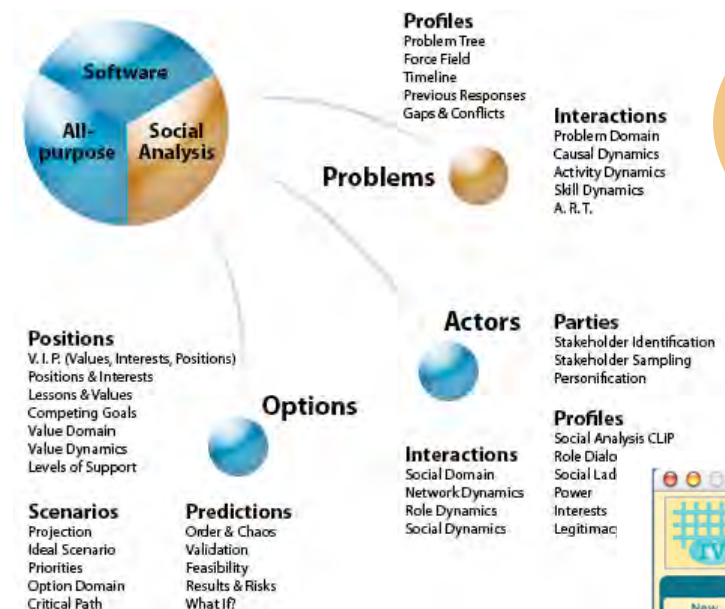


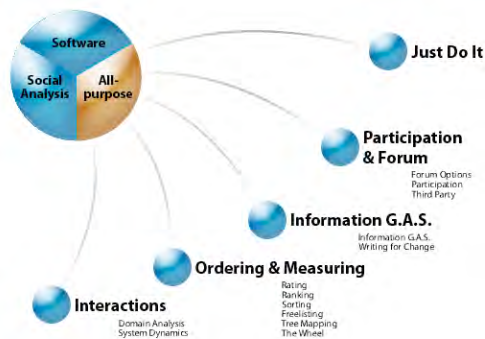
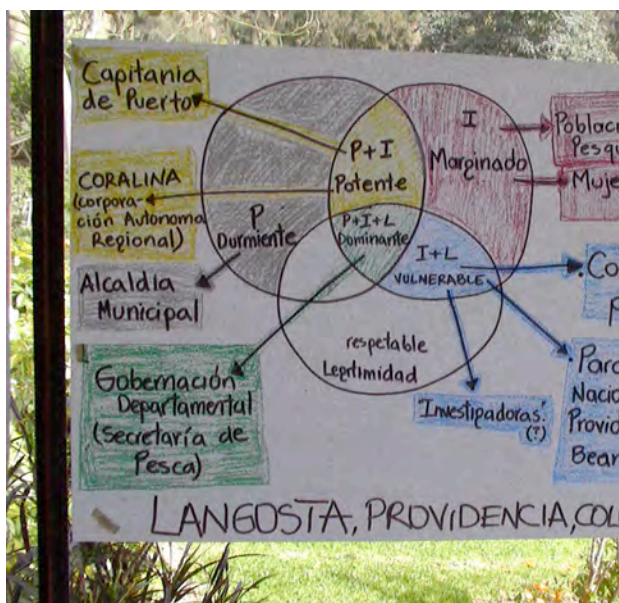
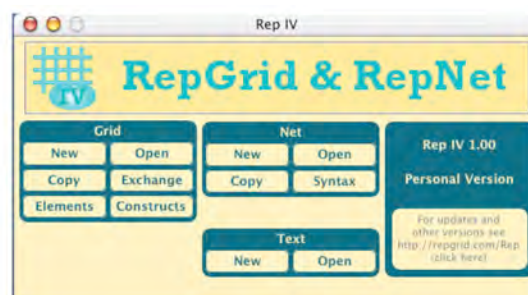


# Concepts and Tools for Collaborative Research and Social Action

<http://www.sas-pm.com/>



Jacques Chevalier  
& Daniel Buckles  
Carleton University  
August 2006





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## SAS<sup>2</sup> Training, Certification, and Partnerships

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### Instructions for SAS<sup>2</sup> and Process Manager

[Instructions](#) (below) help you apply Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup> concepts and tools. They provide an overview of the SAS<sup>2</sup> [Tools](#) and a summary of the principles of **Process Management**, a framework for collaborative project design and management. The SAS<sup>2</sup> technique **Process Manager** (PMr) is described in detail, showing how to do continuous planning and flexibly navigate toward expected results in situations of uncertainty and complexity. The method constitutes an alternative to the linear model of Results-Based Management and its focus on fixed goals and detailed plans made upfront. PMr accommodates planning in a multi-stakeholder context where people pursue different goals or activities even when they collaborate in a common project or program.

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### SAS<sup>2</sup> Tools

#### Social Analysis Techniques

SAS<sup>2</sup> tools support diagnostic thinking in groups of various sizes. The [Social Analysis Techniques](#) are organized into modules that reflect three basic questions applicable to any situation: what are the [problems](#) people face, who are the [actors](#) or stakeholders affected by a situation or with the capacity to intervene, and what are the [options](#) for action? Since these three basic questions depend on and interact with each other, there can be no fixed point of entry into a diagnostic process for all situations. In order to define a problem, you need to know whose problem it is. But in order to identify the concerned parties, you have to know what problems they have in common. The problems and actors you focus on also depend on the goals or options you have in mind. SAS<sup>2</sup> [Instructions](#) help you select the point of entry in a particular context.

#### All-Purpose Techniques

[All-purpose Techniques](#) are generic in nature and can be applied to any topic where you need to gather, organize, analyse and communicate information on peoples' knowledge and views of

reality. They also help you select the best forum and participation strategies to meet your needs.

Simpler and more advanced versions of the Social Analysis Techniques and the All-Purpose Techniques allow for the adjustment of diagnostic assessments to different contexts, depending on the time available and goals. This problem-solving orientation creates the internal flexibility needed to accommodate tools from a variety of sources and disciplines. Advanced applications and didactic uses of some SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques are supported by [Software](#).

---

## Training Workshops

Training in Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup> builds on the learning model of P5BL, for **People, Project, Product, Process, and Problem Based Learning**. This pedagogical approach is [widely used](#) in the training programs of medical universities and colleges.

SAS<sup>2</sup> brings to P5BL a focus on creating new knowledge and innovation rather than the transmission of existing bodies of knowledge and skills as is done in the medical field. SAS<sup>2</sup> training centers on practical exercises in solving complex **problems** and developing the corresponding mastery of **process**. Problems are linked with **projects** — situating every problem in the context of a larger project that has meaning and is worth pursuing. These three components work together to enhance abilities to generate tangible **products** that solve problems and usefully address project needs. All revolve around the people involved: *people* constructing and negotiating *project* goals, putting in place the *processes* needed to meet these goals, working together to resolve *problems* as they unfold, and generating the *products* that express real achievements and the tangible learning developed along the way.

## Introductory Workshop

[Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup>: An Introduction to Concepts and Tools](#) is an introductory workshop designed to facilitate project planning and the use of SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic techniques applied to your own work. It starts with defining your project plans and identifying diagnostic activities that have meaning in the here and now. Skills in the use of collaborative techniques are developed by applying techniques to assess real-life problems, profile stakeholders, identify strategic shifts in stakeholder values, interests and

positions and characterize the options available to decision makers. The workshop (3 to 5 days, in English, French or Spanish) is designed for teams or mixed groups that want to launch a new project or integrate diagnostic thinking into existing projects.

## Advanced Workshop

[Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup>: Integration and Advanced Applications](#) is an advanced workshop that grounds collaborative research in social action, with a special emphasis on the ‘ART’ of integrating Action, Research, and Training into project plans and ongoing activities. It includes exercises in selecting and sequencing diagnostic assessments in the context of real projects and the adaptation of SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques to particular contexts and groups of people. The principle of scaling techniques for different purposes is explored in detail, along with the use of advanced techniques to characterize or assess the dynamics of a situation. The workshop (3 to 5 days, in English, French or Spanish) can be designed for real, multi-stakeholder groups that want to pursue their collective work while they learn advanced techniques and create analytical and narrative reports on real diagnostic assessments. Completion of the workshop is a pre-requisite for becoming a [Certified Practitioner](#).

## Training of Trainers

[Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup>: Training of Trainers](#) is designed for Certified Practitioners who want to provide training services at both the introductory and advanced levels. The workshop (3 to 5 days, in English, French or Spanish) allows participants to acquire skills in designing and facilitating SAS<sup>2</sup> workshops. Completion of the workshop is a pre-requisite for becoming a [Certified Trainer](#).

A [Distance Learning](#) course offered in Spanish by the Bolivian Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies ([CEBEM](#)) introduces SAS<sup>2</sup> to university students and practitioners throughout Latin America.

## Certification and Licensing

[SAS<sup>2</sup> International](#) and [Licensed Institutional Partners](#) offer a Certification Program for Practitioners and Trainers. Certification signifies to prospective communities, clients and students that you have obtained a specific set of skills and demonstrated relevant capabilities applying SAS<sup>2</sup> concepts and tools to real-life situations. Our goal in setting standards of practice and providing a pathway



to achieving these standards is to recognize and support genuine efforts to provide quality action-research and training services. Follow this [link](#) to locate individuals and organizations in your region authorized to deliver SAS<sup>2</sup> services to end users.

Certification as a Practitioner can be earned through a combination of workshop attendance, experience, and evaluation of a **Portfolio** of real-life SAS<sup>2</sup> applications by SAS<sup>2</sup> International or licensed Institutional Partners.

### Authorization Steps for Certified Practitioners

Certified Practitioners attend both the Introductory and Advanced SAS<sup>2</sup> Workshops and gain experience through the application and documentation of techniques in the context of existing projects and programs. These constitute a Portfolio of the following techniques (see [Social Analysis Techniques](#)):

- *Process Manager*
- *A.R.T. (Action, Research, Training)*
- *Order and Chaos*
- *Social Analysis CLIP*
- *Domain Analysis (applied to either problems, actors, or options)*
- *Dynamics (applied to either problems, actors or options)*
- *Ideal Scenario*
- *Priorities*
- *V.I.P. (Values, Interests, Positions)*
- *Levels of Support*
- *Validation*

As with an artist's portfolio, the illustrations in the portfolio can be sketches or fully developed pieces of collaborative research and social action. Documentation of each example in the portfolio should at least include the following elements: purpose of the assessment, the context requiring the assessment, process specifications, a descriptive analysis, interpretation of the results, follow-up actions identified by the participants and observations regarding what went well or difficulties encountered during the process. Photographs and other audio-visual aids should be used whenever possible to illustrate key aspects or dynamics of the exercise (see SAS<sup>2</sup> Illustrations associated with the SAS<sup>2</sup>

techniques).

### Authorization Steps for Certified Trainers

To become a Certified Trainer you must first become a Certified Practitioner and then acquire experience facilitating SAS<sup>2</sup> Introductory workshops under the guidance of a Certified Trainer. A **Portfolio** documenting the design, delivery and evaluation of workshops is also required. **Trainers** can offer Certified SAS<sup>2</sup> Training Services, and make use of specialised training materials provided by SAS<sup>2</sup> International.

### Licensed Institutions

Under development.

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## Partnerships

Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup> is the result of collaboration between people with a common purpose: to create fertile ground for collective action aimed at achieving the common good. It is, and will always remain, a work-in-progress that you can contribute to and learn from. Work with us through [SAS<sup>2</sup> International](#), our [Institutional Partners](#) or [Communities of Practice](#).

### SAS<sup>2</sup> International

SAS<sup>2</sup> International is an informal body established by Jacques Chevalier, Daniel Buckles and Michelle Bourassa. We currently provide oversight to the SAS<sup>2</sup> initiative through three committees:

- An Editorial Committee reviews and approves additions and revisions to the SAS<sup>2</sup> concepts and tools, and postings to the SAS<sup>2</sup> website.
- A Capacity-Building Committee sets standards for training and accreditation as SAS<sup>2</sup> Practitioners and Trainers.
- A Professional Committee defines the Copyright License and related Intellectual Property Rights of contributors to SAS<sup>2</sup> and sets rules for use of the SAS<sup>2</sup> name for certified training and consulting.

### Institutional Partners

SAS<sup>2</sup> International also helps Institutional Partners and other organizations and individuals apply the concepts and tools of SAS<sup>2</sup> to collaborative research and social action projects in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Canada.

Various institutions are actively engaged in developing and applying expertise in SAS<sup>2</sup>, and in adapting and innovating with the concepts and tools. They share, through their ongoing institutional practice, a commitment to making diagnostic thinking both evidence-based and socially engaged.

Current Institutional Partners have formal arrangements with the initiative through project support from the International Development Research Centre ([IDRC](#)). Organizations can also become Institutional Partners through the [Certification and Licensing Program](#) of the SAS<sup>2</sup> initiative.

## Communities of Practice

SAS<sup>2</sup> Communities of Practice (CoP) link people actively working with, adapting and contributing to the ongoing development of SAS<sup>2</sup> in the context of specific disciplines and fields of action.

Whether in small groups or through networks of people with similar expertise, CoP interaction takes various forms including:

- Regular face-to-face meetings, electronic [fora](#), and internet-based teleconferences focused on planning diagnostic assessments and review of results;
- Collaboration on specific research studies, consulting contracts and publications;
- Hosting SAS<sup>2</sup> workshops and other exposure events for people in particular fields;
- Contributions to the adaptation and development of SAS<sup>2</sup> concepts and techniques in a particular area of expertise.

These interactions provide you with opportunities to learn, share and get support on the way to becoming [Certified](#) Practitioners or Trainers. They also provide a vehicle for the development of meaningful professional associations and formal project partnerships. Various Communities of Practice around the world are actively incorporating SAS<sup>2</sup> concepts and tools into the tasks critical to the missions of:

- Natural Resource Management;



- Local Economic Development;
- Organizational Development;
- Education;
- Governance;
- Conflict Management.

If you would like to create a new CoP in your field, convene a core group of colleagues and introduce them to SAS<sup>2</sup>. [Contact us](#) or an [Institutional Partner](#) in your region if you want to establish a [forum](#) on the SAS<sup>2</sup> Website or host a SAS<sup>2</sup> Introductory Workshop.



# Concepts and Tools for Collaborative Research and Social Action

<http://www.sas-pm.com/>

## Name of this Document

## Authors and Correct Citation

## Introduction

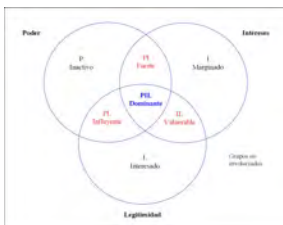
## SAS² Theory

Jacques M. Chevalier and Daniel Buckles, 'SAS² 1.0: SAS² Theory,' in Social Analysis Systems² 1.0, <http://www-sas-pm.com/>.

The Social Analysis Systems² (SAS²) initiative offers a new model for collaborative research and social action that supports the rigorous analysis of real life situations by the actors themselves. The challenge posed by the initiative is to elevate all forms of diagnostic thinking to the power of two, making the most of social scientific rigor and doing it socially — collaboratively and for the common good.

[Social Theory](#) puts forward the main concepts underlying SAS², drawing on and extending lessons from different social science disciplines and perspectives, including:

- A critical history of [participatory action research](#);
- [Social actor and political economy theory](#) (looking at the issues of stakeholder power, interests, legitimacy, and histories of collaboration and conflict);
- [Social anthropology in a socio-constructivist perspective](#) (exploring local knowledge and cultural learning and value systems);
- [Management science and complex systems theory](#) (planning for the complexity of real life situations and variations in levels of certainty and probability).



[Monitoring and Evaluation](#) shows how to adapt the principles and tools of SAS<sup>2</sup> to the monitoring and evaluation of project results.

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## Participatory Action Research

Efforts to engage people in research for social change are by no means new. Participatory Action Research (PAR) and its variants is a well-developed body of theory and practice with roots in social reform movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and numerous applications in the fields of international development, social psychology, industry, agriculture and education. It is based on the principles of collective inquiry into problems, with and by those affected, and actions emerging from group reflection and improved understanding.

### PAR

The key challenge, and major failing, in the practice of PAR lies in the nature of intervention by powerful social actors. PAR is typically initiated by outside groups with predefined goals linked directly to their respective mandates and areas of interest. More often than not, the exercise is used to validate the assumptions and solutions already built into the enterprise of the convening parties, with little scope to challenge the relevance of the issue or argue for alternative agendas.

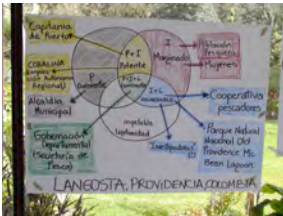


Interventionist tendencies are compounded by conceptual and methodological problems that continue to trouble the theory and practice of PAR. Communities are often defined geographically, reinforcing a romantic concept of social history. A populist, quick-and-easy approach to social factors tends to gloss over the complexities of real-life situations and contribute little to the evolution of concepts and practices in the social and management sciences. More recent developments in PAR such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) typically take a cafeteria approach to the selection of tools and techniques that by and large ignore important social factors and make few concessions to local language and constructions of meaning.

SAS<sup>2</sup> seeks to overcome these problems by deliberately creating mechanisms of cross-fertilization and dialogue across geographic and knowledge boundaries. It supports a **multi-track** process that

brings together fact finding and analysis by all knowledgeable parties and negotiated views of problems and options available for action. It also employs mid-range or intermediate adaptations of tools and techniques from the social and management sciences through which all subjects can speak and learn. These strategies support **rigorous diagnostic thinking by the actors** themselves and the strategic and progressive engagement of stakeholders, helping make intervention, defined as an action from without, impossible.

## Social Actors and Strategic Engagement



## Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholder concept is an important new contribution to collaborative research and social action, when modified by other concepts adapted from political economy and social anthropology. Models based on the stakeholder concept serve to identify the groups, constituencies, or institutions involved in a situation and how their interests may be affected by existing or proposed actions. They also explore the resources, influence, authority or power that stakeholders can apply to a situation, and the actual or potential relations of collaboration or conflict that may exist between them. The models acknowledge the constant interaction of **communities of interests**, thus bringing together the local and global factors of social history and recognizing the critical role of differences in power and interests.

Stakeholder analysis (SA) constitutes a **social actor** alternative to positivist methodologies and challenges much of the conventional wisdom of stratification theory and political economy based on ready-made definitions of class membership. It introduces diagnostic thinking that is context-specific and pragmatic, focusing attention on social actors and what they can do to overcome problems and achieve their objectives using the power and resources at their disposal.

There remain, however, many conceptual and methodological problems with stakeholder analysis that need to be overcome. Tools for stakeholder analysis are by and large overly descriptive and schematic, assuming problems, interests and group boundaries that are clearly defined and stable over time. They pay little attention to



## Strategic and Progressive Engagement



issues of stakeholder empowerment and public representations of the common good. Importantly, stakeholder analysis tends to ignore the question of who should do the analysis and for what purpose — who are the stakeholders affected by the analysis and who should be involved in the assessment process? Stakeholder analysis is often done in a top-down fashion, with a neo-corporatist inclination to promote dialogue without calling into question the existing relations of domination and subordination operating at all levels of the increasingly integrated world system we live in.

SAS<sup>2</sup> builds on and modifies stakeholder analysis in several key respects. First, it proposes a strategic and progressive approach to engagement by focusing on those parties that *can and should* be involved in the analysis and those that need to be empowered through measures of collaborative thinking and social action. The exercise is simple in appearance only, raising two tricky questions that concern the issue of **group boundaries**: when to disaggregate a particular group into various stakeholders, and when to lump various actors into one stakeholder group. Responses to these questions must take into account the actual context and the purpose of the exercise, and also the fact that people may be members of different stakeholder groups; this is particularly true of leaders and public officials who have their own stakeholder profile at the same time as they speak and act for broader groups.

Second, SAS<sup>2</sup> reconciles the two criteria of rigor and flexibility in the methodology of stakeholder analysis by focusing on key factors shaping the course of social history. These include **power, interests, legitimacy**, but also the positions, the values, and the commitments that stakeholders express in real situations, the networks of information that exist between them, and the histories of trust, collaboration and conflict that can be brought to bear on particular situations. The way these factors are distributed and combined in each situation determines the **stakeholder structure** and the corresponding **scenario** to be addressed. The scenario that results from the exercise and the key problems it raises must be further discussed with a view to identifying **strategies** to manage them. This may include steps to modify existing stakeholder relations, such as actions to **empower** the vulnerable and marginalized

groups that have pressing needs or interests.

## Anthropology and Socio- Constructivism

### Knowledge, Values and Culture



### Domain Analyses

While stakeholder analysis can be done strategically, collaboratively and with rigor and method at the same time, it nonetheless raises a basic issue concerning the use of concepts borrowed from the social sciences — the extent to which these concepts reflect how stakeholders define social categories and relations in their own language and context. Will terms such as power, legitimacy, representation, collaboration or conflict let themselves be translated or transported from one culture or period of history to another without changing their meaning? What should we do in situations where the ‘stakeholder’ concept is antithetical to local conflict-management values and practices? Shouldn’t the engagement of stakeholders in the action-research process be founded on the use of local **knowledge systems**, towards a social actor theory that values how people construct their own social and natural surroundings, not to mention the **cultural values** that guide their individual or group behavior?

The SAS<sup>2</sup> methods adapted from social anthropology and psychology point to one of the most innovative aspects of SAS<sup>2</sup>: its approach to culture, knowledge, and learning. While all theorists or methodologists seriously committed to a collaborative research enterprise recognize the importance of culture and local knowledge systems, SAS<sup>2</sup> provides a way to overcome the proverbial challenge of ‘walking the talk’. Techniques such as *Domain Analysis*, *Problem Domain*, *Social Domain*, *Value Domain* and *Option Domain* adapted from Personal Construct Psychology offer both simple and advanced ways to reconstruct knowledge and value systems, employing methods that contain no predefined terms or ideas insensitive to differences in language and culture. The diagnostic assessment becomes an actor-driven exercise in ethno-sociology, ethno-politics, ethno-ecology or ethno-medicine, depending on the topic area that participants choose to explore. Participants, not the facilitator, uncover what is culturally or socially distinct about their knowledge and value system, opening up the possibility of learning and negotiation across social and cultural boundaries. By supporting knowledge systems that are



**designed to learn**, the techniques go beyond current approaches where local knowledge is reduced to descriptive systems (of elements organized into classes and taxonomies) that are relatively static and isolated from each other.

---

## Management Science and Complex Systems Theory

SAS<sup>2</sup> is not a tightly structured methodology but rather a flexible set of concepts and tools. These can be used to generate multiple methodologies within a particular field — social learning systems that pursue goals defined and negotiated in context. As such, they make a direct contribution to the integration of stakeholder perspectives into the science of project planning and management.

## RBM

Disciplines such as public administration, organizational development and business management have developed a wide range of methods for project planning and management. Prominent among methods, especially in the public sector, are sets of procedures focused on managing for results — formally known as Results-Based Management (RBM). RBM methods begin with setting common goals and specific objectives, followed by the design and management of activities to achieve them. The process is conceived as a chain of causes and effects that can unfold efficiently and responsibly *if* based on appropriate inputs including sound analysis and adequate financial and human resources. Increasingly, RBM and other planning and management methods have been adapted to involve critical reference groups in key stages of the project cycle, including goal definition, data collection and project implementation.

The strength of these approaches to management science, reinforced when carried out in a collaborative mode, is the clear focus on the results to be achieved and rational means to deliver on plans made. This clarity is a positive organizing principle and a touchstone against which organizations and people can be held accountable. RBM nonetheless lacks rationality in one important respect: it introduces unnecessary rigidity into planning and management where **unpredictability** prevails. Rational planning under circumstances of unpredictability (conditions that affect your chances of success) and with limited knowledge of key factors

## Process Management (See page 28)



(factors that affect your level of certainty of success) may be better served by leaving gaps and details unspecified in the planning matrix, and treating existing plans flexibly, as in medical practice.

SAS<sup>2</sup> provides an alternative to RBM called Process Management, designed for use in situations of complexity and real-life unpredictability. It supports a process of **continuous planning** built around actions or activities in which goals are embedded, rather than starting with pre-defined goals and objectives that may be too distant or widely contested to define precisely. Process Management accommodates planning in a multi-stakeholder context where people pursue different goals or activities even when they collaborate in a common project or program. It also concentrates attention on planning at the right time and at the right level of detail, neither so general as to be of little use nor so specific as to leave no room for the unknown and the unexpected. Plans developed in this way can be seen as a series of **working hypotheses** to be tested against the full, disorganized richness of ongoing experience. Unpredictable outcomes and frequent adjustments are to be expected, even when actions are performed with due professional rigor. Moreover, diagnostic assessments take on an active role in the planning and management process in response to ongoing needs for information and analysis of changing circumstances. Findings of earlier steps become inputs for the design of later steps, turning collaborative research into a process of purposeful social action. (See page 28)

## Conclusion

SAS<sup>2</sup> social theory incorporates a managerial dimension into collaborative research and social action, using a Process Management strategy that acknowledges the complexity of real life situations, providing flexible tools to navigate in the troubled waters of social history. By the same token, it integrates the social dimension into the research, action and management process. It does so through a series of flexible tools for collaborative diagnostic thinking in the service of dialogue. The tools can be used to better understand the actors involved in a project or situation, the problems they are facing, and the options for action



## Log Navigation

they can adopt to solve these problems and achieve their goals.

This complex systems approach to applied research resolves three problems that are common in the field: toolboxes that are scattered, planning and research methods that are linear and rigid, and analytical guidelines that are sketchy. SAS<sup>2</sup> proposes instead a ‘log navigation’ strategy that allows practitioners to log in and out of the three principal modules (techniques to assess *Problems*, *Actors*, and *Options*), and the system as a whole, so they can choose and keep track of the best combination of tools to meet their needs. The tools can be scaled up or down to adjust the level of analysis to particular needs. This problem-solving orientation creates the internal flexibility needed to accommodate methodologies from a variety of sources and disciplines and support rigorous analysis by the actors themselves.



## Concepts and Tools for Collaborative Research and Social Action

<http://www.sas-pm.com/>

### Name of this Document

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SAS<sup>2</sup> AND PROCESS MANAGER

### Authors and Correct Citation

Jacques M. Chevalier and Daniel Buckles, 'SAS<sup>2</sup> 1.0: Instructions for SAS<sup>2</sup> and Process Manager,' in Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup> 1.0, <http://www-sas-pm.com/>.

### Introduction

The Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup> (SAS<sup>2</sup>) comprises a wide range of tools for collaborative research and social action. These include a central tool called **Process Manager** (PMr) that shows how to do continuous planning and flexibly navigate in situations of uncertainty and complexity, toward expected results. PMr and its conceptual foundations are described in Part 2 of this document.



An important feature of PMr is that it encourages users to incorporate diagnostic activities in their ongoing plans whenever they are needed, by applying SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques and software designed to facilitate collaborative thinking and decision-making. This grounds action in sound analysis, breaking down the distinction between thinking and action. Part 1 of this document presents a general outline of these **50+ techniques and software tools** organized into various modules (such as Problems, Actors, and Options).

Part 3 provides **instructions** on how to adapt PMr and SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnoses to different kinds of situations, including projects that require the conventional Result-Based Management plans and reporting procedures involving monitoring and evaluation.

Part 4 offers tips on how to facilitate **group applications** of SAS<sup>2</sup>

tools. The document ends with an illustration of Process Manager using the software MindManager (together with Word or Excel).

Three **appendices** offer examples of SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnoses performed in radically different contexts.

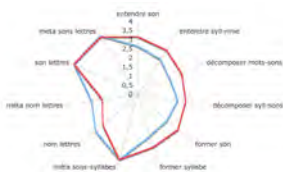
Hyperlinks inserted in the document point to more detailed descriptions of the various techniques that make up the Social Analysis Systems<sup>2</sup>. The conceptual and **theoretical foundations** of the SAS<sup>2</sup> initiative are explained in a separate document (see SAS<sup>2</sup> *Theory*). For more information on how to use SAS<sup>2</sup> and PMr for **monitoring and evaluation** purposes (M&E), see the document *Using SAS<sup>2</sup> for Monitoring and Evaluation*.



## Part 1: Social Analysis and All-Purpose Techniques

### Diagnostic Thinking

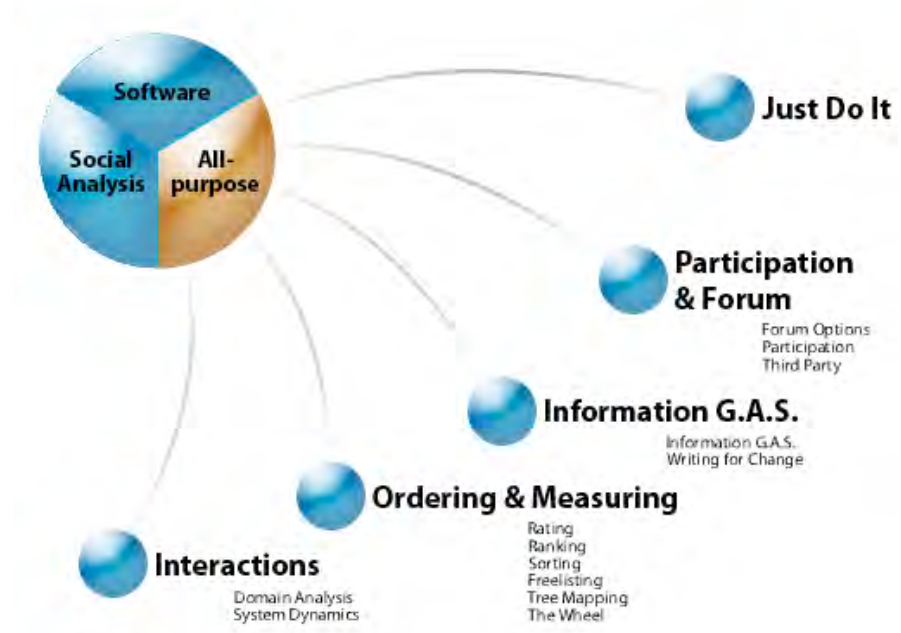
There are two kinds of SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques: All-Purpose Techniques (14) and Social Analysis techniques (40). Readers are encouraged to consult this overview to help them choose the techniques suited to their needs. Note that we use the expression ‘diagnostic technique’ to mean any explicit method used at any time to perform an investigation or analysis of the cause or nature of a condition, situation, or problem. We employ this expression instead of the conventional terms ‘research method’ or ‘evaluation framework’ which tend to be associated with expert forms of investigation limited to specific moments in a project or program cycle (usually at the beginning, at the end, or periodically during the implementation phase). In a SAS<sup>2</sup> perspective, diagnostic activities, using techniques of various kinds, can be organized at any time they are needed and with all the people that should be involved.



### All-Purpose Techniques

The All-Purpose Techniques are generic in nature and can be applied to any topic, including people’s knowledge and views of nature and society, using the forum and participation strategies

appropriate to their needs. They are divided into five sets of techniques:



## Participation and Forum

Participation and Forum helps you choose the forum options (*Forum Options*), the stage, form and level of participation (*Participation*), and the form of assistance (*Third Party*) that are appropriate to the activities you are currently planning.

## Information G.A.S.

Information G.A.S. (Gathering, Analysis, Sharing) includes two techniques. The first, also called *Information G.A.S.*, helps you choose the techniques you need to gather, analyze, or share information for the activities you are planning. The other is *Writing for Change*, a CD and Website that demonstrate effective writing skills, with a focus on writing for science and writing for advocacy.

## Ordering and Measuring

Ordering and Measuring techniques — such as *Rating*, *Ranking*, *Sorting*, *Freelisting*, *Tree Mapping*, *The Wheel* — provide instructions on how to create and organize the elements of a list, identify priorities, and compare the views of different parties.

## Interactions

Interactions consist of two generic versions of advanced techniques used elsewhere in SAS<sup>2</sup> for social analysis (looking at problems, actors, and options for action). The generic versions can be applied to the assessment of the relations between virtually anything

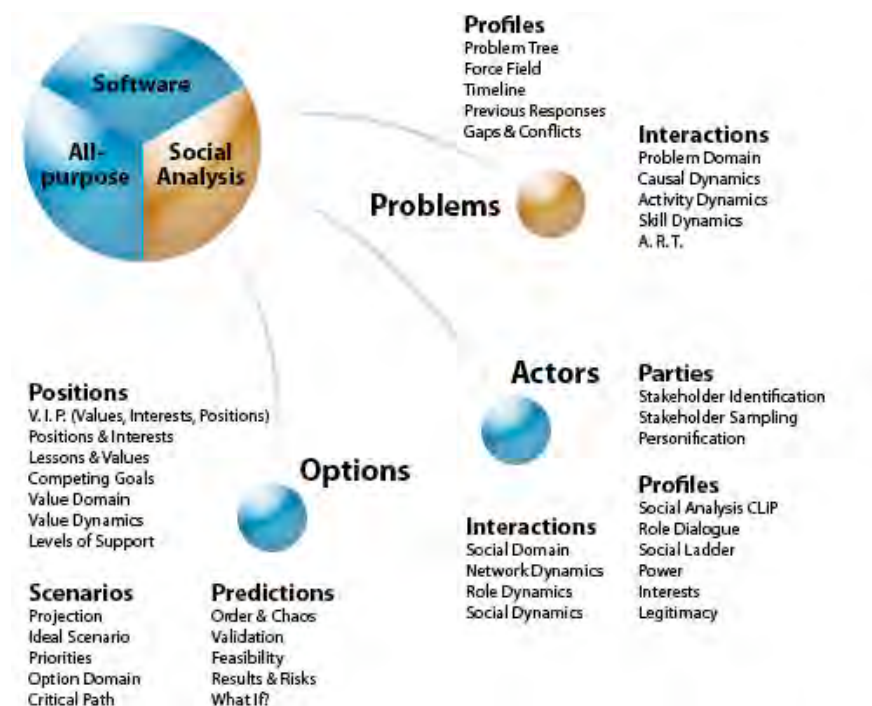


(including plants, animals, soils, etc.). *Domain Analysis* helps characterize and compare the elements of a topic or domain using words and characteristics that participants themselves choose and define. *System Dynamics* is a technique to explore the ways in which elements interact with other elements in a topic area (cultivated plants in a farmer's field, for instance). Both techniques may be used to test people's views against experience, solve problems, and learn in the process.

## Just Do It

Just Do It is an important reminder that people regularly engage in collaborative research and social action, in ways that may be formal or informal and that will vary according to culture and context. It encourages you to consider applying the existing day-to-day rules and procedures to gather and analyze information, create priorities, make plans, resolve problems, take action, and interact with others in the process.

## Social Analysis Techniques

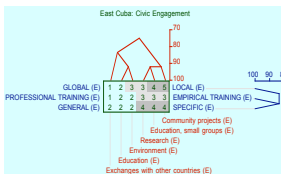
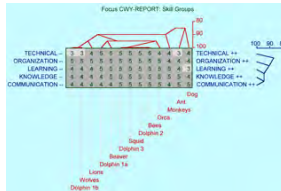


The Social Analysis techniques are organized into **modules** that reflect three basic questions applicable to any situation: what are

the problems that people face, who are the actors or stakeholders affected by a situation or with the capacity to intervene, and what are the options for action?

## Problems

This module presents 10 different techniques to describe or *profile* a set of problems and understand their *interactions*.



**Profiles** includes five widely used participatory techniques such as *Problem Tree* (assessing the first and second-level causes and effects of a core problem), *Force Field* (examining the factors that cause a problem and those that counteract it), and *Timeline* (identifying how a problem has evolved over time). In this set of techniques you will also find *Previous Responses*, a technique to assess the ways that key parties have managed core problems in the past, and whether these responses involved local customs, legal-administrative measures, or Alternative Dispute Resolution. The technique also explores whether past responses involved the use of necessary force, authority and social pressure, concession and accommodation, withdrawal and diffusion, give-and-take compromise, third party arbitration, or mediation and collaboration. Another technique to describe a problem is *Gaps and Conflicts*; it asks whether a core problem is mostly about gaps or conflicts in particular areas such as power, interests (gains and losses), values, or information and communication.

**Interactions** comprises five original techniques that are central to SAS<sup>2</sup> theory and practice: *Problem Domain*, *Causal Dynamics*, *Activity Dynamics*, *Skill Dynamics*, *A.R.T. (Action, Research, Training)*. As their titles suggest, these techniques help users characterize, compare and look at the interactions of problems, their causes, the activities or the skill sets in a project, an organization or a particular situation.

## Actors

This module consists of ten techniques that are divided into three sets: Parties, Profiles, and Interactions.

**Parties** are tools to identify, sample or describe the stakeholders

involved in a core problem or action (*Stakeholder Identification*, *Stakeholder Sampling*, *Personification*).



**Profiles** are more advanced assessments that revolve around *Social Analysis CLIP*, a technique and software tool to examine how the factors of **Collaboration** (or **Conflict**), **Legitimacy**, **Interests**, and **Power** shape the stakeholder structure in a certain situation and possible strategies to manage social problems or actions. If you need to assess each CLIP factor in detail, you can consult the corresponding techniques entitled *Power* (wealth, force, authority, information), *Interests* (net gains or losses), *Legitimacy* (rights, responsibilities, resolve), *Social Ladder* (the advantages and disadvantages of holding higher or lower positions), or *Role Dialogue* (the different roles that a party plays in a concrete situation).



**Interactions** comprise four tools to compare and assess the ongoing relations between actors. *Social Domain* can be used to characterize and compare actors using terms and characteristics chosen by the participants. *Network Dynamics* explores the network of influence, trust or information that exists between stakeholders involved in a core problem or situation. *Role Dynamics* focuses on what stakeholders expect of each other in a particular situation, and how much these expectations are actually satisfied. *Social Dynamics* brings together stakeholder analysis with problem and option assessment in a single technique that asks how each principal stakeholder, problem and activity (proposed or real) influences and is influenced by other stakeholders, problems and activities.

## Options

This module offers the choice of 17 techniques organized into three sets: Scenarios, Predictions, and Positions.

**Scenarios** are diagnostic tools to manage a core problem or action with a sense of vision and with efficiency. They help visualize the future that actors can expect if current trends continue and no actions are taken to change them (*Projection*); imagine an ideal future that builds on current strengths and accomplishments (*Ideal Scenario*);

compare options and identify priorities (*Priorities, Option Domain*); and identify the shortest path to completing step-by-step tasks together with parallel tasks that may be done at any time in the process (*Critical Path*).



**Predictions** allow users to assess different options by looking at the upstream conditions or the downstream effects associated with each option. *Feasibility* is an upstream diagnosis. It focuses on the favorable factors (strengths, opportunities) and the unfavorable conditions (weaknesses, limitations) associated with each course of action. By contrast, *Results and Risks* evaluates the positive and negative effects that are likely to result from each proposed action. Three other risk-management techniques evaluate the knowledge needed to assess a situation, make plans or monitor their implementation: *What If?*, *Validation*, and *Order and Chaos*. The first technique (*What If?*) helps users track factors that are difficult to predict and that may greatly affect the outcome of their activities. The other two techniques point to key ideas about knowledge management from a SAS<sup>2</sup> perspective. *Validation* suggests that a diagnostic assessment can be evaluated using two criteria: the extent to which the assessment is based on evidence (sound and sufficient information and analysis), and the extent to which it achieves consensus through collaborative thinking. *Order and Chaos* advances another important principle: the planning approach you adopt — flexible process management and/or detailed result-based engineering? — must reflect the degree to which your plans are well-informed as well as the level of difficulty you anticipate when trying to achieve your goals.



**Positions** consist of seven techniques to understand and respond to the positions that stakeholders hold in a certain situation. They allow SAS<sup>2</sup> practitioners to examine and discuss the positions, the values, and the goals of different stakeholders involved in a core problem or action. *V.I.P. (Values, Interests, Positions)* is usually a good place to start as it combines these different issues in a single technique: it compares the positions that stakeholders take on a problem or action with their actual interests as well as the moral values they hold. If the *V.I.P.* analysis shows that positions do not reflect existing interests, the technique *Positions and Interests* can then help to reveal the



interests underlying the positions that stakeholders take on a core problem or action. If the analysis shows instead a gap between the positions and the values or principles that stakeholders hold, SAS<sup>2</sup> users can then apply *Lessons and Values* to see how stakeholders can build on the lessons they have learned regarding how to apply their own values with positive results. Note that the software version of *Social Analysis CLIP* incorporates *V.I.P.* to produce a comprehensive analysis of stakeholder positions, values, interests, power, legitimacy and ties of collaboration and conflict. The findings of this full *CLIP* diagnosis can be used to plan actions that better reflect the interests and the values of the parties concerned.



Positions include four other tools to assess people's value systems and commitments to plans for action. *Value Domain* examines how people view the relationship between their own **values** and a specific set of objectives, actions, events, problems, objects or people that express or contradict these values. *Value Dynamics* focuses on the degree of interaction between the values that people hold — the degree to which their values are organized in a coherent system or a hierarchy where each value contributes to and depends on other values. *Competing Goals* helps rank stakeholders' goals (objectives or values) in order of importance, and understand disagreements or misunderstandings that people may have in relation to these goals. Finally, *Levels of Support* is a technique to identify the level of support or commitment that may be obtained for particular activities and options for action.



## Part 2: Process Manager

### Process Management (PMt) and Manager (PMr)

Process Management (**PMt**) is an approach to planning and managing single events or a series of events organized into projects or programs. The principles of PMt and how they relate to frameworks such as Result-Based Management (RBM) are



summarized in the Table below (for a detailed presentation of these principles indicating how they differ from and subsume the principles of RBM, see *SAS<sup>2</sup> Theory*). PMt is the *point of entry and practical grounding* of the social analysis and all-purpose techniques described in the previous section.

The PMt approach can be turned into a formal planning and management technique described below called Process Manager (PMr). How this is done depends on the kind of planning being undertaken. Three likely scenarios can be distinguished, with the help of the Social Analysis technique *Order and Chaos*.

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### Scenario 1: Plan First, Implement After

#### RBM

The first scenario involves situations that are sufficiently predictable for you to be able to plan most project activities (including M&E assessments) in advance with considerable detail, producing plans that are results-based and reliable in most respects. Many project and management tools such as Result-Based Management (RBM) operate assuming this high level of information and certainty regarding the chances of achieving particular goals. Under these conditions, use PMr and SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques to do four things in sequence:

- (a) Assess the initial situation using collaborative SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques (combined with other assessment methods).
- (b) Use PMr to make detailed activity plans based on your findings (when confident that you can predict the linkages between your project activities and the expected results).
- (c) Include plans to use SAS<sup>2</sup> (and other methods) to monitor the ongoing results of your project implementation against your baseline information (your initial set of diagnostic observations or findings).
- (d) Evaluate the final results of your project against your initial objectives using SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques (and other methods).

Many organizations and donors require projects to follow the RBM approach. SAS<sup>2</sup> and PMr can support this RBM approach and





achieve greater efficiency and accountability in the process, by providing tools for collaborative thinking and planning. However, this plan-first and implement-after approach (using SAS<sup>2</sup> and PMr or not) has its limitations. It only works well in situations of relative order characterized by low levels of uncertainty and high levels of predictable linkages between causes and effects (or between inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact). The limitations of this relatively linear approach to planning and management, with its sharp distinctions between research, planning, action, and evaluation, are examined in the document *SAS<sup>2</sup> Theory*.

If you choose this approach, consult the PMr instructions below, and then the instructions on how to incorporate SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques in Process Manager (Part 3). Note that you can also use this approach to plan a full research project, by selecting in advance the appropriate SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques to be applied throughout your research process.

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## Scenario 2: Continuous Planning

The second scenario consists of situations that are not fully predictable but still lends themselves to planning activities in a continuous mode — by making plans along the way or adjusting plans in light of unforeseen events and new information. These are complex situations of relative chaos characterized by the **unexpected and the unknown** where the results of prior activities, the performance of key factors, and stakeholder interventions cannot be assumed or fully predicted.

### SAS<sup>2</sup> & PMr

For this kind of situation, use several SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques and PMr to support a series of events in a project where some actions and analyses may be planned in advance and other plans must be made along the way (in response to ongoing project results, stakeholder interventions, and key factor performance). This approach allows you to make full use of SAS<sup>2</sup> in complex situations where you have incomplete knowledge of the key factors and their future behavior. To help you assess whether or not this continuous planning (or Process Management) approach fits your needs, see *Order and Chaos*. If you adopt this approach, consult the instructions below.

RESULT-BASED MANAGEMENT	PROCESS MANAGEMENT
RBM starts by defining the <b>objectives and expected end-results</b> , and then decides what actions are needed to achieve them.	PMt identifies ongoing and projected activities informed by experience . ideas and the desired results explicitly or implicitly embedded in them.
RBM requires a <b>coherent hierarchy of general and specific objectives shared</b> by all parties and <b>stable</b> over time.	PMt tracks complex <b>multistakeholder</b> situations where general and specific objectives interact and evolve, subject to <b>negotiations</b> , compromises, and change over time.
RBM tends to highlight the interests of the <b>beneficiaries</b> and apply measures of accountability and attribution for observed results to those who lead the project.	PMt accommodates a <b>plurality of stakeholder interests and contributions</b> to project results.
RBM uses a linear <i>conception —&gt; implementation</i> model or the <b>plan-and-execute</b> approach of the engineer. The model includes making <b>assumptions</b> and calculating <b>risks</b> regarding the conditions and means to achieve project or program goals. The approach is suited to situations of relative order characterized by low levels of <b>uncertainty</b> and high levels of <b>predictable linkages</b> between causes and effects (or between inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact).	PMt incorporates the <i>action —&gt; reaction</i> model or <b>testing-and-monitoring</b> approach of the medical profession. This adaptive approach is suited to complex situations of relative chaos characterized by <b>the unexpected and the unknown</b> , hence variable levels of predictability and uncertainty. It works in situations where the results of prior activities, the performance of key factors, and stakeholder interventions cannot be assumed or fully predicted.
In RBM most of the <b>decision-making</b> and <b>planning</b> occurs <b>at the beginning</b> of a project cycle and is done with considerable <b>detail</b> .	In PMt decisions are taken and plans for next steps are made at the right interval, in light of ongoing results, key factor performance, and stakeholder interventions. Plans are made at the <b>optimum level</b> , with gaps and details that are left unspecified until the conditions for further planning are met.
RBM uses <b>pre-established and expert led methodologies</b> , mostly for purposes of <b>comprehensive</b> planning and <b>accounting</b> for the resources used. Assessments are done through upstream diagnostic analyses, midstream reports on the work in progress, and downstream accounts and evaluations of the final results.	PMt incorporates <b>collaborative diagnostic</b> thinking into ongoing activities, using methods that are either <b>planned</b> in advance or <b>improvised</b> to meet unexpected needs. Assessments are done for accounting purposes but also to <b>guide social action</b> in circumstances that evolve over time.
RBM assessments emphasize the need for <b>reliable evidence</b> , measurable indicators, and means of verification applied at the overall <b>project level</b> .	PMt promotes the use of <b>multiple and flexible diagnostic tools</b> to assess different parts of a project at the optimal level of detail (simple, intermediate, or advanced). The optimal or good-enough application of diagnostic tools takes into account what is feasible in each case (given limitations in time and resources) and what level of evidence and agreement is actually needed for the assessment to achieve its purpose.

Note that when using this approach you may choose to progressively compile and reflect on the results of your actions and diagnoses to produce an applied research document such as a report, a thesis or a scholarly publication.

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### Scenario 3: Single Event

The third scenario involves situations that are so uncertain that you can only organize specific and relatively immediate events that are planned or simply improvised, as opposed to making detailed and reliable project plans in advance. PMr or other planning tools are not really needed in this scenario. Rather, you can simply use one or several SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic techniques when you need to for a single or one-off event. If you adopt this approach, go directly to Part 3 of this document.

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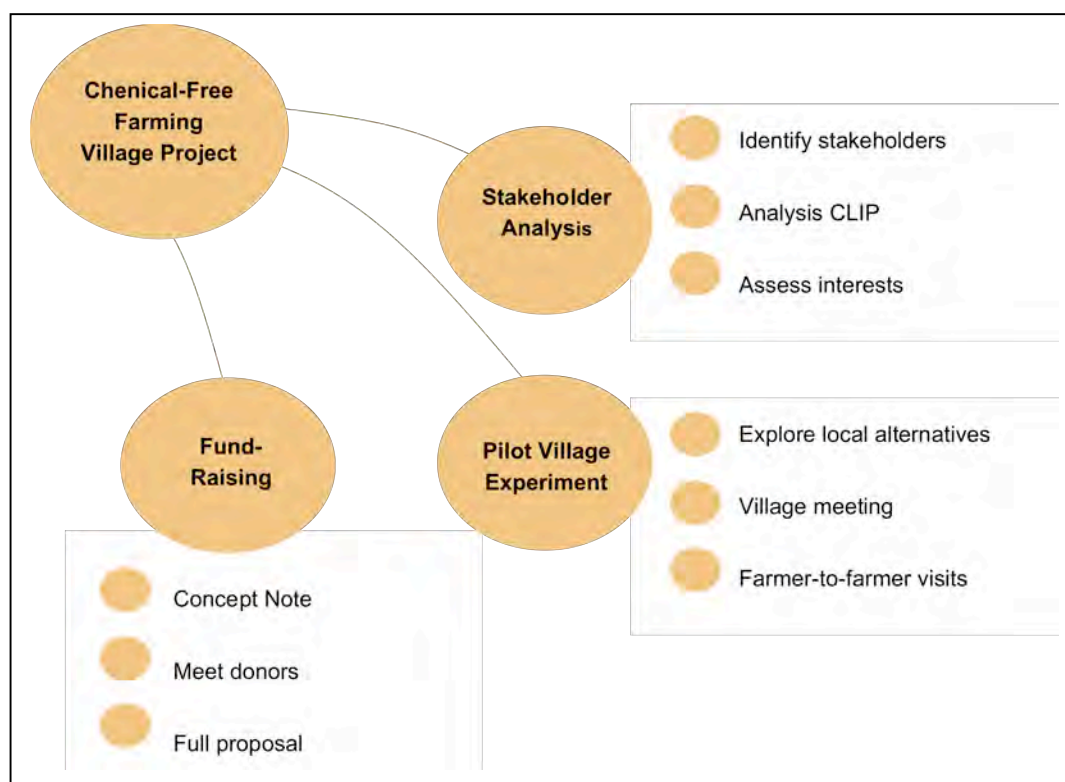
## How to Use Process Manager

Step	
Activity Bubbles	<b>1</b> Identify a <b>project or a series of activities</b> that needs planning.
	<b>2</b> Use brainstorming to <b>list all current and/or proposed activities</b> within your project. Make sure to include the diagnostic activities or assessments that you need as part of your project (including SAS <sup>2</sup> analyses; see Part 3 of this document).
	<b>3</b> Describe each activity on a card using a few key words (one activity per card) and organize them into <b>sets of activities and subsets</b> , if necessary (see Sorting under All-Purpose Techniques). Create a card and a label for each set and for each subset. Be sure to use concrete words and verbs that describe an activity or set of activities instead of topics or objectives. For example, use ‘workshops’ instead of ‘capacity-building,’ ‘fund raising’ instead of ‘resources,’ or

‘lobbying’ instead of ‘policy impact.’

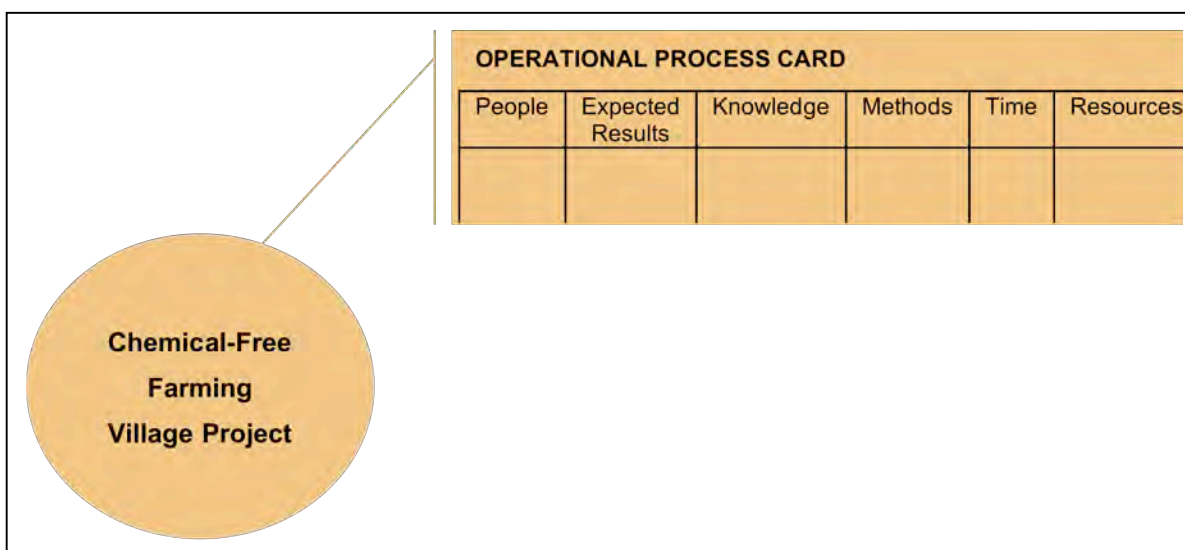
- 4** Begin your process map by drawing a **central bubble** (Level 1). This bubble represents your project as a whole. Label the bubble.
- 5** **Add** smaller **bubbles** at Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4 if necessary. These bubbles represent sets and subsets of activities. Identify the bubbles using the labels created in Step 3. To prevent your map from becoming too complex, do not create more than five lower-level bubbles for each higher-level bubble.
- 6** Place the **activity cards** that cannot be subdivided at the last level of your process map, close to the set or the subset that represents them.
- 7** **Trim down** your process map by reducing it to those activities that are important and feasible.

Here’s an example of a process map involving three levels:



## Operational Modalities

	<b>8</b>	Identify the modalities (people, expected results, knowledge, methods, time, resources) of your <b>project as a whole</b> . You can do this by filling out an <b>Operational Process card</b> for the project level bubble using the following 6 headings. <i>Choose the level of planning detail that corresponds to your needs.</i>
People		The <i>people</i> involved in the activity, their <i>roles</i> and the level of <i>effort</i> expected from them (the number of days they will dedicate to the activity).
Expected Results		The expected results of an activity and the <i>status of the results</i> already obtained (are the results partly achieved?). Results can take many forms, ranging from real products (outputs) to changes in behavior and relationships (outcome). Results may also include how stakeholders are affected or how systems are changed (impact). Note that different expected results corresponding to different stakeholder interests may be assigned to the same activity.
Knowledge		<i>Input or output</i> information, documents (electronic or printed), as well as reports, archives, statistics and websites.
Methods		Ways in which you and others will implement the activity, including how you will meet; the facilitation methods and decision-making procedures you will use; the ordering, measuring, and <i>Information G.A.S. (Gathering, Analyzing, Sharing)</i> techniques you will need for the activity (See All-Purpose Techniques). (The Social Analysis Techniques available in SAS <sup>2</sup> may be integrated into plans as activities in their own right, not as methods within an activity.)
Time		<i>Start and finish</i> dates
Resources		<i>Budget and equipment</i>
		Here's an example of an Operational Process card for an overall project level bubble:



## Plan Now



## Plan Later

- 9** For each activity, choose from three planning options: Plan Now, Plan Later, or No Plan Needed.

Identify the activity bubbles where the immediate planning of all modalities (Operational Process Card) is *needed and possible*. This is the Plan Now option. To help you decide if you should choose this option, ask yourself if you have enough information about:

- \* The results of **prior activities** (for example, do you need to see the results of your fund-raising campaign before you plan a public meeting?)
- \* The performance of a **key factor** (for example, do you need to wait until the municipal elections are over before you plan a public meeting?)
- \* The nature of a particular **stakeholder intervention** (for example, should you wait to see how the newly-elected municipal leader responds to your project before you plan a public meeting?)

There may be some activities that you cannot plan because you cannot anticipate the results of prior activities, the performance of a key factor or stakeholder interventions that may have a direct bearing on the activities. In this case,



## No Plan Needed

choose the Plan Later option. Indicate at which time you should revisit the activity to see if you have enough information to plan the activity.

There may be some activities that require no formal planning, because implementation details are clear to all concerned. In this case, choose the No Plan Needed option for that activity. The activity remains in the overall project plan but no Operational Card is created.

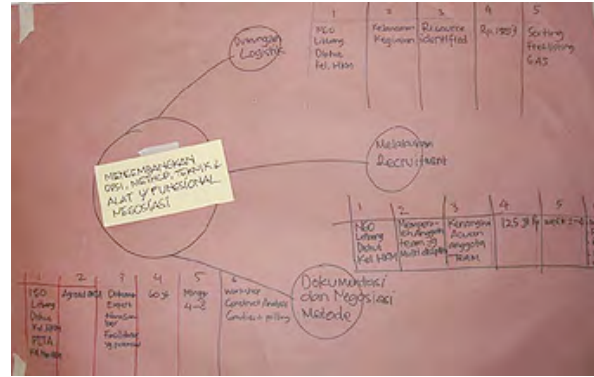
You may record the option you choose — Plan Now, Plan Later or No Plan Needed — on a **Ready-to-Plan card** if necessary. Attach the card to the activity.

Here's an example of a Ready-to-Plan card showing a 'Plan Later' decision applied to a Level 2 activity:





Pachacamac, Peru, UPAZ & IDRC, October 2002



Bali, World Neighbors and DFID, May 2003

## Level of Planning Detail

- 10** If you are ready to plan an activity at any level (Plan Now decision), fill out an Operational Process card for the activity. Choose the **level of planning detail** that corresponds to your needs. Make sure that the modalities recorded for lower-level activities (expected results, etc.) are compatible with the modalities recorded at higher levels of your process map. If some modalities (people, time and methods, for instance) are exactly the same at different levels, you can save time by recording them only at higher levels of your process map.

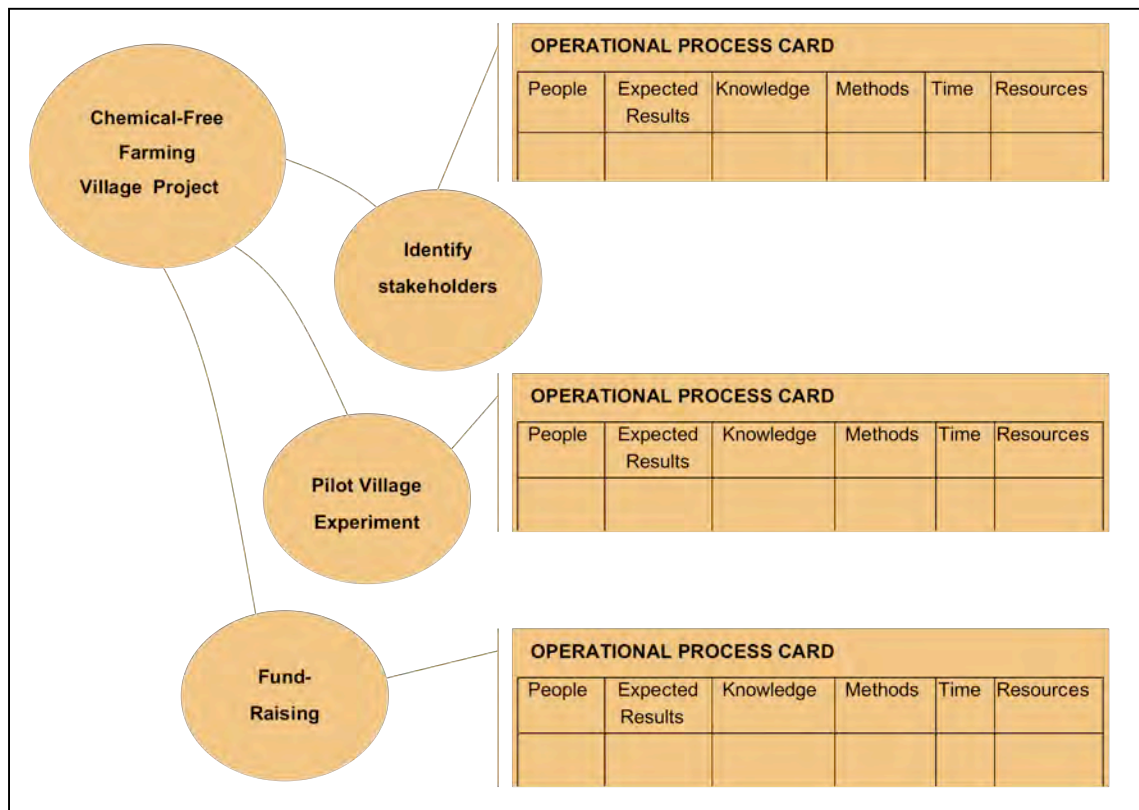
You may decide to focus on the activities that require immediate or short-term planning, leaving some more distant activities unplanned for a while and other activities without formal plans at all. This allows for a continuous and flexible approach to planning that can actively integrate relevant information into the planning process as it becomes available.

## Visual Codes



To make it easier to interpret your map, place activities that will be done in sequence (step by step) on the right side of your map, in a clockwise direction, according to the order in which you plan to implement them. Then place those that are one-off activities or not scheduled on the left side of your map. You may also create and use your own **visual code** to highlight important aspects of your process management map. For example, you can create bubbles using dotted lines to indicate activities that will be planned later, or colors to identify activities that are completed, ongoing or projected.

Here's an example of a simple process map that uses Operational Process cards for three activities (at Level 2).



## Continuous Planning

- 11** Individual or groups may create, fill out, record, and revise activity bubbles, Ready-to-Plan cards, and Operational Process cards at any time to meet their **continuous planning** needs. When you cannot plan an activity because of a factor you cannot predict, you may still decide to do some planning and revise your **tentative plan** at a later date, when you have the information you need. You may also develop a **Plan B**, to be followed in case the original plan does not work or no longer applies because of events you did not anticipate.

## Compile

- 12** You can **compile** Operational Process information from several activities to produce a table of who does what, why, when, and how. To do this, create a table with seven columns. In Column 1, list all your project activities (or only some of them, if you prefer). Use the other columns to

record the information you generated in your Operational Process cards (people, expected results, knowledge, methods, time, and resources) for each activity. You can **modify your table** every time new or more precise plans are made. This kind of table is similar to a Logical Frame used in conventional planning approaches (except that it can be modified over time) and provides a way of linking your plans to other organizational requirements such as reporting to donors on activities (See Illustrations.)

## Tips

- Work with **cards** for activity bubbles, Ready-to-Plan cards, and Operational Process cards that you can move around easily to produce a readable map.
- To prevent your map from becoming too complex, do not draw **lines** between same-level bubbles. Use the Operational Process cards to record connections between same-level activities.
- When working on complex projects, you can divide participants into **groups**, ask each group to use Process Manager to map out their own set of activities, and then adjust group plans through discussions and negotiations between all groups.
- For **simpler** versions: Focus on one activity bubble or one planning period, such as the next month. Omit the Ready-to-Plan or Operational Process cards, or some elements within them. For example: do not fill the Expected Results, Information, and Methods columns on the Operational Process card.
- For **more advanced** versions: Attach a descriptive text to each activity label. Divide your expected results into outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Produce detailed budgets. Describe the methods you intend to use, or the knowledge input and output assigned to each activity. Explain the observations and decisions recorded on your Ready-to-Plan cards. Convert your Operational Process cards into a MindManager map or into a Logical Framework or Microsoft Project document. Use the appropriate database and archival system to support the information inputs and outputs of your project or program activities.



## Part 3: Incorporating SAS<sup>2</sup> Techniques in PMr

### Diagnostic Activities

Project plans, whether they are created using Process Manager or some other planning method, should apply diagnostic assessments whenever they are needed. As noted above, we use the term ‘diagnosis’ instead of the conventional terms ‘research’ or ‘evaluation’ to refer to any activity undertaken to assess or analyse the cause or nature of a condition, situation, or problem. Diagnoses may be performed by any informed person or group, and are not limited to isolated, expert forms of investigation.

### Ongoing Thinking

Process Manager, and the kind of map created above, encourages users to incorporate multiple diagnostic activities, both large and small, in their planning process. Diagnoses may be lower-level activities designed to generate the information needed to create detailed plans (recorded in the corresponding Operational Process cards). Diagnoses may also be higher level activities that contribute information and analysis directly to broader project plans. Some projects may be diagnostic projects in their entirety (so-called ‘research projects’) designed to inform other ongoing projects or initiatives. In all cases, the challenge is to incorporate diagnostic activities and their corresponding methods into key moments of the planning process.



Once you have identified the need for a diagnostic assessment of a problem or situation, you can select the appropriate SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques (and other methods) to suit your needs. How you choose these techniques and adjust them to each diagnostic activity or learning event is not a science involving strict rules. Rather it is an art that requires the exercise of judgment, and a lot of practice. To make full use of SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic tools, practitioners must always consider the setting and the purpose of each diagnosis. They must learn how to make the right decisions on when to apply particular technique(s), what other methods they should use together with SAS<sup>2</sup>, how to organize the techniques in sequence, how to use them

for monitoring and evaluation, how in-depth the application should be, what supporting technology is needed, how to combine narration with tables and diagrams, whether the technique should be made explicit or not, and how to document the results. Guidelines on how to arrive at these decisions are provided below.

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## Identifying the Setting and Purpose

To decide how to **design a SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic activity**, identify first the overall setting and purpose of the activity and the corresponding modalities recorded in its Operational Process card. The key modalities that you must consider are:

- (a) **Who** will be involved in the activity;
- (b) How much **time** is dedicated to it;
- (c) The available knowledge or **inputs** from previous events;
- (d) And, most of all, the **expected results**.

Make sure you discuss and clarify these modalities before you design the activities involving one or several SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques.

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## Selecting the Right Technique

To help you select SAS<sup>2</sup> tools that match your needs, read the overview of techniques provided in Part 1 of this document. You can also consult the Social Analysis and All-Purpose Techniques maps available on the SAS<sup>2</sup> website, read the introductions to the techniques that interest you, and then download and read through them.

## Predefined or Elicited Concepts

Some SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques such as *Gaps and Conflicts*, *Social Analysis CLIP* or *Legitimacy* can help you explore problems, actions, and relations by using predefined concepts adapted from the social sciences (power, legitimacy, gaps in values or information, for instance). Other techniques, including those entitled ‘Domain’ or ‘Dynamics’, involve elements, characteristics, and relations that are fully elicited by the participants. When looking for the right technique to apply in a particular situation, it is important that you keep this distinction in mind and decide whether you should start



with predefined concepts or generate relevant concepts with the participants themselves.

## Characterization or Interaction

SAS<sup>2</sup> includes 13 techniques with either the word ‘Domain’ or the word ‘Dynamics’ in their titles. The ‘Domain’ techniques are social adaptations of Personal Construct Psychology. They can be used to describe or *characterize* a series of elements (problems, activities, actors, skills or options, for instance) and levels of similarity between them, with the optional support of Cluster Analysis and Principal Component Analysis using Rep IV software. By contrast, the ‘Dynamics’ techniques focus on the *interaction* between elements, including actors (*Network Dynamics*), problems (*Causal Dynamics*) or activities (*Activity Dynamics*). SAS<sup>2</sup> practitioners should keep this distinction between ‘domain characterization’ and ‘dynamic interaction’ in mind when selecting a technique.

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## Combining SAS<sup>2</sup> and Other Methods

To be fully effective, SAS<sup>2</sup> must be combined with the knowledge and learning systems that are appropriate to the situation. There is no SAS<sup>2</sup> technique to do chemical soil analysis or to provide legal advice on land tenure issues, for instance. These topics require particular forms of knowledge and inquiry that must be combined with SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic tools if collaborative research and social action is to achieve the expected results. Choose the combination of methods that suits your needs (see also *Information G.A.S.*), including the existing day-to-day rules and procedures to gather and analyze information, create priorities, make plans, resolve problems, take action, and interact with others in the process (see *Just Do It*).

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## Sequencing the Techniques

If you need to organize SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnoses in a sequence, first identify the module (such as Problems) that will be your point of entry (see below). Then decide on the techniques you will use and the order in which you will apply each technique. To do this identify those diagnostic tools whose outputs you can use as inputs for other steps. If you are using Process Manager and its continuous planning approach to project activities, you can decide how to order the techniques or tools at different stages in your project,

when you are ready to do so.

## Point of Entry



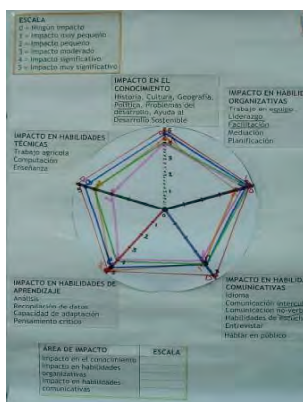
Note that SAS<sup>2</sup> has no fixed point of entry for all projects. This is because all projects typically have three main components that depend on and interact with each other: problems, actors, and goals or options for action. In order to define a problem, you need to know whose problem it is. But in order to identify the concerned parties, you have to know what problems they have in common. The problems and actors you focus on also depend on the goals or options you have in mind. This means that your point of entry should not be decided on the basis of fixed ideas that will apply in all situations (starting with options in the case of *Appreciative Inquiry*, or with actors and problems in the case of the German ZOPP and the Japanese *Project Cycle Management*, for instance). Instead, you should focus initially on what is *more pressing* and leave the other issues in the background until you are ready to explore them in detail. Your point of entry for a diagnostic activity or series of activities will thus reflect the actual situation you are facing, your immediate priorities, and the results of any prior activities. A flexible point of entry implies that the analysis you start with may have to be revised later in the project. Going back and forth between problems, actors, and options for action is an effective way to manage a process that is complex and dynamic.

## Log Navigation

In short, SAS<sup>2</sup> practitioners are encouraged to adopt a ‘log navigation’ strategy where they (a) identify the sequences of diagnostic activities that correspond to their needs and (b) log in and out of SAS<sup>2</sup> modules and the system as a whole to find the best possible combination of tools relevant to the situation. The exercise of judgement, and practice, are key.

## Using SAS<sup>2</sup> for Monitoring and Evaluation

You can use SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques to understand a situation (a conflict, for instance) before you try to act on it. But you can also use SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques to assess the results of your actions against the objectives you had in mind when you started intervening. The diagnosis then becomes an exercise in **formal evaluation**. This involves assessing the results of your actions or project activities against two things:



- Your expected or desired results (which you may have recorded in your Operational Process cards; see Process Manager in Part 2);
- Your observations (or baseline information) on the situation prior to your intervention.

If you choose to use SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques in support of this formal evaluation process, you can apply the appropriate diagnosis twice: at the beginning of the process, before the activities are started, and then at the end to see if things have changed as planned. When applying the diagnosis at the end of the process, you can use the same technique (*Social Analysis CLIP* for instance) or you may scale it down, by reducing it to some key indicators that are **SMART** — specific, measurable, applicable, realistic, and timely (see *Defining the Level of Application* below, and also the document *Using SAS<sup>2</sup> for Monitoring and Evaluation*).

You can also use SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnoses iteratively to **monitor** your project activities and assess the results periodically, after the activities have started. This allows you to take stock of results achieved over time, in the hope that things are moving in the right direction, as planned.

## Accounting or Learning?

You can use SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques for monitoring and evaluation at the level of an entire project or at the level of particular activities. You can plan to do this either in advance or in the course of a project. Whatever strategy you adopt, it is important to define the purpose of the exercise — is it for accountability, for learning, or for both purposes?

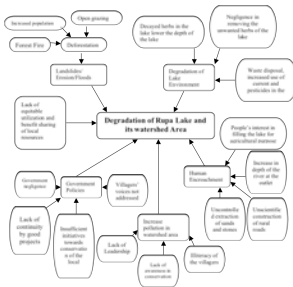
## Using Technological Support

All SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques are available in print and can be downloaded from the website. Some are also available in software form or as online tools (*Social Analysis Clip* and the ‘Domain’ techniques are currently supported by software). For each SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnosis, you must also decide what kind of facilitation equipment you will need, such as cards, flipcharts, drawing material, a projector, and so on.

## Defining the Level of Application

Each SAS<sup>2</sup> technique gives suggestions on how to make things simpler or more advanced. The following factors may help you decide how simple or advanced a diagnostic assessment needs to be:

- How much **time** do you have to apply the technique?
- How **familiar** are you with the technique?
- How **complex** are the issues? Can you address the issues using simple indicators of key factors, or do you need to divide these factors into their component parts (for instance, power can be divided into control over wealth, political authority, the use of force, and access to information and communication)?
- How **reliable** do you want the results to be? Do you need to ensure that the analysis is valid by providing both sound, detailed information and by making sure stakeholders agree with the findings? (See *Validation*)
- How much **dialogue** do you want there to be between knowledge systems (such as local knowledge and the natural sciences)?
- What are the expected results and how important are the **decisions** that will follow from the exercise? Are the decisions reversible if they prove to be wrong?



The level at which you apply a technique should be based on your answers to these questions. It is a good idea to avoid extremes: one where you apply SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques at such advanced levels that real stakeholder participation becomes difficult and action is always pushed back into the distant future; and the other extreme where you use the techniques in a mechanical and superficial way, without providing the details, nuances and analyses that you need to make the diagnostic exercise meaningful and reliable. To assess whether or not you're applying a SAS<sup>2</sup> technique at the right level, see *Validation* and *Order and Chaos*.

One way to apply a technique at an advanced level consists in dividing a key variable into its component parts — looking at the various expressions of the *power* variable in *Social Analysis Clip*,

for instance. By contrast, you can reduce the level of application of a technique by focusing on some key indicators that summarize what the technique is about. These indicators should be SMART — specific, measurable, applicable, realistic, and timely (see the document *Using SAS<sup>2</sup> for Monitoring and Evaluation*).

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## Combining Analysis and Narration



For a judicious use of SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic techniques and their results, think of the best way to combine and move between narration (describing events, telling stories) and analysis (supported by diagrams and tables). The role of analysis is to organize your information and findings in ways that are clear, logical, and succinct. Narration (whether oral or written) gives you the context, the sequence of events, *a sense of purpose*, and some details that add richness and texture to your understanding of the situation. When using SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques you can start with narratives and then convert the findings into formal analyses, or vice-versa. The important point to remember is to combine the two modes of understanding and communication and adjust the relative weight of each mode to suit your needs. You should also carefully read the instructions provided in each technique on how to integrate the collection of quantitative data (ratings for instance) with the analysis and the interpretation of your findings in light of group comments and discussions.

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## Explaining or Not Explaining the Technique

SAS<sup>2</sup> practitioners must judge when to share the step-by-step instructions of a diagnostic technique, and when to avoid explaining these instructions to the participants so as not to detract their attention from the exercise and the substance of the discussion. In the latter case, the technique should be used discreetly to guide an interview or group facilitation process, and to organize the findings in the facilitator's mind or notebook (during or after the event).

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## Documenting the Results

You should also define the steps you will take to document the results of your SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic assessment during the exercise (for example, by taking notes, voice recording, videography), decide

how extensively you will report on the group discussions, and determine the exact purpose or use you will make of the documentation after the exercise (towards a formal report or an online publication, for example). Documentation of the exercise should at least include the following elements:

- The purpose of the assessment;
- The context requiring the assessment;
- Process specifications;
- A descriptive analysis of the results;
- An interpretation of the findings;
- Follow-up actions identified by the participants;
- Observations regarding what went well or difficulties encountered during the process.



Photographs and other audio-visual aids should be used whenever possible to illustrate key aspects or dynamics of the exercise (see Illustrations associated with the SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques).



## Part 4: SAS<sup>2</sup> Facilitation

The following tips are general suggestions on how to facilitate SAS<sup>2</sup> diagnostic activities. They are tips specific to SAS<sup>2</sup> as a whole and are not meant to cover all aspects of group facilitation processes. For tips that are specific to certain techniques, see the instructions for those techniques.

### Pretesting

- Start with simpler applications of the technique you select and become familiar with it before you make full use of it.
- Design and pretest the technique with key parties involved in the process, if possible.



## Explaining the Technique

- Clarify the initial question and the main terms and ideas of a technique and, if necessary, replace them with another formulation of the question and terms that are more meaningful to the participants.
  - If using the technique in a language into which it is not yet translated (versions are currently available in English, Spanish and French), do some preliminary translation.
  - Don't try to explain the full technique before using it. Outline and seek agreement on the expected results of the assessment, and then proceed step by step, with breaks during the process as needed.
- 

## Managing Time

- Plan enough time for participants to go through all steps of the exercise.
  - You may decide at any time to stop doing the analysis so that participants can find more information about the issues raised in the exercise. Once the information is collected people can always return to the exercise and revise their findings if necessary.
  - To save time, you may divide all participants into smaller groups, and then ask each group to complete one part of the exercise (for example, by getting groups to complete the ratings for different rows in a table). Decide whether each group should be homogeneous (using the specialized knowledge they have on the subject, for instance) or heterogeneous (to make sure the diagnosis expresses views that are representative of the entire group). Use the option of smaller groups only if all participants don't need to be involved in all parts of the assessment.
- 

## Numbers and Measurements

- Keep in mind that numbers and measurements are not ends in themselves but rather means to clarify people's views or knowledge about a topic, define their priorities, direct their attention during a group discussion, and facilitate dialogue and

learning. Don't let the numbers overshadow the discussion.

- When planning several diagnoses involving tables or diagrams, vary the techniques and the kinds of tables or diagrams you will be using so as to avoid fatigue.

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## Groups Differences



- If participants disagree about some issues that may affect the results of a diagnostic activity, decide how important this is to the analysis and make a list of points to discuss or research later.
- Be aware that people may be members of different groups that may have different views on the issues raised in a diagnostic activity. For instance, representatives may have their own individual views on certain problems or actions at the same time as they belong to broader groups (for whom they act or speak) that have other views.
- When comparing the analyses of different groups and looking for possible disagreements and misunderstandings, ensure that group differences are clearly defined and relevant to the exercise. This means that the members of the same group should share similar characteristics. When people form separate groups, you may regroup them if you consider that their similarities are more important than their differences (this is called aggregation). On the other hand, if the differences within a group are more important than the similarities, divide the group into meaningful subgroups (this is called disaggregation). Pay special attention to differences that may affect how people assess the same issues. You may create subgroups based on age, gender, marital status, ethnic origin, religion, education, the amount of time they have lived in a certain place, their place of residence (such as rural and urban, old and new immigrants), or type of occupation (such as non-agricultural workers in a farming area).
- Think of realistic ways to help people participate in a diagnostic activity. Doing some analyses when all the key actors are present may not always be possible or desirable, especially



when there is intense conflict and little interest in resolving it. In some cases you may prefer to work only with actors that are keen to cooperate. You can then help them analyze the relevant issues and develop plans suited to their needs. In other cases you may prefer to ask a third party to facilitate the exercise by interviewing individuals or small groups separately, and then presenting the results at a general meeting where all the parties are together (with their prior consent).

- If you do the analysis with some stakeholders but not all of them, be aware that any resulting plans may reflect mostly the views of the participants and others who have similar views or interests.
- Keep in mind that you will not dispel a misunderstanding or disagreement simply by identifying it. Knowing the probable cause(s) is equally important.

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## Social Effect

- Keep in mind that doing a group analysis involves social interaction between the participants and also between the facilitator and the individuals or groups doing the analysis. This social effect may influence the views that participants will express, especially when the views involve sensitive issues. Participants will then express views that reflect what they believe they should be saying, not what they actually think. When this happens, you can discuss the problem openly with the participants. Or you can facilitate the exercise by interviewing individuals or small groups separately and then presenting anonymous results at a general meeting where all the parties are together (with their prior consent).

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## Facilitator's Role(s)

- The facilitator should not express his/her own views about the issues raised in the analysis, unless he/she is an actor and a member of the group doing the exercise. In this case, care is needed to combine the roles of actor and facilitator.
- Team work and a clear division of labor may be necessary when the facilitator(s) must combine several roles during the

application of SAS<sup>2</sup> techniques, including those of actor, consultant, note taker, or instructor (explaining how the technique works).



- Some techniques allow the facilitator to suggest ways to resolve particular problems and learning opportunities (as in all Domain analyses). When making these suggestions, it is important that the facilitator be brief, let the participants decide what is relevant, and make sure there is enough time for the participant(s) to reflect and respond.

# Appendix1: Mission Statement

## Title

### Mission Statement: a Bottom-Up Approach

## Objectives

Clarifying the overall mission of the HR team in one day, 15 participants, exercise not done in recent years despite restructuring of the overall organization

## Agenda

### Introduction

Brief explanation of the workshop objective and agenda.

### Mission Sabotage

Participants must think creatively of the things it would be in their power to do to undermine or sabotage the work of the HR Unit.

### Value Domain

#### Steps:

1. Define the **activities** of the HR Unit (using the Pilesorting technique).
2. Rate the activities according to their level of current and projected **importance** (on a scale of 1 to 7), using a one-year time frame.
3. Rate the activities according to the amount of team **time** (FTE) dedicated to each activity (on a scale of 1 to 7), using a projected one-year time frame.
4. Rate the activities according to whether the activity is **ongoing** (value 1) or **projected** (value 7), using a one-year time frame.
5. **Elicit the objectives** of these activities using the triad technique (small groups choose three activities at random and find two activities that have an objective in common, different from the third). Objectives are organized into bipolar pairs.
6. Participants divided into **groups rate the activities** against one set of bipolar objectives (competitive edge versus equity, employee-cooperant satisfaction versus standardization, capacity-building versus meeting local needs), on a scale of 1 to



7 (to represent the opposite objectives). The rating results are **shared and progressively discussed and interpreted** by the whole group, with a focus on the observed *differences between the more important and the less important activities*.

### Building Blocks

Each group prepares an upbeat presentation or **mission-like statement** of the objectives and projections described in the row rated by the group.

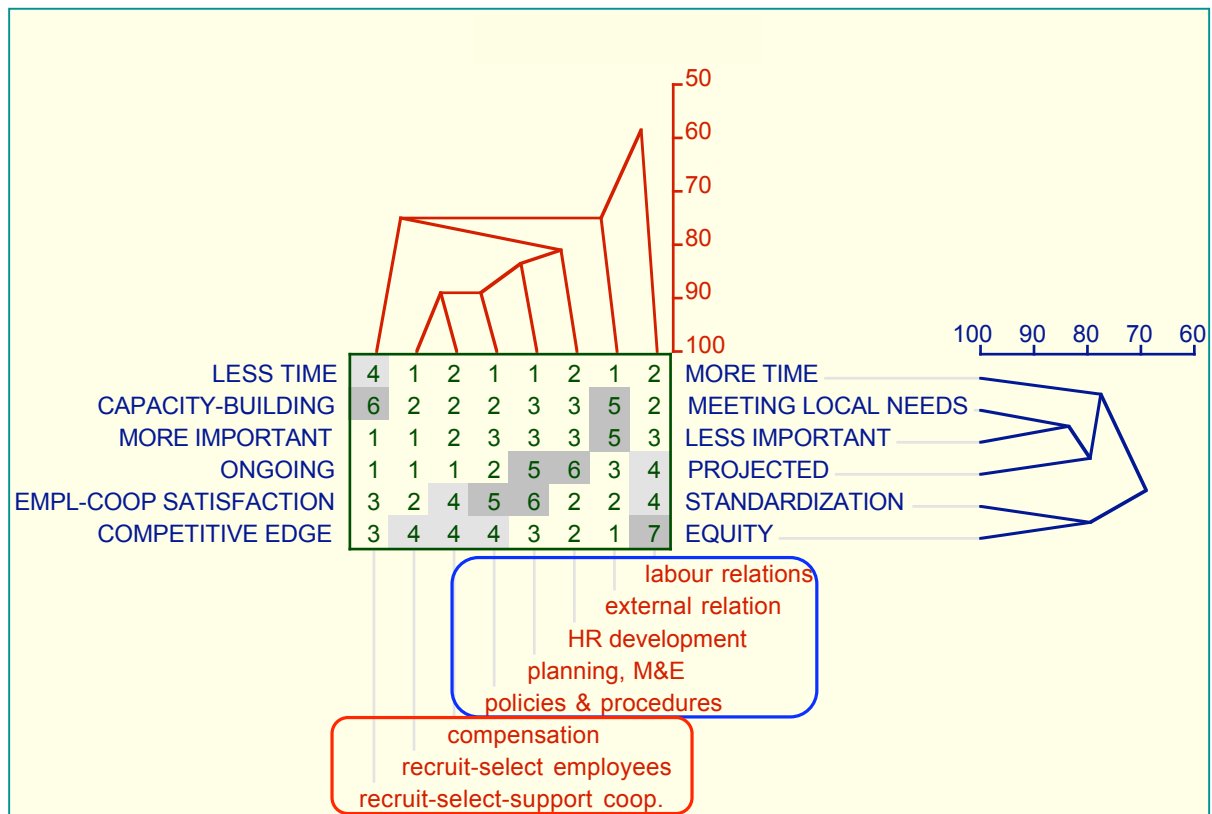
### Mission Surpassed

Participants must think creatively of the things that would happen if all of their objectives were successfully achieved if not exaggeratingly surpassed.

### Values and Interests

Participants assess the unit's mission and plan of action against the values they hold as well their professional interests (using a scale of 0 to 10 for both questions).

## Findings of Value Domain





## Interpretation

### Red Box Activities:

The **core mission** of the unit revolves around ongoing activities to deliver (a) compensations, (b) the recruitment and selection of employees, and (c) the recruitment, selection, and support of cooperants (which takes up more time compared to any other activity). These **ongoing activities** are and will continue to be central to the mission of the overall organization. They reflect a constant effort to *satisfy the needs of both cooperants and employees* and contribute to the further development of their *capacities* to meet *local needs*. They require that a good balance between considerations of *equity* and *competitiveness* be maintained at all times.



### Blue Box Activities:

Activities to support the core mission of the unit include the development and implementation of *policies and procedures*, *planning* (including budgeting and M&E), *HR development* (such as employee and cooperant training), and *labour relations* (including health and safety), as well as some contribution to *external relations* (working with NGOs and Canadian partners). The HR unit plans to **further develop these supporting activities** with a view to strengthening of the overall organization's ability to meet *local needs* and clarifying and *standardizing* the HR policies and procedures currently used by the organization.

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## Appendix2: Social Analysis CLIP

<b>Title</b>	<b>Social Analysis CLIP, Lama Township, Bandarban District, Bangladesh.</b>
<b>Authors and Correct Citation</b>	Daniel Buckles, ‘Social Analysis CLIP, Shabeck Billchary Village, Lama Thana, Bandarban, Bangladesh.’ Social Analysis Systems <sup>2</sup> 1.0, <a href="http://sas-pm.com">http://sas-pm.com</a> .
<b>Purpose of the Diagnosis</b>	To identify strategic alliances that can be used to support farmers wanting to shift out of tobacco production.
<b>Context</b>	<p>Lama is a township of indigenous people and Bengali settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of southern Bangladesh. It straddles the banks of the Matamuhuri River and is close to extensive forests. The British American Tobacco Company (BATC) and other tobacco buyers have been promoting the production of tobacco in the villages of the township since 1984. Currently, tobacco cultivation occupies most of the fertile river valley soils during the primary growing season and uses a considerable amount of wood each year for curing the tobacco leaves. Adverse affects of tobacco production include a decline in food production, health effects from the use of pesticides in tobacco, extensive deforestation, soil erosion and indebtedness among small and marginal farmers. UBINIG, a Bangladeshi non-governmental organization actively supporting ecological farming in a neighbouring township, has recently established contact with a few farmers in Lama that want to shift out of tobacco production. Before initiating a broader campaign promoting ecological agriculture among farmers in the township, UBINIG decided to undertake an analysis of the stakeholders that would be affected by or could influence their promotional activities in the township.</p>



Table One: Stakeholder structure in Lama in relation to a shift from tobacco to ecological agriculture.



## Descriptive Analysis



The stakeholder structure is one of opposing interests between upper-class stakeholders, some of whom have lower-class allies. A large block of forceful stakeholders lead by the BATC would be strongly opposed to the proposed shift from tobacco to ecological agriculture, with some support for this position from land lease owners, money lenders and irrigation pump owners. A block of three stakeholders are in similar or greater positions of power, but supportive of the shift. Between these two blocks lies a block of three vulnerable or marginalized stakeholders (tobacco farmers, labourers, and food farmers) with interests that would be negatively affected by or neutral to the proposed action. One cannot conclude, however, that they share interests with the upper-class stakeholders opposed to the shift, because of a history of conflict between them. Relations of collaboration exist between these stakeholders and more powerful stakeholders in favour of the shift to ecological agriculture. Collaboration between food farmers and UBINIG is only weakly developed. One stakeholder (the Zone commander) is an influential and neutral party.

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## Intpretation



The interests of tobacco farmers are perceived to be negatively affected by the proposed shift from tobacco to ecological agriculture because of the direct impact this would have on their income. Tobacco farming remains profitable despite the many problems it creates as well, both for the farmers and for the broader community. Food farmers are not clearly in favour of the shift either, because a shift to ecological agriculture would increase competition and put downward pressures on crop prices. The scenario is a challenging one for UBINIG (the sponsors of the diagnostic assessment and major proponents of the shift). Several strategies for managing the situation can be imagined. First, UBINIG must demonstrate to farmers that ecological agriculture can generate **net benefits** to farmers at least equal to those of tobacco. Attention by UBINIG and interested farmers should focus on assessing a broader range of economic gains and losses than are currently considered by farmers with a view to enhancing appreciation of net benefits and possibilities for expanding markets beyond the township. Second, UBINIG can make use of its positive relationship with some food farmers in the township to indirectly

influence tobacco farmers. This will need to be done cautiously, however, as the relationship is relatively new. Third, UBINIG may be able to build closer relations with the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council and the BADC irrigation scheme as a means to mobilize support for the shift both from the Zone Commander and the marginal stakeholders with whom they have relations. This strategic action should come later, once perceptions of the marginal stakeholders change in ways more favourable to the proposed action.

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## Action

The farmer participants decided to discuss perceptions of net benefits associated with tobacco production and ecological agriculture with other farmers in the township. UBINIG decided to undertake a detailed assessment of the gains and losses that would result from a shift to ecological agriculture and gauge market demand for a wide range of food products.

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## Process Observations

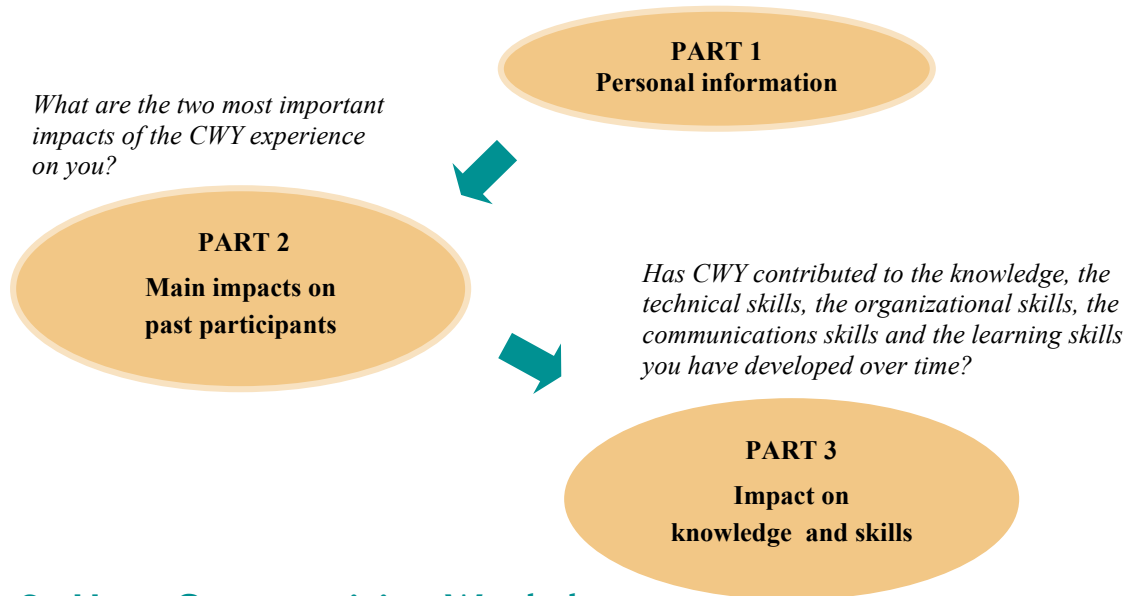


The participants in the exercise represented three stakeholder groups, indicated by a shadow mark in the table. The farmers were intrigued by the exercise and expressed confidence in the picture it created of the situation and strategic actions. They noted that the relationship between two of them had already followed the path suggested: one of the farmers had made the shift to ecological agriculture following exposure to options by UBINIG, and invited one of the other farmer participants (a tobacco farmer) to consider the same. UBINIG was both encouraged and cautioned by the exercise, realizing that support for their campaign was still very weak and that the concerns of tobacco farmers regarding direct impacts on income would need to be taken very seriously if any shift could be expected.

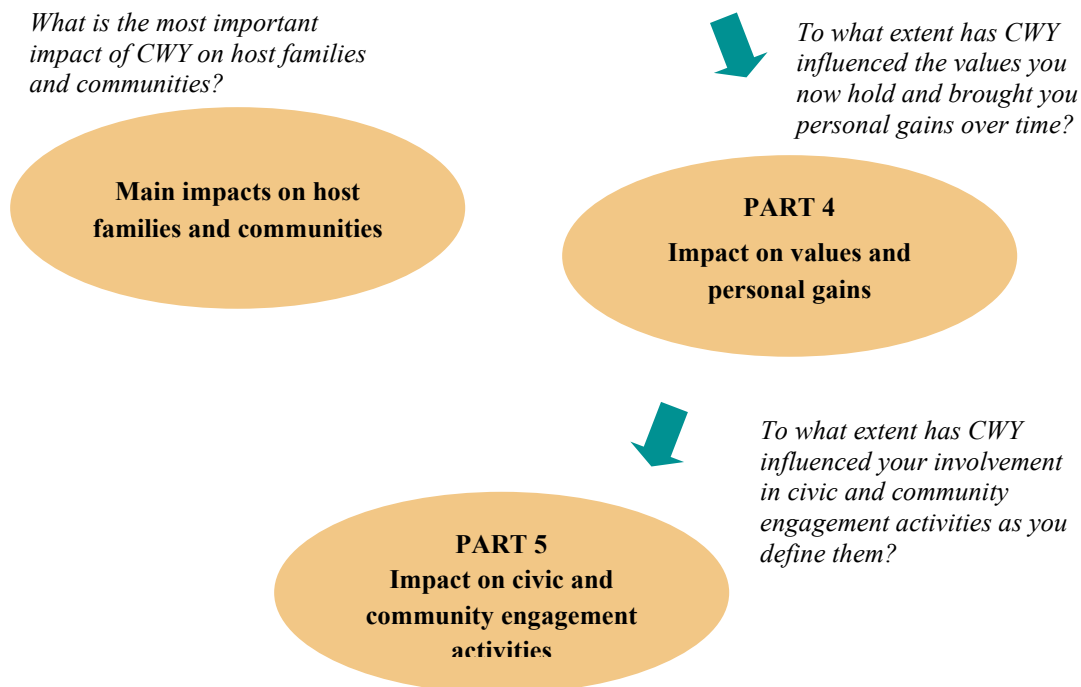
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## Appendix 3: CWY Impact Assessment

### 1. Past Participants Workshops (5 countries)



### 2. Host Communities Workshops



### 3. Institutional Partner Interviews