

Social Analysis Systems²

Concepts and Tools for
Collaborative Research and Social Action

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Title	Identifying stakeholders in a project to prevent and reduce the impacts of floods and landslides in Nepal
Key Words	Stakeholder Identification, Nepal, natural disasters, livelihoods
Reference and Acknowledgement	Sapkota T.B, D. Poudel, D. Buckles. 2007. Identifying Stakeholders in a Project to Prevent and Reduce the Impacts of Floods and Landslides in Nepal. Social Analysis System ² Technique Report #9, 8 pp. Retrieved from: http://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/handle/123456789/34470 .
Context	Chitwan District in central Nepal is often affected by floods and landslides. Various government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide disaster relief efforts but few focus on preventing or reducing the impacts of natural events. Practical Action (PA) is an NGO that has been active in the region for several years. It provides disaster relief and has been planning a project that would support more stable livelihood options in communities affected by disasters. Linking disaster management to the development of livelihoods that reduce the risk and impacts of floods and landslides had not been done in this part of Nepal before. Given this new approach, PA wants to ensure that it develops its project goals and plans with the right institutions and people.
Purpose	To identify the stakeholders likely to be <i>affected by</i> or likely to have an <i>influence on</i> project goals, project design and activities.
Process Summary	Practical Action (PA) convened a meeting at its office in Chitwan. Representatives of several institutions with knowledge of the flood and landslide problems in the area, or the livelihood options open

to the rural poor, were invited to attend. The group included two members of PA's own staff, one professional from LI-BIRD (a research NGO that specializes in rural livelihoods), two representatives of the District Development Office (DDO) of Chitwan responsible for coordinating and monitoring government and NGO projects in the district, and two representatives from the NGO Coordination Committee of Chitwan (NGOCC) which coordinates NGO development activities. Together, they identified organizations with knowledge about disaster relief or knowledge about livelihood options in the region.

PA held a second meeting a month later with representatives of communities where it planned to implement activities and where other potential stakeholders lived. This meeting included representatives of community-based organizations, local NGOs, and local leaders.

In both meetings, groups discussed the problems created by floods and landslides, their experience with efforts to create or support livelihoods that could reduce the risks and impacts of floods and landslides, and project goals and plans. They then identified stakeholders that are or should be involved in the project and mapped their relationships to the project. This was done by placing cards for each stakeholder on a figure on the floor in the shape of a rainbow. The three bands of the rainbow represented the degree to which stakeholders are or would be affected by the success or failure of the project (from most affected to least affected). The bands were divided into three sections or pie shapes representing stakeholders that affect or influence the project to various degrees (from most affecting to least affecting). Cards for each stakeholder were then placed in the middle section of the figure, depending on the degree to which they are or could be affected by the project. After all cards were set down in the middle section, they were then moved to the left side, right side or allowed to remain in the middle section, depending on how much they affect or influence the project. The map that emerged was then discussed and the groups decided which stakeholders are key to the project and what kind of

	<p>relationship they have with other stakeholders. Tek Sapkota facilitated the exercise and drafted the report. Participants were aware that the results of the exercise would be used in reports, and agreed to share their information.</p> <hr/>
<p>Analysis</p>	<p>The first group meeting identified 17 stakeholders with many degrees and types of relationships (actual or potential) to the project (Figure 1). They described Practical Action and The Water Induced Disaster Management Office in Chitwan (WIDMO) as the stakeholders that would be most affected and also have the most influence over the project. The project is a major initiative for Practical Action and the focus on livelihoods represents a new approach for the organization. Project success or failure would certainly affect PA’s future direction and strength. It has a very high degree of influence on the project because of its leadership role. WIDMO, a specialized government agency that monitors and assesses disasters in the district and coordinates relief efforts, was also assessed by the group as a stakeholder that would be strongly affected if the project were successful. It can also strongly affect the project through its official guidelines for disaster relief and through recommendations it might make about future projects of this type.</p> <p>The first group noted that communities vulnerable to disasters would be highly affected by the project, if they are included in project activities. Since no communities had been selected at that time, the group included “vulnerable communities” as a general description of an affected stakeholder. Participants also recognized that communities currently had little influence on the project (least affecting), a situation they resolved to address later.</p> <p>The District Development Office (DDO) and the District Administration Office (DAO) are government institutions that approve projects in the region, enforce development policies and monitor and evaluate project activities. Participants felt that DDO and DAO policies and activities would be moderately affected by a successful experience with a livelihood options project because such an approach would have an impact on their current disaster</p>

	<p>relief practices. Participants also recognized that these two government bodies could strongly affect or influence the project, and even block it if they wanted to. As a result, they identified the DDO and DAO as key stakeholders with whom the project needs to establish a close working relationship.</p> <p>An NGO network called the Common Forum of NGOs working for Disaster Management (CFNDM) was identified as both moderately affected by and moderately affecting the project. Participants pointed out that the CFNDM can influence the project by bringing relevant information from its members into goal-setting and planning, and would then benefit from access to information on the livelihood options approach proposed by the project. The NGO network NGOCC, by contrast, has less direct experience with disaster management, compared to the CFNDM. While it would be moderately affected by the project, it would be somewhat less influential in goal-setting and planning. A number of NGOs that PA is considering as potential partners for the project were also identified and assessed as stakeholders that would be moderately affected by the project while currently having little influence (Forward, Ecocenter, Sahabhazi, MADE, in Figure 1).</p> <p>Participants identified some government agencies (DADO, DLSO, DFO) and the NGO, LIBIRD, as stakeholders least affected by the project but with a moderate capacity to affect or influence it because they have special knowledge of livelihood options or are responsible for certain development activities in the region. Two special interest organizations (the Jwalamukhi Club or JMC and the Bird Education Society or BES) were identified as least affected and least affecting stakeholders. The Jwalamukhi Club is a district NGO that promotes peace among political and rebel groups in Nepal; the Bird Education Society is mostly concerned with conserving bird and other fauna habitats. Both organizations, like all others in the district, are drawn into relief efforts when a major flood or landslide occurs in the district. They have very little to offer directly to the project (least affecting) but their relief work might benefit somewhat from the livelihood approach developed by</p>
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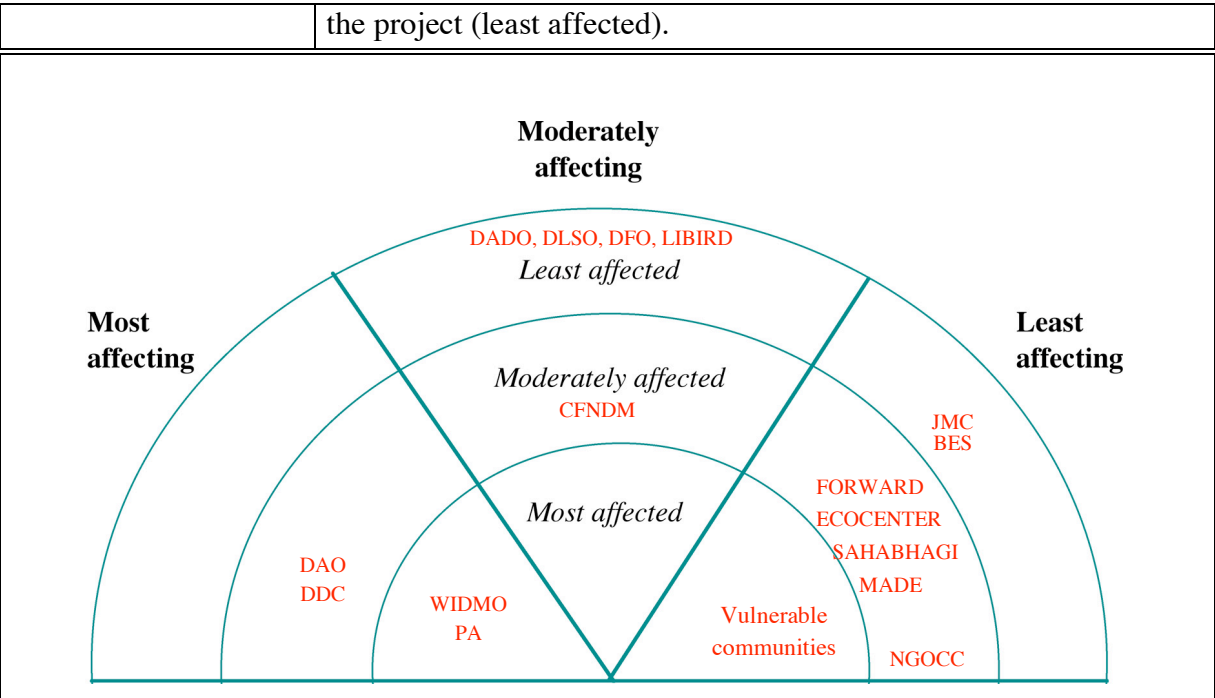


Figure 1: Relationship of different stakeholders to the Practical Action project

DADO-District Agriculture Development Office; DLSO-District Livestock Service Office; LI-BIRD-Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development; DFO-District Forest Office; NGOCC-Non-Governmental Organization Coordination Committee; FORWARD-Forum for Rural Welfare and Agricultural Reform for Development; ECOCENTER-Ecological Service Center; MADE-Multidimensional Agriculture for Development; NRUSEC-Nepal Rural Self-reliance Campaign; JMC-Jwalamukhi Club; BES-Bird Education Society; DAO- District Administration Office; DDC-District Development Office; WIDMO-Water Induced Disaster Management Office; CFNDM-Common Forum of NGOs working for Disaster management; PA-Practical Action.

As a result of the analysis by the first group, PA invited other stakeholders to a second meeting to review and revise the stakeholder map. PA selected the communities to be invited and included the NGO that it had chosen to implement the project (Multi-dimensional Agriculture for Development, MADE). The assessment by the second group showed several adjustments. First, MADE now occupied a similar position to PA and WIDMO except that its influence over the project would be relatively moderate given its role as a contractor.. Its future activities would, however, be strongly affected by the project’s success or failure.

Secondly, participants made several distinctions that clarified and

modified the relationship of vulnerable communities to the project. They argued that local community leaders are stakeholders who are distinct from the general community. Their knowledge of the history of both disaster impacts and development initiatives across communities, as well as their political and administrative roles, make them stakeholders that can moderately influence project goals and plans. Participants assessed the extent to which local leaders would be affected by the project as moderate, reflecting the fact that they have many other interests and roles within their communities, and are not directly involved in project activities. Participants also argued that representatives of the selected communities should be directly involved in goal-setting and project planning. This degree of influence would create a shift to moderately affecting the project while also being strongly affected (same position as MADE). Specific ways to achieve this shift within the project were discussed, as noted below. Participants also created a separate category of communities not targeted by the project that would be affected by and influence the project to a much lesser extent, possibly through the work of other NGOs.

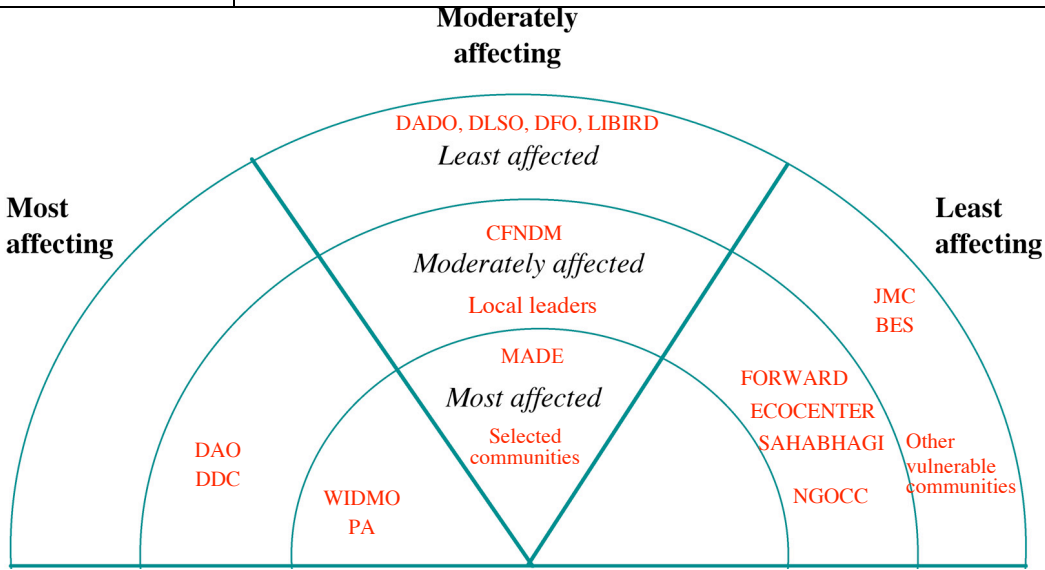


Figure 2: Relationship of different stakeholders to the Practical Action project
 DADO-District Agriculture Development Office; DLSD-District Livestock Service Office; LI-BIRD-Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development; DFO-District Forest Office; NGOCC-Non-Governmental Organization Coordination Committee; FORWARD-Forum for Rural Welfare and Agricultural

<p>Reform for Development; ECOCENTER-Ecological Service Center; MADE-Multidimensional Agriculture for Development; NRUSEC-Nepal Rural Self-reliance Campaign; JMC-Jwalamukhi Club; BES-Bird Education Society; DAO- District Administration Office; DDC-District Development Office; WIDMO-Water Induced Disaster Management Office; CFNDM-Common Forum of NGOs working for Disaster management; PA-Practical Action.</p>	
Interpretation	<p>Participants in the first exercise, while few in number, had a lot of knowledge about the organizations that respond to disasters and work on improving community livelihoods. This made it possible to develop a comprehensive list, including candidate implementing organizations and communities. Further consultation with these other stakeholders was needed, however, to assess their views on the project. The changes to the stakeholder map made by the second group of participants reflect their view that communities are not only “beneficiaries” of the project but also actors in their own right with knowledge and views that can and should influence project directions. The total number of key stakeholders in the project remains low because few organizations have experience with livelihood options as a way to prevent or reduce the social impacts of disasters. While many organizations with knowledge and experience on disaster relief exist, they have less to offer or gain from this new focus. Because they are stakeholders that also represent other stakeholders as well as their own interests, The Common Forum of NGOs working for Disaster Management (CFNDM) and local community leaders, are possible sources of information on the project for these other groups.</p>
Action	<p>PA decided to focus on building close relationships with WIDMO, MADE, selected communities and both the DAO and DDO by consulting with them regularly on project goals, design and implementation. Specific plans were made to engage with the chosen communities to ensure that they have a chance to influence the project. PA also decided to meet once in awhile with CFDMN and local community leaders to update them on the project and provide them with materials they could share with other stakeholders.</p>

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Observations on the Process	<p>The first group of participants knew a lot about disaster relief and district level development policies, but they could not address the relationship of NGOs and communities to the project because the project was still choosing its partners. They were, however, very comfortable with the task of listing relevant groups and discussing their possible roles within the project. Participants were satisfied with the final list and distinctions made among stakeholders. They recognized, however, that they needed to discuss the project more with other stakeholders they had identified. The second meeting gave participants a chance to learn the views of other stakeholders, and to integrate the perspectives of the NGOs, representatives of selected communities, and local leaders. Participants agreed on the final analysis and that it clarified the relationships among stakeholders and the project. They noted that the results of the exercise showed why there should be certain lines of communication among key stakeholders and between the key stakeholders and other groups. They also said they were satisfied with the commitment by PA to engage communities in ways that enhance their influence in the project.</p>