

Vulnerability Analysis

Summary Report of Training of NGOs in
Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry

November 2005

Anasuya Foundation

Preface

This document presents a summary of the proceeding of five workshops that were organised in late 2004 and early 2005 by the Anasuya Foundation for Women and Children, as part of the World Bank supported project on Vulnerability Analysis. The intention behind the project was to enhance the capacities of NGOs to identify the poorest groups of persons in a community and integrate them in to developmental activities of the organisation. There have been two inspirations for us to carry out this project.

The first is ideological. **Anasuya Foundation** works on the basis of Gandhian Philosophy. One of Gandhi's most famous dictums has been "I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him." This underscores all the work that the Anasuya Foundation proposes to do.

Secondly, one of the Trustees, Dr. Rama Kashyap, in her capacity as Adviser Social Development, Royal Danish Embassy, has been instrumental in conceptualising and organising Vulnerability Analysis workshops in some of the Danida supported projects in India. These workshops developed an approach to identifying the most vulnerable persons in the community and also to integrate them into the development initiatives. The participants of the workshop deeply appreciated this new approach to working with the persons of the most deprived sections of the community.

Thus, inspired by Gandhian ideology and the earlier experience, the Anasuya Foundation decided to organise these training workshops. The Foundation is grateful to **World Bank, New Delhi** for the financial support for the project. It must be noted here that the World Bank highly appreciated the conceptualisation of the workshop and permitted considerable freedom in the conduct of the workshops.

We also thank the NGOs that participate in the training workshop by sending their representatives. Our thanks also to Dr. Narayanaswamy, Mr. Binoy Acharya, Mr. Borian and Mr. Manivelu who were the facilitators of the workshop at different times.

Mr. C. Antony Swamy, Col. Radhakrishnan and their colleagues at WORTH Trust Katpadi and Dr. Rajalakshmi and her colleagues at Avinashilingam Deemed University, Coimbatore, offered great support in organising these workshops and we are grateful to them.

Om Consultants, Bangalore prepared the documentation for the first workshop held at Katpadi and we are thankful to them for the excellent production. We are also thankful to Mr. T.K Nathan and Dr. K. S. Malathi for designing and preparing the present documentation.

We hope that this document will be of some use to the development professionals who are engaged in working with the marginalized sections of society.

14 November 2005
Chennai .

D.K. Oza
Managing Trustee,
Anasuya Foundation

The Backdrop

Anasuya Foundation for Women and Children established in 2002 seeks to serve the cause of the underprivileged women and children of India. More importantly it seeks to work in the field of child labour, bonded labour, trafficking in human beings, helping women and children in situations of violence or serious social conflict. In general the foundation aims to promote the rights of women and children as defined by the international charters and rehabilitate those with physical impairment or disability. The foundation strongly believes in networking with other NGOs and seeks to promote the voluntary sector in India.

To carry forward and further this focus, the foundation organised a series of training programmes to enhance the capacities of select NGOs from Tamil Nadu and in Pondicherry in working with marginalised, the un-reached, the vulnerable and the excluded. The participants were mostly in the age group of 30 – 35 who have hands on experience in a specific field including HIV/AIDS, disability, integrated rural development etc.

The workshops aimed in the long-term the empowerment and inclusion of the most vulnerable in the development process. In short-term, a methodology for vulnerability analysis would have been developed to identify and include the most vulnerable in the programme and projects apart from enhancement of the capacity of the participating NGOs.

Anasuya Foundation received financial support from the World Bank to organize these training workshops, entitled “Vulnerability Analysis”. Five workshops were organised between October 2004 and June 2005.

The participants comprised of NGO representatives, PRI members and the Self Help Groups affiliated to the NGOs.

The important discussions and outcome from the workshops are detailed in the following pages. This analysis can be used profitably by other stake holders in development interventions and enhance good governance and civic engagement.

Workshops - Time Plan				
No.	Date	Place	Venue	No. of participants
1	5-9 Oct '04	Katpadi	WORTH trust Katpadi	21
2	15-21 Dec '04	Chennai	Youth Hostel, Indira Nagar, Chennai	19
3	14-19 Feb '05	Dindigul	Anugraha, Nochiodaipatti, Dindigul	27
4	26-30 Apr '05	Coimbatore	Avinashilingam Deemed University	34
5	13-14 Jun '05	Coimbatore	Avinashilingam Deemed University	10

Facilitators

Dr. Narayanasamy, Professor in Rural Extension Department in Gandhigram Institute was the chief facilitator for the workshops. **Mr. Binoy Acharya** the founder of UNNATI in Ahmedabad and **Dr. Rama Kashyap**, a trustee of Anasuya Foundation contributed significantly with their inputs.

The Concept of Vulnerability

The concept of vulnerability as it is used in this workshop referred to the poorest of the poor and the most deprived. There are many dimensions to vulnerability. Poverty or more correctly remorselessness could be the first characteristic. However, mere lack of economic resource alone does not make a person vulnerable. Other factors that contribute to a person being vulnerable are, lack of access to education, health, livelihood, age, denial of basic rights to live with dignity due to official apathy or ignorance and socially imposed inequality measure

and practices, social exclusion and the consequent loneliness. The vulnerable persons are those who are deprived of any basic facility or unable to exercise the basic right of equality to access to resources due to a combination of various factors. Marginalisation, deprivation and denial of right and access to education, health, life with dignity of all human beings irrespective of age and gender make a person vulnerable. One dimension of vulnerability complements the others and in effect makes the people perpetually remain vulnerable.

Thus vulnerability does not focus primarily on the economic dimension but includes various social, political, gender, health and demographic dimensions. To illustrate, an elderly widow with disabilities due to age and hailing from a scheduled caste below poverty line family is the most vulnerable person in her community. The vulnerable persons are extremely resource poor and lack any kind of personal power that they remain invisible from the sight of planners, policy makers, even the development professionals and most importantly the community in which they live.

One might quiz why 'vulnerability' should have a special focus! Basically any development intervention should be able to identify the most vulnerable or/and be able to reach the last invisible person. In reality this identification and reaching is either missed out completely or ignored in any normal processes. Most of the times, this missing is due to lack of tools to gauge the social dimensions; or priority on the technical or "hard issues" in a given project.

In this context, vulnerability analysis is an approach that identifies inherent or socially constructed characteristics of individuals or groups, such as gender, age, health status, and physical impairment along with other routine poverty indicators. The multidimensionality of the concept 'vulnerable' requires a comprehensive tool to encompass multiple dimensions like social, health, gender, and economics of development.

On this background the workshops aimed at providing the participants with a detailed understanding of the concept of vulnerability. And secondly, construct appropriate tools and techniques to enable the development organisation to identify and integrate such vulnerable persons in to the developmental initiatives.

The objectives of the workshop in overall were to:

- 🕒 Attempt at arriving a definition of the vulnerable persons
- 🕒 Attempt at developing a methodology for vulnerability analysis
- 🕒 Build the capacity of the NGOs to understand vulnerability in proper context, and
- 🕒 Enhance the participants' competency to identify and include the vulnerable in respective projects and programmes.

Who is a vulnerable person?

The participants of the workshop discussed and agreed that vulnerable people are those who are very poor, exposed to risk, unable to cope with life situations, have precarious and uncertain livelihood, and are hardly visible in the communities where they live in.

Any intervention aiming to develop society should be able to reach the last of the most invisible of the persons who invariably are exposed to one form of vulnerability or the other. Similarly, any policy intervention should also target the most vulnerable groups. As such, no single individual or an institution can address all dimensions of vulnerability. It has to be a collective effort so that resources are optimally shared and complemented. This is where

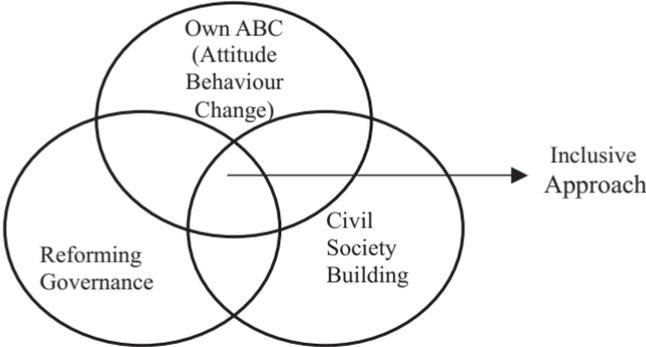
- a. Collective action helps in minimising the duplication and improves 'complementing of one another's efforts apart from significant over all value addition; and
- b. Improves transparency and basic accountability to those for whom we work

If one loses sight of the vulnerable even at the planning phase obviously one cannot be sure of results. Any such intervention would not have helped them in any way and probably our ignorance might only have made those already vulnerable into more vulnerable. They have to be identified, recognised, empathised with and allowed a greater participation for the development of a civic society that has 'lesser flaws and gaps with lesser vulnerable.

The invisible should first become visible. This is where identification of the vulnerable groups become primarily vital. From the state of being merely visible these vulnerable groups need to be moved to an empowered state.

People defined as vulnerable are made invisible and the process of making this is called “Invisibilisation”. They will be “Stigmatised”. If they survive invisibilisation and stigmatization, they will be “Criminalised”. Finally they will be “Custodialised”.

Two approaches of vulnerability analysis are “Rights based approach” and “Inclusive approach”. Under the “**Rights based approach**”, people who are deprived of their basic rights fight for their rights using this approach. In case of vulnerability we need to bring the vulnerable to mainstream through “**Inclusive approach**”.



“How to identify the vulnerable people?”

Having known about vulnerability, the vulnerable people and the existing tools to identify the vulnerable like BPL indicator lists etc, we can of course be clear that there is no one comprehensive tool to elicit information pertaining to vulnerability and vulnerable target population.

It is in this context the current workshops explored various techniques individually and analysed the effect of contribution of these in combination, on identifying the vulnerable. Even if identified, it cannot be said conclusively that the vulnerable will get integrated in

to the programmes and the projects further. Therefore, apart from the systems, tools, methods and techniques the conviction of the practitioner to remain unifocussed and steadfast on an inclusive approach is vitally essential in empowering the vulnerable.

The following pages highlight the novel and maiden attempt to use tools like PRA and Gender in combination with its meaningful inter-linkages for effective identification of vulnerable.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF WORKSHOPS

During the process of the workshops the participants discussed case studies, visited villages and undertook application of various tools discussed above. The case studies were given to make them understand different types of vulnerability, approaches and the working methodology of the intervening agencies. Discussions were generated about alternatives; and brief of the cases. Salient aspects of field findings are shared in the following pages.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) as is well known is a visual method that regards people's participation and their realities as the core of all development work. In all the PRA exercises, the villagers or the community members themselves map, model, show, rank, quantify, score, inform, explain, discuss, analyse and plan.

The workshops used select tools of gender and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) to identify and to understand vulnerability and vulnerable people and groups. The following sections introduce each of the methods and also presents the outcome of the field practice of the method by the participants.

Social Mapping was used to collect information on census details, social issues like child marriage, health status, untouchability & gender issues, prevalence of diseases, community resources, land ownership and utilization pattern, and assistance required of the specific target groups. Moreover, how each one of these aspects are responsible for making the community more vulnerable were brought out. This actually helped in identifying the vulnerable more appropriately

Well-Being and Ill- Being analysis literally spelt out the demand – supply situation of the needs of the vulnerable, be they housing or drinking water or health services or communication needs.



Field illustration of a village : a sample

During the course of discussion with the members of the community, the positive aspects like facilities for drinking water, condition of houses, health services, job opportunities, schools, transport services etc. that are available and accessed by the community are assessed. When we take up the negative aspects, things are not available or denial of access or lack of ownership is observed. The ill being analysis in particular throws light into factors or situation that result in vulnerability. Combinations of village transect, resource mapping and focussed group discussions are ideal for such analysis.

The following table sums up the cause and effect of 'ill being' in village that was visited by the participants.

Ill Being	Effect
⊗ Landlessness	☞ Unable to give education ☞ Lack of food security
⊗ Illiteracy	☞ Mobility curtailed
⊗ Lack of access to jobs	☞ Food security lost ☞ Lost faith in life
⊗ Physically handicapped	☞ Could not earn ☞ Lost respect, insecure
⊗ Visually challenged	☞ Could not earn ☞ Lost respect, insecure
⊗ Speech imparity	☞ Could not earn ☞ Lost respect, insecure
⊗ Destitute / Orphan Large family with non-earning dependents	☞ No access to basic needs ☞ Indebtedness, could not educate, could not earn, delay in marriages of female children, developed insecurity complex
⊗ Land with low soil fertility Poor family with 4 girl children	☞ Low income, indebtedness ☞ Could not educate, could not earn, delay in marriages of female children, developed insecurity complex

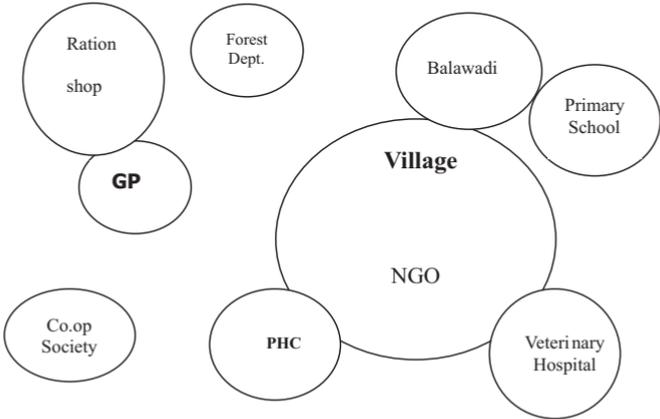
Venn diagram – These were used to ascertain the effectiveness in terms of

- ☞ Distance from the community
- ☞ Accessibility and services offered
- ☞ Quality of service

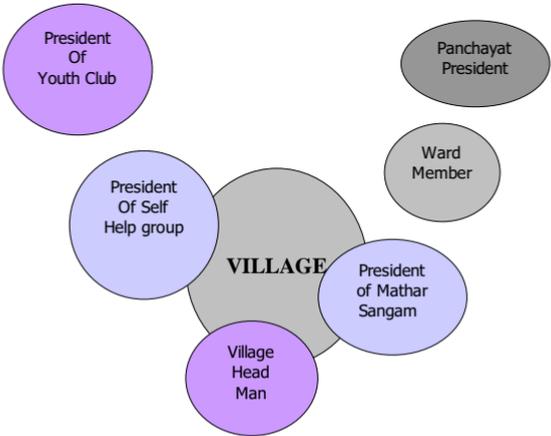
The concept of 'Venn' diagram basically implies, the more the overlap between circles, the better is the service, its quality and its reach to the vulnerable. No overlap indicates that the service is either not available or the access is denied. This can be applied to the various service providers, individuals and institutions, alike.

It also should be noted that the institutions closer to the village indicate that they are supportive and the institutions away from the village indicate non-supportive and have negative feelings with villagers. The following 'institutional analysis' and 'mobility mapping' are illustrative examples of a situation visited by the participants.

Institutional Analysis – a field exploration ...an example



Mobility Map – To ascertain the location and the distance for availing services



GENDER ANALYSIS

The conceptual distinction between **sex and gender** that sex is biological and constant and gender is social construct was used to look vulnerable groups from a gender glass. When participants were asked to visualize male and female traits it was interesting to note that adjectives like strong, headship, brave, handsome, open-minded, dominance were attributed to male while adjectives like softy, obedience, caring, cautious, whole-hearted and beauty to female. Surprisingly, leadership was aligned to both. The **'S' syndrome** in gender was also explained where many words starting with "S" is used to describe women as Simple, Soft, Sacrifice, Shrewd, Sweet, Soothing, Stubborn, Sober, Smiling, etc.

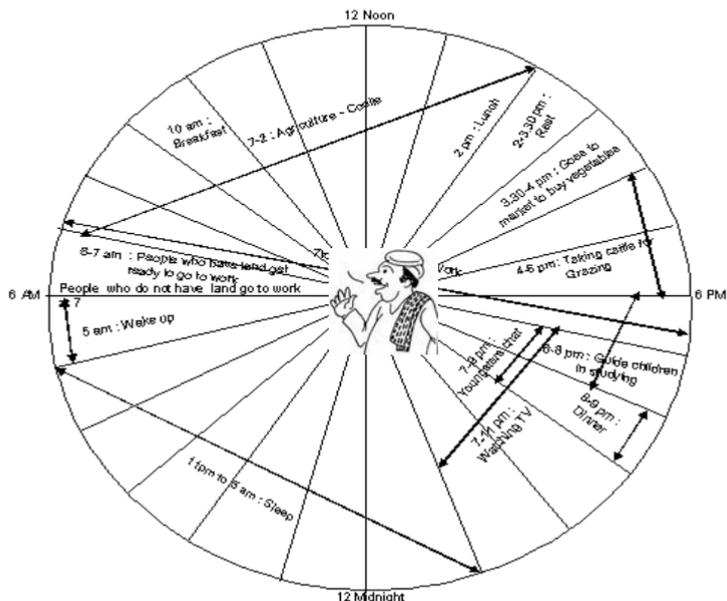
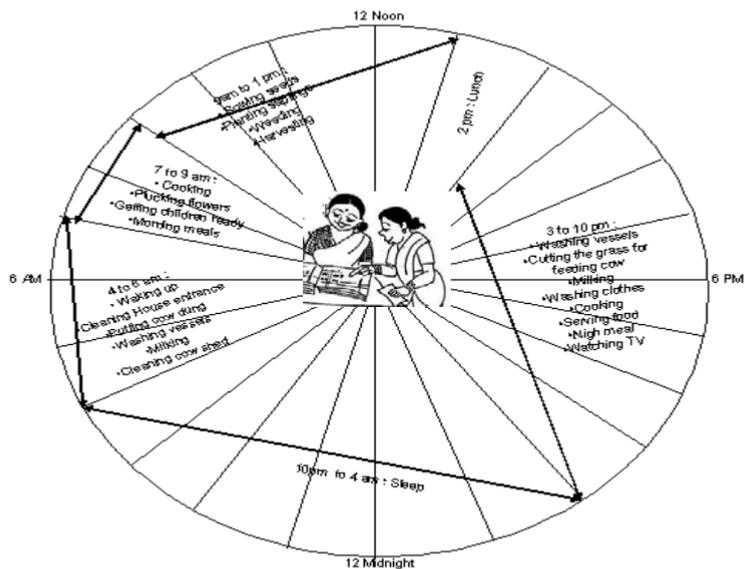
After getting to know the various qualities of the male and female, their 24 hours activity cycle was explained by the facilitator. She explained about the Access and Control of various resources for men and women in their daily life. The access is somewhat equal for both men and women but the control rests with men.

GENDER ANALYSIS – a field reality

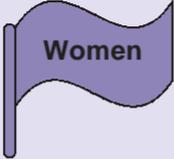
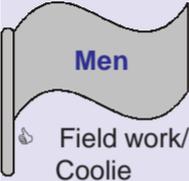
Traditionally men in the society have had the upper hand. The situation is changing where women have found their way up and have proved to be equally capable to men. But in the rural societies this is not so common where women get equal status.

Primarily, people's livelihood and availability of assets are fundamentally affected when access and control of various resources for men and women are not the same in reality in their daily life. Though the 'access', as we have seen in the villages that were visited, is somewhat equal for both men and women the control rests with men. This coupled with other ill beings make the family vulnerable, especially the children.

24 hour work chart of women and men



The Table below indicates the different roles of women and men as perceived by the community.

PRODUCTIVE	REPRODUCTIVE	SOCIAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Plucking flowers ☞ Planting Seedlings ☞ Weeding ☞ Harvesting ☞ Selling the Vegetables ☞ Selling Flowers ☞ Milking cow ☞ Coolie jobs in farms ☞ Agarbhatti making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Cooking ☞ Serving Food ☞ Cutting grass ☞ Grazing cattle ☞ Milking the cow ☞ Gathering fuel wood ☞ Cleaning the house ☞ Washing clothes ☞ Cleaning cowshed ☞ Feeding the cattle ☞ Cleaning ☞ Rangoli, ☞ Washing ☞ Cooking ☞ Taking care of cattle ☞ Preparing children for school ☞ Taking care of children ☞ Collecting firewood ☞ Collecting grass for cattle ☞ Rest ☞ Cleaning vessels ☞ Supervising Children's studies ☞ Bath ☞ Dinner with family ☞ Going to the Farm ☞ Taking care of cattle ☞ Labour (coolies) ☞ Taking care of children ☞ Market (buying goods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Taking part in functions ☞ Working in Temples and during Festivals ☞ Helping the sick & pregnant women in labour ☞ Watching TV <div data-bbox="676 550 850 709" style="text-align: center;">  <p>Women</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Watching TV, Household work, Chit-Chat
<div data-bbox="114 1062 303 1243" style="text-align: center;">  <p>Men</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Field work/ Coolie 		

It is clear that women vastly differ with men both in degree of labour and also their contribution to living with dignity. Denial of control results in women being vulnerable and interventions should aim to reduce this dependency and vulnerability.

The tools when applied in combination will yield details on

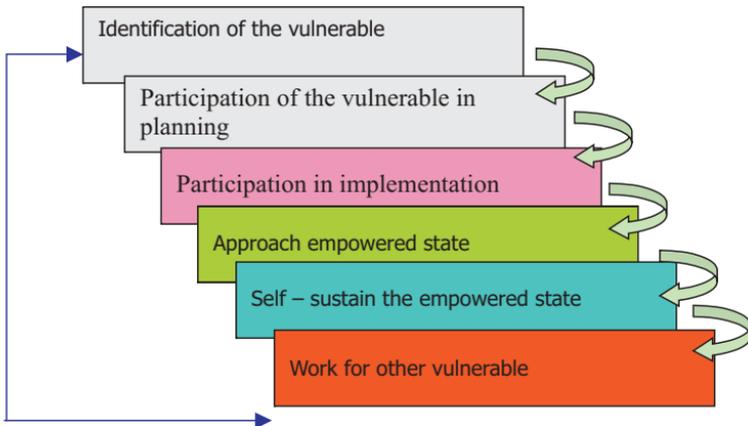
- Deprivation from basic amenities (materials)
- Assetlessness
- Isolation
- Dependence on exploitative intermediaries
- Lack of decision making power in household and in community
- Alienation
- Lack of capacity to cope with disaster / shock Exposed / susceptible to violence

Participatory Vulnerability Analysis in the Field

Based on the theoretical inputs and the practical field experience, the participants arrived a method for participatory vulnerability analysis (PPA).

A Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) is a systematic approach used to analyse the effectiveness of the overall (current or proposed) system. It is a regular process. We can elicit multi-stake holder participation using this process. Vulnerability analysis concerns the identification of inherent or socially constructed characteristics of individuals as sources of differential vulnerability such as gender, age, childlessness, health status, disability, widow etc.

Ideally the PVA cycle desiring to intervene and work for the vulnerable should work through the following stages:



Vulnerability analysis can at best be done through consultative participation. While doing vulnerability analysis, ranking should be done from people's perspective. Following factors are to be considered:

Well-being / Ill-being: See those who are excluded really from 'participation'. Find out the causes and effects, risks, opportunities, social exclusion, mobility, conflict.

Priorities of poor: Priorities of poor cannot be obtained at community level meetings. It can be done only through individual contacts.

Hopes and fears: Hopes and fears are not the same with all the poor.

Institutional analysis: Institutional analysis need not be at the Governmental level. List out the institutions that are supportive to / negative of our efforts. Contact traditional leaders like priests, local doctors, teachers, etc.

Gender analysis: Gender analysis should be carried out in men and women groups separately.

Stages	Data Requirements	Methods	Remarks
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlessness • Pregnant mothers in poor families • Female headed households • Migrants • Aged • Children of Migrant workers • Widows • Family with Alcoholic husbands • Households with large no. of non-earning dependants • Family which eats only once a day • Bonded children • Family which work in hazardous industries 	<p>Transect Social Mapping Semi Structured Interview Focussed Group Discussions</p>	<p>A combination of tools like PVA, PRA, Gender analysis etc have to be adopted depending on the data required</p>
Target groups – Vulnerable people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Exclusion • People with high risks • Totally resource less • People with lesser no. of livelihood security • People living in very poor environment & unhygienic condition 	<p>Well being & Ill being analysis Ranking Livelihood analysis In-depth interviews</p>	<p>Social map is the best with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one poor woman - one poor man - one family with no security

Stages	Data Requirements	Methods	Remarks
Identification of Cause and likely effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate causes and the causes behind each of the immediate cause, effects and Impacts 	Causes and effects Diagram OR Problem Tree	This enables to pinpoint the root cause for a situation
Trends of major attributes in vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment Wages Livelihood opportunities Prices Education Social Status Cultural Practices Status of Women Status of Aged Status of Girl children Coping strategies Safety Nets Access to Resources Access to various forms of capital Governance 	Historical transect (Time Line) Trend analysis Seasonal analysis	Provide historic background & short/long term trends

Stages	Data Requirements	Methods	Remarks
Institutional analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Institution • Health Institution • Credit Institution • Political Institution • Civil Society Institution • Para statal Organization • Leaders – Formal & Informal • Government Departments 	Mobility Map Venn diagram	To ascertain distance, location and effectiveness
Resource analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ponds • Grazing land • Porombokku Land • Community Builders • Irrigation Tanks • Trees • Forests • Other common property resources 	Resource Mapping Access & control	Livelihood opportunities available and accessible to the vulnerable
Gender analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of women in the society 	Activity Access & control Decision making	This will reveal how many and how much men are gender sensitised
Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal setting 	Force field analysis	Where are they? Where they want to be? Supporting & Opposing forces

The framework provided in the previous pages is an important experiential outcome from the workshops. It comprehensively encompasses cause and effect, processes of identification and integration of the vulnerable. The tools used to identify/ elicit responses should certainly be a combination of techniques on gender analysis and PRA. Any single dimension of vulnerability when fitted into this framework will help to identify the vulnerable and also give a broad indication of what kind of citizen action or responses from the civic society will be required to address the issues.

PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK

Feedback about the workshop was elicited through various formats covering orientation, content appropriateness, understanding, logistics, participation level, material, overall environment, duration, and facilitation process. In general participants appreciated the overall training. The novelty in the methods, new concept and thought provoking and insightful deliberations were some of the factors that were highly appreciated.

Regarding taking forward the learning from these workshops, the participants gave the following responses.

-  After attending this workshop I have the ability to conduct workshop based on the same to my volunteers
-  These techniques will help us to do the work among needy children in Chennai. The gender analysis tools will definitely find application in our own home besides working for society
-  Discuss these techniques with my Trustees if possible and we would like to have one workshop for our partners in Karnataka
-  My friends want to make their village a world model. I will use what I have learnt for this purpose.
-  What I have learnt through this training, I will try to implement in my organisation. I will also help my colleagues to learn these aspects.

-  I have learnt how to approach the villagers and how to meet their needs and how to help the deprived class to make progress. This training will help me to do my job better.
-  These 5 days training was good. Participation and field work were useful. I will inform my organisation for implementing these ideas. Particularly next month November and through TNVHA, we plan to train volunteers. What we have learnt will come handy. Our grateful thanks to the organisers.
-  Some of the techniques will definitely be utilised by me for the monitoring and enhancing the quality of work turned out by the field staff. I am sorry that I have come across these techniques at the evening of my life.
-  I will equip myself well with PRA techniques and will give training to others.

CONCLUSION

The efforts to develop a framework for identifying the vulnerable persons are only a beginning. It is indeed a pioneering effort, which should be further researched and practiced upon to make it widely usable. The Anasuya Foundation hopes to continue its efforts to better the lives of the poorest through collaboration with other NGOs and also through direct implementation of projects.

Anasuya Foundation welcomes any comment, feedback, and suggestions to improve upon this process.

