

LIVELIHOODS VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS

Conservation, Livelihoods and Governance Programme
Tools for participatory approaches

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Livelihoods vulnerability analysis is a method of assessing the impact of hazards on livelihood resources.

What is it useful for?

- Identifying the hazards that have the most serious impact on important livelihoods resources.
- Determining which livelihoods resources are most vulnerable.
- Identifying current coping strategies and beginning to identify opportunities for adaptation.
- Introducing and exploring the concept of climate change adaptation.
- Informing an understanding of local values of ecosystem services in relation to livelihoods and well-being and how these may change as a result of the threat of hazards.

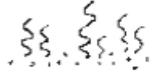
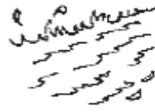
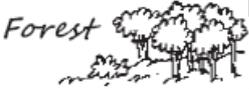
Suggested steps

Allow approximately **one and a half hours** for this exercise.

- 1) Ask participants to brainstorm and identify the most important livelihoods resources for them. It may help to organise the livelihood resources or to have a checklist based on the 5 asset (or resource) classes commonly used in Sustainable Livelihoods frameworks (human, social, physical, natural and financial).
- 2) This may create a long list of resources so ask participants to identify up to six resources that they consider to be MOST important in achieving well-being. The priority resources are listed down the left side of a matrix. If participants prefer symbols can be used as well as, or instead of, words.
- 3) Ask participants to identify the greatest hazards to their livelihoods. Hazards may be natural or man-made. It is important to be specific in the hazards, and to ensure that the issues identified are actually hazards. Participants may identify conditions such as “food insecurity” as hazards. Ask the group to break down these conditions to determine if they are caused by hazards (e.g. food insecurity may be the result of a drought, which is a hazard). Similarly, some groups may identify scarcity of resources, such as “lack of money”, as a hazard. In this case, it should be determined whether the lack of a resource is the result of a hazard, or in some cases, whether the resource should be added to the list of priority resources identified in the previous step.
- 4) If the focus of the exercise is on climate change prompt the participants to identify some environmental hazards. It may be desirable to break down climatic hazards into more specific hazards. For example ‘no winter rains’ can become ‘no winter rains for winter crops’, ‘no winter rains for forest plantation’ and so on.

- 5) The five most important hazards should be listed horizontally across the top of the matrix, again using symbols if necessary.
- 6) Participants should then decide on a scoring system for the hazards against the livelihoods resources, identifying significant, medium, low and no hazard. It is vital that all participants understand the scoring system. An example is as follows:
 - 3 = significant impact on the resource
 - 2 = medium impact on the resource
 - 1 = low impact on the resource
 - 0 = no impact on the resource
 Stones, symbols or different colours of markers (e.g. red = significant risk to resource, orange = medium risk, green = low risk, blue = no risk) could also be used.
- 7) Considering each resource in turn, participants decide the degree of impact that each of the hazards has on each of the resources. Any inconsistencies or differences of opinion should be discussed and resolved, if possible (either through discussion or by exploring the reasons for these differences and preparing more than one table if necessary).
- 8) Discuss and analyse the results, noting different perspectives from different participants.

Figure 1: An example of a livelihoods vulnerability matrix (DFID, 2010)

Livelihood resource/asset	no rain 	increased summer heat 	river floods 	illness in the family 	forest fire 
Forest 	0			0	0 0
Stream 	0 0	0			
Irrig ⁿ channel 	0 0		0 0 0 0	0	
Road 			0 0 0 0		
FUG marketing network 				0	

Questions to guide discussion and analysis

The following questions can be used to guide the discussion but should be adopted and adapted according to the focus of the exercise.

- Are there any trends in the impact of hazards on livelihood resources?
- Which resources are most affected and why?
- Are there any resources that are more resistant to hazard?
- What coping strategies are currently used to deal with the hazards identified? Are they working?
- Are there different strategies that you would like to adopt which would reduce the impact of hazards on your livelihoods?
- What resources do you have that would help you to adopt these new strategies?

- What are the constraints to adopting these new strategies?

Points to remember:

- ❖ It can take time for people to understand the concepts and thus good facilitation will be needed to engage them.
- ❖ Be aware that subjective or sensitive issues may not be discussed or clear to an outsider.
- ❖ Local participants should be encouraged to build as much of the diagram as possible without interruption and to suggest anything else that should be recorded.
- ❖ Before using this tool read the accompanying document, *A guide to using tools for participatory approaches*.

For further information

CARE (2009) *Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook*
<http://www.careclimatechange.org/tools>

DFID (2010) *Participatory Tools and Techniques for Assessing Climatic Change Impacts and Exploring Adaptation Options*
<http://www.forestrynepal.org/images/publications/Final%20CC-Tools.pdf>

This tool is based on the *Vulnerability Matrix* in Care (2009) *Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook*



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Fauna & Flora International, 4th Floor, Jupiter House, Station Road,
Cambridge, CB1 2JD
Telephone +44 (0) 1223 571000
Fax +44 (0) 1223 571000
Email info@fauna-flora.org