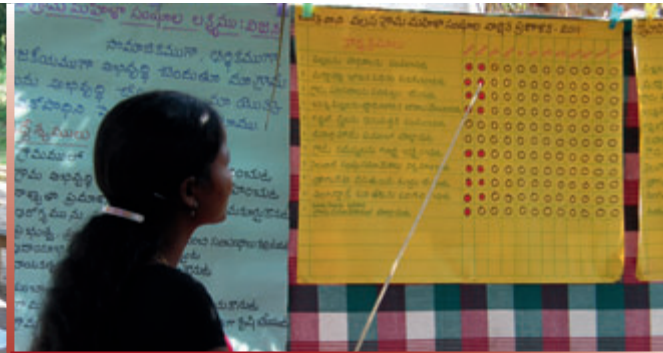# NGO-IDEAs

NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox

2011

Participatory Monitoring of Outcome and Impact

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Abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organisation
LogFrame	Logical Framework
MAPP	Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
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)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PWR	Participatory Well-being Ranking (PRA and NGO-IDEAs tool)
SAGE	Situational Analysis and Goal Establishment (NGO-IDEAs tool)

NGO-IDEAs (<u>NGO</u> – <u>I</u>mpact on <u>D</u>evelopment, <u>E</u>mpowerment and <u>A</u>ction<u>s</u>)

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 NGO-IDEAs "Impact Toolbox" is to enable NGOs and grassroots organisations to monitor projects together with the so called target groups involved, in a manner that will enhance positive outcomes and impacts, and reduce negative ones. It focuses on joint setting of goals, on monitoring them and finally on taking joint decisions about the further design and direction of interventions.

The instruments of the NGO-IDEAs "Impact Toolbox" are simple and participatory. Simple means: setting out from people's knowledge and know-how, therefore, easy to understand and apply. Application can easily be fitted into the "normal" activities of the NGOs or grassroots organisations. The participatory character emerges through democratic elements promoting a "Culture of Learning" that the people can assimilate.

Introduction to the Impact Toolbox

Outcome and Impact Oriented Steering – the concept of NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox: purpose and key features

The NGO-IDEAs "Impact Toolbox" is to enable NGOs and grassroots organisations to manage projects together with the population involved, in a manner that will enhance positive outcomes and impacts, and reduce negative ones. It focuses on joint setting of goals and on monitoring them.

The instruments of the NGO-IDEAs "Impact Toolbox" are simple and participatory. Simple means: setting out from people's knowledge and know-how, therefore, easy to understand and apply. Application can easily be fitted into the "normal" activities of the NGOs or grassroots organisations. The participatory character contains democratic elements promoting a "Culture of Learning" that the people can assimilate.

> Key **features** of the NGO-IDEA "Impact Toolbox":
> - The Toolbox offers a combination of a small number of tools that are linked to one another. They form a methodical whole but may also be applied individually to reduce complexity, if required.
> - The Toolbox is based on instruments that NGOs using a participatory approach are well familiar with. Additionally, the NGOs should have some experience in managing qualitative and quantitative data. The tools could be introduced to grassroots organisations and gradually be used independently.
> - The changes which are monitored periodically by the group members are mainly derived from their own goals which motivate them to participate in the group (or community based organisation, CBO), in a very direct and easy way.
> - The Toolbox allows to measure changes quantitatively. While this facilitates the aggregation of data, the survey results can also easily be disaggregated, i.e. differentiated, if required: For example, not only is a differentiation of impacts possible according to gender, but also according to poverty categories or other social criteria, depending on what is required.
> - This quantified information is combined with explorative questions which lead to additional descriptive information.
> - The monitoring results encourage reflection on how the peoples' own action has contributed to change, and help to take decisions based on the continuous establishment of impacts. They can also be used for reporting where this is needed.
> - The tools sensitise group members for poverty and social inclusion issues, enable the poorest and disadvantaged people to monitor their goal achievements and to improve their living standard/quality of life.

Conforming to the participatory approach, the Toolbox assumes that the NGO has a facilitating role, and that the NGO staff has good facilitation skills. The standard situations of group facilitation are therefore not described in detail.

The Toolbox builds on the assumption that monitoring of outcomes and impacts works better if people are clear about their own goals. They can then monitor their achievements:
- The Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWR) helps in identifying the community's needs. This situational analysis is followed by the setting of goals.

- With Situational Analysis and Goal Establishment (SAGE), the group[1] sets the goals for what should change for individuals and households.
- With Performance Appraisal by Groups (PAG), the group sets the goals it wants to achieve collectively, thus complementing the goals for the individuals.
- The first steps of monitoring are done with Well-being Ranking, SAGE and PAG by the groups themselves, including assessment (data collection), validation, analysis and reflection.
- The Participatory Impact Analysis and Reflection (PIAR) describes an in-depth analysis done by the NGO or, depending on the structure of the organisation, by federations or networks: it gives guidance how the monitoring results of many groups are consolidated, documented, analysed and discussed.

The Toolbox does not describe the full process of situational analysis and project planning which are normally carried out before starting a project; but it may give some useful ideas for it. More specifically, it will help identify the intended beneficiaries' goals and indicators that people can monitor themselves; both can easily be combined with project plans building on the Logical Framework. In summary, well-proven organisational practices can be combined with this toolbox application.

It is suggested to use the tools in the same sequence as they are presented here.

Overview of the 4 tools

Table 1: Overview of the 4 tools

Name:	Purpose:	Application mainly by:
Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWR)	To cluster households according to criteria for well-being	NGO
Situational Analysis and Goal Establishment (SAGE)	To establish changes among individuals and households	Group, facilitated by NGO
Performance Appraisal by Groups (PAG)	To establish changes in groups	Group, facilitated by NGO
Participatory Impact Analysis and Reflection (PIAR)	To manage performance by analysing outcomes and impacts in-depth	NGO

Depending on the structure of the project or the participating organisations, the terms referring to the users can be interpreted more widely, e.g.:
- Group: community based organisation (CBO), people's organisation;
- NGO: federation, network, umbrella organisation.

A few examples are given in this publication. More examples from different sectors can be found in: "How do they do it? Civil society monitoring self-effectiveness. An NGO-IDEAS documentation of field experience," Bonn 2011, www.ngo-ideas.net

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1 The term "group" is used here as a general term for groups of primary stakeholders (beneficiaries), including community based organisations (CBO) and self-help groups (SHG). If you don't work with the group approach, but for example with a family approach or whole communities, it might sometimes be necessary for analysis to cluster respondents.

1 Goal setting and planning at group level

1.1 Participatory Well-being Ranking

1.1.1 Concept

Participatory Well-being Ranking (PWR) is a tool designed to involve the community in *classifying the households into different categories of well-being,* i.e. quality of life, according to their economic, health, education, social, political and other status. Various groups of resource persons or key informants from the village (women / men; young / elderly; different social groups) are asked to classify the households independently. The classification, and the criteria for this classification, are then documented and discussed with the community.

Well-being Ranking is basically designed to utilise the existing knowledge, information and experiences of the community to assess their situation and status of well-being. This helps to make the community to be aware of potentials and obstacles for its well-being. It visualises who are the neediest households, and it motivates the community to find solutions to overcome poverty. In project implementation, it is used to identify the social mobility from one poverty category to another. In combination with SAGE, it helps in identifying the project outcomes and impacts on the households in each category. This is to make sure that the poorer or marginalised households benefit from the project at least as much as those who are better-off.

To put it in simple terms, it is a tool facilitated by the NGO with the rural or urban community to classify community members' households into at least four categories, e.g.:

Table 2: Variety of terms to classify well-being or poverty

Extreme poverty	Very poor quality of life	("Very poor")
Severe poverty	Poor quality of life	("Poor")
Poverty in subsistence	Acceptable quality of life	("Local middle class")
Simple affluence	Good quality of life	("Local rich")

Poverty and well-being are not to be understood in economic terms only! The terminology used for well-being should match with the people's and the project's terminology. It is sometimes helpful if at least two categories are below the poverty line, and two categories are above the poverty line.

There are alternative ways to conducting Participatory Well-being Ranking. One is to start with the ranking as it is described here. Another one is to start by identifying categories: The categories from extreme poverty to simple affluence are introduced, and then they are attributed to the households on the basis of the determined criteria. This option is described below, too. Thirdly, in the disability and inclusion sector, Participatory Quality of Life Ranking (PQR) is used. It originates from Well-being Ranking *and focuses not only on the economic situation but on various aspect of well-being.*

Purpose

The expected **results** of Well-being Ranking assessments are that the NGO and the group have
- identified the neediest households within one village or one area,
- established a well-being profile and
- increased their awareness of the main factors influencing well-being and quality of life in a village or area.

These results shall contribute to:
- creating awareness and sense of supporting, respecting, including the poor,
- building the ground for community based planning and to set adequate goals for poverty reduction,
- identifying the extent to which different social groups are benefiting from the project (not only in regard to economic, but also personal, social, cultural, or political change),
- ensuring that NGO services reach the designated target groups,
- overcoming the most critical causes of poor quality of life and exclusion,
- referring the Millennium Development Goals as well as the national goals for poverty reduction to the local agenda, not only for groups but also for individual members and their families.

1.1.2 Process of using Well-being Ranking

Pre-conditions:
- The NGO should be familiar with the area and have good relations to the stakeholders. The chosen households should be an entity, a community.
- The community needs an orientation on the purpose of the NGO's intervention, specifically about the purpose of Well-being Ranking.
- The NGO needs basic information on the households (village survey or social mapping) and has to draft a household list, containing at least the names of the household heads.
- The NGO staff needs knowledge and skills in facilitation and application of PRA tools; they especially need to be trained in Well-being Ranking.
- *If Well-being Ranking is implemented before starting a major project with the community:* Even if the result of Well-being Ranking suggests not to start a major activity, at least a small project activity should result after this exercise. Funds have to be allocated for this.

Step – 1
NGO staff members who are not familiar with the village to be assessed should read earlier village survey documents and additionally take a walk through the village ("transect walk") to become familiar with the village. Village authorities should generally be informed.

Step – 2
Note down the names of the household heads (which are known from the village authorities' list, the village survey or the social mapping) on cards (one card per household). Find out whether your household list has to be updated.

Step – 3
Select key informants representing all sectors of the community; form at least 3 small groups (e.g. 3 persons) of key informants, representing different socio-economic sectors of the village, thereof at least one group composed of women, and if possible at least one group composed of youths.

Step – 4
Ask the key informant groups to rank (sort) the households (= the cards) in accordance with their well-being status by comparing the households with each other. A line develops, but often 5–8 clusters emerge. Put together these clusters into four categories (e.g. extreme poverty, severe poverty, poverty in subsistence, simple affluence). Facilitate this sorting; it should not be done publicly.

Step – 5
As soon as the key informant group has sorted all the households, ask the key informants for their criteria of classifying "well-being". Document the answers on a flipchart using the local language and/or pictures and attribute the household numbers according to their well-being criteria.

Step – 6
Repeat this exercise with each key informant group.

Step – 7
Document the results and compare them with the help of the stakeholders and your team. If the key informant groups have categorised the households approximately in the same categories, select the more frequent attribution. If the attribution deviates over more than two categories, analyse and clarify the reasons in depth later.

Step – 8
Document and analyse the criteria for well-being; identify the critical factors, the solidarity practices, and discuss the consequences.

Step – 9
Validate the results by discussing and cross checking them with other members of the community.

Step – 10
For NGO-monitoring: These categories will then be used for SAGE and for poverty dis-aggregation. The community needs not to be involved in step 10.

Another option for conducting Well-being Ranking: starting by identifying categories

Many NGO-IDEAs partners prefer to start with the identification of the well-being categories as seen by the community; afterwards they attribute a category to each household. Instead of steps 4 and 5 described above, the procedure is as follows:

Step – 4
Together with the community members (in a meeting with group members, or with the key informants), identify the main categories (recommended: two above and two below the poverty line) how community members can be classified according to their well-being. Identify the main determinants for well-being (or: well-being classification criteria) and de-scribe the characteristics for each category as demonstrated in the example (p. 11).

Step – 5
Each key informant group sits separately and sorts out the cards into different piles, cor-responding to the categories of well-being (very poor, poor, local middle class, local rich, etc). While doing this sorting, the community's criteria on well-being can be discussed and complemented.

Advantage: The procedure can build on the NGO's experiences and save time.

Disadvantage: The procedure is less explorative, not so much open for new aspects. Site specific features may be missed.

And a third option for conducting Well-being Ranking: limited to one group
Some NGO-IDEAs partners have applied Well-being Ranking in a completely different way:
They have applied it only within the groups they work with.

Advantage: This option seems appropriate for NGOs having no experience with Well-being Ranking yet; it helps to get familiar with the tool. And it can give a good idea of the differences of well-being within the existing or predetermined groups.

Disadvantage: With this approach the group members cannot be placed within the wider community to compare their situation with other community members.

Hints for use

- It is recommended that the community *(or for the third option: the group)* is involved in the process as much as possible. The purpose of Well-being Ranking should be explained in community meetings. The key informants can be selected by the community (step 3). The results should be discussed and validated in community meetings (step 9).
- Knowing the relative well-being status of each household will help in assessing the development of living standard of the respective household periodically. However, it is not necessary to conduct the assessment annually, as the poverty situation ordinarily does not evolve that quickly. It may be repeated every 3 to 5 years.
- The Well-being Ranking exercise should not be the first situational analysis of the community. A household survey should have been conducted before, ideally combined with a village mapping, and by using PRA tools; or secondary data may be used if available.
- The household survey might list information according to the project context, e.g. on the number of households, the names of the household heads, the name and education level of husband and wife, the total number of members in the family (men, women, children with age/year of birth), children of school age, disabled family members, the number of earning members, the type of housing, the social group (e.g. caste), the membership in CBOs or groups.
- It will save time if the village maps are done directly on the big chart paper instead of on the ground. After categorizing the households as per poverty status, this can be reflected on the map colouring the houses in different colours. The map can show the location of the group members' houses, too. This map will serve as reference for future updates on the well-being status and comparisons after 3–5 years.
- When selecting key informants with the help of the community, be specific about the criteria for selection. Be aware that women and men, elder and younger people may have quite different perspectives.
- The criteria for well-being vary according to local context and sector needs.
- The terms "very poor", "excluded", "very low quality of life" etc. should be discussed with the resource persons, and the terms used locally should be used in the further discussions. The resource persons may also further differentiate "very poor" into two categories a. "extremely poor" and b. "very poor".
- The results of the Well-being Ranking analysis create the ground for community based planning (see 1.6) and contributes to setting adequate goals for poverty reduction.

Note
The privacy of data has to be ensured. This means that data are encoded once these leave the NGO. When data are aggregated or results are published, it should not be possible to identify individuals.

Table 3: Classification of well-being criteria

	CRITERIA		Categories of Well-being			
	Main Criteria		**Rich (green)**	**Middle (white)**	**Poor (yellow)**	**Very Poor (pink)**
1	HOUSING	Type: Size:	Govt.house with extension **25**	Govt.house **1,4,5,9,11,12, 16,19,20**	Hut **3,8,17,18,10, 13,21,23,24, 14,26, 27,29, 32**	Temporary shelter **2,6,7,15,22,28, 30, 31**
2	LIVELIHOODS	Sources of livelihoods*	Agriculture **25,29**	NTFP collection/ fishing	Daily wage labour **1,2,3,4,5,6,9,10, 11,12,13,15,16,17, 18,19,20,21, 26, 27,28,31,32**	Attached labour/ Migrant Labour **7,8,14,22,23,24,30**
3	FOOD SECURITY	Food scarcity in number of months	No scarcity **2,20**	1 month **1,3,4,13,17,23,25,32**	2 months **5,6,7,8,9, 10,11,12, 14,15,16, 21,22,24, 26,27,28, 29,31**	3 months **18,19,30**
4	HEALTH, NUTRITION & DISABILITY	Type of illness:	Healthy family **10**	Seasonal health problems (Malaria and Typhoid) **1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,23, 25,28,31, 32**	Anaemic & malnourshed children and women **11,12,13, 15,16, 17,18,20, 21,24,27, 29,30**	Chronic illness/ Disability (T.B, Leprosy,HIV/AIDS, Disabilities**) **14,19,22,26**
5	DEBTS	Purpose of debts	No debts	Debts for IGAs **3,10, 11,13,15,25, 29**	Emergency debts **5,8,9,12, 16,17, 18, 19,22 24,26,27, 31, 32**	Lifecycle/ consumption debts **1,2,4,6,7,14, 20, 21,23,28,30,**
6	DECISION MAKING	Participation	Both **1,3,5,6,7,8,9, 10,11,12,13, 14,15,17,21, 22,23,24, 26,29,28,31, 32**	Women **25**	Men **4,16,18,19,20, 30**	Elders/others **2**
7	**EDUCATION**					
7.1	PARENTS				Literate **5,6,9,17,20,21,22, 24,31**	Illiterate **1,2,3,4,7,8, 10,11,12,13, 14,15,16,18,19, 23, 25,26,27,28,29, 30,32**
7.2	CHILDREN	Level or grade of education	Higher **31**	Secondary **10,27**	Primary **11,15,19, 20,8, 21,24**	Never enrolled/ dropout **18,25,26**

	CRITERIA		Categories of Well-being			
	Main Criteria		**Rich (green)**	**Middle (white)**	**Poor (yellow)**	**Very Poor (pink)**
8	ACCESS	Access to communal resources	Full access	Moderate access	Limited access	No access **1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, 10,11,12,13, 14,15,16,17, 18,19, 20,21, 22,23,24,25, 26,27,28,29, 30,,31, 32**
9	ANNUAL INCOME	Annual income in Rs.	Above Rs.30,001	Rs 25,001 – Rs.30,000 **3,9,10,11, 13, 15,17, 18,25,26,29,32**	Rs 20,001 – Rs.25,000 **1,2,4,5,6, 12,19,20, 21,27,28, 31**	Below Rs.20,000 **7,8,14,16,22,23, 24,30**
10	LAND	Extent of land	Above 2Ac dry/ 1 Ac wet land	Between1–2 Ac dry land **3,9,10,11, 13,15,17, 18,25,26,29,32**	Below 1 Ac dry land **24**	No land **1,2,4,5,6,7,8,12, 14,16, 19, 20,21, 22,23, 27,28,30,31**
11	LIVESTOCK	Type of livestock	Both (Cow/Buffalo & Sheep/Goat/Ram)	Cow/Buffalo **32**	Sheep/Goat/Ram **23,13**	No livestock **1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, 10,11, 12,14,15, 16,17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27,28,29, 30, 31**
	Distribution of members to well-being categories	Out of 32 members		3,9,10, 11, 13,25, 29,32 (8 member households)	5,12,15,17,20,21, 24,26,27,31 (10 member house-holds)	1,2,4,6,7,8, 14, 16,18, 19, 22,23, 28, 30, (14 member households)

Source: Sri Ramakrishna Ashram Nimpith (SRAN), India

> **Note:**
> This is an example. The bold figures assign the different member households. The criteria for well-being will vary according to the local context. Please follow the discussion on the NGO-IDEAs homepage *www.ngo-ideas.net* and look for further examples.

1.1.3 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Well-being Ranking

Is it useful to have the **validation with other people** than with those who participated as resource persons (key informants)?
- Yes, definitely, the validation must come from other persons.
- However, feedback has to be given to the resource persons; in this sense, they shall be informed about the Well-being Ranking results and validate the summary and the conclusions.

How to apply Well-being Ranking **for pre-defined groups**?
- Well-being Ranking can be used before and after forming groups.
- If the group has been formed or pre-defined previously, Well-being Ranking helps to identify the vulnerable group members and to make the group aware of specific needs for mutual support.
- If the group is yet to be formed, Well-being Ranking helps to identify the vulnerable community members; this may influence the formation of the group, depending on the NGO's approach.

How frequently should Well-being Ranking be carried out? How far can we capacitate the people for **periodic follow-up** and monitor the progress of each individual?

- It is not the primary purpose of Well-being Ranking to track and monitor changes in the ranks.
- If periodic follow-up is done, it is sufficient to do it every 3 to 5 years (see NGO-IDEAs publication: "How do they do it" (KRWCDS case) and homepage www.ngo-ideas.net).
- Some NGO-IDEAs partners, however, have observed relevant changes in the "poverty mobility status" already after one year. Some of them have carried out "light" Well-being Rankings once a year.
- It might make more sense if the umbrella organisation is capacitated, not the group.

How should **Well-being Ranking and SAGE** be combined?

- Well-being Ranking results will help the group to set goals to improve their well-being.
- Well-being Ranking and SAGE can be combined directly. Both refer to households (or families). The "poverty differentiation" in PIAR shows how (see chapters 3.4.2 and 3.5.2, p. 58 and 60).
- The analysis of change done in SAGE attributes each household to a well-being category (obtained in Well-being Ranking). By analysing change category-wise (filtering), the intensity of change in different well-being categories can be compared: to what extent have the most vulnerable households (= those with the lowest level of well-being) benefited as compared with the average of the group.

How should **Well-being Ranking and PAG** be combined?

- Well-being Ranking and PAG can only be combined indirectly. Well-being Ranking refers to families or households, whereas PAG refers to the group as a whole.
- However, results from Well-being Ranking will help the group to set goals which shall contribute to reducing disparities in well-being.

Soundbites

- Before applying PWR, we all thought that all our SHG members were poor, but after doing this exercise, we realized, though we are poor, our poverty status is different from each others and our needs are also different. (SHG woman, Dalwada village, KRWDCS, India).
- The group members are able to identify the neediest households and development strategies towards achieving specific set goals at individual and group levels. (Mary Mate, Diocese of Embu, Kenya)
- The use of PWR in the covered communities helped staff in identifying most vulnerable families and children relevant to programming. The community representatives realized their situation in the light of the well-being categories and see the need for action to respond to the situation, e.g. considering the poorest households in their community to be the primary beneficiaries of government interventions. (Maan and Vivian, World Vision, Philippines)
- Now (after tool application) the poorest/disabled are slowly considered, respected, included & prioritized for project benefits by 'rich' 'middle' class community people as they are mutually dependent on each others. (SHG member, Joggad village, KRWCDS, India).
- In the family development approach, PWR was not applied before NGO-IDEAs tool. But after applying PWR, significant changes are seen among the families.(Md. Mahbub Islam, Dipshika-Bangladesh).
- We found out that four families are "poorest". First we have to work to benefit them and to bring them in the next category. (Shabiyabi, Devalwada village, India)
- There are no more households in the "poorest" category in our village as Saira now (after 3 years) moved to "poor" category. (Rabiya Khan, Secretary, Joggad Village, India)

1.2   Goal setting for individuals' well-being with SAGE

1.2.1 Concept

SAGE (Situational Analysis & Goal Establishment) is used to identify the individuals' goals and to appraise changes at the individual and household levels. This tool works with the concept that people create their own vision of their future living conditions. The purpose is to make individuals aware of their own goals or objectives. This will then guide their actions and help them in monitoring to what extent each group member or each household has developed towards these objectives.

> The terms "vision", "objective" or "goal" can be used interchangeably.
> A "vision" gives a wider picture of the future, "objectives" or "goals" refer to more specific aspects. These are all formulated as a description of the future situation.
> *(see the examples in the following pages)*

SAGE is a tool for assessing change; it is based on the goals set for the individual group members and/or for their households / families. The situational analysis of the individual members includes personal, social, cultural, economic & political aspects and it ideally starts with the Well-being Ranking. With repeated situational analyses, the individuals can establish to what extent they have reached each of these goals; this helps to monitor the improvement of the quality of life of each individual and her/his family or household.

> **Note**
> SAGE needs to be adapted to your context so that people understand it. NGO-IDEAs suggests you use as core terms "goals for individuals", or "goals for group members" instead of "SAGE goals".

Purpose

The expected **results from SAGE** are that the NGO and the group members have:
- identified the long term goals of the individual group members to improve their lives with reference to their personal, social, cultural, health, political and economic goals
- identified the changes achieved by the individual members, their households and their group periodically,
- an understanding of the influence of the group activities, of the project and others on each individual and her/his family or household, since the inception of the group or the start of the project.

These results shall contribute to:
- ensuring that all members including the poorest and most disadvantaged group members have set their goals,
- tracing, the changes in the group members' lives, based on the vision of the group and the goals of the individuals, and what contributed to these changes,
- guiding the group and NGO in deciding the kind of support to be given to the individuals and their households,
- planning the future course of action together with the individuals, their households and/ or their group.

1.2.2 Process of setting goals with SAGE

This is how SAGE is introduced:

Step 1:
Inform the group of the purpose of the tool, its application and usefulness. Decide jointly on its application.

Step 2:
Develop together a vision for each of the individuals or families of the group, e.g.: "Describe what should your life be like after 5 years!"

Step 3:
Convert important aspects of the vision into goals which create awareness on the way forward and which can serve for assessing individual member's progress towards their personal, social, cultural, health, economic, and political goals.

Monitoring and reflection with SAGE:
Steps 4 to 7 are explained in chapter 2.1, p. 36

Hints for use

Each of the steps implies a number of activities which need to be described in more detail:

Step 1: "Inform the group of the purpose of the tool, its application and usefulness. Decide jointly on its application."
Information has to be given considering the local context and ability of the group members to understand. Therefore, facilitators need to explain the tool with simple words and methods, assuring that all group members understood and see the benefits of the tool. This is key to the acceptance and successful application of the tool by the group.

The following Step 2 and 3 are closely interrelated:
How can the groups develop a vision, or the goals? If people never had an opportunity to influence their lives, or to plan for their future, they may not have clear ideas on how their situation could improve, and find it difficult to formulate such ideas clearly. As experience shows, setting goals is easier when people discuss with others what they want to achieve together.

Consequently, individual visions (step 2) and goals (step 3) may be worked out by each individual or jointly with the whole group. Common aspects are then chosen for monitoring individual progress.

Note
Some partners have made good experiences by organising *just one brainstorming for SAGE and PAG together* to identify the entire vision of the group and all its goals. The distinction of goals referring to individuals (for SAGE) and goals referring to the group (for PAG) can easily be made afterwards. Field workers should have experienced goal setting before, e.g. in the facilitators' training.

Step 2: "Develop a vision for each of the individuals or families of the group."
If it is the first time we ask a group to set goals for themselves, this may sound too abstract. We need to ask questions that are easier to deal with. Experience shows that we have to start with a wider perspective on people's lives – a "vision" – and that the question has to be put in simpler terms, e.g.:

> After 5 years, what should have changed in the members' lives or in the lives of their families?
> Describe what your life should be like after 5 years!

The time frame for such a vision may be longer or shorter, but in this context five years could be appropriate.

Group members will share ideas. We need to encourage them to come up with ideas, make sure that many members participate. Some groups tend to tell stories of what they have achieved and thus lose focus. We need to gently but quickly lead them back to our question.

There are different dynamics for developing the vision:
- Group members take a couple of minutes for dreaming individually, and then they share their dreams.
- Small groups can be asked to draw a picture of their future lives; the contents of the drawing can then be discussed in the group.

The vision gives a comprehensive picture of the future. Some specific aspects, "objectives" or "goals", will then be selected in the next step.

Step 3: "Convert important aspects of the vision into goals."
After having developed a vision that gives a comprehensive picture of the future, some specific aspects, "objectives" or "goals", will be selected, serving the assessment of the individual members' progress towards their personal, social, cultural, health, economic and political goals.

The goals should be based on the local situation and needs of the group members in the focused areas of interventions. They should be more concrete, and achievable by group members. They are not limited to the NGO project's goals. After setting the goals, the group will prioritise and confirm the goals which shall be monitored in future.

Four options for application:
Groups can prioritise their goals basically in four different ways:
1. They arrive at their own, group-specific set of individual goals through a facilitated process.
2. An umbrella body of groups (a federation, association etc.) discusses common individual goals. Representatives of all groups take part in this. They decide on the goals and all the groups apply the same goals.
3. The NGO may propose individual goals for all the groups, expecting them all to measure against the same goals. This is not recommended by NGO-IDEAs because it might cause less ownership of the goals, but it is easier for the NGO staff and makes comparison between groups easier.
4. A combination of 1, 2 and 3: The NGO or federation sets a small number of goals which are *common* for all the groups, e.g. referring to goals and/or indicators from the project plans. Additionally, the NGO or federation facilitates a process in which each group decides on some more goals which are *group-specific*. **At the end, there will be a set of goals which is common for all the groups, and some goals which are specific for each group.**

Experience shows that groups start with aspects regarding group operation:
- I attend regularly
- I respect the rules of the group
- I save regularly

It may then be necessary to orient the group members to reflect on *how their own life or that of their family should be in future.* Important aspects of this vision are highlighted; a goal to describe the situation in the future:

Table 4: Example of goals for individuals in SAGE

1. Knowledge, attitude, skills
1.1 I am sending my school aged girls and boys to school regularly.
1.2 In my family, violence is avoided, also in the domestic area.

2. Economic aspects
2.1 My household has sufficient income to provide healthy food for all members.
2.2 I am regularly repaying my loan: principal and interest.

3. Social and cultural aspects
3.1 I am conscious of my rights as a woman.
3.2 I treat my daughters and sons equally.

4. Political aspects
4.1 I am regularly participating in the community activities.
4.2 I exercise my voting rights.

It is important to keep in mind how to achieve these goals, considering the capacity of the group to do so. These goals should then flow into the Community Action Plan (see chapter 1.6, p. 30). Most probably, not all the goals can be taken up into the group's planning. Similarly, not all of these goals can be monitored regularly. **Priorities have to be set!**

Note
Discuss and decide with the group which of these goals shall be prioritised for planning and monitoring. It is recommended that not more than 15 goals are selected for planning and monitoring.

Soundbites
- NGO Ideas assists the SHG women to track and achieve their goals. (Nancy Kireu, PACT Mombasa, Kenya)
- Group members are becoming more focused on planning and implementation of targeted group specific projects. Individual members' reflection and awareness are influencing personal identification of strengths and weaknesses improving sustainability of the undertaken activities. The responsibility in undertakings and ownership of projects has improved. (Mary Mate, Diocese of Embu, Kenya)
- The goal setting is very helpful to us. I changed my food habits and increased the intake of green leafy vegetables during pregnancy. (Malati, Sundarbans, India)

1.3   Goal setting for group performance with PAG

1.3.1 Concept

PAG (Performance Assessment by Groups) is used to identify goals to be reached by the group and to assess its performance with regard to these goals. *PAG establishes changes in the performance of groups*, in contrast to SAGE, which establishes changes in the situation of families and individuals. In PAG, the group members agree on the goals to be reached by the group; regularly, they can measure to what extent they achieve the group's goals, and what contributed to this change. However, PAG is not applicable where the project has no interventions at group or community level.

PAG ideally builds on the analysis made in the Well-being Ranking. The goals can be identified with the help of a question like "What are goals which cannot be achieved individually but only as a group?" They can cover different areas of intended change such as attitudes and behaviour; social, cultural, economic and political aspects; and sustainability. Like in SAGE, the group will prioritise preferably up to 15 PAG goals and confirm for future monitoring.

> **Note**
> PAG needs to be adapted to your context so that people understand it. NGO-IDEAs suggests you use as core term "group goals" instead of "PAG goals".

Purpose

The expected **results of PAG** are that the NGO and the group members have:
- identified the goals of each group to improve its performance with reference to personal, social, cultural, political and economic aspects and their indicators for sustainability;
- identified the changes achieved by the group as a whole;
- understood the influence of the group activities, of the project and of others on the group performance since the inception of the group or the start of the project.

These results shall contribute to:
- increasing the group's responsibility and ownership in setting and monitoring their own goals and thereby increasing their empowerment and the positive project effects;
- tracing the changes in the group's performance, and what contributed to these changes, based on the goals established for the group by its members;
- identifying the areas to be improved, and how to achieve the improvement;
- planning the future course of action together with the group;
- guiding the NGO in deciding the kind of support to be given to the group.

1.3.2 Process of setting goals with PAG

> **This is how PAG is introduced:**
>
> **Step 1**
> Inform the group of the purpose of the tool, its application and usefulness. Decide jointly on its application.
>
> **Step 2**
> Develop a vision together with the group, e.g. "As a group, where do you want to go, where do you want to be in three or five years?"
>
> **Step 3**
> Convert important aspects of the vision into goals which create awareness on the way forward and which can serve for assessing the group's progress towards their social, cultural, economic, and political goals.
>
> *Monitoring and reflection with PAG:*
> Steps 4 to 7 are explained in 2.2

Hints for use

Each of the steps implies a number of activities which need to be described in more detail:

Step 1: "Inform the group of the purpose of the tool, its application and usefulness.
Decide jointly on its application."
Information has to be given considering the local context and ability of the group members to understand. Therefore, facilitators need to explain the tool with simple words and methods, assuring that all group members understood and see the benefits of the tool. This is key to the acceptance and successful application of the tool by the group.

The following Step 2 and 3 are closely interrelated:
How can the group develop a vision, or the goals? If people never had an opportunity to influence their lives, or to plan for their future, they may not have clear ideas on how their situation could improve, and find it difficult to formulate such ideas clearly. As experience shows, setting goals is easier when people discuss with others what they want to achieve together. Consequently, visions (step 2) and goals (step 3) may be worked out jointly for a whole group.

> **Note**
> Some partners have made good experiences by organising just one brainstorming for SAGE and PAG together to identify the entire vision of the group and all its goals. The distinction of goals referring to individuals (for SAGE) and goals referring to the group (for PAG) can easily be made afterwards. Field workers should have experienced goal setting before, e.g. in the facilitators' training.

Step 2: "Develop a vision together with the group."
If it is the first time we ask a group to set goals for themselves, this may sound too abstract. We need to ask questions that are easier to deal with. Experience shows that we have to start with a wider perspective on group achievements – a "vision" – and that the question has to be put in simpler terms, e.g.:

> • As a group, where do you want to go, where do you want to be in three or five years?

The time frame for such a vision may be longer or shorter, but in this context five years could be appropriate.
    Group members will share ideas. We need to encourage them to come up with ideas, make sure that many members participate. Some groups tend to tell stories of what they have achieved and thus lose focus. We need to gently but quickly lead them back to our question.
    There are different dynamics for developing the vision:
- Group members take a couple of minutes for dreaming individually, and then they share their dreams.
- Small groups can be asked to draw a picture of their future lives; the contents of the drawing can then be discussed in the group.
The vision gives a comprehensive picture of the future. Some specific aspects, "objectives" or "goals", will then be selected in the next step.

Step 3: "Convert important aspects of the vision into goals for assessing the group's progress."

After having developed a vision that gives a comprehensive picture of the future, some specific aspects, "objectives" or "goals", will be formulated, serving the assessment of the groups' progress.

Like in SAGE, there are four options for application:
Groups can prioritise their goals basically in four different ways:
1. They arrive at their own, group-specific set of goals through a facilitated process.
2. An umbrella body of groups (a federation, association etc.) discusses goals. Representatives of all groups take part in this. They decide on the goals and all the groups apply the same goals.
3. The NGO may propose goals for all the groups, expecting them all to measure against the same goals. This is not recommended by NGO-IDEAs because it might cause less ownership of the goals, but it is easier for the NGO staff and makes comparison between groups easier.
4. A combination of 1, 2 and 3: The NGO or federation sets a small number of goals for all groups it works with, e.g. referring to goals and/or indicators from the project plans. Additionally, the NGO or federation facilitates a process in which each group decides on some more goals which are group-specific. **At the end, there will be a set of goals which is common to all the groups, and some goals which are specific for each group.**

Brainstorming on goals
If we ask groups to say what goals they want to set, we will probably demand too much from its members. We need to ask questions that are easier to deal with. Experience shows that the following questions can work well:

> • What are goals which cannot be achieved individually but only as a group?
> • Where can the group contribute to achieve the SAGE goals?

Group members will share ideas. We need to encourage them to come up with ideas, make sure that many members participate. Some groups tend to tell stories of what they have achieved. We need to gently but quickly lead them back to our question.

Experience shows that groups usually start with aspects of group operation:
- group meets regularly
- no drop-outs from group
- members save regularly
- records and account are kept properly

Many of these are on the activity or output level of the results chain. They are important, but we need to include higher levels, the benefits for its members and the community, as well: So wherever we feel that the group might develop relevant goals, we can ask:

> 1. **What benefits** does a strong group bring **for its members**?

We can get answers like:
- Members enjoy certain benefits.
- The group supports its members in crisis.
- Members visit each other when a relative passes away.
- They give financial support in illness and after death.
- The group is able to solve conflicts.
- The group intervenes in domestic conflict.
- The group helps to overcome stigma, it gives self-confidence and trust.

If aspects our projects focuses on are not mentioned, we can ask for these directly, through questions like:

> 2. What **social benefits** should members get?
> 3. What **benefits** should members get **regarding their health**?
> 4. What **benefits** should members get **in economic terms**?

Often, these points come up through a discussion what the group has done and achieved. Group members remember what happened, evaluate the process and results, and say what was good and what they were not happy with. This is an important process of reflection and creating awareness. It needs good facilitation skills!

Groups tend to look at benefits for the group and its members. But very often, these groups have a meaning for the wider community. They bring about change also for others. That could be a group goal. So let us ask:

> 5. What **benefits** does a strong group bring **for the community**?

As with the benefit to members, people tend to reflect on what happened, what change they did bring about. Often, impressive stories are being told. We need to bring this back to goals:

> • What does the group want to achieve for the community?

Examples are:
- Assistance in domestic conflicts even for non-members.
- Raising awareness on issues like school attendance or health for the general community.
- Convincing government to bring infrastructure or services.
- Linking groups or the community to specific service providers (agricultural extension, health services, community development programs, loans, etc.)

Again, if certain aspects are not mentioned, we could ask for these issues the project aims at, like in the following examples.

- What **benefits** should the community get **in social/cultural aspects**?
- What **benefits** should the community get **in health**?
- What **benefits** should the community get **in economic terms**?
- What **benefits** should the community get **in terms of infrastructure and political involvement**?

Up to now, the steps consisted of brainstorming and reflection. But the group has to decide on the goals to be pursued. The number of goals should be manageable, so the points raised need to be formulated as goals/objectives and **the group needs to set priorities**.

It is important to keep in mind how to achieve these goals, considering the capacity of the group to do so. That should be discussed with the group, and accordingly the goals have to be prioritised and decided on. These goals should then flow into the Community Action Plan (see chapter 1.6, p. 30). The goals are then grouped and prioritised with the help of a facilitator. The result may be like this:

Table 5: Example of goals for the group in PAG

1. Knowledge, attitude, skills
1.1 Group self-confidence is satisfactory.
1.2 Group is able to solve conflicts without external support.

2. Economic aspects
2.1 Relations to local economy are satisfactory.
2.2 New income generating activities are explored.

3. Social and cultural aspects
3.1 Group is conscious about own rights as an association.
3.2 Group is active against domestic violence.

4. Political aspects
4.1 Group motivates its members to be active in the community.
4.2 Group is represented in local government meetings.

5. Indicators for sustainability
5.1 All group records are kept properly.
5.2 Group capital has increased.

Which scoring method is easier and most suitable for the group may be decided during the goal setting workshop. More explanations will be given in in chapter 2.3.1, p. 42–44.

Note
Some partners have made good experiences by organising *just one brainstorming for SAGE and PAG together* to identify the entire vision of the group and all its goals. The distinction of goals referring to individuals (for SAGE) and goals referring to the group (for PAG) can easily be made afterwards.

Soundbites
- The process of goal setting and formulation of the community Vision – Mission – Goal is in itself a process of empowerment. The process on agreeing on the scoring and scaling in coming-up with a tool [PAG] questionnaire is also a process of consciousness raising. (Estella, JPIC-IDC Lapulapu Housing project, Philippines)
- In Tushemerirwe Kolping Family, members intimated that tools had helped them to improve on their welfare. As a result of setting a goal related to having a decent house, members have started making bricks for each other in order to have decent homes. So far seven houses had been built. (Boniface Tukwasiibwe, Kolping Society, Uganda)
- 'It has helped us understand better what our roles are' – There is now an increased participation of members in CLA activities. (CLA member, PACT Mombasa, Kenya)

1.4   Common and different features of SAGE and PAG

SAGE and PAG have many features in common – but they have also clear differences. They should not be mixed!

1.4.1 Overview

Table 6: Common and different features of SAGE and PAG

Common features	Different features
• Both tools build on goals which people set for themselves.	• SAGE refers to goals the individual members set for their own lives. • PAG refers to goals set with regard to the performance of the group as an organisation.

• The same kind of measurement can be used for both tools (see also p. 42–44):
  • YES/NO answers
  • Percentage statements
  • Scoring
	• In SAGE, the NGO-IDEAs partners have experienced that it is easier to start with the YES/NO answers. With some practice, when scoring is understood by the group members, and when consolidation of scored results is mastered, a shift towards scoring will yield better results.
	 • In PAG, scoring seems easier to introduce, as it corresponds to the practice of many organisations.

• Both tools consider qualitative and quantitative aspects in the data collection process, and both help to identify changes by comparing the actual with earlier situations. • They include questions for reflection, too, mainly on the causes for the changes observed.	• In SAGE, sometimes it may not be possible to go in-depth for analysing the reasons for all the changes. Individual talks and counselling may then be more appropriate. • In PAG, the analysis is mainly done collectively for the group as a a whole.

> **Note**
> Experiences proved that achievement of the goals for individuals (SAGE) is higher where PAG is applied, because the group goals are generally complementing to achieving the individual goals.

1.4.2 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): SAGE and PAG

Specific FAQ concerning SAGE

*What is the **better alternative to "YES/NO"** answers?*
- Scoring and scaling can be introduced depending on the literacy level of the group. It is explained in chapter 2.3.1, p. 42–44.

Specific FAQ concerning PAG

*In **what phase of organising** a community could PAG be introduced?*
- PAG can be started in any phase of a project and of organising a community. It focuses on the qualities of a strong group – that is always relevant!
- However, if the goals for the group are set when it starts, this may give a clearer orientation right from the beginning, and it will contribute more to impact and outcome.
- Many NGO-IDEAs partners hold that one should not start before half a year after the group formation. First the group needs to have some consolidation. Members need to understand what the group is for before they can set goals.

FAQs concerning both SAGE and PAG

*Should the **vision relate to SAGE and PAG**? Can the brainstormings for SAGE and PAG goals be combined?*
- Yes, there can be a vision for each individual and her/his family as well as for the performance of the whole group.
- In practice, some NGO-IDEAs partners have made good experiences by organising just one brainstorming for SAGE and PAG together to identify the entire vision of the group (see also note above in chapter 1.3.2, p. 22).

*Is **PAG a summary of SAGE**?*
- No, PAG is not a summary of SAGE. PAG refers to goals set with regard to the performance of the group as an organisation. SAGE refers to goals the individual members set for their own lives or of their families; even if all group members have the same or similar goals (e.g. "My self-confidence has increased"), the goals of individuals are not the same as the goals of a group (e.g. "Our self-confidence as a group to deal with authorities has increased.").
- Even if the group performance can be seen as a summary of individual performance: it is useful to separate individual goals by using SAGE because this will help in tracking changes at the level of individuals and households, whereas PAG will only give a general overview of the changes of the group.
- It may, however, be useful to summarise individual goals (which would be suitable for SAGE) in PAG if the list of goals in SAGE has to be shortened.

*How can SAGE and PAG be **better linked**?*
- It is advisable to start with SAGE as the members' motivation to participate in group activities is visualised here. These results may then have an influence upon PAG which visualises the required qualities of the group to serve the members' aspirations.
- The development of goals for SAGE and PAG can be combined. The separation will then be made in a second step when asking: Can this goal be achieved by individual members (SAGE) or only by the group as a whole (PAG)?

*How could **community issues** be addressed with SAGE?*
- SAGE is designed to start from the needs of the individuals and their families and helps to monitor the achievements for them.
- If the community issues are influenced by each member, and if they have an influence on the life of each member (household), then they may be taken up in SAGE. For example, members could formulate goals like:
  - Each member assists her/his family in solving conflicts.
  - All members make sure that within their community no child with a disability is hidden in the house. (Groups of Persons with Disabilities)
- If the community issues are influenced by the group as a whole, then it should be considered to integrate these issues into PAG.

*Would it make sense to develop **short, medium and long term objectives** to suit each level of the organisation?*
- Yes, it can make sense. But this needs not to be decided when setting the goals; it will become clear when monitoring the achievement of the goals. Short-term goals can be discarded when they have been achieved.
- For impact and outcome monitoring, and when building on Logical Framework, it is sometimes important for the NGO to separate "activities and outputs" from "outcomes and impacts". Further distinctions are required only if they are relevant for the NGO's project management.
- If these distinctions are relevant only for the NGO, staff can do this after the meeting on its own.

Soundbites
- The use of the tools has encouraged the groups to set goals which they have not done in their personal life and see the value of assessing the status of the goal they set by themselves. (Maan and Vivian, World Vision, Philippines)
- The process is empowering because it is the individual members of the group who will identify their group goals as well as individual goals. It guides them in what they want to achieve individually as a member of the organization which is also related to their organization's goals. (Virgie, METSA, Philippines)
- This is an interesting process to observe the group and the individual members with their possibilities to change the situation through the self-assessment. (Shobha, Women Program Organizer, ASARE)
- In Kyamabare SHG, members were able to set goals which were relevant to their lives. In this area, land is becoming very scarce. Therefore, one of the goals set was to use small pieces of land to harvest bigger yields. We felt participants were more analytical of their situations and in control of their destiny. (Boniface Tukwasiibwe, Kolping Society, Uganda)
- After conducting SAGE and PAG the group motivated me to take up an Income Generation Activity of Cane Basket Stock. (Laxmi S Raikar, Goyer Village, India)

> • We are not that much literate and we do not know English, but we are seeing in our children's mark cards that teacher's give grades like: "A, B, C, D". We tell our children to get "A" grade. It also applies to our group. We should also get "A" grade. (…, Devalwada village, India)

1.5   Setting of priorities

The brainstorming on goals to be achieved individually by the members (SAGE) and collectively by the group (PAG) may yield much more goals than the group can follow up at the end. It is therefore essential to be clear about the priorities in order to reduce the number of goals. There are several options to do so:

Option 1: include outcomes and impacts

Many groups tend to set goals for the activities of their members, or for outputs to be produced by the group. This may be important for the existence of the group, it cannot be neglected. But it is equally important to set goals for the expected changes in people's living conditions, i.e. outcomes and impacts of the group activities (see also the note on p. 33).

Table 7: Distinction of activities/outputs and outcomes/impacts

Activities and outputs (produced by the group)	Outcomes and impacts (changes in people's lives)
• Regular attendance to meetings	• Improved health status
• Campaigns are conducted twice a year	• Alcoholism is reduced
• Roads are maintained	• Agricultural marketing is improved
• Regular savings	• Increased income

Activities and outputs can sometimes be important for the group performance and therefore be relevant, especially in PAG. They are also easier to monitor. However, it should be sought to focus the changes which are important for people's lives.

Option 2: include several areas of change

The group can prioritise some subject areas where change is aimed at. The selection can be based on the situational analysis, more specifically, on the felt needs of the group members, or on the NGO's or the federation's policies.

> *(Examples for areas prioritised for outcome and impact assessment)*
> 1. Increased self-confidence
> 2. Increased gender equality
> 3. Increased additional income
> 4. Improved educational status of the children
> 5. Enhanced health status of the family

In many cases, the facilitating NGO-IDEAs partners have suggested to the groups to include different clusters where change is expected, e.g.:

- personal (knowledge, attitudes, behaviour)
- socio-cultural
- economic
- political

Option 3: include aspects relevant for project monitoring and reporting

The NGO (or the federation, the network) may suggest including a few aspects which are common to all the groups participating in the project. These may be derived from its vision, mission, or the cross cutting objectives of the organisation (e.g. inclusion, gender equality).

In many cases, it is useful to focus on the objectives as described in the project's planning matrix (see chapter 1.7, p. 32, table 9). It may deepen these subject areas further.

> **Note**
> The group should prioritise a few areas where outcomes and impacts are expected.

> **Soundbites**
> - Earlier project focus was on project based goals, some of which will not meet the people' needs, now the approach changed to people' goals. (Mr. Susairaj, KRWDCS, India)
> - Helpful to prepare staff work plan. It encourages the implementing NGOs to work closer with the community (Mrs. Nagarathna, ASARE, India)

1.6   Community Based Action Plan

> A Community Based Action Plan can build on Well-being Ranking, SAGE and PAG. This is suggested to orient project management to poverty reduction, outcomes and impacts.

The NGO-IDEAs concept for monitoring self-effectiveness is not a separate project or activity. As an integral part of the project cycle it helps focus the communities' action on outcomes and impacts.

NGO-IDEAs partners have made the following experiences:

- Well-being Ranking sensitises for the determinants of poverty, and hence for the possibilities to overcome poverty. This is not only true for each of the community members who participate in the well-being ranking; it is also true for the group as a whole who identifies needy members and decides to give specific support to them.
- SAGE helps the group members to create a vision of their future lives. It gives guidance to their individual goals and to the required action for reaching them. Finally, it helps the group monitor the achievement of these goals and adjust the action.
- PAG gives guidance to the setting of goals for the group performance. Similarly, it helps the group in steering its action towards these goals.

Therefore, in order to support the participatory impact oriented project management, the Community Action Plan may be a solution. After the first application of Well-being Ranking,

SAGE and/or PAG, the next step is the preparation of a Community Action Plan. In its simplest form, it can have this shape:

Table 8: Basic structure of a Community Action Plan

Goals (expected outcomes/impacts)	**Activities**	**Time frame**	**Responsibilities**
Alcoholism is reduced	Conduct a small survey on alcoholism in the community	March	A., B.
	Collect and assess experiences from other communities	March	C., D., E.
	Design strategy and plan the activities	April	Group
	Prepare role plays	May-June	
	Prepare materials	May	A., D., F.
	Conduct campaign	June 12th to 19th	Group

Contrary to conventional monitoring practice of action plans, the NGO-IDEAs concept will help to overcome the fixation on activities and instead focus on the achievement of goals, i.e. outcomes and impacts.

This exercise of preparing an action plan will be repeated at least after each assessment of SAGE and/or PAG, by revising the present plan and updating it, or preparing a new plan, as per the need.

Practice has shown that when goals have been achived – i.e. all the members have reached the goals set in SAGE, or the group fully performs the PAG goals – then these goals drop out of the plans, and new goals are taken up for monitoring.

> **Soundbites**
> - After NGO-IDEAs, SHG's are given new dimension to identify their needs and goals. Visible changes can be seen among them and they started involving themselves in IGP activities. (Project Officer, SCINDeA, India)

1.7   Matching group goals with LogFrame

How to match goal setting and monitoring at grassroots level with project planning and monitoring at organisation level?

The NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox outlines how goals are set by groups, and how the outcome and impact monitoring can then be built up. However, frequently, the project has already been planned, agreed and funded before the NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox comes into play; in these cases, project plans already exist, objectives, outputs and indicators have already been fixed. The pragmatic question then is:

How to match the NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox with the Logical Framework?

If the project and monitoring plans have been established before…
- Well-being Ranking helps you to verify to what extent your identification of the intended project beneficiaries matches with your situational analysis and rationale of the project.
- SAGE helps you to verify to what extent the project objectives and corresponding indicators match with the individuals' goals of group members and their households.
- PAG helps you to verify to what extent the project objectives and corresponding indicators match with the groups' organisational goals.
- PIAR helps you to analyse the outcomes and impacts of your project, not only with regard to goals and indicators coming from SAGE and PAG, but also from your LogFrame, and unforeseen changes.

All the tools support the analysis of changes in a participatory process with the group members. *SAGE and PAG make indicator setting easy!*

The following example may show how LogFrame and Toolbox indicators could be related:

Table 9: Connecting Logical Framework and Toolbox

Project objectives	Indicators as established in the project plans (e.g. Logical Framework)	Indicators as developed in SAGE and PAG (Toolbox)
Increased self confidence	• Group members are able to speak up in public events	• Number of persons confirming to have increased their self confidence • Degree (score) of group self-confidence when dealing with authorities
Increased gender equality	• Gender balance among representatives in grassroots' organisations	• Percentage of households (with children in school going age) sending all the girls to school regularly • Degree (score) of group performance with regard to gender equality in group leadership
Increased additional income	• Average income of members (or of members' households)	• Percentage (or number) of member households getting economic benefits from new business activities • Degree (score) of group performance in savings and credit programme
Improved educational status of the children	• Enrolment and regular school attendance (boys/girls)	• Percentage of households (with children in school going age) sending all the children to secondary school • Degree (score) of group performance in conducting awareness campaigns for child rights
Enhanced health status of the family	• Frequency of…disease among children from 0 to 6 years of age	• Percentage (or number) of member households applying improved hygiene practices • Degree (score) of group performance in conducting health awareness programs

It can be observed that in this example, established at random:
- very different kinds of indicators can be related with the project objectives – many SAGE and PAG goals and indicators refer directly to the project objectives;
- the indicators may refer to different logical levels, i.e. to activities, outputs, use of outputs, outcomes or impacts.

Therefore, a more conscious development of goals and indicators in SAGE and PAG should not be excluded.

> **Note**
> **Activity / output or outcome / impact?**
> It is often difficult to attribute objectives and indicators to the "right" level of the results chain. Please be aware: an activity or output at individual or group level (e.g. sending girl children to school, or conducting health awareness programmes) is frequently an outcome or impact of the NGO's promotion efforts!
> Hence, from project perspective, such changes are frequently project outcomes or impacts!

How to develop goals and indicators with the Toolbox, when project plans with indicators already exist?

In NGO-IDEAs, the attribution to the results chain normally happens at the end, in the NGO, if required for reporting to funding agencies. It is not to be transferred to group level.

Experience has shown, however, that some NGOs are in a different situation. In the chapters on goal setting with SAGE and PAG (see chapters 1.2 and 1.3, p. 19 and 23), in step 3 of each of them, we have described that there are four approaches to set goals with the group: they are mainly distinct with regard to the influence taken from outside.

Option 3 says: *"The NGO may propose goals for all the groups, expecting them all to measure against the same goals. This alleviates the NGO's work, particularly when starting to apply the Toolbox; however, is not recommended by NGO-IDEAs as a standard procedure because it might cause less ownership of the goals."*

> **Note**
> It should be avoided that all the goals are pre-established and imposed to the group! Therefore, whenever possible option 4 of the approaches to set goals, i.e. developing a set of goals which is common for all the groups, and some group specific goals, should be preferred!

How to match goals and indicators with other objectives, e.g. organisational objectives or beyond?

The matching procedure described here is applicable not only for project objectives, but for any other "superior" objectives, be it
- mandate or long term objectives of the organisation;
- transversal objectives at organisation level (e.g. referring to inclusion, gender or environment);
- national or regional development goals;
- international development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This means that when the goals have been set by the group members, indicators can be derived to assess the achievement of these "superior" objectives. This can be of high importance with regard to the external and internal accountability of the organisation.

How can the project and organisation monitoring be further refined?

In PIAR, it is shown how the monitoring results of SAGE can be further differentiated with the help of Well-being Ranking (see chapters 3.4.2 and 3.5.2, p. 59 and 61):
- by poverty categories, specifying the impact on people living in extreme poverty;
- by gender, specifying the impact on women and girls;
- by people with and without disabilities, specifying the impact on differently able people.

This means that SAGE gives you the opportunity not only to observe the project outcome and impact on the individuals and their households, and to use this information for project management and accountability purposes, but especially identify the outcome and impact on the most vulnerable stakeholders.

It is then even possible to monitor the project objectives in a differentiated manner, distinguishing the achieved benefits according to each social group – to take it to an extreme: it is then even possible to establish to what extent the most vulnerable groups, very specifically, are approaching the MDGs, as an outcome and impact of the project and people's self-help endeavours!

How to develop goals and indicators with the Toolbox, when project plans and indicators yet have to be established?

NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox is meant to be used for planning projects and establishing indicators, too.
- The situational analysis obtained from Well-being Ranking will help you to focus more clearly on the families living in extreme poverty, and to identify the causes of their poverty, and their specific needs.
- The goals and indicators, derived from SAGE and PAG, will help you to formulate the objectives and indicators for your Logical Framework which match perfectly with the goals at grassroots' level. You will get realistic objectives which have been set by the group members, and indicators which can be monitored regularly by them.

> **Note**
>
> The NGO-IDEAs Impact Toolbox can contribute to smoothly shift the top-down approach towards a bottom-up practice in project planning and monitoring.

Soundbites
- The connection between the logical frameworks, project abstract indicators and activity plan of the PO contributes to efficient implementation. (Estella, JPIC-IDC Lapulapu Housing Project, Philippines)
- NGO-IDEAs tools strengthen the need based planning, primary stakeholders and NGO's joint actions and complement to the Logical Framework approach. (Mrs. Nagarathna, ASARE, India).
- Staff gained enhanced planning and facilitating skills – become highly participatory in the formulation of capability building plan of the target individual child and groups/gangs. (..., Tambayan, Philippines)
- The project proposal development got a shift from top level perspectives to grass root perspectives, present project proposal is strengthened, based on the learning from NGO-IDEAs. (Mr. Susairaj, KRWDCS, India).
- The reporting format in UKS has improved. We are still using the Logical Framework to report, but with more details on the impact of the interventions made. (Boniface..., Kolping Society, Uganda)

2 Monitoring at group level

2.1 Monitoring and reflection with SAGE

The first steps (1 to 3) of setting goals with SAGE have been explained in in chapter 1.2.2, p. 17. The following steps shall describe how regular assessments on goal achievement are made.

Steps 1 to 3 (see p. 18) describe how SAGE is introduced.

Monitoring and reflection with SAGE:

Step 4:
Assess periodically and together with the individuals and/or with the group to what extent each individual or her/his household has reached each of the goals.
When repeating the assessment after a couple of months, compare it with an earlier one.

Step 5:
Analyse the changes together with the individuals and/or group.
- In which areas did improvements take place? Where did they not take place? Why?
- Whose situation has improved? Whose situation has worsened? Why?

Step 6:
Analyse who and what has contributed to the observed changes:
- What has the group contributed to the observed changes?
- What has the NGO contributed to the observed changes?
- What have others, or changes in the context, contributed to the observed changes?

Step 7:
Analyse the consequences for future action of the group and NGO:
- What can the group (and its federation) do to further improve the situation of the neediest persons/in this area?
- What can the NGO do?

Step 4: "Assess periodically to what extent each individual has reached each of the goals."

To monitor the outcomes and impacts of the group's action with regard to the goals set for individual members and their households or families, measurement options have to be chosen (see chapter 2.3.1) first. This should generally happen outside the group and is an extra activity only for the NGO, or the federation.

Once the scoring method has been decided, periodic reviews have to be held. The first scoring should happen at least one week after the goals were set, but not more than 2 months later, in order to give the group the possibility to validate the goals (see 2.3.3, p. 46).

Table 10: *SAGE documentation example*

SAGE FORMAT													
Name of the organisation													
Name of the group													
Number of members	10												
Month and year of group foundation													
Baseline – Date of first survey: .. .. ….											TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
MAIN INDICATORS													
Is the member very poor **(VP)**, poor **(P)**, medium wealthy **(M)** or rich **(R)**?	P	P	VP	VP	M	R	VP	VP	P	VP	…	# of YES	# of NA	% of YES
Member's Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	…			
Member's Name	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	…			
KNOWLEDGE/ATTITUDE/SKILLS														
1. I am sending my school aged girls and boys to school regularly.	yes	yes	no	NA	NA	yes	no	no	NA	yes	…	4	3	**57**
2. In my family, violence is avoided, also in the domestic area.	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	…	4	0	**40**
Sub-Total Personal														
ECONOMIC														
1. My household has sufficient income to provide healthy food for all members.	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	…	4	0	**40**
2. I am regularly repaying my loan: principal and interest	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	…	9	0	**90**
Sub-Total Economic														
SOCIO-CULTURAL														
1. I am conscious of my rights as a woman.	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	…	7	0	**70**
2. I treat my daughters and sons equally	yes	NA	no	NA	NA	yes	no	no	NA	yes	…	3	4	**50**
Sub-Total Socio-Cultural														
POLITICAL														
1. I am regularly participating in the community activities.	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	…	7	0	**70**
2. I exercise my voting rights	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	…	6	0	**60**
Sub-Total Political														
Total (All aspects)														

Only two indicators of each cluster are shown here. If any new indicators are evolved, please add them to this format.
 # stands for "number".
To calculate the "% of yes" answers: "Total # of yes" divided by ("Total # of group members" minus "# of NA").

Possibility to score: 1 = yes; 0 = no; [NA] = not applicable.

> **Note**
> This table presents a yes/no option. Scoring 1–5 would also be possible (see chapter 2.3.1, p. 42–44). Scoring could be done using the seeds-technique: 1 seed = not at all achieved; 5 seeds = fully achieved.

Consolidation of the SAGE results is done as follows:
- The *rows* in this basic sheet show to what extent *each goal* has been reached;
- The *columns* in this sheet show how *each group member* has fulfilled each of the goals.

At the end of each row and column, sums can be calculated.
- For each goal (in each row), the scores are summed up and an average is built.
- For each person (in each column), the scores are summed up.

Additionally, sub-totals can be calculated:
- For the goals, sub-totals can be calculated as required. Many NGO-IDEAs partners have preferred to cluster the goals which refer to similar endeavours.
- For the persons, sub-totals can be calculated, too. Many NGO-IDEAs partners have clustered the members/households belonging to the same social category. In the example above, the members can be clustered according to the well-being categories VP, P, M and R. This "poverty disaggregation" is further explained in chapters 3.4.2 and 3.5.2 (p. 59 and 61).

Settings for the assessment

There are basically two settings to analyse whether, or to what extent, each individual or her/his household has reached each of the goals:
- with the whole group: this is advisable when there is enough trust within the group, so that the individual change can be discussed openly with others; unrealistic self-assessments can then be reflected, and joint learning may take place more easily;
- with the individuals: this is advisable when the individual change cannot, or should not, be discussed in the group.

There are also intermediate solutions. The group agrees with the facilitator on how to organise the analysis, and evaluate this experience later with the intention of improving the process.

Exploring "unplanned" or "unforeseen" changes

The goals refer to expected changes which have been defined beforehand. Additionally to these we also need to explore whether other changes have happened – beyond the ones expected by the goal setting (see chapter 2.3.2, p. 45).

The **validation** of the self-assessment – by the group members, the facilitator or a staff member who knows the group – is crucial, because the self-assessment may be biased (see chapter 2.3.3, p. 46).

Note
- The privacy of data has to be ensured. This means that data are encoded once these leave the NGO. When data are aggregated or results are published, it should not be possible to identify individuals.
- In SAGE, in practice, it is sufficient to report to external persons only the last columns (see SAGE documentation example) which represent the summaries. The details about each member can stay with the group. This makes reporting – and data entry to the software, if required – much easier.

Soundbites
- NGO-IDEAs helped the team to understand the groups further and the dynamics involved. Staff appreciates the importance of qualitative reporting as it brings out different perspectives, and the impact of our projects and the needs within the project came out clearly. The tools have contributed to a learning process for the group and organization. (Maureen, APDK, Kenya)
- Before NGO-IDEAs, my child was late to school (Early Child Care Centre), because I was busy in my household work, I have to complete the kitchen work in the morning and then only I could take my child to school. So it got delayed some times. During SAGE first application, the goal, 'I send my child on time to school' was set by individual mothers. Next day, I discussed this with my husband and motivated him to help in taking the child to school on time. My husband agreed and now he is helping me and the child by taking the child to school on time before he goes for his business. (SHG member, Murshidabad, RKM Narendrapur, India).
- For the staffs, aside from easier tracking of the project accomplishments and levels of achieving indicators, the whole process of participatory monitoring enriched their experience and grasp of a sustainable development methodology. (Roldan Gonzales, GITIB, Philippines)
- There is so much to know ourselves and have an assessment of our own capabilities to do towards our own development. This tool application made me to re-think about myself. (Uma, Ganaludoddi, India)

2.2   Monitoring and reflection with PAG

The first steps (1 to 3) of setting goals with PAG have been explained in chapter 1.3 (p. 22). The following steps shall describe how regular assessments of the group performance with regard to the achievement of these goals are made.

Steps 1 to 3 (see 1.3) describe how PAG is introduced.

Monitoring and reflection with PAG:

Step 4
Assess periodically to what extent the group achieves each of the goals.
When repeating the assessment after a couple of months, compare it with an earlier one.

Step 5
Analyse the changes together with the group:
- In which areas did improvements take place?
- Where did the group not improve?
- Why?

Step 6
Analyse who and what has contributed to the observed changes:
- What has the group (and the federation) contributed to these changes?
- What has the NGO contributed to the observed changes?
- What have others contributed to the observed changes?

Step 7
Consolidate and validate the results and seek reflection on the consequences for future action of the group (and its federation) and the NGO.
- What can the group (and the federation) do to improve the group performance in this area?
- What can the NGO do to improve the group performance in this area?

Step 4: Assess periodically to what extent the group achieves each of the goals.

To monitor the outcomes and impacts of the group's action with regard to its goals for group performance, measurement options have to be chosen first (see chapter 2.3.1, p. 42–44). This should generally happen outside the group and is an extra activity only for the NGO, or the federation. Once the scoring method has been decided, periodic reviews have to be held.

The assessment could proceed as follows:
Facilitate a meeting of the group to assess with the group to what extent they have reached each goal. At the *first* scoring, validate the goals. This should happen at least one week after the goals were set, but not more than 2 months later. That means: ask group members if the goals that they have set are really the goals they want to pursue. This serves to remind members of the goals they set. It can lead to some changes in goals.

The group members should agree on the degree (i.e. the score, see chapter 2.3.1, p. 44) they have reached each goal for the time being; if there are different opinions, the arguments should be listed on a flipchart: What specifically has the group reached? What specifically has the group not yet reached? Finally, the group should agree on the scoring.

In the following example we assume that the scoring possibilities are in a 5-point-scale with numbers from 1 to 5.

Table 10: PAG format with scoring results

PAG FORMAT						
Name of the organization: ...						
Name of the group: ...						
Number of members: ...						
Month and year of group foundation:						
			Date of the Survey			
			March 2011	Sept. 2011	March 2012	Sept. 2012
No.	**Goals/Impact Indicators**	**MAX. SCORE**	**Base-line**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**
1	**ATTITUDE, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS**					
1.1	GROUP SELF CONFIDENCE IS SATISFACTORY	5	2	3		
1.2	GROUP IS ABLE TO SOLVE CONFLICTS WITHOUT EXTERNAL SUPPORT	5	1	2		
1.3	...	5	2	2		
	Total	*15*	*5*	*7*		
2	**ECONOMIC ASPECTS**					
2.1	RELATIONS TO LOCAL ECONOMY ARE SATSFACTORY	5	1	1		
2.2	NEW INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES ARE EXPLORED	5	1	3		
2.3	...	5	2	3		
	Total	*15*	*4*	*7*		
3	**SOCIAL & CULTURAL ASPECTS**					
3.1	GROUP IS CONSCIOUS ABOUT OWN RIGHTS AS AN ASSOCIATION	5	2	4		
3.2	GROUP IS ACTIVE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	5	2	3		
3.3	...	5	3	3		
	Total	*15*	*7*	*10*		
4	**POLITICAL ASPECTS**					
4.1	GROUP MOTIVATES ITS MEMBERS TO BE ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY	5	3	1		
4.2	GROUP IS REPRESENTED IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEETINGS	5	1	1		
4.3	...	5	2	3		
	Total	*15*	*6*	*5*		
5	**INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABILITY**					
5.1	**ALL GROUP RECORDS ARE KEPT PROPERLY**	**5**	5	4		
5.2	**GROUP CAPITAL IS INCREASING**	**5**	4	3		
5.3	...	**5**	1	1		
	Total	*15*	*10*	*8*		
	Grand Total	75	32	37		
Only two indicators of each cluster are shown here. If any new indicators evolve, please add them to this format.						

When repeating the assessment after 6 or 12 months, compare its results with an earlier assessment and analyse it according to the steps 5 to 7.

Consolidation is as follows:
- The *rows* in this basic sheet show to what extent *each goal* has been reached.
- The *columns* in this sheet show the results of *each assessment (measurement)*.

At the end of each row and column sums can be calculated.
- For each goal (in each row), the scores are summed up and an average is built.
- For each assessment (in each column), the scores are summed up.

Additionally, sub-totals can be calculated:
- For the goals, sub-totals can be calculated as required. Many NGO-IDEAs partners have preferred to cluster the goals which refer to similar endeavours.

Exploring "unplanned" or "unforeseen" changes
The goals refer to expected changes which have been defined beforehand. Additionally to these we also need to explore whether other changes have happened – beyond the ones expected by the goal setting (see chapter 2.3.2, p. 45).

The **validation** of the self-assessment – by the group members, the facilitator or a staff member who knows the group – is crucial, because the self-assessment may be biased (see chapter 2.3.3, p. 46)!

Soundbites
- In the 1st measurement, they [SHG] had two members who had defaulted on loans. Most of the members in the SHG couldn't approach them to demand for money because they feared to be branded "bad" people. But after sharing with them the indicators of a strong group, they approached the defaulting members and indeed they paid, returned to the SHG and were working together in harmony. (Boniface Tukwasiibwe, Kolping Society, Uganda)
- The process involved us in the self-monitoring. We could not reach full goal achievement. It made us active and punctual in attending the goal achieving tasks. (Savitramma, Ganaludoddi, India)
- The monitoring experience helped the group to get access to services of government extension staff, it improved resource mobilization and it brought the recognition of groups of marginalized (disabled) persons. (Moses Kawikizi, GLRA, Uganda)

2.3   Monitoring and reflection with SAGE and PAG: common features

2.3.1 Options for measurement (Step 4 SAGE and PAG)

In SAGE and PAG we use numbers (i.e. quantitative indicators) to describe the situation of the individuals/households or the group. While this offers many advantages in aggregating or analysing the results, it may also have disadvantages compared to descriptive methods. There is a risk that SAGE and PAG has too much of a "school mark" character. Its character, however, depends very much on how this tool is applied. In reality there are a considerable range of design options; here we present three of those options attributing numbers.

Table 11: Quantitative measurement options

Option 1: *YES/NO*	*YES* stands for: I have attained the status that I desired when I joined the group. *NO* stands for: I have *not yet* attained the status that I desired when I joined the group.
Option 2: *Percentage Statements*	100% stands for: I have wholly attained the status that I desired when I joined the group. The numbers between 0% and 100% stand for the gradual attainment of the target, with assessments being given according to feelings. *Note:* • *The "10-seeds-technique" known from PRA follows the same idea. Each seed would then count for 10%.* • *The experience of NGO-IDEAs partners has, however, shown that it is easier to work with less seeds, e.g. 3 to 5, see below: "scoring".*
Option 3: *Scoring*	For each criterion, "growth levels" are established, each of which is assessed with a certain number of points (see p. 44). The scores can directly be summed up as they are, or averages can be built. This is also possible if five colours are used to represent the five point scale. The scores can also be transferred to percentage calculation: With a five point scale, we get five steps: $0 - 25 - 50 - 75 - 100\%$.
Overall option: *N.A.: "not applicable"*	*For calculating sums and averages, in every scoring method it is important to exclude the members or households for whom the specific objective is not applicable, e.g.:* • *"I send all my children, girls and boys, to school." → This is only applicable if the member has children in school going age.* • *"I am able to read and write." → This goal might not be applicable to all members, e.g. elder women who think they are too old to learn it.* • *"I have an additional income from non-timber forest products." → This goal only applies to those households who are able and willing to collect products from the forests.*

Option 1: "yes/no" answers
The specific question is: Which goals has the person/the household reached? Which goals has the person/the household not yet reached?
• If the member considers she or he has reached the goal, the answer is "yes".
• If the member considers she or he has not yet reached the goal, the answer is "no".
This kind of measurement is not very precise. The decision to opt for "yes" or "no" is often very difficult, even with the support of the group and the facilitator.

However, the consolidation of results is very easy, and this is why many groups and NGOs prefer to start with this measurement option. Experience shows, however, that after some time a more precise measurement is sought – as shown in options 2 and 3.

Option 2: percentage statement
When we use percentages or scores for assessing the achievement of goals, we have to explain its meaning carefully. There are many ways of doing it, and it should be close to the practice and thinking of group members.

For the percentages, many NGOs use the currency units. In India, e.g. 100 Paise correspond to 1 Rupee. So the question can be:

- With regard to this objective, how many Paise have you collected, considering that reaching this objective fully corresponds to 1 Rupee?

Option 3: scoring

Generally scoring is possible with many scales. The experience of NGO-IDEAs partners shows, however, that the five-point scale is very appropriate. This allows for more differentiated results and analysis than Yes/No answers, and the scoring is easier than with a higher number of possibilities. The lowest score of the scale is 1 and the highest score is 5. To each of the scores a label has been attributed.

In the more general example 1, the two extremes of the scale have been labelled as 'very poor performance…very good performance.' In example 2, to facilitate understanding, the individual values have been assigned terms.

Example 1: General scoring option with a 5 point-scale

GROUP IS ABLE TO SOLVE CONFLICTS WITHOUT EXTERNAL SUPPORT	
General scoring option	Score
• Very poor performance	1
• Poor performance	2
• Fair performance	3
• Good performance	4
• Very good performance	5

Example 2: Check list for conflict resolution

GROUP IS ABLE TO SOLVE CONFLICTS WITHOUT EXTERNAL SUPPORT	
Specific scoring option	Score
• The group is unable to solve minor conflicts.	1
• The group is able to solve minor conflicts with facilitation by the NGO.	2
• The group is able to solve minor conflicts with mentoring by the NGO.	3
• The group is able to solve important conflicts with mentoring by the NGO.	4
• The group is able to solve important conflicts autonomously.	5

Note
A maximum for the total score can be attributed to the group performance. With 15 goals, and a maximum score of 5 for each of them, a group could reach up to 75 points.

In practice, NGO-IDEAs partners have used many creative possibilities to work with the five-point-scale:

- For the scoring, symbols are frequently used, e.g. destroyed mud pot – mud pot – copper – silver – gold. These symbols stand for the scores 1 to 5.
- These symbols can also be transferred to percentages: 0 – 25 – 50 – 75 – 100 %.

- Similarly, some NGOs use (mostly five) different colours to symbolise different scores: green – blue – yellow – red – black. The colours corresponding to the scoring are selected by the group members. It is crucial that, regarding the meaning of each colour, hints are given to the group members, and that they understand the meaning of colours unmistakably. The assessment is made by preparing coloured sheets of paper and then asking the members to show the colour they would rate themselves. In reports, the meaning of the colours always needs to be explained. For calculation, number have to be attributed.

> **Note**
> It should be explored and tested beforehand which scoring symbols are most suitable for the group.

2.3.2 Explorative questions (Step 4 SAGE and PAG)

The monitoring of the goal achievement (indicators) with the help of yes/no questions or numbers (ratios, percentages, scores) is an important part of the assessment of change. But it is not the only one!

The goals (the indicators) refer to expected changes which have been defined beforehand. Additionally to these we also need to explore whether other changes have happened – beyond the ones expected by the goal setting – or not. After the assessment of goal achievement we therefore have to ask:

> **Explorative questions to complement the assessment of goal achievement:**
>
> *(If we need to know any important **changes in the situation** of the community:)*
> - What else has changed?
> - Are there any other important changes?
> - Please highlight important changes in the community.
>
> *(If we need to know any important **influences** in the community:)*
> - What else happened?
> - Have there been any other remarkable achievements or events?
>
> *(If we specifically need to know the **change brought about by the project** in the community:)*
> - What else has changed as a result of the group's and/or NGO's activities?
> - Are there any other important changes which have been influenced by the SHGs and/or the NGO?

A minute taker should record the most relevant answers. Ideally, these answers are written on a flipchart provided many members are literate. The group can prioritise the most important answers.

These "unplanned" or "unforeseen" changes can be considered to be positive or negative. Further analysis is described in the chapter 3.6.3 (p. 64).

2.3.3 Validation (Step 4 SAGE and PAG)

Quality checks at group level are necessary (see also Checks and Balances in chapter 3.6, p. 64) – they can hardly be done, or with big efforts only, by programme staff or outsiders who do not participate in the meetings. Validating the self-assessment repeatedly – by the group members, by the facilitator or by a staff member who knows the group – is crucial, because the self-assessment may be biased!

At the *first* scoring, the goals need to be validated, too. That means: ask group members if the goals that they have set are really the goals they want to pursue. This serves to remind members of the goals they set. It can lead to some changes in goals.

> The **quality control at group level** is crucial. The following questions are useful to ascertain reliable data quality:
> * Did everybody understand the questions well, and in the same way?
> * Are the answers honest?
> * Is it likely that information has not been distorted by the interview (or: self-assessment) situation?
> * Are the answers documented correctly?

2.3.4 Analysis of SAGE and PAG at group level (Step 5 to 7 SAGE and PAG)

As stipulated in steps 5 to 7 of SAGE and PAG, when repeating the assessment after 6 or 12 months, the assessment results should be compared with earlier assessments and analysed in the group immediately.

Step 5: Comparisons (baseline – previous – actual)

Immediately when the actual assessment – we can also call it data collection – is done, the results need to be compared with some references. The most frequent way of doing it – and this is very common in the groups – is to compare the results of the actual assessment with the ones of the previous assessment.

At group level, it makes sense to use the basic sheet again (see above, 2.1)[2] showing to what extent each group member has fulfilled each of the goals agreed. Together with the group (or if there is no group approach: with the individuals) the changes are analysed.

> **Analyse the changes together with the individuals and/or group:**
> * In which areas did improvements take place? Where did they not take place? Why?
> * *(for SAGE:)* Whose situation has improved? Whose situation has worsened? Why?

But it can also be useful to compare with the starting point (baseline) or with the expected final result (target value) or with any other benchmark.

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2   Several options to modify the basic sheet are documented in "How do they do it? Civil society monitoring self-effectiveness." An NGO-IDEAS documentation of field experience, Bonn 2011, and on the NGO-IDEAS homepage www.ngo-ideas.net further examples will be collected.

A simple table to visualise these comparisons could look like this:

Table 12: Basic structure of a comparative chart

Goals/ indicators	Baseline	Previous assessment	Actual assessment	Remarks (What has contributed posi- tively and/or negatively to change?)

Note: It would also be possible to have a separate column for the *target* or any other *benchmark*.

Comparisons can also be made with qualitative (non-numerical) findings. But they are normally not listed in a table.

A general question to analyse the results is:

> **Which changes surprised us, and why?**

Further questions to compare the findings of the previous and the current assessment could be:

> **Questions for comparing:**
> - What differences between the previous assessment and the current assessment are *higher* than expected?
> - What differences between the previous assessment and the current assessment are *lower* than expected?
>
> *Together with the "unplanned" or "unforeseen" changes identified with the help of the ex- plorative questions, one could also ask:*
> - Which changes have been particularly positive?
> - Which changes have been particularly negative?

Step 6: Causes for changes

If changes have been observed, this does not necessarily mean that they have been produced by the group or by the NGO – they may originate from other influences: climate, regional econ- omic and social development, mass media, and so on.

To analyse outcomes and impacts it is therefore always necessary to ask for the causes for the observed changes:

> **Questions to analyse contributions to change:**
>
> *Analyse who and what has contributed to the observed changes:*
> - What has the group (and its federation) contributed to the observed changes?
> - What has the NGO contributed to the observed changes?
> - What have others, or changes in the context, contributed to the observed changes?
>
> *Additionally, or alternatively, one could also ask:*
> - What/who supported this change?
> - What/who hindered the expected change?

Step 7: Consequences for the action plans

The analysis of changes observed, and what caused these changes, should help the group members and the NGO to draw conclusions about their future activities. Individuals can learn how they can influence the achievement of their personal goals; and the group and the NGO can make up or adjust their action plans. The basic question is:

> **Where do you see the need for taking action?**

> **Questions to adjust action plans:**
> * Which adjustments should be made in our Action Plan?
> * What can each member do to achieve better outcomes and impacts?
> * What can the group (and its federation) do to further improve the situation of the nee-diest persons/in this area?
> * What can the NGO do to improve impacts for the neediest persons/in this area?
> * What can others do to improve impacts for the neediest persons/in this area?

The group does normally not operate completely on its own; it is connected with its own um-brella bodies (e.g. federation) or with the NGO. It may therefore also be useful to ask specifically for issues that the group has difficulties to solve alone:

> **Are there any problems or conflicts not yet solved, or very difficult to solve?**

But at the same time, there may be some particularly interesting outcomes:

> **Are there any success stories that should be reported to others?**

2.3.5 Hints for use of SAGE and PAG

* The NGO or the federations of the groups **need to assist in introducing this tool.** After-wards, they gradually need to hand over the exercise to the groups or community facili-tators, if existent.
* With the help of the facilitator, the answers to each of the questions (listed above in chapters 2.3.2 to 2.3.4, p. 45-48) are collected with the group. **Visualisation on a flipchart is advisable.**
* If the opinions are controversial, and no agreement can be reached after a short discussion, all the **differing opinions should be documented** and the deepening discussion postponed to a later date.
* After the session, **the leadership of the group could analyse the results,** share this analysis with the group and draw conclusions for future action.
* The **NGO should maintain the dialogue with the group** on the consequences of these conclusions.
* To **know which questions to ask and how to react to what members say**, requires good facilitation skills. We need to ensure that the outcome of the discussion really reflects goals that are relevant to the individuals. They should not set goals because we want them to. On the other hand, facilitators need to help groups to think beyond what they would normally do, develop goals for something they find important but would not name by themselves. And with our questions we can help groups to define the goals that are most relevant to them.

- **Combination with other tools:** We can combine SAGE and PAG with other tools, e.g. Well-being Ranking, Community Action Plan or the Tiny Tools[3].
- After a little practice, **the group itself can administer the two tools**: SAGE and PAG. In spite of this, it will probably make sense in many cases for an external person, as a facilitator, to support self-evaluation, validation and corresponding reflection. When groups are federated, the facilitator can come from the umbrella body/federation.
- **Umbrella bodies** are also groups, in a way. They **can use PAG and SAGE similarly**. But they need to set own goals which correspond to their role as umbrella bodies. The process of establishing goals can be similar to the one described here. The questions for facilitation need to be adapted, of course.
- **Listen and try to understand**: Groups have a lot of wisdom which is sometimes hidden. We need to listen attentively and try to understand the underlying meaning. That will help us to support the groups more effectively.
- **Repeat the assessment periodically** to track the changes.

> **Note**
> **Repeat the assessment periodically to track the impact.**
> - SAGE will enable you to understand the progress of individuals and their families/households towards their goals.
> - In PAG, the information from a comparative chart of the group, showing its development over time, will enable to develop group indicators as well as to assess group performance.

2.3.6 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on monitoring and reflection with SAGE and PAG

*SAGE and PAG help in monitoring people's goals, i.e. intended change. How to **identify unintended change**? Positive and negative?*
- SAGE and PAG ask for people's goals and monitor to what extent they have been achieved. This means, it focuses on intended positive change, outcome and impact.
- Usually, information on unintended change comes up in the discussions during the monitoring (scoring) exercise. It is important to be prepared to record them! In order to identify unintended change, positive and negative, explorative questions are asked additionally when monitoring SAGE and PAG indicators (see chapter 2.3.2, p. 45).

*How can the **contribution of the group members** be made explicit?*
- Indeed, it is important to be aware that the project alone has limited impact if it does not support the self-help activities of the community.
- As explained in step 6 ("Causes for change") of SAGE and PAG: When analysing change, one should always ask:
  - What did the individual members, their families, and their group contribute to the observed changes?
  - What did the NGO contribute to the observed changes?
  - What did other actors, stakeholders or other influences contribute to the observed changes?
- Additionally, when using the results chain, it is very helpful to analyse the "use of outputs" (between the "output" and the "outcome" level): to what extent did the group members make use of the project outputs (e.g. investments, trainings, services offered by the project)? This reflection is particularly helpful if the outcomes have not yet unfolded visibly.

3 See www.ngo-ideas.net/publications

Soundbites

- Though it seems a strenuous process of looking at several questions and answering them, the result sheet prepared in the end reflects the image of our situation. It tells where we are and where we need to go. (Yashodamma, Cheelur, India)
- Group members have learnt to observe, assess and direct their own activities. Dealing with disabilities brings out emotions from participants and they can talk for very long. This resulted in corrective actions and adjustments in some instances. (Maureen, APDK, Kenya)
- Farmers monitoring and evaluation enabled them to take charge of their lives; to be more aware of results and to take advantage of opportunities to improve their families and clans. Even if applying the tools take a lot of time its benefits are still worth it. The challenge is for project managers to provide adequate time and resources for it to meaningfully take place. (Alma de la Paz, KAPWA, Philippines)
- NGO-IDEAs is promoting a learning culture. Through the application of tools the community members learnt from each other and improve themselves. (Dr. Manasi, SRAN, India)
- Group discussions are now more about resolving group issues and activities needing changes: e.g. no more bullying among members, no more stealing, sniffing, marijuana, and smoking. As a gang, the children learned to become responsive in assisting abuse cases of their members. (…, Tambayan, Philippines)
- 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, India)

2.4   Monitoring of Community Action Plan

2.4.1 Data collection to assess activities, outputs and outcomes

The Community Action Plan is normally reviewed in each group meeting. The most common way is comparing what was planned with what was achieved. If there are any differences, they should be analysed and, if necessary, further action should be taken.

Table 13: Monitoring of Community Action Plan

What activities were planned? (time frame & responsibility)	What was achieved?	Reasons for deviations (if any)	Need for action?
Conduct a small survey on alcoholism in the community	Survey brought insights but only for some households	Many endangered persons did not respond	Not yet possible
Collect and assess experiences from other communities	Very interesting and important ideas and advices received from 3 communities	–	–
Design strategy and plan the activities	Planning was done, many good ideas are implemented, it's motivating	–	–
Prepare role plays	The groups are meeting, it's fun	The performance is not so good yet	Role plays should be shorter and more to the point
Prepare materials	Received from neighbour community	–	–
Conduct campaign			

The original action plan will then be updated. If the task is completed, it can be ticked off in the normal action plan. If the assessment shows the need for further action, this is added to the action plan.

The action plan focuses on the activities and outputs. The achievement of goals (outcome and impact) is rather monitored with the help of SAGE, PAG and additional indicators. When goals have been achieved – i.e. all the members have reached the goals set in SAGE, or the group fully performs the PAG goals – these goals and the corresponding activities drop out of the plans, and new goals are taken up for monitoring.

2.4.2 Explorative questions

If possible, the group meeting should not limit itself to compare "planned" and "actual". It is helpful to ask additional explorative questions:

> - **What else happened?**
> - Have there been any other remarkable achievements or events? Success stories (if any)?
>
> From time to time, in order to learn about the group's own effectiveness, it is also useful to ask:
> - **Which changes have been brought about as results of these activities?**
> - Please highlight important changes in the community.
>
> To avoid hidden obstacles, the question can be asked:
> - **Are there any problems or conflicts not yet solved?**

All these questions may again lead to additional activities (or even goals) to be taken up in the action plan.

3 Participatory Impact Analysis and Reflection (PIAR)

3.1 Introduction to PIAR

Concept

PIAR (in brief: "Analysis and Reflection") serves for an in-depth analysis of outcomes and impacts of the NGO's work. Analysis and Reflection uses the Well-being Ranking, SAGE, PAG and additional data independently and links them with each others. It includes reflections on the results of the NGO's project management and at grassroots level. It is part of regular monitoring, ensures optimal use of resources, reflection, correction and improvement of the ongoing process, and serves the purpose of accountability to their stakeholders.

Analysis and Reflection is mainly applied by the NGO, but it is equally meant to be applied by umbrella bodies (e.g. federations) that have some experience in impact monitoring. At the outset, participatory analysis and reflection are done by the groups in each assessment (see Well-being Ranking, SAGE and PAG).

> **Note**
> PIAR needs to be adapted to your context so that people understand it. NGO-IDEAs suggests you use as core terms "analysis and reflection", "analysing data" or "making sense" instead of "PIAR".

SAGE and PAG, ideally also Well-being Ranking, have to be conducted prior to applying PIAR. Analysis and Reflection sets out from the methods of self-assessment of changes among individuals / households and in the group (SAGE, PAG and additional information). It elaborates their results with the support of a number of additional elements used at different levels. Here the NGOs can summarise the findings from the above mentioned different sources, document and check the data quality, and analyse the consequences with reference to the areas of intended change which have been prioritised.

The expected **results of PIAR** are that the NGO (or the umbrella body) has
- cross-checked the information from Well-being Ranking, SAGE and PAG with information from other sources;
- deepened the understanding of what caused the observed changes;
- differentiated the information on outcomes and impacts with regard to gender, well-being and other social categories;
- summarised its findings, assessments and conclusions on project outcomes and impacts.

These results shall contribute to:
- assessing the sustainability of the implemented strategies;
- improving the performance of the project management and to prepare strategies for further action;
- reporting to the project beneficiaries and to the funding agencies.

The outcome and impact monitoring should serve the empowerment of the group members. Even if the NGO takes the lead in the process of in-depth analysis, it is indispensable that

the groups are involved in consolidation, cross checking and analysing the results as far as it corresponds to their capacities.

To NGO staff and groups, the joint analysis of the monitoring results not only raise awareness of their self-effectiveness and improve decisions, but also build capacity for data collection and analysis of monitoring results.

3.2   Where to start

The description of Analysis and Reflection[4] basically follows the typical sequence of analytical steps which have already been described for the monitoring at group level:

Analytical steps:

1. summarise = consolidate
   a. for each single indicator, by groups and for total of all groups
   b. for clusters of indicators, by groups and for total of all groups
2. filter = differentiate
   c. by characteristics of groups
   d. by characteristics group members (poverty, gender, social issues)
3. compare
   e. different times of measurement
   f. social categories with group average
4. analyse data quality

3.2.1 Conversion of goals to indicators

How can the goals be converted to indicators? With SAGE and PAG we develop objectives / goals first, and indicators are second! The formulation of indicators should happen outside the group and is an extra activity only for the NGO, or the federation.

They have to be reworded slightly in order to allow for **counting the members or households having reached the goal:**

Converting goals to indicators by counting the members or households:
(SAGE only)
- **Number of** households **having** sufficient income to provide healthy food for all members.
- **Number of** members actively participating in the community activities.

If the **counting of various groups with different size** is to be done, it is more helpful to select an indicator quantifying the ratio, i.e. percentage of members or households having reached the goal. This is done by calculating the proportion of how many have reached the goal, *divided by how many members (to whom the goal is applicable) does the group have:*

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4   A more comprehensive description of PIAR has been prepared by C. Rajathi. It shows examples of numerous reporting formats and the flow of information from one level to the next. It can be downloaded from the NGO-IDEAs homepage www.ngo-ideas.net.

> **Converting goals to indicators by calculating the proportion of members or households: (SAGE only)**
> - **Percentage of** households **having** sufficient income to provide healthy food for all members.
> - **Percentage of** members actively participates in the community activities.

Many organisations have already experiences with scoring methods. In this case it may be preferable to **rate the achievement of goals by "growth levels"** (percentages or scores). The indicators would then be worded like this:

> **Converting goals to indicators by calculating the rate of the goal achievement:**
>
> **SAGE**
> - Degree of sufficient household income to provide healthy food for all members.
> - Degree of members' active participation in the community activities.
>
> **PAG**
> - Degree of the group's ability to resolve conflicts.

3.2.2 Basic analysis of data

Basic analysis of data can be done at group level and is just summarised here:

> **Participatory Well-being Ranking:**
> - What are the main criteria determining well-being in the community?
> - What are the critical factors determining poverty?
> - Who are the neediest persons and households in the community?
> - What are typical practices of solidarity in the community What action should be taken to overcome poverty?
>
> **SAGE and PAG (individual and group goals):**
>
> When **analysing change** regarding the achievement of each goal (area of change):
> - In which area/at which goals does the group perform best? Why?
> - In which area/at which goals does the group perform least? Why?
> (After repeated assessment)
> - What differences between the previous assessment and the current assessment are higher than expected? Why?
> - What differences between the previous assessment and the current assessment are lower than expected? Why?
> - What are unintended changes observed?
>
> When **analysing change** at personal (household) level (for SAGE):
> - Who are the persons (households) reaching their goals best? Why?
> - Who are the persons (households) reaching their goals least? Why?
> (After repeated assessment)
> - Whose situation has improved? Why?
> - Whose situation has worsened? Why?

When **analysing contributions to change:**
- What has the group (and its federation) contributed to the observed changes?
- What has the NGO contributed to the observed changes?
- What have others, or changes in the context, contributed to the observed changes?

(Additionally, or alternatively:)
- What/who supported this change?
- What/who hindered this change?

When **drawing conclusions for the action plans:**
- What can each member do to achieve better outcomes and impacts?
- What can the group (and its federation) do to improve impacts for the neediest persons/in this area?
- What can the NGO do to improve impacts for the neediest persons/in this area?
- What can others do to improve impacts for the neediest persons/in this area?

Additional indicators from other sources:
Most of the above mentioned questions apply. Alternatively, two simple questions can be asked:
- Did things develop as expected?
- What are the consequences?

From the group level, only a part of the information needs to be transferred to the NGO or the umbrella body (e.g. federation):

From the Well-being Ranking format:
- criteria for well-being
- numbers of households belonging to each social category

From the SAGE format:
- list of goals
- totals for each goal (last column of the format) for each assessment

From the PAG format:
- list of goals
- totals for the group (last row of the format) for each assessment

This means: confidential information about the individual households has not necessarily to be included in reports.

Soundbites
- The NGO-IDEAs tool application had important effects on our staff: It is more motivating as they see progress assessed by beneficiaries themselves; it helped to see fruits of their effort in tangible way. Staff is now able to exploit the potential and innovative ideas of the community by learning from community. In general, it contributed to up grade skill in monitoring and evaluation. (Ahmed…, GLRA Ethiopia)
- NGO-IDEAs is like a 'compass' (an instrument in the ship showing the right direction) which guides in correct direction. Helpful to know the current status of NGO activities. It enables to refill the gaps that are occurred during the implementation. It is very much useful to planning, management of the project. (Mr. Emmanuel Kunduri, MTRDS, India)**.**

> - The tools are helpful to understand the changes at community level, where the changes are significant or low, accordingly it is easier for the NGOs to direct the project management in an effective way. (Mrs. Nagarathna, ASARE, India).
> - The tools encouraged discussion, which impliedly create awareness on the current changes and joint reflection among the group members and at JPIC team/NGO level. (Hazel, JPIC-IDC Basiwasco Water Cooperative, Philippines)

3.3   Consolidation of data

The following examples shall briefly show how the data obtained from SAGE and PAG can be analysed. They are taken from a SAGE application for yes/no questions[5].

3.3.1 Results summary for each single indicator

The first step of analysing the monitoring results is the summary (aggregation, consolidation, compilation) of the obtained data. The answers of all group members are compiled to build the summary of the group; then the groups are summarised, too. In order to make results of groups which have different sizes comparable, for each goal (indicator) we usually calculate the average (percentage) of persons/households answering "yes":

Table 14: % of members achieving the goals, by groups, and average for all groups

Goals/Indicators	group 1	group 2	group 3	group 4	average, goal wise*)
We have sufficient income to provide healthy food to all household members.	40%	45%	55%	60%	50%
We have a small kitchen (or backyard) garden close to the house.	10%	20%	20%	30%	20%
We send all the children (boys and girls) in school going age to school.	100%	65%	55%	100%	80%
We avoid violence, also in the domestic area.	30%	25%	35%	30%	30%
We actively participate in the community activities.	55%	45%	35%	25%	40%
average, group wise **)	47%	40%	36%	49%	44%
Number of group members	18	20	19	17	

*) This means: … % of all group members, or persons surveyed, to whom this question is applicable, and who have achieved this goal.
**) This means: in average, the respective group has achieved these goals by … %.

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5   Also when working with gradual answers (percentage statements or scoring), with PAG, such results summaries can be established.

> **Note**
> • This example shows only the percentage of members achieving the goals. The number of persons can also be important; the figures would then show the numbers of persons, and the last column would show the total number of persons achieving the goals.
> • This analysis can only be made with groups using the same indicators.
> • It is advisable to always indicate the number of group members in tables that show percentages.

> **Questions for analysis:**
> • For which goals/indicators is one group performing much *higher* than the average? Why: What are the *favouring* factors?
> • For which goals/indicators is one group performing much *lower* than the average? Why: What are the *hindering* factors?
> • Which groups are performing well, which ones are rather weak? Why: What are the *favouring* and *hindering* factors?

3.3.2 Results summary for clusters of indicators

If you want to group (cluster) several indicators which have certain characteristics in common, then you can cluster any selection of indicators which might be relevant for you:
• indicators referring to similar aspects, e.g. personal, social, economic or political changes;
• indicators referring to the same LogFrame objectives: e.g. to project goal/purpose, project objective, project result no. 1, project result no. 2,…
• indicators referring to the same level of the results chain: outputs; "use of outputs", outcomes, impacts;
• indicators referring to overarching goals (e.g. MDGs) or to cross-cutting objectives (e.g. gender justice) of your organisation.
This means that, apart from the average for each single indicator, the averages can also be calculated for clusters of indicators – according to your needs:

Table 15: % of members achieving the goals, by clusters of indicators

Goals/Indicators	% of members	Cluster average
Cluster: Food security and nutrition		
We have sufficient income to provide healthy food to all household members.	50%	35%
We have a small kitchen (or backyard) garden close to the house.	20%	
Cluster: Personal attitudes and behaviour		
We send all the children (boys and girls) in school going age to school.	80%	50%
We avoid violence, also in the domestic area.	30%	
We actively participate in the community activities.	40%	

NOTE:
- This calculation can be done for each group, and for the total number of groups as well.
- To be able to cluster indicators, the quantitative measurements (e.g. the scoring) have to be the same for all.

Questions for analysis:
- For which goals/indicators is the performance much *higher* than the average? Why?
- For which goals/indicators is the performance much *lower* than the average? Why?
- For which clusters is the performance much *higher/lower* than the average? Why?

3.4 Filtering/differentiation

3.4.1 Filtering by characteristics of groups/CBOs

At the beginning (see chapter 3.3.1, p. 56), we have distinguished the results by different groups/CBOs. Another possibility is that we can cluster the groups by certain characteristics, e.g. their age of existence.

Table 16: % of members achieving the goals, by clusters of groups

Goals/Indicators	Groups existing 3 years and more	Groups existing less than 3 years	Group Average
We have sufficient income to provide healthy food to all household members.	55%	45%	50%
We have a small kitchen (or back-yard) garden close to the house.	20%	20%	20%
We send all the children (boys and girls) in school going age to school.	100%	60%	80%
We avoid violence, also in the do-mestic area.	50%	10%	30%
We actively participate in the com-munity activities.	45%	35%	40%

Note
This analysis can only be made if these indicators did not change over the years.

Other criteria for filtering by characteristics of groups/CBOs could be:
- different working approaches have been applied by the NGO;
- different socio-economic conditions.

Questions for analysis:
- For which goals/indicators are some groups performing much better than the average? Why?
- For which goals/indicators are some groups performing much less than the average? Why?

3.4.2 Filtering by characteristics of persons/households

Another possibility is that we filter (or "select and differentiate") the results by the characteristics of the members or the households. When we have categorised the households with the help of Well-being Ranking, we can sort the results according to the well-being categories – this is the "poverty differentiation".

Table 17: % of members achieving the goals, by well-being categories

Goals/Indicators	Very poor	Poor	Medium poor	Rural rich	Group Average
We have sufficient income to provide healthy food to all household members.	40%	45%	55%	60%	50%
We have a small kitchen (or backyard) garden close to the house.	10%	20%	20%	30%	20%
Cluster: Food security and nutrition (average)	*25%*	*32%*	*37%*	*45%*	*35%*
We send all the children (boys and girls) in school going age to school.	40%	80%	85%	100%	80%
We avoid violence, also in the domestic area.	30%	25%	35%	30%	30%
We actively participate in the community activities.	55%	45%	35%	25%	40%
Cluster: Personal attitudes and behaviour (average)	*42%*	*50%*	*52%*	*52%*	*50%*

Questions for analysis:
- For which goals/indicators is the performance of "very poor" members above the group average? Why?
- For which goals/indicators is the performance of "very poor" members below the group average? Why?

Similar distinctions can be made – according to your specific needs for analysis – with other social categories, by separate filtering of
- Men and women
- Different status of disability or exclusion
- Different ethnic or social groups
- Different education or main income sources

Note
The differentiated analysis of men and women ("gender differentiation") can only be made with goals/indicators referring to characteristics of individuals. It does only make sense in mixed groups.

Table 18: % of members achieving the goals, by gender differentiation

Goals / Indicators	Men	Women	Group Average
I have learnt to read and to write.	80 %	50 %	60 %
I am aware of the children's rights and respect them.	30 %	60 %	50 %
I actively participate in the community activities.	60 %	90 %	80 %

Note: The average is calculated for a group with 10 male and 20 female members.

3.5   Comparisons

Results from SAGE and PAG can be compared – but not consolidated to a sum or an average, as they refer to different goals and indicators.

Compare the current results with earlier ones, e.g. the first measurement (baseline) or the previous measurement. Assess the direction and the intensity of change. Compare it with changes in other contexts.

The next step for analysing the data is comparing the actual findings with specific references. Many of these comparisons can easily be made in a group session, i.e. without writing or data processing, if they just refer to one group. For example, the results of each group member can be compared with the results of her/his group.

3.5.1 Comparing different times of assessments

The most important comparison, in order to measure change in the context of outcome and impact assessment, is to contrast the results of the *last* assessment ("actual") with the results of the *first* assessment (= the "baseline").

Table 19: % of members achieving the goals, group average – progress made since baseline

Goals / Indicators	2006 (baseline)	2011 (actual)	Difference
We have sufficient income to provide healthy food to all household members.	0 %	50 %	50 %
We have a small kitchen (or backyard) garden close to the house.	0 %	20 %	20 %
We send all the children (boys and girls) in school going age to school.	30 %	80 %	50 %
We avoid violence, also in the domestic area.	5 %	30 %	25 %
We actively participate in the community activities.	30 %	40 %	10 %

The results of the last assessment can moreover be compared with any earlier assessment. Above all it may be important to compare with the last but one measurement, or with the whole series of earlier measurements: e.g. 2006 – 2007 – 2008 – 2009 – 2010.

This can also be visualised as a graph.

Questions for analysis:
- Which changes surprise us? Why?
- Which lack of change surprise us? Why?
- For which goals/indicators was the change stronger than the average? Why?
- For which goals/indicators was the change weaker than the average? Why?

3.5.2 Comparing social categories with the group/CBO average

It should be avoided that mainly the "better off" households in the community benefit from the project. For the NGO, therefore, it is usually relevant to know to what extent each social category has improved its status (see chapter 3.4.2, p. 59), especially the households which are excluded or live in extreme poverty ("poverty differentiation"). For this purpose, the monitoring results of SAGE can be further differentiated with the help of Well-being Ranking:
- by poverty categories, specifying the impact on people living in extreme poverty
- by gender, specifying the impact on women and girls
- by people with and without disabilities, specifying the impact on persons with disabilities

Table 20: Achievements of the poverty category "very poor", compared with group average, in %

Goals/Indicators	"Very poor" average	Group average
We have sufficient income to provide healthy food to all household members.	40%	50%
We have a small kitchen (or backyard) garden close to the house.	10%	20%
Cluster: Food security and nutrition (average)	*25%*	*35%*
We send all the children (boys and girls) in school going age to school.	40%	80%
We avoid violence, also in the domestic area.	30%	30%
We actively participate in the community activities.	55%	40%
Cluster: Personal attitudes and behaviour (average)	*42%*	*50%*
All goals/indicators	*35%*	*44%*

Questions for analysis:
- For which goals/indicators has the performance of the "very poor" members increased more than the average? Why?
- For which goals/indicators has the performance of the "very poor" members increased less than the average? Why?

Soundbites
- At the beginning of NGO-IDEAs, the supervisors' visits lasted between half an hour and one hour; now they last 2–3 hours. This, however, is not considered as increased work load, but it is more satisfactory because the consultation is more qualified, and the satisfaction is higher: To see the changes in the children is more joyful to us. So, spending some more time in monitoring I feel is not a workload, it is worth and also joy to me after seeing the changes in the children learning – Before we just talked with some children to get an impression on the situation, but now we have an overview over all the children. (Staff of RKM, Narendrapur, India)
- Self-assessment motivated/steered the individual members to have keen observation of the change happened. Increases healthy competitions.(Dr. Manasi, SRAN, India)
- The SAGE helped partners to identify policy corrections and strategic review. Our implementation approach shifted from 'general-approach' to 'poverty – focused – approach'. – (Mr. Susairaj, KRWDCS, India)

3.6   Monitoring of additional indicators

Not every aspect to be monitored can be covered by SAGE or PAG indicators.
- People frequently have their own indicators, e.g. by counting numbers of animals, area of agricultural land, number of bags harvested of a specific produce, etc.
- Project partners are frequently using different indicators which are specific for the sector they are working in.
- National and regional statistics may provide indicators on the general context.
- Finally, the project plans may consider other indicators.

The group has to select which information is needed most to get more background information for SAGE and PAG data. Normally, certain areas are prioritised: depending on the project, the group needs more information on
- Health
- Education
- Economy
- Social issues
- …

Note
For each of these prioritised areas (i.e. where outcomes and impacts are expected), results from SAGE and PAG are complemented with further data from other sources, e.g. health post, school or local authorities.

This procedure is normally applied by the NGO, but once a relationship has been established, a direct exchange of results between the local authority and the group can be organised.

3.6.1 Data collection for additional indicators

Out of these manifold indicators, some are already found in existing documents as "secondary data", or they may be collected[6] first-time by the NGO and/or the beneficiaries as "primary data".

The *secondary data*[7] can usually be obtained from the respective authorities. Sometimes, other projects have already collected some relevant data which can be shared, or they know specific studies which have been carried out. However, the usefulness of secondary data has to be examined carefully as you do not have control over the data quality and its accuracy. In some cases, the purpose, aggregations and definitions used in the studies might not correspond to your needs and data may be outdated.

The *primary data* usually have to be collected by the project itself. The most productive way of doing this is to conduct own surveys with the help of methods which can be implemented by the community, e.g. with Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools facilitated by the NGO. The NGO-IDEAs Tiny Tools[8] and MAPP (Method for Impact Assessment of Programmes and Projects) illustrate some examples of participatory and awareness creating data collection.

It is, however, also possible to agree with local stakeholders that they collect and document specific information, e.g.:

Health post: nutritional status of children; use of mosquito nets
School: school attendance; students' performance / marks
Local authorities: households in the village; size of agricultural land

Finally, the NGO can be interested in conducting a survey on specific indicators established in their project documents.

3.6.2 Compilation of quantitative data

The **purpose** of monitoring additional quantitative indicators is:
- to obtain more accurate information on the change in relevant areas
- to validate the (self-) assessment with SAGE and PAG

Quantitative or numeric indicators help to answer questions about things that are inherently expressed in numbers such as "How many? How often? How much?" Quantitative indicators often are considered to provide the useful and understandable information to decision-makers, because they can be easily picked up, aggregated and compared.

Quantitative indicators are obtained from SAGE and PAG by expressing the monitoring results with numbers, e.g.:
- by counting the Yes- and No-answers and relating them to the totality of the possible answers;
- by calculating averages of scaling and scoring results.

Additionally, quantitative indicators can frequently be obtained from other sources as described above.

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6   In the context of this Toolbox it is not possible to give detailed descriptions on how to collect data in general. The NGO-IDEAs Manual gives some more hints about data collection.
7   e.g. census, housing, health, social security reports as well as other national statistics and other research related documents.
8   See www.ngo-ideas.net/publications

> **Note**
> Any data obtained have to be cross-checked ("triangulated") with other data available (see also Checks and Balances in chapter 3.7, p. 65). The NGO should, additionally, verify the validity of the community's self-assessment in SAGE and PAG and the quality of the secondary data.

3.6.3 Compilation of descriptive information

The purpose of the compilation of descriptive information is to:
- get additional qualitative information;
- identify, describe and assess the unforeseen changes;
- prepare more specific case studies.

Descriptive information is necessary to explore further aspects of change in each of the prioritised areas, especially to identify unexpected changes and more detailed information and deepen the understanding of quantitative data.

It is collected with the help of explorative questions (see chapter 2.3.2). This corresponds widely to current NGO practices and is very useful especially for describing the changes in personal attitudes, belief, behaviour etc. which are more difficult to display by numbers. These responses are valuable because they reveal more about how the respondent thinks.

While quantitative indicators help to collect standardised information, descriptive information will not only make the numbers more understandable but also provide information about unforeseen outcomes and impacts and their relation to external and internal influences. Hence the descriptive informaton – with the explorative questions – will complement the quantitative indicators in collecting information on changes. All information from different sources has to be cross-checked, and in case of divergences, the background has to be studied.

The explorative questions do not – unlike indicators – ask for any pre-determined information, but they will rather help in exploring descriptive examples of significant changes. They will help us to better understand the quantitative indicators; and they may help us in discovering new indicators. By asking the same questions regularly (e.g. every 6 or 12 months), the NGO will be able to find out how the answers of the group members are changing. This is important for the outcome and impact assessment. Such descriptions are useful for preparing case studies, too.

> **How to use explorative questions**
>
> **Step 1: Identification of aspects which need to be deepened**
> For each prioritised area decide, on the basis of the quantitative indicators available (from SAGE, PAG and other sources), on what needs to be further analysed.
>
> **Step 2: Formulation of explorative questions for relevant change**
> Phrase questions – at least one for each prioritised area where outcomes or impacts are expected – aiming at complementing the quantitative indicators and at exploring significant change in the selected area:
> - "What else has changed significantly in this context?"
> - "How has it changed?"
> - "Can you give a typical example for this change?"

Step 3: Formulation of explorative questions for unforeseen change
Ask specifically for unforeseen change: "Have there been any unforeseen changes, positive and also negative ones?"

Step 4: Documentation of answers
Document these answers in narrative form or in a table. (See Example)

Table 21: Explorative questions – documentation example

Explorative question	Answers received (date)
What else has changed significantly in this context?	• New road has been inaugurated. • Improved income opportunities have emerged, others have disappeared.
What are the (positive and negative) effects of these changes?	• More lorries are coming to our community now, and more middlemen. • It only takes one hour to get to the market now (before: three hours). • Many people from the village lost their additional employment (income).

Note
- The explorative questions can be prepared as an interview guide. This will also help in preparing more specific **case studies**. Case studies are very helpful, especially to highlight the development in a person's (or community's) life since they joined the programme.
- If the questions are being repeated after some time, it is helpful to compare them with the answers last time. The group can then be asked to comment on the difference in answers between now and then.

3.7   Checks and Balances

Analysis of data quality

The whole system of data collection and analysis relies strongly on self-assessment. However, these assessments may sometimes be different from what outsiders perceive. Moreover, the documentation and reporting process can lead to errors in the monitoring process. Not only quality checks and cross-checking (triangulation) of data are needed; but a reliable system of checks and balances has to be introduced.

When analysing the monitoring results, as described above for results summary (aggregation, consolidation, compilation), filtering (differentiation) and comparison, sometimes doubts with regard to the validity of the data may arise. The quality of the monitoring data therefore needs to be analysed continuously, for each step from the beginning of data collection.

Typical questions regarding the quality could be:
- If the results seem not to reflect the reality: did everybody understand the questions well, and in the same way? Have the answers been cross-checked and validated?
- If the results for one of the indicators have "worsened" after one year: is it an error? Or is it justified because the members have changed their understanding of the goals they want to

achieve? (i.e. Has the NGO opened their eyes and broadened their perspective, and therefore they feel like performing less than before?)
- If the groups selected for this analysis are a sample: are they representative for the totality of the groups the NGO works with?

It is normal that with a critical view on the information received, even on their own monitoring system, such doubts come up. This gives an opportunity to improve the monitoring.

1. Quality checks
The following questions are useful to ascertain reliable data quality.

At group level:
- Did everybody understand the questions well, and in the same way?
- Are the answers honest?
- Is it likely that information has not been distorted by the interview (or: self-assessment) situation?
- Are the answers documented correctly?

Note
The quality control at group level is crucial because this can hardly, or with big efforts only, be verified by "more distant" levels.

At all other levels:
- Are the answers likely to be true/realistic?
- Are the answers documented correctly?
- Are the numbers calculated correctly?

2. Cross-checking of data or triangulation[9]
In addition to the validation of data by quality checks, it is advisable to compare the information received from the reporting system with information from other sources, or obtained with other tools of data collection and analysis.

Examples:
Different types of cross-checking (triangulation) may be distinguished:

- **Data triangulation:** different indicators or types of data are compared, at *different points in time* and/or with *different units of analysis* e.g.:

beginning   mid-term   women   men

     end of a project   children

---
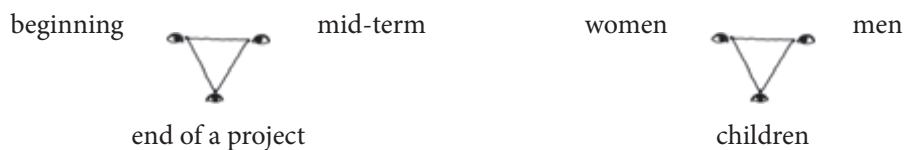
9 Triangulation means comparing the information with other sources, showing other aspects, seen from different perspectives, or collected with different methods.

- **Stakeholder triangulation:** different perspectives from the involved stakeholders are compared e.g.:

beneficiaries   NGO staff   women   men

independent observers   children
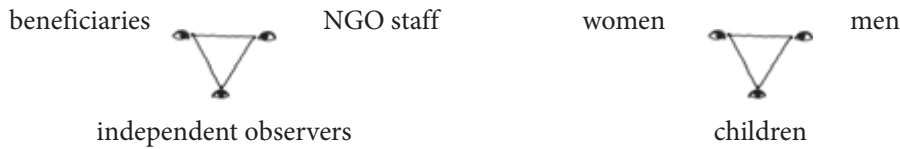
- **Investigator triangulation:** information from different sources, observers or interviewers are compared e.g.:

own observation   national statistics

independent survey
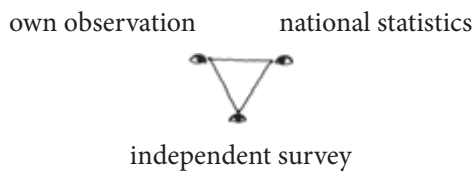
- **Methodological triangulation:** different methods or tools (e.g. observation, interview, group discussion) are used and compared e.g.:

Tiny Tools   SAGE

interviews
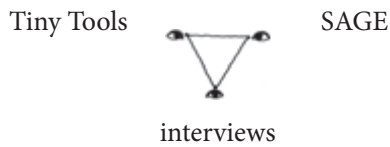
The SAGE and PAG results which strongly build on self-assessments should be compared with information from internal and external sources, e.g.:
- information on health can be cross-checked with information from the health post;
- information on education can be cross-checked with information from the schools;
- information on income can be cross-checked with information on selling prices.

These data from other sources need to be validated, too, as it cannot be excluded that they contain errors. In any case they can contribute to validating and examining the quality of the SAGE and PAG results, and bring more specific and precise information on the change and its context.

3. System of checks and balances

The system of checks and balances relies on internal and external controls. There ought to be an internal control system where one level checks the reliability of the information obtained from the previous level. NGO staff and community facilitators can play an important role when verifying the information reported.

The external controls are spot checks to make sure that the internal control mechanisms are working well. The system of checks and balances relies on four pillars which can be visualised as follows:

Table 22: Four pillars for checks and balances

1st pillar	2nd pillar	3rd pillar	4th pillar
Internal control (from one level to the next)	1st external control	2nd external control	3rd external control
Members	NGO staffs (spot checks by Project Officers)	Independent M&E Unit (if existent)	Independent Evaluators or Auditors
Group			
CLA			
Federation			

In addition, further "control pillars" can be introduced. To be concrete stakeholders who know the project context by their local knowledge or by their subject matter expertise:
* between 1st and 2nd level: local experts and authorities;
* between 3rd and 4th level: any other stakeholders beyond the local level.

Soundbites
* Validation of data is easier in SHGs where NGO-IDEAs is applied. With help of NGO-IDEAs tools' results, the NGO / Network level monitoring persons can have clear ideas, prior plans and concrete preparations what and where he/she wants to monitor. The tools serve as means of verification for external and internal monitoring person, too. The tools save the time and monitoring needs in lesser time comparatively. (Mr. Ravendran, SCINDeA Network, India)

3.8   Cause–effect analysis

Concept

The causes that have contributed directly and indirectly to the observed changes are analysed, e.g. the contributions of the group, of the NGO's project and of other influences [10].

This procedure is normally applied by the group and facilitated by the NGO.

The application of this analysis can contribute to:
* attributing the observed changes to the contributions of the community, of the NGO and of others;
* fine-tuning the project management decisions.

Two basic questions for outcome and impact monitoring:
1. What has changed, and to what extent?
2. What contributed to this change?

10   For more detailed information: refer to the NGO-IDEAs Manual "Monitoring Self-Effectiveness".

The simplest way to set up a cause-effect-relationship is to ask for the causes and the consequences of the observed change:
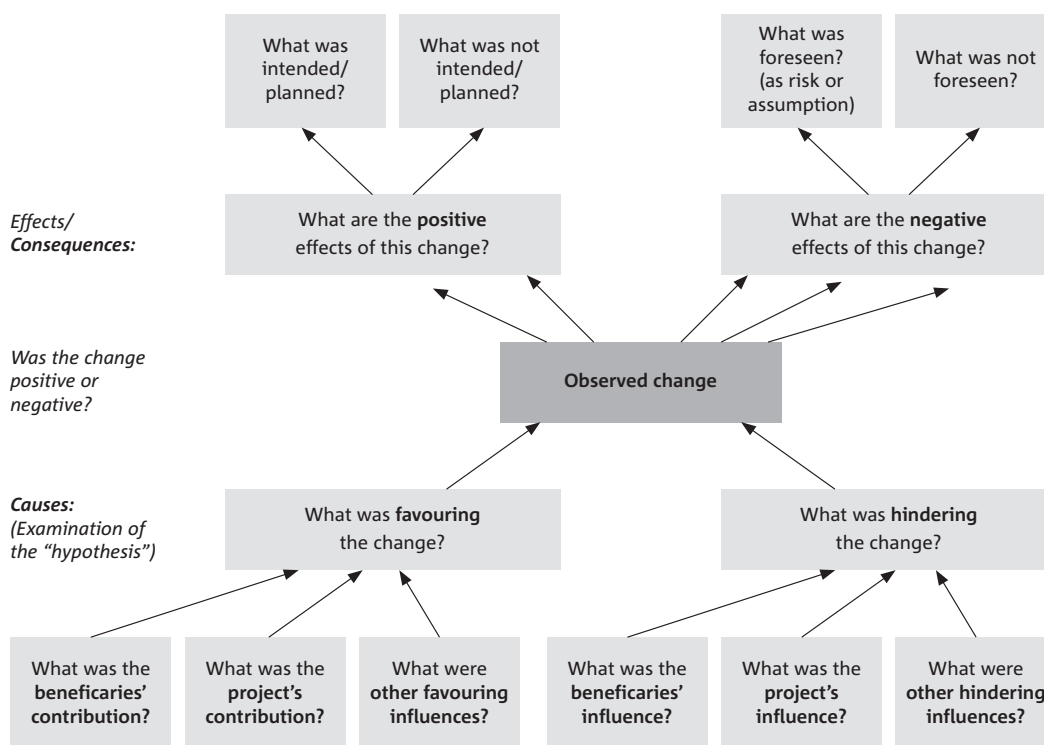
In simple words the "cause" is "why did it happen?" and the "effect" is "what were the consequences?" The logical relationship between these two is called the cause-effect relationship. This means going deeper on change that has occurred to see 'what were the factors that played a role leading to the particular effect'. This shall help in fine-tuning groups' and the NGO's project activities.

Application Process

Step 1: Compilation of the observed changes
Compile the observed changes (qualitative and quantitative indicators from SAGE, PAG and other sources) for the prioritised areas.

Step 2: Identification of the reasons for change
Ask the **community** (the group) to analyse the reasons for change, focusing on the **contributing and hindering factors and the consequences of change:**
a. What has contributed to this change? Who contributed, how?
b. What has hindered this change? Who hindered, how?
c. What are the consequences of this change? For whom, how?

Step 3: Validation by NGO staff
In the **NGO staff** meeting, ask the same questions as in Step 2 and compare the results with the perspective of the group members.

Step 4: Visualisation of influencing factors
Use the table of influencing factors to rate the actions which led to change. Cumulative results would indicate which actions need to be strengthened. (The matrix of influencing factors given below should only be used if the NGO wants to deepen the analysis. It can be used in Step 2 and Step 3 directly.)

Table 23: Influencing factors leading to change (example)

Women are more conscious of their rights			
	Group members' contribution	**Contributions from the project/NGO**	**Other external factors**
Contributing factors	Active interest of women; mutual encouragement; positive internal regulations of the group	Training and information for women; Leadership training for group members	Reservation for women into the local bodies; local teachers and health post support the project
Hindering factors	First activity brought severe disputes; some husbands were opposed to independent activities by their wives.	The behaviour of some staff members is not appropriate	Legal situation is in favour of men

This analysis will help to draw conclusions for the future action (see 3.8).

3.9   Consequences for future action

In the spirit of outcome and impact oriented project management, the outcome and impact monitoring results will be used for decision making on future action of the group. The NGO will define its future project activities in a continuous dialogue with the group members which is based on the information produced by the outcome and impact monitoring.

When the positive and negative influences on the observed changes are known, conclusions can be drawn for further action:

- What can the NGO do to increase impact?
- What can the group do to increase impact?
- What can other stakeholders do to increase impact?
- What does it mean for the NGO's project management?
- What does it mean for the NGO's strategy?

Soundbites

- Monitoring focus changed greatly from Output & Activities to Outcome & Impact. NGO-IDEA Tools have strengthened the capacity of Caritas management team in making the policy decisions and strategies for implementation & monitoring. The tools also make concrete results visible which can be used in annual reports. (Dennis Opiu, M&E officer, Caritas Kasanaensis, Uganda)
- Through the tools the management committee realized that the cooperatives have not addressed the needs of some of the members, some groups were left behind and have not totally benefited from the projects like for example the blind members. The cooperatives adjusted their plans based on the monitoring result, it can be used as reference in the planning. (Loy, NFCPWD, Philippines)
- Akkamma Chikmat was the poorest in our group as she is a widow & she has to feed 3 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 better position. We encouraged her to take up IGP and she took bangle selling. Also when there was a scheme from the government for a post of a cook in Govt High School, 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, KRWDCS, India)"

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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- Ärzte ohne Grenzen*
- africa action / Deutschland *
- Aktion Canchanabury
- Andheri-Hilfe Bonn
- Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Eine-Welt-Landesnetzwerke in Deutschland (agl)
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Evangelischen Jugend in Deutschland (aej)
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft Entwicklungs-ethnologie
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungs-hilfe (AGEH)
- ASW – Aktionsgemeinschaft Solidarische Welt
- AT-Verband*
- AWO International

- Behinderung und Entwicklungs-zusammenarbeit (bezev)
- BONO-Direkthilfe
- Brot für die Welt
- 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)
- Deutsche Kommission Justitia et Pax
- Deutsche Lepra- und Tuberkulosehilfe (DAHW)
- Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)
- Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrts-verband
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- Deutsches Rotes Kreuz*

- DGB-Bildungswerk – Nord-Süd-Netz
- Difäm

- Eine Welt Netz NRW
- Eine Welt Netzwerk Hamburg
- EIRENE – Internationaler Christlicher Friedensdienst
- Evangelische Akademien in Deutschland (EAD)
- Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED)

- FIAN-Deutschland

- Gemeinschaft Sant´Egidio
- Germanwatch

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

- Indienhilfe
- INKOTA-netzwerk
- Internationaler Hilfsfonds
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- Jugend Dritte Welt (JDW)

- Kairos Europa
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- KATE – Kontaktstelle für Umwelt und Entwicklung
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- Lateinamerika-Zentrum
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- Ökumenische Initiative Eine Welt
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- terre des hommes Deutschland
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- Weltfriedensdienst
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- Weltladen-Dachverband
- Weltnotwerk der KAB Deutschlands
- Werkhof
- Werkstatt Ökonomie
- World University Service Deutsches Komitee
- World Vision Deutschland
- W. P. Schmitz-Stiftung

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VENRO has 118 members

* Guest member

VENRO is the umbrella organisation of development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Germany. The association was founded in 1995 and consists of around 120 organisations. Their backgrounds lie in independent and church-related development co-operation, humanitarian aid as well as development education, public relations and advocacy. 16 one-world networks are part of VENRO. These represent about 2000 local development initiatives and NGOs.

VENRO's central goal is to construct a just globalisation, with a special emphasis on eradicating global poverty. The organisation is commited to implementing human rights and conserving natural resources.

VENRO
- represents the interests of development NGOs vis-à-vis the government
- strengthens the role of NGOs and civil society in development co-operation
- engages in advocacy for the interests of developing countries and the poorer segments of society
- sharpens public awareness of development co-operation issues