

- "**Monitoring Self-Effectiveness": A Manual to Strengthen Outcome and Impact Oriented Project Management**
  The Manual intends to support an organisation to focus its planning, monitoring and evaluation procedures towards increased outcome and impact orientation.

- **"How do they do it? – Civil Society Monitoring Self-effectiveness": An NGO-IDEAs documentation of field experience**
  The publication presents descriptions of examples of outcome and impact analysis, which illustrate to staff of development organisations how outcome and impact assessment can be implemented and used in different ways.

- **NGO-IDEAs GrafStat Guide**
  GrafStat is a simple and helpful software which can be used by development organisations to prepare their monitoring data for analysis. This guide focuses on applications and examples of GrafStat relevant for NGO-IDEAs.

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- Bündnis Eine Welt Schleswig-Holstein (BEI)
- Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend (BDKJ)
- Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe für Menschen mit geistiger Behinderung

- CARE Deutschland-Luxemburg
- Caritas International
- Casa Alianza Kinderhilfe Guatemala
- ChildFund Deutschland
- Christliche Initiative Romero
- Christoffel-Blindenmission Deutschland

- Das Hunger Projekt
- Dachverband Entwicklungspolitik Baden-Württemberg (DEAB)
- Deutsche Entwicklungshilfe für soziales Wohnungs- und Siedlungswesen (DESWOS)
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- Eine Welt Netz NRW
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- FIAN-Deutschland

- Gemeinschaft Sant´Egidio
- Germanwatch

- Habitat for Humanity Deutschland
- Handicap International
- HelpAge Deutschland
- Hildesheimer Blindenmission*
- Hilfswerk der Deutschen Lions
- humedica

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- INKOTA-netzwerk
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- medico international
- MISEREOR
- Missionszentrale der Franziskaner*

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- OIKOS EINE WELT

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- ORT Deutschland
- Oxfam Deutschland

- Peter-Hesse-Stiftung
- Plan International Deutschland

- Rhein-Donau-Stiftung*

- Salem International
- Samhathi – Hilfe für Indien*
- Save the Children Deutschland*
- Senegalhilfe-Verein
- Senior Experten Service (SES)
- Society for International Development (SID)
- SODI – Solidaritätsdienst-international
- Sozial- und Entwicklungshilfe des Kolpingwerkes (SEK)
- Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden (SEF)
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