

Community engagement in road development

Green roads for climate resilience and water management

Tailor Made Training

Dhulikhel, Nepal

Presenter: Letty Fajardo Vera



Community engagement

Key messages

- Community engagement is essential to make full use of the opportunities for road development.
- Community engagement differs in the different steps of road development (planning, design, construction and maintenance).
- Communities can be a major force in the implementation of roads and green programs at scale (which creates 'ownership' contributing to the sustainability of road infrastructure).



Communities play an important role in road programs

Seen as individuals with their own worth and value and knowledge's:

- When they are part of the decisions and treated as a valuable part of the process, they will be more willing to collaborate.
- Community is in charge of a large part of all activities: management through their own organization.
- Communities have their own worries and problems.
- Communities own local knowledge and know the priorities for improvements.
- Communities are hesitant to participate in road construction without being explained the purpose and offering of practical solutions for daily problems.
- They can show resistance by not wanting to co-operate or giving false statements.
- They recognize importance of projects they benefit from and are very willing to participate and improve their future.

Neglection of engagement process: Threats

- Resistance:

When ignored, local communities may actively resist against plans.

Examples: boycott, sabotage, damage, legal action and wider protests.
- Women feel ignored when only consulting men Negative.
- Relation with the local people in the area:
 - Violation of their individual and veto rights.
 - Poor future prospects for development in affected area.
- Bad for image
 - private sector, NGOs and government.

Benefits that community engagement generates:

Better decisions: delivering sustainable economics, environmental, social and cultural benefits.

Free and full development of human potential:

- relationships based on mutual understanding
- trust and respect
- facilitates the sharing of responsibilities
- creates more inclusive and sustainable communities.

Empowerment for the members of the community, feeling appreciated.

Engaging community's steps

- **Consultation:**

- Process of consultation must occur freely and voluntarily without any external manipulation, interference or coercion and without intimidation.
- In a local language, with local content.
- Overall positive/negative influence of road (open question)
- Understand roads as more than roads:
 - Employment opportunities
 - Capacity building opportunities
 - Boost to the economy
 - Improve the environment

- **Process**

- The community engagement process will take account of existing social structures
- Leadership and decision-making processes
- Social identities as gender and age and be cognizant of women's and other potentially marginalized groups.

Different Stages in community engagement



How to engage communities at each different stage of road development

Infrastructure Development Stage	Engagement through:	Infrastructure development	Infrastructure usage	Related economic opportunities	Related environmental services
Conceptualization and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government Representative interest groups Stakeholder dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road alignment selection Decisions on type of contract and construction method 	Choices on supporting transport measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choices on type of economic opportunity to promote Decisions on use of road reserves Special economic zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major choices on multi-functionality Road alignment to optimize environmental functions specific to local opportunities
Design and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community discussion Local government Participatory methods Consultation with other parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design of roads and water crossing and additional measures Freeing up land for road and road reserves Community contracts Agree on interface in participation 	Design to accommodate specific transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freeing up land for side activities Roadside tree planting concessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of measures and locations for road water management Consultation on location of road drainage structures Consultation on location of water harvesting structures and borrow pits
Construction of road and water infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community groups Local government Participatory methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community road construction groups Start up contractors Community contributions in land and labor Complaint handling mechanisms 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community concessions "Start up" contractors Training in income generating activities Additional provisions 	Community and individual development of roadside water management infrastructure
Maintenance and continue care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community groups Local government 	Community road maintenance groups/contracting societies	Community road safety measures	Roadside tree planting	Maintenance and rebuilding of water structures part of individual responsibility

Recommended methods for community engagement



Communication campaign

To create awareness and trigger communities

- Radio campaign
- Poster and billboard



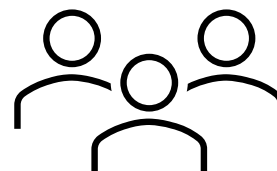
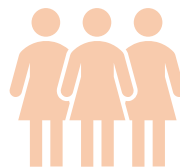
Well-being Method

This method tried to understand the opportunities and issues from the life priorities of the persons directly concerned



Participatory Rural Appraisal

This method engages group discussion around mapping, preparation of time-lines, doing a transect walk or priority setting



(1) “Well-being” method

Points of Departure:

- ✓ Both parties are equal
- ✓ Well-being is the central interest
- ✓ The social research themes are understood in the context of the lives of the people and not separate from this



(1) “Well-being” method – The 3 stages



Common human understanding

The first stage concerns the establishment of common human interest. As humans, there are a number of areas that touch us all deeply, whatever our background: our health, our autonomy and security and the future of our children. This we can share and discuss and exchange our experiences. A number of questions that can be asked at this stage:

- How is your health and what are your concerns? How do you see the life and future of your children?
- Do you feel safe and secure? Can you manage with your income? – How do you feel from day to day?
- What risks do you see for your family?

Not all questions need to be asked—what is important is the natural flow of the conversation and the understanding that is jointly developing.

(1) “Well-being” method – The 3 stages



Reflections

Following the common human-interest stage, more reflective questions can be asked. These encourage light analysis of one's situation and that of others and gives a lot of mutual and often unexpected holistic insight. Examples of such reflective questions are:

- How are things done? – How do other help each other?
- How is your relationship with members of family?
- How is your relationship with your neighbors?
- How do you look at things in your life, how do you look at others; how do you look at yourself?
- What are your roles, and are you content with these?
- Would you say that people help each other?
- Do you think things will be different in the future?

One can also ask for examples and relate to what is in the house or immediate environment to illustrate the points. What is important is to listen to what is behind something out of empathy.

(1) “Well-being” method – The 3 stages



Thematic discussions

From these two stages, one can move to topics that originally triggered the learning visit (e.g. road construction program, mobility and access and environmental effects) and that one wants to understand better. One can raise these in a conversational way and see how they relate to the person's well-being.

By this time there is a good, deep understanding of each other's lives and the thematic question can relate to these interests. It is best to use a checklist that one either has memorized or quickly glances at.

(2) Participatory rural appraisal

Key points:

- ✓ Social research technique used in the field
- ✓ Requires trained facilitators and substantial investments to be effective
- ✓ Aims at strengthening the analyzing and decision-making power of the affected communities
- ✓ It can be used during all phases of road design



(2) Participatory rural appraisal

Activities/Stages

1. Mapping

2. Transect walk

3. Timeline

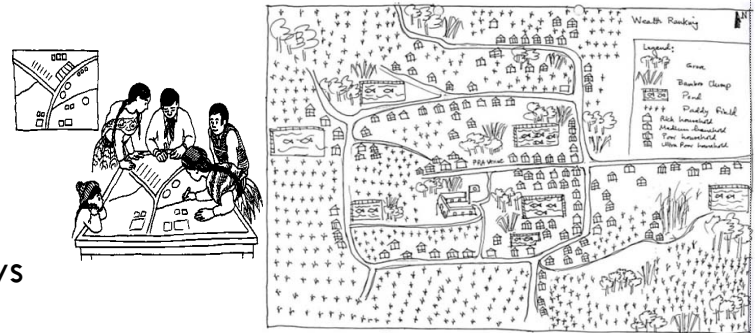
4. Ranking

(2) Participatory rural appraisal

1. Mapping

Community mapping is used to collect information from the community concerning the location of resources and land uses that might not be obvious from observation alone. This may help to explain how the community views their situation and where they see opportunity and constraints. This method is more effective when used by a small group, preferably representing women and men, working to **produce a large sketch map of the area in which they live**. In the context of road water harvesting, some important features to be mapped are:

- Main objects and topography in the landscape
- Water resources
- Soil moisture
- Accessibility
- Hotspots



(2) Participatory rural appraisal

2. Transect Walk

Transect walks are systematic walks through a selected area from one side to the opposite side. During the walk the field worker observes, ask, listen to people, look the landscape and the local practices and at the same time he/she interacts with the community members encountered.

A transect walk is a precious tool because it allows the community to look at their area with an innovative point of view. The participants can stop during the walk and discuss what they are seeing around them. One can even decide to stop at fixed intervals – for instance every 100 meters and then make observations. It helps in visualizing processes that need to be understood in order to plan and implement road water harvesting measures. During the exercise a sketch is drawn taking into account the changes that take place in different locations of the area investigated.



(2) Participatory rural appraisal

3. Timeline

To better understand how things evolved, a timeline is constructed. It also helps to put the present in context and see how things may turn out.

Questions can be asked on different important aspects - like the main economic activity, means of transport, population settlements and more. To refresh the memory, important events can be used - such as what the road connection was like during the time of the last election.

The development of these timelines helps to collectively understand the past and future trends better.



(2) Participatory rural appraisal

4. Ranking

In the ranking or scoring exercise, community members are asked to list their priorities in terms of their water needs. It helps communities to prioritize solutions and challenges. It simply implies giving a score (vote) to the different discussed items and then prioritizing according to the items that got the most (or the least) votes.



Examples of community engagement at scale

Ethiopia: Community mobilization for road water harvesting through the annual national **soil and conservation “Watershed”** programs



Examples of community engagement at scale

Nepal: Involving road maintenance groups in mountain road maintenance



Group discussion

How is community engagement in road development and maintenance currently taken place ?

- *With larger role for municipalities?*
- *With increased use of excavators and other earthmoving equipment?*
- *What can be improved?*

Useful resources...

- Community engagement: A Resilience Perspective

<https://thewaterchannel.tv/videos/community-engagement-a-resilience-perspective/>

- Road Water Harvesting in Tigray, Ethiopia

<https://thewaterchannel.tv/videos/road-water-harvesting-in-tigray-ethiopia/>



Thank you!

For more information contact :
www.roadswater.org
syakami@metameta.nl
vansteenbergen@metameta.nl

