

Participatory Needs Assessment

Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA) is the first contact of IFSP with communities in selected villages. A PNA team of three to five governmental and non-govern-

mental staff stay for two to three days in the village. The community, in particular the poor people, describe and discuss their own problems and potentials. The PNA team helps them to do this and

- to inform the village community about the activities of IFSP
- to build up trust and good relations



Participatory Needs Assessment meeting: women are discussing problems with a PNA member at a village meeting

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between the villagers and field staff from government departments and NGOs

- to provide an opportunity to meet a team of officers from different

departments and organisations

- to help them to analyse themselves their problems and constraints, their resources and potentials and their needs and, possible solutions for the whole village community
- to assist them to identify projects which are most important for the community as a whole
- to support the village community to identify vulnerable groups (families who do not have enough to eat and no steady income and who are affected by the war)
- to encourage the vulnerable groups to analyse their specific problems and potentials in sub-groups
- to assist them to identify the projects most suitable to solve their specific problems
- to encourage families to form own groups and societies and to strengthen their self help capacities
- to assist the “service providers” (government departments and non-government organisations) to make support services available for project

implementation

Soon after the PNA the service providers will visit the communities again. This is the follow-up of PNA where projects are planned in detail. The officers will assist communities and vulnerable groups in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating their priority projects.

Basic Principles of Participatory Needs Assessment

- Learning from the community: Communities, their problems and potentials are the key to development
- Insiders analyse, outsiders (PNA team) encourage: Communities themselves analyse their situation; PNA teams help during this process as facilitators and animators
- Appropriate methods and instruments: PNA team assure that the methods and instruments for analysis are adequate to the habits and skills of the communities.

So far IFSP has done PNA in 20 villages. The projects include: water and sanitation, health and nutrition education, tank rehabilitation, drainage and road construction, goat and poultry rearing, nursery schools, school gardens, mid day meals.

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