

## Part 2: Guidance to users

### Module 4: Preparing for field work

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In this module, you will:

- learn good practices for the process of carrying out participatory research;
- learn how to collect socio-economic, gender and climate sensitive information at the village and household level by using a sampling strategy; and
- understand processes for identifying needs and priorities of different groups in relation to climate-smart agriculture.

Building on the concepts covered in the previous modules, this module explains the specific activities that are requested of you and your colleagues at the conclusion of this training session.

As part of an implementation team for research on gender, climate change, agriculture and food security, you will be organizing and implementing research and analysing findings.

This section provides you with an overview of how work in the field can be carried out. It is followed by step-by-step guidelines on implementing research activities, including instructions on how you can record your findings. Finally, guidance is provided on analysing and reporting on the findings of your field work.

To ensure that study sites can be revisited in the coming years, it is important that a standardized approach is developed and followed, ensuring consistency and quality of implementation across sites, as well as on intensive briefing and training of study teams. Given the emphasis on qualitative methods, much effort will be needed to ensure that the risk of each village process going off in its own direction is minimized.

#### Implementation teams

We suggest that implementation teams comprise two research facilitators and at least two note takers; one female and one male research facilitator and one female and one male note taker. Between you, you will have some experience in employing participatory research tools in community-based participatory action research, some technical knowledge of gender and social issues as well as climate change and agriculture. You will lead the implementation of the field study, using the participatory research tools in this joint FAO-CCAFS initiative. Keep in mind that you will be responsible for organizing the fieldwork, ensuring that the research protocols are followed, overseeing the recording of data collected in the field; analysing and reporting on that data; and evaluating the entire research process.

*Specifically, this requires you to:*

- Hire and instruct at least two local note takers (one female, one male) at each site. Instruction should take place prior to any collection of data. See paragraph below, Process of data collection. It may also prove useful to contact a local ‘ambassador’ or gatekeeper who can facilitate your entrance into the village.
- Identify one village in which to implement the research.

- Fulfil all ethical best practice requirements to ensure effective engagement with appropriate institutions and communities.
- Engage with the relevant authorities to ensure that the study can be carried out in selected village.
- Ensure that the logistical arrangements and materials for each visit are in place before departure to the field.
- Ensure the refreshments and lunches are available for the participants for each day.
- Sample focus group participants by following the sample frame protocols laid out in this Module (see the paragraph: Sampling procedure for focus group participants). This is critical in order for the results to be comparable across sites.
- Send out or deliver invitations either in writing or orally to the selected individuals with the help of the village authorities. Invitations must convey the objective information about the first and final public community meeting, the activity schedule and a statement that participants will be provided lunch as a token of appreciation for their time. The invitations should also explain the approximate amount of time participation in the study will require; i.e. participation in the public community meeting on the first day, in at least one focus group discussion and in the meeting on the final day.
- Carry out field activities for information collection in accordance with guidelines, including meticulously checking that records in the debriefing documents are complete and reliable.
- Prepare a brief presentation of major results and present these at the final public meeting in the village.
- Compile an audit trail of all processes, as and when they are underway, highlighting any events that were different from the plan, specific comments about implementing the research and any observations. This is pertinent for the interpretation of the data from the village.
- Deliver final site reports to CCAFS. The village maps and any other visual information should also be included, as per the guidelines in the CCAFS–FAO Analytical Report.
- Leave a copy of all your findings (village maps and other visual information) with the village.

### Note takers

As mentioned, the implementation team will include two note takers, one woman and one man, who have some experience in note taking. Note takers will have a critical role to play by taking meticulous notes throughout all activities in the field and transcribing notes to the debriefing document in collaboration with you, the research facilitators.

It is important to include female team members in equal proportion to male colleagues, as the men and women of the target communities may be more comfortable speaking to members of their own sex. This will enable focus group discussions to take place with men and women in separate groups at the same time. They are responsible for completing the debriefing document and play an important role in supporting the research facilitator. The note takers must all be briefed by sharing this training guide. You may want to even hold a mock fieldwork session with them for preparation. Ideally, note takers should have a good understanding of development issues and some experience in fieldwork. If the research facilitators are not from the area of study, it may also be helpful to work with note takers who are from the area to gain access to villagers since a local note taker will know people and will be able to use the local dialect. This will help to develop and gain trust between the implementation team and respondents.

The implementation team will take gender and cultural sensitivities into account and should know the local language and area well. The implementation teams will be responsible for implementation of the activities in the village.

### Process of data collection

Prior to visiting the villages, you are advised to carry out preparatory work (see Module 3, A. Preparing for and carrying out participatory field research). This preparatory work will consist of a meeting with your team members, carrying out background research and briefing everyone on the team about the objective of the study. The CCAFS household baseline study may also be used to provide background information to the village. Doing preparatory work will help you develop an entrance strategy into the village where you will conduct fieldwork and develop a work plan.

A preliminary visit should be paid to members of the community (i.e. village leaders, representatives of existing groups) to request their permission for participation, inform them of the process, set meeting times and organize focus groups. You might also ask participants to bring a cushion or chair to the sessions depending on the location.

An outline of steps that can be taken and the tools that can be used to collect the data in the community can be found in the step-by-step guide in Module 5: Work plan on gender and climate change in agriculture and food security. In total it is estimated that you would spend a about four days at a site (this does not include preparatory meetings in advance). **Different groups of community members should be used for different exercises, so as to not overburden individuals.**

### Sampling strategy

In order to facilitate your work, we suggest you select villages that fulfil the following criteria:

- The village leaders must be willing and able to provide information related to CCAFS work.
- The village must be relatively easy to access and must not be very small (i.e. less than 50 households).
- A village is defined as:
  1. A place where people act as a 'community' in the sense that there is a level of interaction and dependence among them;
  2. A place where it is possible to define who is or is not part of the village;
  3. A place where it is possible to communicate with inhabitants (e.g. through a chairman or a village meeting).

You can find suggestions and more details on village sampling on CCAFS internet site on Baseline surveys: [HTTP://CCAFS.CGIAR.ORG/RESOURCES/BASELINE-SURVEYS](http://ccafs.cgiar.org/resources/baseline-surveys).

### Sampling procedure for focus group participants

A random sampling procedure, using for example the randomizing function in Excel, can be used to limit possible biases in participant selection. This also allows for potential comparison of the results across villages, as the same sampling procedure can thus be followed by research teams across sites. For this you will need to get hold of already existing household listings, such as the household listings prepared for the CCAFS household survey undertaken in early 2011, or you will have to

create them yourself. You should then select at random groups of males and females to participate, **following the procedures described below.**

The target size of each focus group is not more than 20 individuals (as that can get unwieldy quickly) and not less than 8 (since you will want to capture a range of experiences). We would suggest that you deliver 15 invitations, one to each household that was randomly selected. Ideally, participants are to receive written invitation letters (see example letter below), but if written letters cannot be delivered, it is critical that the same procedure described below is followed to find out which households need to receive verbal invitations, if not written ones. For the women’s focus groups, the invitation should specify that an adult woman engaged in agricultural production activities from the household is requested to attend the focus group session (at a particular time and place). For the activity on weather forecasts, we suggest that an additional two groups of youths (one female and one male) within the age range of 18–25 are be targeted, and in this case the invitation should specify this.

**Table 4.0: Summary of the activities and the number of focus groups required**

Activity	Focus Groups (ideal size: 8–15 participants)
Climate Analogues	1 male focus group and 1 female focus group
Weather Forecasts	1 male focus group; 1 female focus group 1 youth group of females and (ages 18–25) 1 youth group of males (ages 18–25)
Climate-smart agriculture initiatives	1 male focus group and 1 female focus group

Instructions for randomly choosing the households from which the focus group participants will be invited:

1. Use the complete list of households of the village (that was generated earlier or used in the CCAFS household baseline survey);

Your Excel file could look something like this:

	A	B
1	No	Household head
2	1	Samwel Nyangweso
3	2	Joel Auma
4	3	Hellen Atieno Chore
5	4	Esther Akoth Otieno
6	5	Origa Opiyo
7	6	Evaline Odhiambo
8	7	Eunice Opiyo
9	8	Jacob Ouma
10	9	Tobias Odhiambo
11	10	Abigael Opiyo
12	11	Fanis Mbori
13	12	Nora Ombe
14	13	Losi Otieno
15	14	Margaret Agembo
16	15	Peres Agembo
17	16	Mary Lucy
18	17	Millicent Ochieng
19	18	Wilfrida Onada Ovienn

2. In Cell C1 enter the header “Random Function”.
3. In Cell C2 enter the formula **=rand()**.

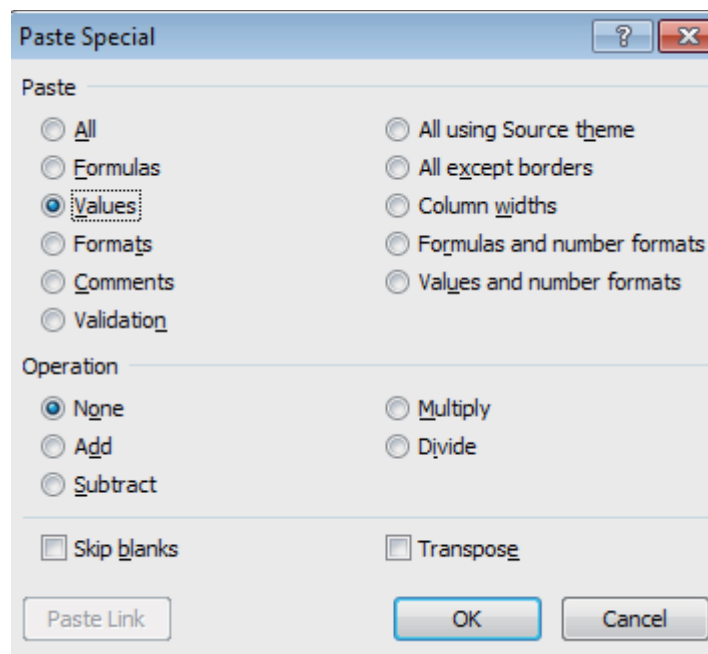
4. When you press <enter>, a random number between 0 and 1 will appear as shown here:

	A	B	C
1	No	Household head	Random Function
2	1	Samwel Nyangweso	=rand()
3	2	Joel Auma	
4	3	Hellen Atieno Chore	
5	4	Esther Akoth Otieno	
6	5	Origa Opiyo	
7	6	Evaline Odhiambo	
8	7	Funice Oniva	

AND()

	C	D
	Random Function	
	0.242206437	

- Copy this formula down to the rest of the cells in this column. Note: as you do this the first value will change. This happens because you have a dynamic function in the cells so we need to convert these to static values.
- With the whole of column C selected, right-click and choose **Copy**.
- Move into cell D1; right-click and choose **Paste Special**.
- On the **Paste Special** dialog box select **Values** as shown here:



- Click **OK** and the actual values rather than the formulae will be pasted. Note the values in column C will have changed again – this is expected as they still contain dynamic functions, but the values in column D are now fixed and suitably random.

B	C	D
head	Random Function	Random Function
ingweso	0.744177876	0.058706894
	0.640201683	0.963529815
o Chore	0.395211113	0.627936679
h Otieno	0.11728479	0.163614979
	0.256438018	0.2770732
ambo	0.453193442	0.094103139
o	0.97922997	0.594697083
a	0.811615447	0.461596198
ambo	0.105462689	0.344765124
ro	0.386375295	0.440159737
	0.886159111	0.370800928
	0.446585654	0.612235868

- Cancel any selections you may have in place, then sort the worksheet in descending order by column D ensuring all columns are sorted together.
- For the first group exercise, select the first 15 households from the randomized list as shown here:

	A	B	C	D
1	No	Household head	Random Function	Random Function
2	33	Peter Boyi	0.874077455	0.017730519
3	13	Losi Otieno	0.91832201	0.024524936
4	35	Joash Okoth Olango	0.504202832	0.032677951
5	68	Akeyo Owuor	0.611844209	0.046565199
6	72	Margaret Ajwang	0.036357955	0.049803141
7	1	Samwel Nyangweso	0.761231935	0.058706894
8	6	Evaline Odhiambo	0.257287622	0.094103139
9	57	Lilian Okoth	0.184998841	0.105234312
10	52	Grace Okungu	0.894102602	0.106317496
11	25	Mary Osude	0.572225309	0.108259188
12	16	Mary Lucy	0.951542042	0.114684376
13	46	Herine Onyisi	0.082671843	0.1294482
14	41	Eunice Akoth	0.479688169	0.143003494
15	4	Esther Akoth Otieno	0.58344778	0.163614979
16	32	Judith Onyango	0.300780051	0.16936147

- For the second group session, continue down the list. If you get to the end of the list, go back to the top and continue the selection.
- For female focus groups the invitation should go to an adult female in the household; for male groups it should go to an adult male in the household; and for youth groups to a person aged between 18 and 25 years. If there is nobody in the household fitting the description, then choose the next household from the randomized list.

Although random sampling prevents bias, there is a risk that the random sample will generate a list of participants who are not active farmers, which makes it difficult for them to participate and answer the questions that need to be posed. In such a case, go through the entire list of households with a village authority and keep only the households that are farming, for example. Then generate a random sample of farming households.

### Invitation letters for group participants

Send out or deliver written invitation letters to each participant and to the village leader. These letters should be addressed to the selected households. In some countries women's names are often not registered for the household. In such a situation, one may have to visit the household to personally invite women. Specify exactly whether you are inviting a man, woman, female or male youth (age 18–25) for the activity, when the activity is to take place, where, etc. For an example, see the attached sample letter (Box 4.1 Suggested sample invitation letter). It may be useful to take a local official with you when delivering invitations, depending on the local context. This may help to gain access to participants and better local knowledge, as well as gain trust between the implementation team and respondents. Such local officials may act as important ambassadors of the project and gatekeepers to the village.

#### Box 4.1. Suggested sample invitation letter

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms.....

CCAFS, the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security intends to conduct a study in your community. The meeting will focus on understanding strategies used to adapt to changing climates within your community and beyond. We would like to work closely together with you over the next days to help develop answers to questions that we as researchers and you as a community member may have – we aim to develop insights that will help to better address the challenges you face in the future.

We would very much appreciate your participation in this study. If you would like to participate in any of our group activities [*provide schedule of activities*] for a maximum of 2 hours, please inform your village authority. In addition to the group activities, we would also like to invite you to a public meeting on... October 2011, at ...a.m. for you to become aware of our objectives. We will also have a final public meeting on... October 2011, at ...am. Lunch (compensation) and refreshments will be provided at all these meetings.

Thank you and I look forward to your collaboration.

Yours faithfully,

Mr/Mrs/Ms.....

Although formal, written invitations are encouraged, in some contexts, informal oral invitations may also be used, especially if those being invited are unable to read or if they are suspicious of formal documentation. Before inviting participants, however, check when there will be major festivals or holidays since those are times when participation will be difficult. One should also check when local schools are in session since it may be difficult for youths to participate when they are in school. It may also be difficult for women and girls to participate during certain hours of the day depending on their daily activity and/or cultural restrictions that prevent attending public meetings.

It is possible that those invited may not want to participate due to participation fatigue since there could be many research institutes and non-governmental organizations in the area that have also been trying to work with the same group of participants. Additionally, those invited may not want to participate because they do not feel that they will receive anything tangible. In such instances, it may be useful to partner with a national institute that has local credibility to gain access to participants. At the same time, you may want to disseminate information packages on agriculture or other related issues that the national institute has produced to provide something tangible to participants.



### Communicating with the village

You should communicate the requirements mentioned in the Sampling procedure for group participants section with the village authorities in advance of the actual group discussions, asking them to help with the invitations in the village to form focus group discussions. One innovative suggestion for describing how the particular households are picked is by comparing it to a 'lottery' (and helps explain why a particular village elite may not get invited). Working closely with the village authorities to schedule the work also tends to help facilitate a relatively smooth process. Meetings and activities during your visit should be scheduled at times when both women and men as well as all socio-economic groups are available to attend. You should send out written or oral invitations to the selected individuals in the community with the help of village authorities. These letters must include the objective, information about the first and final public community meeting (providing the suggested work plan is followed), the activity schedule and a statement that participants will be provided with lunch and refreshments as a token of appreciation for their time. This letter should also explain the approximate amount of time participation in the study will require (i.e. participation in the public community meeting on the first day and the time of at least one focus group discussion). All community members should be made aware that on the first and fourth day there will be an open invitation for all community members (participation is voluntary) for the implementation team to introduce the objectives of the study and provide a summary of their findings respectively.

The objective of the research should be described at an open meeting on the first day of the visit to the village. This initial meeting can also serve to meet the selected individuals for the focus group discussions based on the responses to the invitation letter mentioned above (if they also attend the open meeting, they will want to know why they were selected – the lottery analogy may also come in handy here!). The expected outputs and possible benefits of the research should also be shared. You should convey the message that the study will address assumed challenges, needs, and priorities of the village in the future. It is also important that you manage the expectations of villagers at an early stage, thereby avoiding anticipation of things that you are not able to deliver. Those attending on the first day should be notified that there will also be a public meeting on the fourth and final day.

### Research Ethics

- It is essential that permission is gained not only from the village chief, but also from the participants themselves. Participants should be explicitly asked to confirm that they consent to take part, and reassured that they are free to leave the sessions any time if they feel uncomfortable or no longer want to participate.
- Participants should be made aware of the purpose of the research and what they can expect to receive in the way of feedback (e.g. the meetings planned for the fourth day).
- Participants should be notified that the information they put forward will remain anonymous and confidential and will thus not be circulated beyond the research team.

### Checklist of materials

- Flip chart pads or other large papers
- Pens
- Notebooks for recording
- Camera



- Stones or twigs etc. (if going for the low tech option)
- Mats, chairs or rugs to sit on?
- Check the various materials lists in the next module (print out matrix sheets in sufficient quantities, etc.)
- Audio recording device (this requires participants' consent)