Participatory Mapping Guidelines

Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains

BIGfoot

Participatory Mapping - Methodology & Guidelines using the Bottom-up Approach Method"

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Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains

Towards local development through intergenerational dialogue in mountain areas

PREFACE

Although "participatory mapping", "bottom up approach", "local democracy", and "concerted management" and other such approaches are not exact equivalents, they are all variants of a local concentration approach and of a collective process whereby a local community can take charge of the future of its own area. Within the BIGFOOOT Project partnership, there is experience on how each one of the partners coming from the three testing areas (GR, IT, BG) better designs the participatory mapping in its area, but they do not share a common background on which "participatory mapping" would based to reveale the area specific features and structures.

On the other hand KENAKAP SA is familiar with the concept of "bottom up approach" which is core element of the LEADER method for rural development. Since 1992 KENAKAP SA has implemented all rounds of EU LEADER rural development programme from its initial form as Community Initiative (LEADER I & II) followed by the round of LEADERplus and the currently mainstreamed Axis 4. LEADER approach of EU Rural Development Programme 2007-2013. KENAKAP SA wishes to share with the partners its accumulated knowledge about this approach that allows the local community and local players to express their views and to help define the development course for their area in line with their own views, expectations and plans. However, the "bottom-up" approach cannot be applied (nor is it applicable) systematically to all places in all circumstances. Depending on the specific cultural context of each rural area the participatory process is often more of a trend or a desirable working approach than a day-to-day reality.

Therefore KENAKAP SA worked out a document titled "Participatory Mapping - Methodology & Guidelines using the Bottom-up Approach Method" with the aim to give both a theoretical and a practical framework for the participatory mapping context that the three partners may conduct while testing their experimentation in their areas. Furthermore tries to connect and thus to incorporate to a unique set all the work has to be done by towards to the final deliverable which is the Feasibility Study in our areas, within the Participatory Mapping of WP 5.

The 'Participatory Mapping - Methodology & Guidelines using the Bottom-up Approach Method' as document is Additional Deliverable to the Commission (EACEA) but by no means intended to replace any other, contractually fixed Deliverable.

A. INTRODUCTION

Participatory mapping is, in its broadest sense, the creation of maps by local communities, often with the involvement of supporting organizations. Participatory maps are used to provide a valuable visual representation of what a community perceives as its place and the significant features within it.

The participatory mapping process can influence the internal dynamics of a community. This process can contribute to building community cohesion, help stimulate community members to engage in decision-making, raise awareness about pressing issues and ultimately contribute to empowering local communities and their members.

Participatory mapping uses a range of tools but yet any mapping initiatives can be ineffective and generate confusion and conflict if implemented without a working knowledge participatory development processes and community facilitation and organization skills.

B. WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY MAPPING? – A THEORETICAL APPROACH.

A general definition for Participatory Mapping is " a growing family of approaches, methods, attitudes and beliefs that enable people to express and analyse the realities of their lives and conditions, to plan themselves what action to take and to monitor and evaluate the results" (Chambers, 1997, p. 102).

The common theme linking them is that the process of map-making is undertaken by a group of non-experts who are associated with one another based on a shared interest and is supported by a group of experts (practitioners).

Participatory maps are not confined to simply presenting geographic feature information; overall they illustrate important social, cultural and historical knowledge. They often represent a socially or culturally distinct understanding of landscape and include information that is excluded from mainstream maps. This type of map becomes a medium of empowerment by allowing local communities to represent themselves spatially.

Participatory maps are planned around a common goal and strategy for use and are often made with input from an entire community in an open and inclusive process. The higher the level of participation by all members of the community, the more beneficial the outcome because the final map will reflect the collective experience of the group producing the map.

It is map production undertaken by communities to show information that is relevant and important to their needs and is for their use.

C. SIX PURPOSES FOR INITIATING A PARTICIPATORY MAPPING PROJECT

1. <u>To help communities articulate and communicate spatial knowledge to external agencies</u> to demonstrate to external agencies how a community values, understands and interacts with its lands and immediate space.

2. <u>To allow communities to record and archive local knowledge</u> to use mapping projects to collect and preserve cultural histories and to record their elders' knowledge about their land.

3. <u>To assist communities in land-use planning and resource management</u> .

4. <u>To enable communities to advocate for change .</u>

5. <u>To increase the capacity within communities .</u>

− One of the greatest strengths of these initiatives is the ability of the mapping process to bring community members together to share their ideas and visions, which can contribute to building community cohesion.

− The map-making process can also act as a focus for discussion: discussions might raise community awareness about local issues.

− Thus, participatory mapping is not simply about being an expert cartographer, but about community building.

6. <u>To address resource-related conflict.</u>

D. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE OUTCOMES

1. Presence of enabling or disabling environments

Good practice includes developing working relationships with local people and citizens with decision-makers and including them in the design, implementation and results of a Local Action Plan initiative.

2. Roles of development intermediaries

The participatory aspect requires that the community assume as much control.... passing on as much responsibility as possible to the community.

Three **fundamental ingredients**: <u>transparency</u>, <u>trust</u> and <u>time</u>

– <u>Transparency</u> refers to the type of communication necessary for good participatory mapping practice. It implies timeliness, clarity, accountability, the use of simple and understandable language, transparent procedures (e.g. open meetings) and capacity-building in use of and access to technology. It respects the need for communities engaging in the process to be informed of all the potential drawbacks that might be associated with using the tools.

– <u>Time</u> is needed to build meaningful relationships between intermediaries and communities, and during implementation to maximize the positive impacts from the initiative and to enable local communities to take ownership of the tools and products produced. There needs to be clear recognition of the need for a substantial investment of time. Tight time frames, imposed to meet outsiders' agendas, often serve to undermine a project. They might also disempower communities by preventing them from fully understanding the technologies or fully exploring their potential benefits.

– <u>Trust</u> refers to the relationships between different groups and individuals. It is a critical ingredient for undertaking participatory mapping. Barbara Misztal (1995) writes that trust makes life predictable, it creates a sense of community and it makes it easier for people to work together. The need for trust appears to exert a discipline on practitioners. Without the appropriate behaviors and attitudes for developing this trust, participatory mapping practice is difficult indeed.

Important issues:

– Commitment to community control ;

– Respect for community needs ;

– Support for community intellectual property ;

  ▪ Removal of any map-related information needs to be done with the express permission of the community. Maps produced by the community should be considered "on loan" to the development intermediaries unless otherwise specified .

– Gender sensitivity.

  ▪ sensitivity to the role of women in the mapping process and the need for their voices to be included in the map initiative. Women often have a unique perspective about a community's land and a relationship with it that is different than men's. …(e.g. the youth , women, elderly people, etc).

– Clearly defined roles for stakeholders.

  ▪ At the start up pf the process, it is important to carefully define and agree upon the roles of the different stakeholders so that everyone involved in the project has a

clear idea of his or her own role and responsibilities and those of others. Generally, a combination of internal and external facilitation is the optimum combination.

− Long-term commitment to initiatives.

  ▪ Unless the map is produced for a single purpose with the expectation that it might be used just once, it is important for the information to be updated.

3. Awareness of mapping impacts

A number of unintended negative consequences and conflicts can occur:

− Boundaries and conflict

− Participatory maps' ability to present local knowledge

− Documenting sensitive information

E. COMMON PARTICIPATORY MAPPING PROCESS

Participatory mapping initiatives should be driven by <u>process</u> and not by products, technology or tools. The benefits of the structured process are that it is transferable and straightforward to follow. A highly structured approach may, however, sacrifice flexibility. However, a disorganized and unfocused process is likely to undermine a mapping initiative and alienate community members. It is important to have a clear structure in place before initiating or engaging in a participatory mapping project.

1. Preparing the community for the mapping activity

Prior to commencing a mapping activity, it is important to provide the community with:

− sufficient information about participatory mapping (e.g. why mapping, what maps are and how they are made and used)

− the range of tools available (i.e. from sketch maps to sophisticated computer-based mapping systems)

− the process required to create the map (e.g. how much time, effort and resources are required)

− the map's potential uses.

it is also important to consider what map **scale** the activity will use.

This information is best presented in a **community meeting** or series of meetings. This initial meeting is also an opportune moment for the outsiders to introduce themselves and begin to build a relationship with community members.

RISK: creating unrealistic expectations.

2. Determining the purpose(s) of making a map

to determine at the outset the purpose, or purposes, for creating a map and to have a strategy about how the map might be used to address issues faced by the community.

Questions to determine the purpose for creating a map:

Determining the purpose for creating a participatory map will require careful facilitation by either a trained community member or an outside intermediary.

Suggested questions to stimulate discussion and decision-making include

− Why do we want to make a map?

− Who do we want to show it to?

− What are some of our most important land-related issues?

− What can we use the map for in the short term?

− What can we use the map for in the long term?

− Is there a predefined reason for creating the map?

In most cases, communities will have multiple purposes for creating a map. What is important during this process is that community members think clearly and articulate why they are creating the maps.

At this decision-making stage, it is vital to involve as many people in the community as possible and having a broad cross-section of community members engaged in this decision-making stage. The larger the proportion of community members involved, the better the maps will represent the views and interests of the entire community.

If they are involved at this early stage it is also more likely that the community will take ownership over the map, which will result in the maps having a greater legitimacy both within the community and with outsiders. If the community meeting is large, it is often best to split into smaller groups.

After a clear set of purposes have been determined, community members must decide what information to incorporate into the map to satisfy the identified purposes of the mapping initiative.

Before information collection begins, the community must decide on some fundamental map-related issues:

− who from the community will be involved in making the map;

− whether the community intends to map its entire territory or focus on areas of special significance.

3. Collecting information

The mechanics and techniques for collecting information will depend on the chosen process and type of map that is being made.

4. Creating the map and determining the legend

Giacomo Rambaldi (2005) notes, "the preparation of the legend, particularly the selection of features to display and the way they are depicted and textually defined, assumes a key role in determining its final intellectual ownership, its resulting message, and its usefulness in the process."

5. Analyzing and evaluating the information

The map needs to accurately represent the views and knowledge of the community.

it is important for facilitators to lead a discussion to evaluate and verify the overall quality, completeness, accuracy and relevance of the mapped data.

This step is of particular importance if

− the map was made partially by outsiders;

− the map was made by just one group in the community (e.g. youth);

At this stage, community members (even if they were not directly involved in the map-making process) should have the right to add, remove or modify the information presented on the map.

Questions to ask when evaluating participatory maps.

The map needs to accurately represent the views and knowledge of the community. It is therefore important to allow community members to evaluate its content and usefulness.

− Should more information have been included on the map?

− Is any information incomplete?

− Is the information displayed on the map accurate?

− What are the most important parts represented on the map?

− What areas need to be improved or addressed?

− If genders were separated, what are the main differences represented on the maps and why do you think this is?

6. Using and communicating the community's spatial information

If a community has contributed its time and energy into creating a map, it is important that they see that their investment is respected and that the completed maps are used to serve the purpose(s) identified during Step 2 of this process. Using the maps needs to be part of a broad and well-defined strategy.

Six stage mapping process

1. Ground preparation: During the months leading up to the start of formal project activities, project leaders and indigenous authorities visit communities to explain the objectives and importance of the mapping work and to discuss the methodology to be used.

2. First workshop - orientation and training: Project staff and indigenous leaders bring together the surveyors and the technical team and explain to them the objectives and methodology of the mapping project.

3. First fieldwork - gathering data and sketch mapping: Surveyors visit communities in their areas to gather detailed information.

4. Second workshop - transcription of data onto new maps: Surveyors arrive from the field with information on significant land features in their region.

5. Second fieldwork- verification of data: Surveyors return to the communities with the draft maps to verify the details on them, answer questions and fill in gaps. Villagers have an opportunity to take a critical look at the maps and discuss issues surrounding their territory.

6. Third workshop - correcting and completing final maps: Surveyors reunite with the cartographers to incorporate information that has been verified in the field and put the draft maps in final form.

F. PARTICIPATORY METHOD – THE "BOTTOM UP APPROACH" MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. "Bottom up" approach: an approach to sustainable rural development

From a sustainable development perspective, the **Bottom up** approach seeks to take into account the internal opportunities and constraints of rural areas as a result of the

environmental, economic, social and cultural factors of an area's past, as well as the external opportunities and constraints arising from opening up local economies.

Although "bottom up", "participatory", "local democracy", "concerted management" and other such approaches are not exact equivalents, they are all variants of a local concentration approach and of a collective process whereby a local community can take charge of the future of its own area.

It is an approach that allows the local community and local players to express their views and to help define the development course for their area in line with their own views, expectations and plans.

However, the "bottom-up" approach cannot be applied (nor is it applicable) systematically to all places in all circumstances. Depending on the specific cultural context of each rural area the participatory process is often more of a trend or a desirable working approach than a day-to-day reality. However, there is no doubt that efforts are being made to put local communities and local development players back at the heart of the rural development process.

The situation of each rural area can be analysed in relation to issues that overlap in some respects:

− Engaging the community and reinforcing social cohesion;

− Reinforcing the culture and identity of the area;

− Preserving natural resources and managing the environment and land;

− Creating activities, reinforcing competitiveness and accessing markets;

− Benefiting from technological developments in all fields (agriculture, transport, etc.), especially information and communication technology (ICT);

− Balancing migratory flows and ensuring socio-professional integration;

− Combining know-how, skills and jobs;

− Enhancing the image and perception of the area;

2. Aims and objectives of the "Bottom up" approach.

The bottom-up **aims** to encourage a process of local participation in every aspect of development policy. The involvement of local players is sought at all levels, either through consultation or by involving them in the partnership. It is aimed at the whole community, promoters of ideas and projects, the civic and voluntary sector, economic and social interest groups and representative public and private institutions.

Participation is encouraged at every stage: during the definition phase, during implementation, during evaluation and the revision of the programme – either directly or through those bodies representing collective interests (professional organisations, women's groups, cultural associations, etc.)

The bottom-up approach has a number of **objectives**:

− To <u>involve the local community</u> : Securing the active participation of the community and of economic and institutional partners and associations in the development process entails organising the circulation of information, facilitating access to training and finding suitable methods of "animation", whilst at the same time ensuring transparent decision-making procedures. In most cases this involves first and foremost giving renewed confidence to local communities and players not accustomed to expressing their needs, expectations or plans.

− To <u>draw out ideas and generate initiatives</u> – Which calls for a degree of open-mindedness and acceptance of the risks associated with innovation. Fostering meetings and dialogue between people, convergence between sectors, the exchange of knowledge and complementarity between skills are all aspects that "animation" will seek to develop among a multitude of target groups, both present and yet to come.

− To <u>build consensus</u> – Where participatory decision-making works effectively, it can ensure broad and fair representation of all interest groups, thereby providing an opportunity to build consensus, manage conflict and foster new links between sectors and groups.

− To <u>delegate decision-making powers</u> – Adopting the bottom-up approach means delegating decision-making powers from other levels of governance to the local level. Participatory local decision-making allows new ideas and projects that have emerged to be managed and integrated to the full. Hence the need to implement this approach as early as possible, from the stage of analysis and drawing up the local action plan.

3. "Bottom up" approach's specific contribution.

It can be distinguished four main contributions of the **"Bottom up" approach**, towards to a sustainable rural Community plan:

− <u>A decentralized, integrated, area-based approach</u>: by focusing on the benefits of (re)considering a rural area in its entirety (i.e. ignoring classic thematic or sectoral boundaries), by putting different sectors of activity into contact with one another and by adopting an approach that allows local players to express their views and help to shape their area's destiny in line with their own desires and vision for the future, the **"Bottom up" approach** is a particularly suitable means of fostering the social and economic revitalization of rural areas;

− Community engagement: inherent in the **"Bottom up"** approach, the aim of engaging the community makes it possible to collectively tackle the area's future by overcoming fatalism and traditional divides, fighting exclusion and ensuring a balance between the know-how, opportunities and needs of all sectors of the community. Ultimately the method helps to define new or revive existing local identities;

− Uniting development players at local level: **"Bottom up" approach** encourages the establishment of new partnership and local management structures.

− Depending on the local context, **"Bottom up" approach** facilitates the development of new forms of collective organisation, knowledge organisation and political organisation. Even more focuses on a local approach and encourages greater local "governance"

4. The groups of development players and their interests.

Implementing an approach to suit rural areas calls for a new local development approach but, above all, for an approach that corresponds as closely as possible to the concerns and expectations of local development players.

By advocating an integrated bottom-up approach, as well as the decentralized management of public policies, helps to give renewed consideration to the prime movers in a rural area.

An overview of the diverse players involved is required in order to achieve a coherent partnership approach. Potential players and partners belong to three main groups:

− People or associations of people concerned primarily with issues of society, employment and quality of life.

− Private enterprises and the financial sector concerned primarily with business growth and profitability, as well as with the local economy's adaptation to markets.

− local public institutions concerned with regional policy, employment, the area's environmental, economic, social and cultural "heritage", the settlement of new residents and coherence between sectoral and area-based policies.

Combining the diverse, or even conflicting, interests of the different players involved in the development process transforms the vision of the "area project".

It allows for a richer, more complex and coherent interpretation of the new framework of reference represented by the area project:

− **richer**, because recognition of the diverse viewpoints makes it possible to get away from "clichéd" ways of thinking handed down from generation to generation and attitudes of "what just is not done" that have led to the time-honoured caution of most rural areas.

− More **complex**, because it reveals existing obstacles that are so characteristic of community groups whose opinions are not taken sufficiently into account. It reveals the existence of hitherto disregarded human resources and innovative ideas.

− More **coherent**, because the expression of differences, or even diverging points of view, though annoying at first due to the latent conflict to which they may lead, is essential for the creation of new identity references. It is through action, through the development of a collective project that it becomes possible to overcome the conflict arising from these first encounters and to develop initial views.

5. "Bottom up" approach: The four levels of "participation"

At each stage of a development programme, it is necessary to consider which are the most appropriate tools and methods for fostering local participation. Whether at the stage of programming, decision-making or implementation, "participation" occurs at different levels, with different people or groups and different resources that have to be set in motion at the right time. The four levels proposed below are not "sequential" but simultaneous levels that are brought into play to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the programme phase.

LEVELS	TOOLS	WHEN?	WHO?
Information	Public meetings Media and telecommunication, fairs and exhibitions	Initial phase, programme implementation phases, project identification phase	The entire community, LAG partnership, project leaders, institutions, decision-makers
Consultation	Village audit, Methods of participatory analysis, training "animators"	Initial phase, development of the strategic plan	Active community groups, associations, interest groups
Joint development	Specialist working groups, "animation" of the partnership, training "animators" and local players	Launch of the projects, implementation of the programme, participatory evaluation (self-assessment)	local partnership, sectors concerned, interest groups
Collective Decision making	Participatory selection of projects, "animation"	Definition of courses of action and strategies Implementation of	local partnership, project leaders

of the partnership	the programme, new analysis following the participatory evaluation	

G. VALUES AT THE HEART OF THE BOTTOM UP APPROACH

The bottom-up approach requires "developers" to support a number of values:

- To respect ideas and people – No exchanges or joint efforts are possible where there is indifference or contempt;

- To recognise the existence of diverse needs – Social and economic cohesion is one of the key elements for balanced and sustainable development. It is therefore vital to seek a balance between the needs of farmers and of other rural players, such as the tourist sector;

- To introduce transparency – In the distribution of tasks, in decision-making, etc.

Calling for flexibility and pragmatism, the bottom-up approach calls for adaptations to be made to suit the different contexts, players, goals and objectives involved. For this, the key concept is "animation" – in the field, in working groups and in the global approach.

1. Participation + collective decision-making = project ownership.

The bottom-up approach eventually is based on the **equation** : Participation + collective decision-making = project ownership.

In order for the local community to truly take control of the development project, it must be fully involved in the process and must be included in some way in the decision-making process, in a way that:

1st Evolves as the programme develops.
- During the analysis phase, the bottom-up approach calls for **awareness-raising** (through information) and **engagement** in order to analyse the rural area's strengths and weaknesses and to identify needs and expectations (using methods of participatory analysis). This stage targets the entire community, plus the active groups.

- During the phase of **planning** the strategic choices of the programme, the bottom-up approach calls for the participation of various interest groups (by setting up ad hoc working groups).

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2<u>nd</u> <u>Is tailored to suit the context.</u>

The initial local context will determine a multitude of different forms of engagement. In this respect, it is important to distinguish between:

− Contexts that require a partnership founded on an **engagement rationale** – where the aim is, for instance, to reconcile conflicting parties, remedy certain shortcomings in institutions, refocus local energies on the rural area, etc.

− Contexts that require a partnership founded on a **structural approach** – where institutions are strong, there are long-standing partnership practices, etc. The main aim in this case is to link the different institutional functions and sectors of intervention.

Whatever the case may be, it is possible to engage the community and local players only:
− If they feel that they have "something to gain" from the process.

− If they quickly see tangible improvements in the quality of life in the area.

− If the approach takes into account all of the problems as a whole, instead of concentrating solely on the difficulties of certain community groups or sectors of activity.

− If it extends the community-engagement principle further than the stage of the area-based analysis (organising the circulation of information, exchange situation, monitoring of project results, etc.)

− If the partnership has a spin-off effect, leads to the development of the local action group and/or to the emergence of new forms of organization and collective learning processes.

2. Some tips to "animate" the area.

"Animation" activities are a strategic component of the bottom-up approach. Local action groups have fully understood this and have invested time and money in "animation" activities. The job of "development agent" has developed and become a profession. In the programmes, there have been significant intangible investments to complement Structural Fund investments.

It may be used numerous avenues for putting the bottom-up approach into operation:
− Creating meeting places (organisation of events, public meetings, village audits, training courses, etc.)

− Managing conflict (encouraging conflicting views to be expressed, initiating negotiations or even arranging mediation, etc.)

− Encouraging links between sectors and groups (thematic meetings, organising visits, discussions, etc.)

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−   Decentralising responsibilities, whilst bearing in mind that true power sharing has to be approved by those who have the power in the first place. As a result, formal management of the local partnership very often remains under the control of certain types of "dominant" partner, usually the public authorities.

−   Enhancing the professionalism of communication (targeted and interactive use of means of communication, fairs, exhibitions, etc.)

H. THE BIG FOOT PARTICIPATORY MAPPING FOR INTER-GENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

1.   Making the diagnosis of the area.

The **elaboration of the Participatory Mapping** is a complex process that requires a good knowledge of the intervantion area, a thorough collection of primary data and information, and continuous contact with residents and stakeholders in the region, in order to be achieved an integrated approach to the phenomenon of the ageing of population and depopulation of mountain rural areas. The overall picture of such approach can be mapped in an **Area Diagnostic Study**. The **aim** of the area diagnosis is to identify the information necessary in order to influence the particular area and to collect the data required for this purpose. The more that is known about an area, the easier it is to implement a tailor-made development project **(BIG FOOT experimentation activity).** Correct identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the area (assets, vehicles for innovation, main obstacles, factors which hinder development, etc.) will make it easier to establish a lasting impetus for development. This knowledge will subsequently enable a better assessment to be made of the effects of the development project.

2.   Selecting the intervention area.

The BIG FOOT project is intended for **small rural areas** which form a homogeneous unit in physical (geographical), economic and social terms. The areas selected must in all cases have sufficient coherence and critical mass in terms of human, financial and economic resources to support a viable development strategy. Applying these criteria may result in areas being defined as not coinciding with a national administrative area. In all cases artificial divisions of areas which could undermine the coherence requirement referred to above should be rejected.

Neither universal nor static, the "area" concept is a collective one based on the integration of geographical, economic, social, cultural, political and other factors. The area is both the product of its history and a reflection of its present, whilst at the same time harbouring the conditions for its own future.

Its identity is conveyed by its inhabitants (sense of belonging) and by exchanges with the "outside world", which in turn reflects back a certain image of the area. The "area-based" approach allows

local players to define a development policy based on the area's particular circumstances, assets (strengths), constraints (weaknesses), needs and opportunities. It relies on a global concerted approach to the area, and on a bid to integrate (endogenous) local resources.

3. Collecting the data.

In addition to the specific features of the area under consideration, the diagnosis requires that various general areas of information should be covered. Indicatively these include:

− description of the area - geographical constraints and assets;

− specific historical and cultural features;

− demographic data and trends;

− available infrastructure and locally accessible services;

− environmental assets and constraints;

− structure and organization of, and current developments within, the local economy;

− development of the labour market;

− existing social problems;

− innovative projects which have already been planned or carried out by local people;

− analysis of the institutional framework of the area in question (particularly with respect to territorial authority);

− the importance and activities of associations, trade unions, etc..

Not all the fields examined will necessarily appear in the final diagnostic study; it will contain only the most important and relevant information, enabling a direction to be given to the development project to be supported by BIG FOOT programme **(BIG FOOT experimentation activity).** However, all the information collected may prove invaluable when the impact of the process is subsequently evaluated. The factual information and the development trends in the main factors will enable a 'reference situation' to be developed ("what would have happened if there had been no intervention"), against which the impact of the action can be measured.

The list of points to be analysed must be supplemented with a list of the studies and surveys which have been carried out already on the area in question. This will mean that the available resources, which are inevitably limited, will not be wasted and may also, extend the lines of approach. Research in the local newspapers, specialist publications and the region's research centres can often yield much data and analysis.

4. Analyzing the data and further progress.

The next stage is to analyse the information which has been collected. This analysis should highlight the main sources of impetus used in the area. In particular, this diagnosis must clearly reveal:

− the strengths and weaknesses of the area as a whole and of its constituent parts;

− the basic observable trends within the area with respect to the population, economy, housing, social and cultural life, etc.;

− the categories of the population most affected by social and economic problems;

− initiatives and projects which appear already to be vehicles for innovation;

− the 'obstacles' which must be overcome and, as a consequence, the actions to be implemented in the social, economic and cultural spheres;

− resources (internal and external) which would be needed to get these actions off the ground.

The diagnosis lists what needs to be done and what can feasibly be done, but it does not take firm decisions. The elements contained in the list should then be used to set out a strategy. It must therefore provide all the elements needed to ensure that the strategic choices are relevant and support the choice of the development project to be supported **(BIG FOOT experimentation activity).**

Indeed, one of the important objectives for the diagnostic stage is to communicate with the population concerned on the work carried out and the conclusions reached. Even if the diagnosis is carried out over a very short period, it is desirable that interim reports (through the press, during meetings and wider debates, etc.) be organised on a regular basis and be accompanied by requests for contributions. This will inevitably enhance the analysis and will also allow the diagnosis procedure to be used as an ideal opportunity to involve local people in the initiative. In particular, this way of working encourages the growth of a collective vision of the area.

5. Practical steps in addressing a development project to support under BIG FOOT (experimentation activity).

For the purpose of conducting a diagnostic study and to select a local development project to be supported **(BIG FOOT experimentation activity)**, the following activities and work practices are being proposed:

− For a start must be realized the collection of statistical data and information, concerning the area of intervention, so to be 'determined' the area and to be done a presentation of its main features. In this direction can be gathered data regarding demographic and social characteristics of the population, such as the total population, distribution of the population per age and gender, dependency index and ageing index, age, education

level, occupational status, etc., data that determine the economic characteristics of the population, such as employment and unemployment and records relating to the natural environment and special features of the intervention area. Moreover, can be implemented an analysis of the economic activities of residents, according to the sector of activity, namely the characteristics of those employed in the primary sector, in the secondary and in the tertiary, respectively. Finally, at this stage may be realized a reference to the spatial planning (if exists any), as long as to the technical and social infrastructure and cultural environment.

– The contact with cultural organizations and folklore entities of the area is being required for the registration and evaluation of the particular cultural environment of the studied section. Working with them can highlight the historical, religious and cultural wealth, but also bring us into contact with the traditions, customs and social mores of the people. It is considered essential the collection of printed and digital material including local songs and music, and recorded data on the major events and festivals and also the procession of special cultural events.

– Consultation with local authorities is important as they are familiar with the peculiarities and problems of local communities. They can provide information on local social structures, social support programs and the general social policy that is followed and its operational planning.

– In addition, there may be contact with local agricultural cooperatives, agricultural structures, tourist offices, handicrafts workshops, restaurants, biological farms, as well as local schools. The meaning of all this is to highlight local production and record the problems and capability of development of these activities, to strengthen local family income, increase employment and to eradicate social and economic isolation of these areas.

– Creation of a questionnaire suitable for assessing the views and concerns of respondents that will take part in the process. Additionally, may be a selection of a random sample of people of all ages in the region and conduct interviews with them to identify existing issues of local society.

– Conduct public evenings where it is going to be made the choice of families who will participate in the program. Is being proposed the use of the above questionnaire and the continued cooperation in order correct and significant results to be achieved.

For the creation of the Participatory mapping, since all data are collected and the current situation is recorded and analyzed, should be an analysis of comparative advantages and disadvantages of the area through a **SWOT analysis**. This will identify the advantages, disadvantages, opportunities and threats in the area and will provide this important element in shaping the actions and strategies to be followed in order to achieve the objectives of the program.

The next step is that based on the above can be determined the goals and strategies of the program and the criteria that are used for the selection of the development project/s to be supported **(BIG FOOT experimentation activity).**

Following an attempt was made to contextualise the whole process as a link up under the tile "Feasibility Study", from the beginning up to the final outcome (Feasibility study).

Crossing Generations, Crossing Mountains

BIG foot

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