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| **TOOL SUMMARY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLANNING** |
| Purpose | The purpose of this tool is to help the needs assessment team plan for the assessment so that the most relevant data is collected in the most efficient manner.  |
| Information Sources | **Information the assessment team should have before planning for the assessment:*** Geographical scope of the target population
* Information on the demographic make-up of the population, including importantly any marginalized groups.
* Core program area models.
* Relevant technical frameworks or approaches (resilience, food security, etc.)
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| Who | One person from the project design team should lead the planning process. Once planning is completed and tools and methodologies have been developed, people familiar with the use of PRA and RRA methods should be assigned to gather the necessary data.  |
| When | The Needs Assessment is normally the first step in the project design process. * Information gathered is used primarily to help conduct the Problem Analysis.
* It can also be used in other areas of the Project Proposal, such as the project background and information on partner or local institution capacity.

A well thought out plan for conducting the needs assessment should be completed before any data collection begins. This will help ensure that only essential data is collected.  |
| Requirements | **Requirements*** The plan must outline the resources and time necessary to collect all the data needed to triangulate the answers to the assessment questions.
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| **Recommendations*** Filling out the tables in this tool is NOT required, but it is recommended.
* The plan should consider all relevant subgroups of a target population, and should also examine the relationships between these groups.
	+ These groups include, but are not limited to, men, women, girls, boys, different socioeconomic groups, different ethnic groups and marginalized groups such as the elderly or disabled.
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| Tips | * Use the CRS Guidance on Participatory Assessments and Learning for Gender Integration Manual (forthcoming) to help plan for needs assessments for development projects.
	+ For assessment in emergency contexts please contact the LWR EOPS unit for guidance.
	+ Visit <http://www.needsassessment.org/> for an abundance of resources on needs assessment.
* The Needs Assessments, Problem Analysis and gender constraints analysis can overlap.
	+ Your first round of data collected can be used to complete a first draft of the problem analysis. When conducting the problem analysis some causes may be unclear in which case you may need to collect more information.
* There are two main reasons for conducting separate interviews, group interviews, and focus group discussions with men and women:
	+ When you want to be able to compare the different responses from men and women. If you want to understand the different constraints men and women face in participating in training, it is helpful to interview men and women separately and then compare their responses.
	+ When social norms restrict men and women from being in the same room or expressing themselves in front of each other.
* It may be necessary to consider further disaggregation of groups based on other characteristics, like age or ethnic group.
* It is not necessary to use every tool with men and women in separate groups. For example, general information about the composition of communities or the composition of producer groups can be gathered from mixed groups or official records.
* Do not confuse information about women-headed households with information about individual women.

\*From CRS NA Guide, PG. 6 |
| Gender Considerations | A project that meets the LGI standards for gender integration at this stage will undertake all of the following:* Consults secondary data sources on gender issues in the targeted area and/or sector including but not limited to:
	+ National statistics;
	+ Existing gender analyses from other projects, donors, etc.
	+ Other development literature on the social context.
* Conducts primary data collection in the target area from men and women, girls, and boys
* Organizes and triangulates primary and secondary data from men, women, girls and boys
* The needs assessment should provide evidence of:
	+ Women’s and men’s roles at different levels including the household, the community, and other groups or associations (what do people do);
	+ Women’s and men’s decision-making roles in households and communities;
	+ Women’s and men’s access to resources and services;
	+ Women’s and men’s needs and interests;
	+ Beliefs and norms about men and women; and,
	+ How laws, policies, and institutions establish (or not) an equitable environment for men and women.
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| **NEEDS ASSESSMENT PLANNING TABLE** |
| Name of Needs Assessment Lead: |
| Budget for assessment:  |
| Time available or required for the assessment:  |
| Logistical support required:  |
| **Step 1: Why?** **Why are we doing the assessment? What are its objectives?** |
| **Instructions:**Be clear about what is necessary and sufficient. Objectives need to be achieved with the resources available. Objectives should be concise so that assessment is as focused as possible. |
| **Step 2: What?** **What are the questions that need to be answered?**  | **Step 3: How?** **What methods or sources will we use to gather the answers to the assessment questions? Who will we talk to?**  | **Step 4: Scope?** **What number and characteristics of perspectives are needed for either triangulation or purposeful sampling?** |
| **Instructions:**Make sure the questions will provide specific answers that meet the objective. This information will go into column two of Table 2 so that it is clear all the questions that each method will need to answer.  | **Instructions:**List both methods and sources. Don’t forget secondary sources, which if available are less costly and faster to access. Questions can be grouped according to methodology if one methodology covers multiple questions and has the same sampling and triangulation method. This information will go in the first column of Table 2.  | **Instructions:**This will help in determining the resources needed to conduct the assessment. Purposeful sampling is the process of identifying a population of interest and developing a systematic way of selecting cases that is not based on advanced knowledge of how the outcomes would appear. The purpose is to increase credibility not to foster representativeness.Three methods or sources are usually needed for triangulation. Are more needed to have confidence in the information? Is there justification to have fewer? |
| **Example 1:** **Objective 1:** To determine the capacity of the farmer cooperative. |
| **Example 1:****Question 1.1:** Does the cooperative have functional leadership structure? | **Example 1:**Focus group discussion or in-depth interviews (key informant interviews) with current cooperative leadership.Participatory workshops with cooperative members (male and female) and interviews with government extension staff.  | **Example 1:**We are purposely selecting cooperative leadership team members, general cooperative members and extension staff as they all have knowledge of the cooperative’s leadership structure and capacity. If their views align the data will be considered triangulated.  |
| **Question 1.2:** What role do women and men currently play in the cooperative’s leadership decision making? | Focus group discussion with current cooperative leadership and heads of women’s self-help groups. Participatory workshops with current cooperative members (male and female) and interviews with government extension staff. | Current cooperative leadership is all male. We are purposely selecting heads of women’s self-help groups to better represent both gender’s perspectives at a leadership level. Both male and female cooperative members will be asked from a general membership perspective. |
| **Question 1.3:** What is the status of the cooperative’s financial sustainability? | Focus group discussion with current cooperative leadership.Key informant interviews with the cooperative’s finance manager.Most recent audit assessment.  | Triangulation will be achieved by questioning both leadership and the current finance manager who recently joined. An audit was conducted 1 year ago and its findings will be considered during the FGD and KII to determine if any change has been accomplished based on its recommendations.  |
| **Example 2:****Objective 2:** To identify climate related vulnerabilities to coffee farmers. |
| **Example 2:****Question 2.1:** What are the most common climate shocks?**Question 2.2:** How does each climate shock affect men and women (girls and boys) differently?**Question 2.3:** How does each climate shock specifically affect the coffee farmer’s livelihood?  | **Example 2:**Hazards, vulnerabilities, capacities assessment (HVCA)* Includes household interviews, key information interviews with cooperative staff, and community mapping.
 | **Example 2:**The sample of households will be selected to ensure that households in different hazard prone areas are represented based on community mapping. Men and women will be asked questions separately.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT METHOD/SOURCE OUTLINE** |
| **Name of method and/or information source** | **Questions Covered:** Assessment questions to be covered in tool  | **Who:** Who will respondent(s) be for tool  | **Additional considerations:** Are there any unique considerations associated with collecting the answers to the assessment questions?Are there any adjustments that need to be made to the methods relating to stakeholder participation, ethical considerations, data quality, etc.? |
| **Instructions:**Only list one method or source per line. These come from Column 3 of Table 1.  | **Instructions:** Questions from multiple objectives will be listed here if they correspond to a specific tool. After filling out this table, make sure all questions from Table 1 have been included in this table.  | **Instructions:**State specifically who will be interviewed using this tool. Simply note here If it is a secondary source and where it came from.  | **Instructions:**This section should give as many additional details needed in order to ensure that the needs assessment is representative and accurate as possible.  |
| **Example:** In-depth interviews. | **Example:** Does the cooperative have functional leadership structure?What role do women and men currently play in the cooperative’s leadership?What is the status of the cooperative’s financial sustainability? | **Example:**President, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.  | **Example:**All cooperative leadership members are male. Women’s perspective on leadership ability will come from the leaders of the women’s self-help groups and from female members of the cooperative.  |