CERTI Crisis and Transition Tool Kit

RAPID ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES (RAP): Addressing the Perceived Needs of Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons through Participatory Learning and Action

Second Edition

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SECTION III.
PARTICIPATORY ACTION PLANNING
(WITH SETTLEMENT ACTION TEAM)

ACTIVITY 11:   PROBLEM TREE: ANALYZING ROOT CAUSES OF PRIORITY PROBLEMS

Background and Purpose

Settlement action team (SAT) identifies the important causes leading to the top priority problem identified in earlier activities.

A problem tree is a graphic representation of a problem at the center with major branches reflecting main causes leading to the problem. This activity stimulates and broadens thinking about potential or actual causes and helps to further examine causes until a chain of causes leading to root causes are identified. This activity will help the settlement action team address root causes of problems in action plans rather than superficial symptoms.

Materials needed
• index cards,
• pens and notebook,
• stones, pebbles, beans
• chart paper or newsprint

Process

Step 1 – Develop the Problem Statement

• The group will need to meet for about one hour to 90 minutes;

• The facilitator begins by placing an index card—with the problem written or drawn on the card—in the center of an open space.

• The problem card should include words and a drawing to describe an existing negative state;

• Avoid describing the problem as an absence of a solution or indicating the cause or effect of the problem.

• Next, have participants place a symbol such as a rock or branch on top of the card to represent the problem.
  ▸ The symbol has the function of keeping the index card from blowing away in the wind, and allows participants to use their own symbol to represent the problem/issue, increasing understanding of what is being discussed.

Step 2 - Identify major causes

• Ask participants, using group consensus, to identify the major causes/events leading to the problem.

• Instruct participants to place symbols (a rock or stick) representing each cause in a line to one side (usually below) of the index card/symbol representing the problem.

• The facilitator then writes the name of each cause on an index card and places the index card underneath the symbol representing that cause.

• The facilitator asks about each cause, *"How does this (cause) lead to the priority issue/problem?"*

• Record explanations given by informants.

Step 3 - Identify root causes

• The facilitator asks participants to indicate the chain of events leading to each of the major causes/events leading to the problem.

- The rule of thumb is to ask "What leads to _____?" five times for each major cause/event that leads to the problem or until the participants cannot think of anything further.

- For example, for each major cause (X) ask, "What are the things (Y) that lead to X?" and then "What leads to Y that then leads to X?" and then "What leads to that?" etc.

- Continue this line of questioning for each major cause/event leading to the problem.

- Have participants, using consensus, graphically show the chain of events leading to the problem, by placing a symbol on the ground and drawing lines between symbols in a way that links the events in the order mentioned.

- We ask these questions to look in-depth at a problem to try and understand its underlying root causes. This is so that we can address problems by developing solutions that address root causes rather than superficial symptoms.

Step 4 - Identify "most important" root causes:

- Once the problem tree is completed, the group then selects, from among all the root causes identified, the ones they consider to be the major sources of the problem.

- Encourage participants to rank among those causes farthest down the 'branches' of the problem tree.

- Ask about and record explanations of why some root causes are ranked highly important.

> **For example:** If there are ten ultimate root causes (those root causes with no further causes below them), ask the group to select the five most important (half the total). The group—using consensus when possible, voting when not—places five (5) beans next to the symbol for the root cause that they feel contributes most to the problem. Then, they place four (4) beans next to the symbol for the cause that contributes second most to the problem, three beans (3) for the cause that contributes third most to the problem, two beans and one bean for the fourth and fifth most important contributors to the problem, respectively.

Step 5 - Identify root causes that are both important <u>and</u> changeable.

- Ensure that there is a card or symbol for the root causes identified as "most important" in the exercise above.

- Ask participants to re-arrange the symbols for the "most important" root causes in order of "changeability" from most changeable to least changeable.

- Divide the ordered root causes in half and into two groups: most changeable and least changeable.

- Suggest that the "most changeable group of root causes be the focus of intervention. See Figure 16. below for an example of a Final problem tree with most changeable root causes identified.

Note: The above process (problem tree) can be repeated for other top ranked problems.

Figure 15. Example of Problem Statements: Statements to <u>Avoid</u> (avoid describing the problem as an absence of a solution or indicating the cause or effect of the problem) and Statements that are <u>Suitable</u> (should describe an existing negative state).

No hospital is available	People cannot receive modern medical treatment
AVOID (indicates absence of solution)	**SUITABLE**

Frequent floods destroy farms	Farms are often damaged and destroyed
AVOID (includes cause or effect of a problem)	River is frequently flooded
	SUITABLE

Figure 16. Example of Problem Tree with the problem identified as *Kec* (hunger) (by Settlement Action Teams in an IDP camp in Gulu, Uganda)

Kec

Food Shortage

Pests, crop disease

Poor Marketing

Use of old technology

Shortage of land

Need to pay medical bills

No other income opportunities

Lack of extension training

Congestion

Only one camp in sub-county

One trading center in sub-county

People not business oriented

Lack of formal education

ACTIVITY 12:   OBJECTIVES ANALYSIS

Purpose

Settlement action team (SAT) identifies potential objectives for an intervention to address the most important problem of concern for refugees/IDPs.

Materials needed
- List of the most important root causes for top priority issues/problems.
- index cards,
- pens and notebook
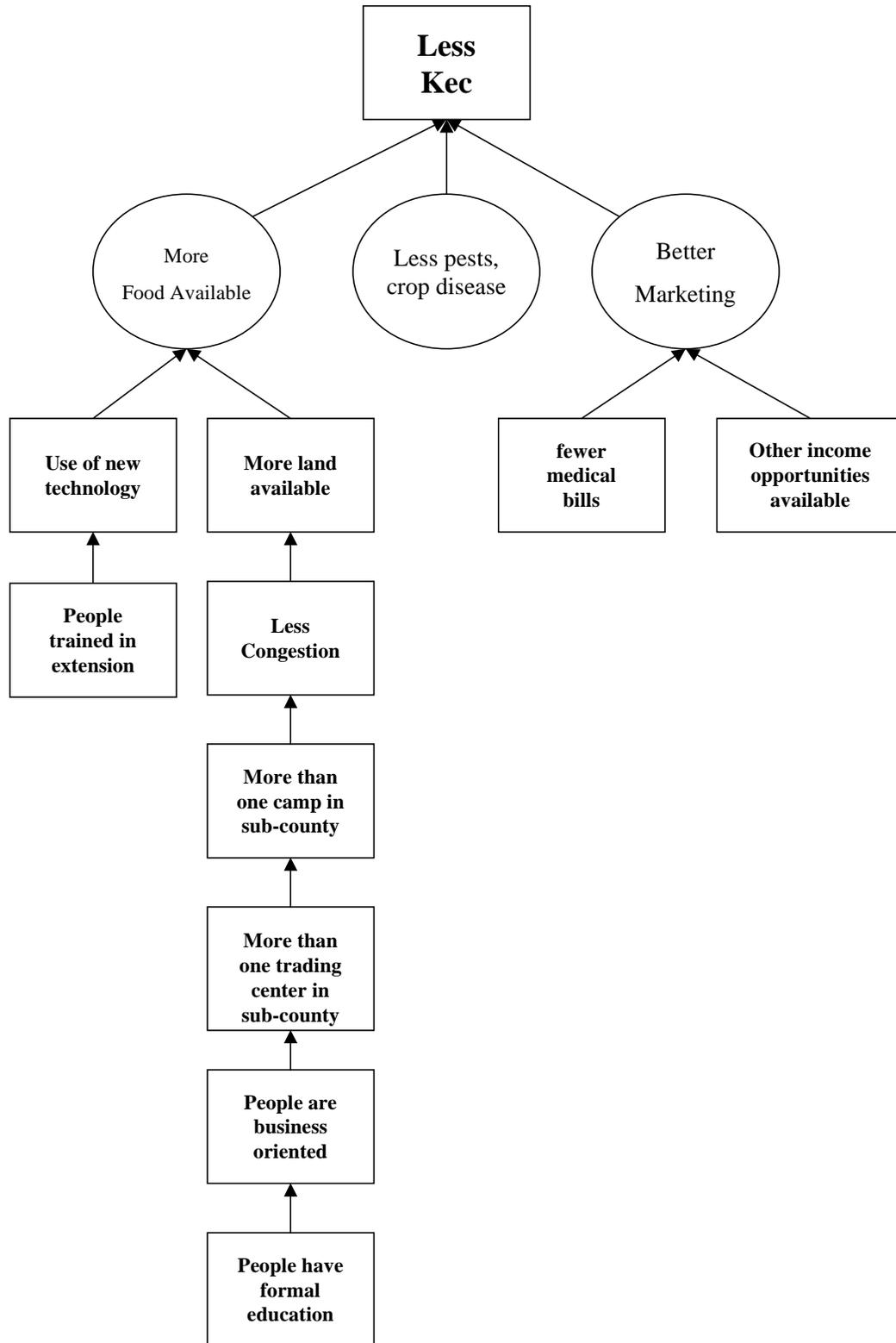- chart paper or newsprint

Process

- Assist SAT members to transform the problem statement and root causes of the Problem Tree.

- SAT members transform the problem statement and root causes into objectives by rewording the negative 'cause-effect' description of the root causes into positive 'means-ends' objective statements.

- Below is an example as to how the problem tree example in Activity 11 can be reformulated into an Objectives Tree.

- Develop the Objectives Tree using symbols and index cards first. Later, transfer the information to paper for sharing with other settlement members and stakeholders.

Understanding and Using the Information

- Problems and root causes can be reformulated as positive statements.

- These positive statements can serve as potential objectives (general objectives) for programs.

- The potential objectives describe possible means for solving key problems and describe the effects of any solutions that would be implemented.

- Objectives analysis, therefore, describes 'desirable conditions' after a problem is solved and provides the basis for program management and evaluation.

- The potential objectives of a program would be the reformulation of those root causes ranked as priority for intervention.

Figure 17. Example of an Objectives Analysis Tree, (Developed from a Problem Tree)

```
                        ┌──────────┐
                        │   Less   │
                        │   Kec    │
                        └──────────┘
             ▲               ▲              ▲
      ╱──────────╲    ╱──────────╲    ╱──────────╲
     (   More     )  ( Less pests,)  (   Better   )
     ( Food       )  ( crop       )  ( Marketing  )
     ( Available  )  ( disease    )  (            )
      ╲──────────╱    ╲──────────╱    ╲──────────╱
       ▲        ▲                      ▲        ▲
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐    ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│ Use of new│ │ More land │    │  fewer   │ │ Other income │
│ technology│ │ available │    │ medical  │ │ opportunities│
│           │ │           │    │  bills   │ │  available   │
└───────────┘ └───────────┘    └──────────┘ └──────────────┘
     ▲              ▲
┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐
│  People   │ │   Less    │
│ trained in│ │ Congestion│
│ extension │ │           │
└───────────┘ └───────────┘
                    ▲
              ┌───────────┐
              │ More than │
              │ one camp in│
              │ sub-county│
              └───────────┘
                    ▲
              ┌───────────┐
              │ More than │
              │ one trading│
              │ center in │
              │ sub-county│
              └───────────┘
                    ▲
              ┌───────────┐
              │ People are│
              │ business  │
              │ oriented  │
              └───────────┘
                    ▲
              ┌───────────┐
              │ People have│
              │  formal   │
              │ education │
              └───────────┘
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ACTIVITY 13:   SOLUTION RANKING MATRIX

Purpose

Settlement action team (SAT) ranks potential strategies to address root causes (important and changeable) of a top priority problem.

Materials needed
• chart paper or newsprint;
• open area on the ground, easel or chalkboard for working on matrix;
• stones, pebbles or beans for scoring/ranking (or chalk for chalkboard);
• List of potential objectives from objectives tree.

Process

Develop the matrix:

• Develop a matrix on a large sheet of paper, on the ground or on a chalkboard where the group discussion will take place;

• Make a column for the following items:
  ‣ *Potential solution/strategy* is a column for listing all the potential strategies to achieve an objective (to be selected).
  ‣ *sustainability* refers to the chance that a potential strategy can be carried out with existing resources and will continue as long as needed;
  ‣ *Equatability* refers to the chance that a potential strategy is "fair" and will be accessible to those most affected by the problem;
  ‣ *Productivity* refers to the chance that a potential strategy can fully address the problem;

  ‣ *Overall ranking* is used to rank potential solutions in order of preference .

• Collect sufficient numbers of locally available counters (stones, pebbles, beans, seeds, grains, goat droppings) to fill every box in the matrix (about 100 counters).

Introduce the topic and process

• Facilitator introduces the topic and reads the group verbal consent form and signs the form if participants give consent (participants who do not consent are allowed to leave).

• Facilitator shows the objectives analysis tree to the group and asks the group to select one of the objectives from the objectives tree to address first (select one from among those at the bottom/end of the tree).

• Facilitator presents the matrix by indicating the meaning of each column.

• Facilitator checks understanding of the meaning of each column. Use symbols to help indicate the meaning if this helps.

• Facilitator uses a group process to elicit a list of potential solutions–these are written in the "potential solution" column.

• Facilitator passes around counters to each of the group members and explains the process for ranking strategies using the counters (or explains scoring if scoring will be used instead).

<u>Complete the matrix</u>

- The facilitator presents the matrix step by step, moving systematically box by box through the matrix (suggest vertically for this matrix);

- Encourage group members to RANK each potential solution, 1st to last, along each criteria.
  - ▸ Use the one bean or pebble for the top ranked solution and use one more bean/pebble for each lower ranking item.
  - ▸ [If there are many potential solutions listed, a more practical alternative is to SCORE each potential solution using a scale of 1 to 3 beans or pebbles by the relevant criteria].
  - ▸ Make sure that a lower number of beans means the same thing across criteria (e.g. one bean means ranked first, two beans means ranked 2nd, etc.).
  - ▸ For the overall ranking ask, "What would be your overall first choice for a strategy? "Second choice?" "Third?"… and so on until preferences for the top three strategies (or whatever number of strategies seems manageable to implement) have been identified.

- Ask why strategies are given an overall ranking of 1st, 2nd, 3rd as preferred strategies.

- It is very important to record explanations given by group members (exact quotes of important statements are excellent to record).

Understanding and Using the Information

- The outcome of this activity depends heavily on the criteria used. "Sustainability" and "Equitability" are suggested as key criteria to encourage selection of strategies directed at the most marginalized and that can be carried out with existing resources.

- This activity is the final step prior to development of the Settlement Action Plan. In this exercise, up to three strategies are selected. Next, during development of the Settlement Action Plan, the SAT will assign tasks to begin carrying out the strategies selected by this activity.

- Note: this process should be repeated for other "important <u>and</u> changeable" root causes of a problem selected for intervention.

Figure 18. Example of Solution Ranking Matrix for a Root Cause of hunger: low levels of training in up-to-date agricultural technologies (by SAT in IDP Camp in Gulu, Uganda)

(Potential solutions scored on a scale of 1 to 3 with 3 = better meets criteria)

Potential Strategy	Sustainability	Equitability	Productivity	Overall Ranking
Establish training center in IDP camp	3	3	3	1
Competitions	1	2	2	
Study tour of other extension sites	1	1	1	
Demonstration sites	1	1	1	
Recruit extension staff	2	1	3	
Make chemicals available	2	1	2	
Model contact farmers	3	3	3	2
Post-harvest handling	2	1	2	
Peer groups	3	3	3	3
Fast yielding seeds	3	2	3	
Make Farm tools available	2	1	3	

ACTIVITY 14: DRAFT SETTLEMENT ACTION PLAN

Purpose

The settlement action team (SAT) will draft an action plan for beginning implementation of the solutions selected in Activity 13 (Solution Ranking Matrix).

Materials needed
- chart paper or newsprint;
- easel or chalkboard for working on action plan;
- markers for working on paper, chalk for working on chalkboard,

Process

Develop and explain the matrix:

- Develop the planning matrix on a large sheet of paper or on a chalkboard where the group discussion will take place;

- Along the top of the matrix, along the horizontal axis, draw words and symbols for following suggested columns: (1) action; (2) person responsible; (3) date to be completed; and, (4) resources needed.

- Facilitator presents the meaning of each column on the horizontal axis;

- Facilitator checks understanding of each objective symbol and criteria symbol... correct misunderstandings... ask the group to modify symbols that are not understood;

Complete the matrix

- Facilitator uses a participatory group process to elicit a list of potential actions needed to implement the solutions selected in Activity 13.

- Once a list of priority actions has been agreed to, the facilitator helps the SAT complete the remainder of the matrix.

- For each action, the SAT should agree to a responsible person, a completion date, and resources needed to complete the action.

Understanding and Using the Information

- In this activity, the SAT will (1) agree on actions for carrying out the strategies selected and, (2) plan the immediate next steps to implement these actions. The action plan probably will not be complex or cover more than one year's activities. The focus is to begin action as soon as possible. However, in the early planning stages, initial actions may include gathering more information or meeting with persons that have access to needed resources.

- The draft action plan should be dynamic and flexible. For example, after this activity, the draft action plan will be presented at a public meeting for approval and/or modification. Also, additional actions will need to be added or substituted as implementation begins and monitoring identifies additional needs.

- Once approved by settlement members, this plan helps focus action and allows a later assessment of achievement of the intervention.

FIGURE 19. EXAMPLE ACTION PLANNING MATRIX

Problem Statement: Hunger
Action Plan for Priority Solution: Establish agricultural training center in camp

#	Priority Action	Person Responsible	Date to be completed	Resources needed
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

ACTIVITY 15: PUBLIC MEETING - APPROVE SETTLEMENT ACTION PLAN

Purpose:

This public meeting is placed after the draft action plan has been developed by the settlement action team (SAT). There are several purposes for a public meeting at this stage in the study. This includes the following:

- *share* with the settlement members the recommendations of the SAT;

- *obtain* recommendations from settlement members as to how the draft action plan can be improved; and,

- *arrive* at an agreement or understanding about the actions settlement members will take to address the top priority problem.

Present Findings

There is no one correct way to conduct this meeting. The process will vary from settlement to settlement. Therefore, a specific process will not be suggested here. Instead, we suggest that the study team consider the following issues when designing the structure of the public meeting:[9]

WHAT? That is, of all the information collected, what should be included in the presentation.

> **Hint:** At a minimum present the following:
> - composition of the SAT and methods used;
> - root causes of the top priority problem;
> - most important and changeable root causes
> - objectives analysis tree
> - proposed solutions to achieve objectives
> - draft action plan(s) for proposed solutions

WHO? That is, who presents AND who has a chance to react to the information collected;

> **Hint:** Include refugees/IDPs on the presentation team to enhance acceptability of the findings.

HOW? That is, determining the appropriate presentation style to encourage analysis and reflection on the information collected

> **Hint:** if the population is primarily non-literate, prepare visual cues to communicate findings.

WHERE? Note that the place where feedback takes place may influence the quality of participation and the subsequent discussion;

WHEN? That is, will the feedback meeting take place at a time that allows maximum participation by settlement members?

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[9] These issues were suggested by Pretty, Guijt, Scoones, and Thompson in *A Trainer's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development. 1995.

ACTIVITY 16:   DOCUMENT THE STUDY

Purpose

• We document the study as a means of communicating the purpose, methods and findings of our work.

• The document also serves as a reference for those carrying out the action plan resulting from the study.

Materials Needed
• Objectives of the study;
• Results of individual data collection activities;
• Results of analyses by the study team and the settlement action team;
• Minutes of meetings and decisions made with settlement leaders and the general public;
• Background information on the settlement;
• Background information on the NGO's activities in the settlement and surrounding region;
• Schedule of activities during the study.

Content of the Document (Report)

The following outline can be used to write the study report:

1. Title Page;
2. Table of Contents;
3. Abstract (Written last);
4. Background on the programs in the area;
5. Goals & Objectives of the study;
6. Methods Used:
   ‣ Action planning methods;
   ‣ Sampling methods used;
   ‣ Data collection methods;
   ‣ Qualitative data management process;
7. Results
   ‣ Order by topics and study objectives, NOT by methods used;
   ‣ Include quotes to support statements of findings.
8. Conclusions and recommendations
9. References
10. Annexes
   ‣ Data tables
   ‣ Data collection forms

Use of the Report

• Once the report is complete, distribute the report to interested parities to coordinate and influence activities in the settlement.

• Interested parties may include donor agencies, NGO headquarters, partner NGOs, government ministries, universities interested in refugee and disaster studies; libraries of qualitative and participatory research.

• Refer to the report for agreements of decisions made during the study and action planning process.

• Use the report to evaluate implementation of agreements/decisions made during the action planning process.

• Use the report as a starting point for additional activities in the future (e.g., address other highly ranked problems).

ACTIVITY 17:   FOLLOW-ON ACTIONS (CONTINUOUS)

Purpose

- Build and support local capacity to carry out problem solving activities.

- Support implementation of the action plan developed during the study.

- Evaluate results of implementation of the action plan and support follow-on actions, as needed.

- Maintain relationships with settlement leaders and members developed during the study.

Time needed

This activity is a continuous activity that may require months or years of continued involvement and support to settlement members including return to homes and resettlement.

Possible Follow-on Actions

- Help to link the settlement action team (SAT) and settlement leaders with higher level government authorities and planners.

- Assist SAT to carry out advocacy activities, if needed.

- Build SAT capacity to monitor implementation of the action plan developed during the study.

- Encourage SAT to build on or modify the action plan, as indicated by monitoring and evaluation.

- Support development of action plans for other priority problems and issues.

SECTION IV

APPENDICES

ANNEX 1: SEQUENCE AND DESCRIPTION OF RAP ACTIVITIES

Activity Number	Description	Use
Participatory Problem Identification & Prioritization Phase		
1	Public Meeting	Inform settlement members about the study and help prevent unrealistic expectations
2	Participatory Map	Refugees/IDPs develop a map of the settlement. Used to help plan future activities.
3	Walkabout	Team observes the condition of the settlement and people. Uses also to triangulate findings of the mapping activity.
4	Free Listing	Help refugees/IDPs communicate the issues of most concern without group pressures or public scrutiny.
5	Pile Sorting	(Recommended) Useful for understanding the issues raised during free listing and the inter-relationships among issues.
6	Pair-Wise Ranking	Refugees/IDPs describe preferences for problems to be "rid of." Used to rank problems for priority action.
7	Venn Diagram	Refugees/IDPs identify "stakeholders" for priority problems including the 'most vulnerable' groups. Used also to suggest criteria for membership on a settlement action team.
8	Key Informant Interviews	(Optional) Used to fill in 'gaps' in knowledge about top ranked problems for this population.
9	Data Management & Preliminary Analysis	Data collected to date is organized. Findings about top priority problems are summarized and compared across study sites. This activity is used to prepare for a public meeting to provide results of the study to date.
10	Public Meeting	Refugees/IDPs receive feedback on findings of the study and decide on a problem to address during the action planning phase of the study that follows. The findings are also used to help select a "settlement action team."

Activity Number	Description	Use
Participatory Action Planning Phase (with Settlement Action Team [SAT])		
11	Problem Tree	SAT identifies root causes of a problem selected for intervention. This information is used to determine the scope of an action plan to address the selected problem.
12	Objectives Analysis	SAT transforms statements about important and changeable root causes of a problem into objectives of an action plan.
13	Solutions Matrix	SAT lists potential solutions to achieve objectives and then ranks solutions according to criteria. This exercise is used to select the specific strategies that will be used to achieve objectives of the action plan.
14	Draft Action Plan	SAT develops a detailed plan (who, what, by when, resources needed) to carry out specific strategies (that were selected in Activity 13) to achieve the objectives of the action plan.
15	Public Meeting	Study team and SAT presents action plan to settlement leaders and members. The meeting is used to agree on a plan of action (as modified during the meeting or afterward, if desired) to address a priority problem.
16	Document the study	Study team writes a report of the study that presents the background, the methods used, the findings of data collection, the action plan and conclusions. This is used to communicate with partners to influence their actions in the settlement.
17	Follow-On Actions	Study team support implementation of the action plan developed during the study, and supports development of action plans to address other problems. This is a continuous process that can last months or years.

ANNEX 2: POSSIBLE SCHEDULE FOR CARRYING OUT THE RAP

Activity Number	Description	Days Needed
Participatory Problem Identification & Prioritization Phase		
NA	Initial Training: -Introduction to RAP -Qualitative & Participatory Research -Interviewing in qualitative & participatory research -Train/prepare for public meeting and mapping activities	2.0
1	Public Meeting	0.5
2	Participatory Map	0.5
3	Walkabout (training & conduct)	1.0
4	Free Listing (training & conduct)	1.0
5	Pile Sorting (recommended; training & conduct)	1.0
6	Pair-Wise Ranking (training & conduct)	1.0
7	Venn Diagram (training & conduct)	1.0
8	Key Informant Interviews (optional; 2 days if needed)	0.0
9	Data Management & Preliminary Analysis	1.0
10	Public Meeting (prepare & conduct)	1.0
	Subtotal: Days Needed this Phase (including initial training)	9 - 10
Participatory Action Planning Phase (with Settlement Action Team [SAT])		
11	Problem Tree (training & conduct)	0.75
12	Objectives Analysis (training & conduct)	0.25
13	Solutions Matrix (training & conduct)	0.5
14	Draft Action Plan (training & conduct)	1.0
15	Public Meeting (preparations & conduct)	0.5
16	Document the study	2.0
17	Follow-On Actions (months to years)	?
	Subtotal: Days needed this phase	3 - 5
Total Estimated Days Needed For The Study (This Schedule)		**12 - 15**

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