

GUIDE FOR THE CONTEXTUALISED ANALYSIS OF LOCAL CONSTRUCTION

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House built on a mound with adobe bricks walls and thatch pitched roof in Mpale, Mangochi, Malawi.
Jon Twingi



House in Haiti built with timber structure and stone filling and with a pitched roof.
CRAterre



Two typologies of housing coexisting in Timor Leste
Peter Shanks – Creative Commons

1. OBJECTIVES OF THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this document is to explain the process and the objectives of the contextualised analysis of local construction (shelter/housing and habitat) in a comprehensive manner in order to allow for the development of humanitarian and development projects in the Shelter/Housing sector in a given context.

It covers the whole of the different stages of analysis, and is intended for the use of technicians in the Shelter/Housing.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONTEXTUALISED ANALYSIS OF LOCAL CONSTRUCTION

The contextualised analysis of local construction should be carried out by each partner in the Shelter Cluster in the early stages of any project or programme of support in the shelter/housing sector as part of the first step “Understanding the context” of the Protocol “Informing choice for better shelter”: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/promoting-safer-building-working-group/protocol-informing-choice-better-shelter>

The diagnostic process should allow partners to better approach the identification and observation of local building cultures and practices in order to:

- Understand the value of what already exists in terms of site, settlement, architecture, design, culture and technical solutions linked to the housing;
- Understand the techniques and the evolution of local building practices;
- Understand the reasons behind the choice of specific design, material or techniques solutions;
- Understand the impact of « natural » hazards on habitat, and identify local strategies to deal with these.

This process should then serve to inform the development of shelter or housing projects or programs in place, taking the context into account and making the best possible use of relevant local construction practices, and potentially useful local materials.

3. EXPECTED RESULTS FROM THE ANALYSIS

1. Improvement of the housing projects and the humanitarian support offered in a post-disaster situation, and also better disaster preparedness:
 - Familiarity with local house-building practices;
 - Understanding about knowledge, attitude and practices related to the design and construction process;
 - Formulation of an adequate and efficient humanitarian response;
2. Validation of adequate and efficient local building cultures;
3. In the long term, formation of a database allowing better understanding of local construction in order to support humanitarian action. For this, partners are encouraged to share their reports and summaries of research findings to the coordination of the Shelter Cluster in order to allow all partners to benefit from the knowledge which has been brought together.

4. ELEMENTS OF THE CONTEXTUALISED ANALYSIS

Production of habitat	Architecture of the area	Influence of risks in the habitat
Objectives - To identify the processes of production of habitat (self-building, tradespeople, etc.); - To understand the issues involved in habitat and in the way of dwelling; - To understand the issues of habitat in relation to risks; - To identify the actors in construction in the area being studied; - To identify the suppliers of materials; - To understand the role of gender and age in the production and maintenance of habitat; - To understand the engagement of vulnerable groups in the construction process; - To understand sources of information and knowledge sharing related to the construction process. Expected results - Knowledge about what materials are available on the local market; - Familiarity with the idea of the prices and variations in price of materials; - Awareness about the actors in construction and maintenance and their roles; - Ability to support these actors; - Identification of used and trusted engagement channels. Information gathering: Interviews with inhabitants, tradespeople, producers and suppliers. The different diagnostic tools are a support for this.	Objectives - To identify the different architectural typologies; - To identify the materials used for construction; - To identify the size and dimensions of homes and habitations; - To identify the building cultures of the area being studied; - To identify ways of living in the area (hygiene, security, access to water, cuisine...); - To identify the number of stages of construction; - To know the dimensions of land plots; - To identify the way of building on plots (one or several houses, one or several buildings). Expected results - Identification of local building cultures; - Identification of the rationale behind the use and practice of the identified building cultures; - Draw out the best from local building knowledge and develop solutions which are suitable to the context and to the inhabitants. Information gathering: Site visit. Interviews with inhabitants. The different diagnostic forms guide this process. Debrief and summary at the end of each day. Photos.	Objectives - To identify the type of settlement and its general characteristics; - To understand the possible risk of eviction and the security of land (HLP issues); - To understand environmental aspects related to the production of habitat and to the potentiality of risks; - To know the types of risk current in the area being researched; severity and frequency of these; - To know the impact of the risks on the population; - To identify the potential risks; - To identify the vulnerability of the population; - To identify which parts of the area being studied are most exposed. Expected results - Knowledge of the strategies put in place to deal with disaster; - Identification of means for prevention and channels for information; - Identification of places of refuge; - Identification of the resilience of the population / capacity for recovery / access to shelter; - Identification of the measures put in place to reduce damage. Information gathering: Interviews with inhabitants and local authorities. The different research tools support this process.

5. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	PREPARATION	RESOURCES NEEDED
A STUDY OF THE AREA AND ESTABLISHING CONTACT BEFORE THE FIELD MISSION	1. SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREA 	To select a target area linked with the local authorities, ad hoc local humanitarian plans and the needs identified by the Shelter Cluster.	Careful consideration of the security situation before going to the field.	- Operational Plan Shelter Cluster and Government; - Ad hoc local humanitarian plans and needs identified by the Shelter Cluster.
	2. STUDY OF EXISTING DOCUMENTATION 	- To understand the population in the area being studied; - To understand the actors already operating in the area (starting point for a stakeholder mapping); - To understand the community dynamics: different ethnic groups, associations, women, young people, people living with disability, etc. (starting point for a stakeholder mapping); - To start defining the territory where this analysis will be relevant.	- Study available documentation on the area and review of the whole body of documents to learn about the situation before going to the field: - Maps regarding mainly: geography, soils, hazards, administrative maps, ethnic maps... - Statistical data regarding mainly: occupation of inhabitants, number of inhabitants per household, level of income, ethnic groups, social status... - After analysing these data, cross the information gathered and try to make a first approach to what could be the area with common characteristics regarding environmental, sociocultural, economic and administrative aspects. Create a map with all these data. You will use this map in Activity 15.	- Existing documentation on the area; - Maps; - Statistical data.
	3. CONTACT WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES BEFORE THE FIELD VISIT 	- To clarify the reasons for the activity with those in positions of responsibility for the local population; - To respect the principle of accountability to the local authorities; - To facilitate the process.	- Identification of the correct protocol (who should be contacted first, and by whom); - Identification of the right period to undertake the field visit (taking note of market days, religious festivals, aid distributions, sensitising by other actors, etc.); - Agreeing meeting times and places with the people who will meet with you on arrival in the field, sufficiently ahead of your journey to the field; - Sharing the objective of the visit and the way the research will be carried out with the different stakeholders; - Logistical preparations for the field visit (local guides, meals, accommodation, - if necessary, meeting room, dealing with unexpected events, rain, etc.)	

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIAL REQUIRED
B OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS IN THE FIELD	4. MEETING WITH THE AUTHORITIES, CHIEFS, AND COMMUNITY NOTABLES 	- To explain the process to the authorities and to request permission for the visits and guides for the purpose; - To identify the target groups that it is most important to meet; - To request information on the history, context, social dynamics, etc., of the site; - To study the distribution of inhabitants across the target area.	Duration : Between 30 and 60 minutes - Meeting with local authority. - The meeting should serve to prepare the following visit. The local authority should be able to facilitate local guides for the field visit, but also to inform the population about the focus groups and the need for different persons to participate in these group interviews. - Make sure not to raise expectation and to properly explain the objective of the interviews.	- Free note taking ; - Form 01 – authorities
	5. VISIT TO THE TARGET AREA 	COMMON TO ACTIVITIES 5-6-7-8-9-10 - To identify building cultures and skills in the target areas: - To identify the existing architectural typologies (past, present, and apparent tendencies in evolution) linked to the specificities of the area: natural hazards (winds, water, seismic activity, volcanos, hail, fires) and technological/ human (shifting territories, mines, conflicts, fires deliberately lit...). (See point 7); - To understand the habitat: link to the community, link to the land plot, distribution of internal spaces, roles and usage of interior and exterior spaces, access to water, to sanitation, to religious buildings / shrines); - To understand the links between local cultures and ways of dwelling/inhabiting; - To get to know the capacities, vulnerabilities, strengths and weaknesses of local habitat; - To identify barriers families may have to get the house they desire and meet their needs; - To contribute to the reinforcing of the resilience of local settlement and of the communities more broadly;	Duration : Between 1 hour and 1 hour and 30 minutes Observation of the environment - Access (physical and security). Access to local materials; - Communications coverage, basic services; - Vegetation, topography, landscape. Observation of the territory - Taking photos of the built environment and the layout of the area; - Observation of the logic of the layout (houses in clusters or dispersed; proximity to rivers, peaks, forests etc.; proximity to fields; proximity to quarries, etc.); - Mapping of risks. Observation of the housing typologies - Photographing the different typologies (with consent of the inhabitants); - Observation of similarities and differences. Selection of houses for individual study (Activity 7) - Choose two houses of each typology; - Request the owner's permission for the study. Advise her/him that the visit would include entering the house.	- Camera - Free note taking - Form 01 – Interview with authorities and Form 02 – Collective interview and target location visit

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIAL REQUIRED
B OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS IN THE FIELD (cont)	6. COLLECTIVE INTERVIEW 	COMMON TO ACTIVITIES 5-6-7-8-9-10 (continues) ● To understand the modes of production and maintenance of housing. To understand also the life cycle of the dwelling : ○ To know the roles and responsibilities of the main actors involved in the different stages of the processes of production of habitat (inhabitants, tradespeople, merchants, administrative authorities, etc.); ○ To open and explore the aspect of gender (roles of women/ girls and men/ boys in building a house; ○ To identify and understand the modes of contracting between the different parties (hiring labour); ○ To understand the way in which households maintain their dwelling (frequency, means, materials, actors) ; ○ To understand the existing patterns of solidarity within communities (in the construction of housing and other areas) ; ○ To understand knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, practices and communication channels related to local habitat; ○ To identify who are the key stakeholders and 'influencers' for the community ● To deepen understanding of the population in the area being studied.	Duration : Between 45 and 90 minutes Preparation of the interview ● Prepare a sufficient number of interview forms for each researcher; ● Prepare the interview teams to ensure they fully understand the meaning and purpose of the questions; ● Don't hesitate to rely on local researchers (ensure there is adequate budget for this). Following up gender issues is facilitated by having gender balance in the teams deployed; ● Make sure not to raise expectation and to properly explain the objective of the interviews. Conducting the interview ● Two researchers run the interview. One takes notes, and the other leads the discussion (adaptation of this approach is possible according to team resources); ● <u>Opening of the interview</u>: Thanks, and explanation of the project and the goal of the interview. Make clear that no fee is paid to interviewees; ● Ideally, the interview is conducted according to the order of questions set out in the form, while leaving space for free-flowing conversation. Important to know how to come back to questions not yet covered, but this is not obligatory. Questions can be added. Don't hesitate to reformulate questions or to put them again; ● Have a timekeeper. Beware of debates that drag on. Be careful that it's not always the same people who respond; ● <u>Closing the interview</u>: Thanks, and explanation of the reason for having specific target groups for the other interviews. Expected results ● Synthesis of the information gathered during the interview.	● Form 02 – Collective interview and target location visit

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIAL REQUIRED
B OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS IN THE FIELD (cont.)	7. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WOMEN AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PERSONS WITH DISABILITY	COMMON TO ACTIVITIES 5-6-7-8-9-10 (continues) To understand the perceptions and experience of different groups who provide complementary information.	<i>Duration of each interview : maximum 1 hour</i> Preparation of the interview - This form should be divided into two different forms, so that two teams can work in parallel with different focus groups (Form 3.1. and Form 3.2.) and time can be saved. Conducting the interview - The women's focus group should preferably be facilitated by a woman. It is strongly recommended that any research team should be made up of 50% women and 50% men. - For a detailed explanation of the preparation and conducting of group interviews see the section on implementation under Activity 6. Expected results - Synthesis of the information gathered during the interviews with FGD for women (with and without disabilities + different ages) and for persons with disabilities (women/men/boys/girls of different ages) respectively. - The result of these FGDs should be read and compared with the general FGD with the community and the rest of interviews.	- Form 03 3.1. Focus group discussion - women 3.2. Focus group discussion - persons with disability

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIAL REQUIRED
B OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS IN THE FIELD (cont.)	8. VISIT OR INTERVIEW WITH TRADESPEOPLE / SUPPLIERS + FGD WITH BUILDERS / ARTISANS / SELF-BUILDERS FOR DIAGNOSIS OF SKILLS AND MATERIALS AVAILABLE	COMMON TO ACTIVITIES 5-6-7-8-9-10 (continues) ● To identify the potential of existing resources in relation to the production of habitat in the area: ○ To know the existing technical skills available (number of bricklayers, bricklayer's labourers, carpenters) and the ways in which knowledge is transmitted; ○ To evaluate whether or not enough local labour is available to meet the needs of the project; ○ To identify resources and competencies in terms of technical training in construction (training centres, schools, universities); ○ To understand where do inhabitants and construction workers get the information about the construction sector; ○ To know what materials are available and affordable and identify limitations; ○ To identify relation to environment (source of materials and construction waste management).	<i>Duration of each interview : maximum 1 hour</i> Information to be collected ● This form can be divided into two different forms if there are people to represent both groups, so that two teams can work in parallel with different focus groups (Form 5.1. and Form 5.2.) and time can be saved. ● Availability of labour, skills. ● Availability of materials : season of availability, dimensions, availability of materials in case of crisis, origin of the materials and method of supply; ● Costs of materials (not only monetary). Validation and value add of local contributions (collection, production, assembly); ● Identification of the suppliers of materials, of manufacturers / growers (where this is the case) and their methods of manufacture. Support to these actors through their participation in the projects.	● Form 05 ○ 5.1. Tradespeople - suppliers - manufacturers of local materials ○ 5.2. Local construction workers / artisans / self-builders

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIAL REQUIRED
B OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS IN THE FIELD (cont.)	9. INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS PER EACH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN	COMMON TO ACTIVITIES 5-6-7-8-9-10 (continues) - To understand the different housing typologies, their construction, evolution, maintenance, living conditions. - To understand the reasons why families build the houses they build, what are the reasons for each choice regarding materials, design, position, orientation, etc.	Duration of each interview : maximum 1 hour per household (two households for each typology) Preparation of the interviews - As far as is possible, home owners should be informed in advance of the visit; - Two individual interviews should be carried out per type of design in a given area (see point 7 in this document with guidance on how to identify housing designs). Conducting the interview - The interview is run in two phases which can be carried out in parallel: one phase of questions (Form 4.1) and one phase of drawings and taking technical notes (Form 4.2); - Formation of two groups: one group for the questions to the home owners, and one for the drawings; - As far as possible, it is advisable to interview several members of the household, and not only the head of the household. Expected results - Detailed plan of each house: layout/ cross-section / elevation / layout of the immediate environment; - Photos of the houses and structures (interior and exterior) and of the plot; - Knowledge of the history of the house : base, extension, repairs, current maintenance, etc.; - Allocation of roles in the process of production of the house. Cost. Investment by households; - Strengths and weaknesses of the house (referred to design and construction systems (do they fit their needs?)); - Knowledge of the construction systems used.	- Form 04 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW 4.1. Individual Interview – household's section 4.2. Individual Interview – technical section - Camera - Measuring tape (to take the measurements of houses)

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIAL REQUIRED
B OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS IN THE FIELD (cont)	10. ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS WITH FOCUS GROUPS ACCORDING TO THE AREA STUDIED	COMMON TO ACTIVITIES 5-6-7-8-9-10 (continues) To understand the perceptions and experience of different groups who provide complementary information.	Duration : Between 30 and 60 minutes per focus group Importance of these interviews - This form is an invitation to think about the specificities of groups of people that may be identified as having a different background, characteristics, situation, history in a given context. The groups may include: refugees, displaced populations, returnees, minority ethnic groups, religious minorities, etc. Preparation and conduct of the interview - This form has a first common part with general questions that can be suitable for all the eventual focus groups. Then, there are subsections with specific questions referring to particular groups. As examples of specific questionnaires, we present one for displaced households and/or refugees (A) and one for returnee households (B). - Conduct as many interviews as is necessary according to the profile and characteristics of the area. - For a detailed explanation of the preparation and conducting of group interviews see the section on implementation under Activity 6. Expected results - Synthesis of the information gathered during the interviews. - The result of these FGDs should be read and compared with the general FGD with the community and the rest of interviews.	- Form 06 – Other focus groups (context specific) A. Displaced persons / refugees B. Returnees C. Etc. - D. - E.
	11. RETURN TO THE COMMUNITY	- To respect the principle of accountability to affected populations; - To involve the community in the carrying-out of the project.	Duration : 15 minutes - Short oral report-back on activities carried out in the field visit and interviews with the community. - Following the report-back, the protocol for departure can be followed.	No material needed: oral reporting back

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIALS REQUIRED
C REFLECTION AFTER THE FIELD VISIT AND BEFORE THE WRITING-UP OF THE PROJECT	12. PREPARATION OF THE SUMMARY REPORT 	- To summarise the information gathered in the research process through the forms. These forms must be easily readable, and not contain too much text, in order to be as attractive and reader-friendly as possible. The forms will be shared with all the influential people or groups of people in the area; - To communicate about the research and about the area, and allow stakeholders to have a rapid and efficient overview of the traditional building cultures in the area.	Expected result - Summary report with text in dot points and photos which communicate significant aspects and points. Process - Preparation of the summary individually or as a group; - Summary of collective interviews in point format and with photos inserted; - Summary of observations on the typologies of construction in the area. Addition of plans, photos and some text; - Summary of individual interviews, plans, elevations, drawings and information on sanitation, etc. Indicative outline SITE: Situation / aerial view / access/ landscapes / local hazards HUMAN CONTEXT: History / population / main economic activity / governance / stakeholders / security / services (administration, education, health, markets, etc.) / situation of women / situation of disabled persons / communication (trusted sources of information) / engagement channel register / access to land / waste management / seasonal calendar SETTLEMENT AND HOUSING: General description of settlement patterns / choice of the site / orientation of buildings and situation within the plot / functions of different buildings in a compound / general description of existing building designs (Design 1, Design 2, Design 3, Design 4...) / water / sanitation / knowledge, attitude, beliefs or practices related to housing PRODUCTION OF HOUSING: Solidarity mechanisms in construction / season for construction / available skills / maintenance / improvement-extension of construction / LESSONS LEARNT FROM LOCAL ARCHITECTURE: weaknesses / strengths and good practices ANNEX: PESTEL ANALYSIS STAKEHOLDERS	- Computer - Format for summary report

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION	MATERIALS REQUIRED
C REFLECTION AFTER THE FIELD VISIT AND BEFORE THE WRITING-UP OF THE PROJECT (cont.)	13. REPORT-BACK TO COMMUNITY AND TO THE DISTRICT AUTHORITIES FOR VALIDATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY AFTER THE SUMMARY REPORT HAS BEEN WRITTEN	- To present the summary report to the community for possible corrections, and validation; - To inform the local authorities (particularly the District authorities) about the work carried out in the area; - To promote and share the knowledge gathered on local building cultures.	Duration: 60 - 90 minutes the presentation plus a discussion - Presentations on the work conducted in the form of a lecture-debate with the local authorities and other main actors in the area (municipality, civil society, church, etc.); - Handing over of a copy of the summary report to the community.	- Summary report - Computer and projector (if possible)
	14. DEFINITION OF THE LIMITS OF THE TERRITORY WHERE THE DATA REPORTED WOULD BE APPLICABLE, TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY	To define the area where the particular analysis of the visited locality will be relevant even if it was not possible to deeply analyse the entirety of the area.	Duration: 60 minutes - After reporting back to the community for validation and accountability, use a map of the area (if possible a big format one to stick it on a wall) with the data gathered during Activity 2 (Data review). The map or maps can already contain some information (geography, soils, hazards, administrative divisions, ethnic data...); - Use the map of the area and define with the community where would be the rough limits of the territory where the data reported in the presentation would be applicable. Try to create a map asking questions about the following topics: - extent of the area where different ethnic, social or religious groups live, - area of prevalence of main religions, - differences in the access to land (customary, men-women, traditional authorities), - conditions of access to the area (roads, paths...), - prevalent hazards, - types of housing, - available construction materials and skills, - ways of building houses, - etc.	Map of the area in big format



15. VISIT TO THE AREAS SURROUNDING THE STUDIED LOCALITY AND VISUAL CHECK OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AREA	To define the area where the particular analysis of the visited locality will be relevant even if it was not possible to deeply analyse the entirety of the area	- Visit the surrounding areas after reporting back to the community and deciding with them about a first proposal of area concerned by the analysis. During the visit (mainly by car) visually check the following points: a. Type of landscape (trees, rivers, lakes, mountains...); b. Orography (flat, hilly...); c. Potential hazards (flood prone area, exposed to winds, landslides...); d. Types of soil (presence of clay, stone, sandy soils...); e. Agriculture (products, type of agriculture: subsistence farming, industrial agriculture...); f. Access (roads, practicable paths...); g. Urban-rural differences; h. Type of settlement (grouped, dispersed, lineal); i. Organisation of the compounds (fences or not, presence of trees, constructions present in plots...) j. Types of local housing designs: presence dwellings built on raised earth platforms; materials used in foundation, walls and roof; form of the dwellings (round or rectangular); form of the roof (conical, gable, hipped); presence of veranda or other differential aspects; k. etc. - Whenever it is possible, the presence of a representative of the local authority in the vehicle can be a strength.	- Vehicle - Map - Camera
16. FINAL VERSION OF THE REPORT	- To adapt the report to the feedback from the community; - To define the territory for which the data on the report is relevant.	Review the report after reporting-back to the community and define the territory for which the data on the report is relevant.	- Computer - Summary report
17. REFLECTION BY THE PARTNER OR THE CONSORTIUM ON THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO BE USED IN THE AREA	To decide on the project strategy in agreement with the community and taking into account the diagnosis of local building culture which has been completed.	- Choice made in a manner consistent with the Vision and Principles of the Shelter Cluster. - Linkage between the diagnosis and the proposed project: for example a study on solutions to reduce costs as relevant to local reality (participation by inhabitants, gathering of materials). - Carefully consider exit strategy.	Project documents from each participating shelter partner

6. PROCEDURE AND INDICATIVE PLANNING FOR THE SITE VISITS

PROCEDURE

In principle, the field assessment should be carried out over two days, but the time allocation can vary according to the season, the security situation, the context, the complexity of local conditions and the number of enumerators available.

Composition of work teams tasked with conducting the research:

- The duration of the field analysis or the number of researchers needs to be adjusted in line with researchers experience and the complexity of sites being assessed.
- A minimum of two persons is necessary to undertake an assessment, as it is necessary to conduct the interviews and to take notes and to be able to give some relay if necessary.
- In order to be able to carry out an assessment in two days, at least 4 persons would be necessary, in order for them to make two teams of two persons each and carry two Focus Discussion Groups or two Interviews with individual households in parallel.
- It is highly recommended that all the persons making part of the enumerators team take part of the interview with the authorities, of the collective interview and the visit to the target area. This is important in order to have a common understanding of the general situation.
- For each field assessment, mixed teams are recommended: woman / man or non-binary + technical background / social background.
- For each separate interview (individual, FDG), a mixed team is recommended: woman / man or non-binary.
- For each separate interview (individual, FDG), a mixed team is recommended: technical background / social background.

Important to note:

- The research tools act as the guiding thread and the record through the different interviews and research.
- These do not necessarily have to be followed strictly in order. It is more important to 'let the conversation run' rather than 'keep control of the discussion'. Some elements that come up out of a spontaneous discussion will contribute to the depth and richness of the assessment. The relationship established in a 'free' discussion allows the researchers and community members to create a climate conducive to sharing of experiences and information.
- It is therefore important that one of the researchers facilitates the discussion, while the other takes notes and makes additions tools when that is necessary. The latter can also return the discussion to points that have not been covered, or covered only partially.
- Whenever possible, complement the information gathered with photos and sketches.
- Don't forget to take down the telephone contacts of the local people who might be able to provide further information after the main assessment has been done.
- Once the assessment report has been written, hand it over to the community and the local authorities who gave permission for and facilitated the assessment.





INDICATIVE PLANNING OF THE FIRST SITE VISIT

The planning can vary for each site visit. It can take longer or shorter. The essential point is to carry out the whole of the activities, but not necessarily in the order that they are given here.

DAY 1

Day time	Indicative time	Activity	Interview form and other material required for the activity
Morning	Between 30 and 60 minutes	ACTIVITY 4: Meeting with the local authorities, chiefs, community notables, according to local context. (Form 1)	Free note taking Form 1 – Authorities
	Between 60 and 90 minutes	ACTIVITY 5: Visit to the target area	Free note taking Form 2 – Collective interview and target location visit Camera
	Between 45 and 90 minutes	ACTIVITY 6: Collective interview (Form 2)	Form 2 – Collective interview and target location visit
Afternoon	From 45 to 60 minutes per household	ACTIVITY 7: 2 interview teams (Form 3) FGD women (Form 3.1) + FGD people with disability (Form 3.2)	Form 3: 3.1. Focus group discussion - women 3.2. Focus group discussion - persons with disability
	From 45 to 60 minutes per household	ACTIVITY 8: 2 interview teams (Form 5) Assessment of available materials and skills FGD or visits to tradespeople/ suppliers and manufacturers of local materials (Form 5.1) + FGD with local construction workers/ artisans self-builders (Form 5.2)	Form 5: 5.1. Tradespeople - suppliers - manufacturers of local materials 5.2. Local construction workers – artisans – self-builders
Evening	Between one and two hours	- Sort out the photos taken during the day, according to the themes to be presented in the summary report. - Build up the summary report with key points which have emerged from the first day of assessment. - Identify what information is missing (data, photos) in order to collect this on the second day of assessment.	Computer Template for summary report

DAY 2			
Day time	Indicative time	Activity	Interview form and other material needed for the activity
Morning	30 minutes	Brief report-back to local authorities on the previous day's activities. Validation of the team's understanding of the site. Gathering of complementary information.	Free note-taking Form 1 – Authorities Form 2 – Collective interview and target location visit Form 3: 3.1. Focus group discussion - women 3.2. Focus group discussion - persons with disability Form 5: 5.1. Tradespeople - suppliers - manufacturers of local materials 5.2. Local construction workers
	From 45 to 60 minutes per household	ACTIVITY 9: Several interview teams (Form 4) Individual interviews with households according to architectural typologies (2 households per typology / 2 interviewers per household, 1 for each section)	Form 4 – individual interview, household (one per household / 2 households per typology) 4.1. Individual interview - household's section 4.2. Individual interview - technical section Camera Measuring tape
Afternoon	From 30 to 60 minutes	ACTIVITY 10: Additional focus group according to the profile of the area (Form 6)	Form 6 – Other focus groups (context specific) A. Displaced persons / refugees B. Returnees C. Etc.
	2 hours	Follow-up research (individual interviews or focus groups if necessary). ACTIVITY 11: Overall report-back to the community of the assessment work over the previous two days (15 minutes). END: Leave-taking protocols and departure.	Free note-taking Forms remaining to be finalised (01, 02, 03, 04, 05 or 06)
Evening	Between one and two hours	Sort out the photos taken during the day, according to the themes to be presented in the summary report. Build up the report.	Computer Template for summary report

INDICATIVE PLANNING OF THE SECOND SITE VISIT AFTER WRITING THE REPORT

The planning can vary for each site visit. It can take longer or shorter.



DAY 3 (AFTER REPORT WRITING)

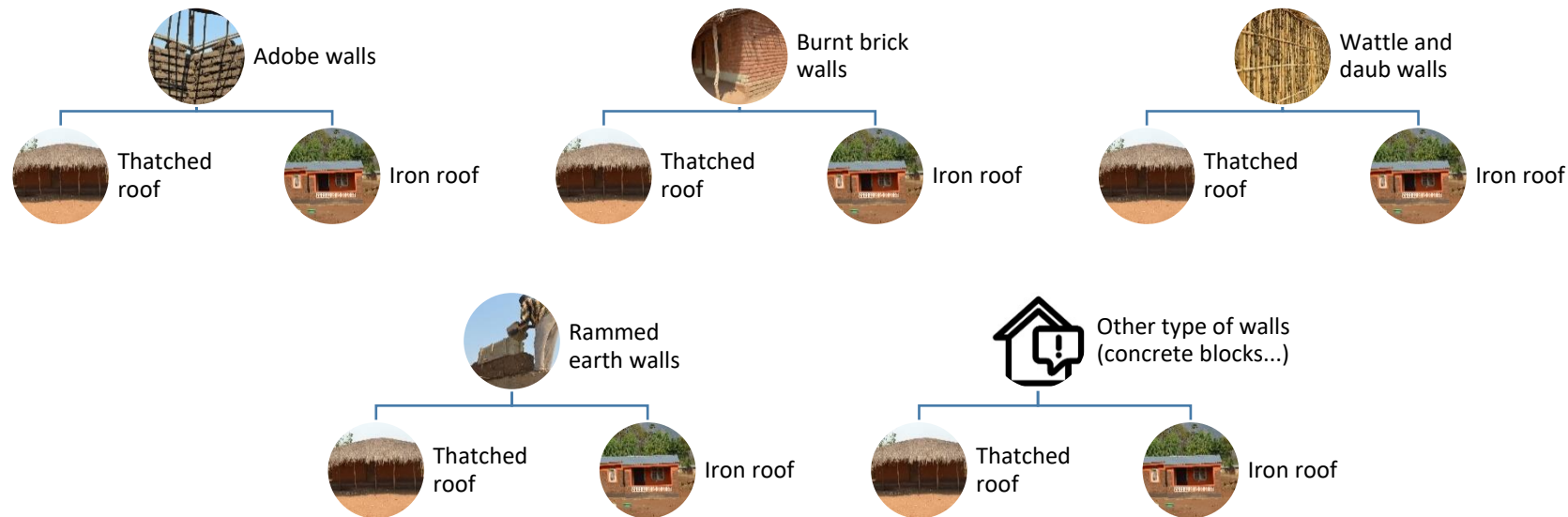
Day time	Indicative time	Activity	Material required for the activity
Morning	Between 60 and 90 minutes	ACTIVITY 13: Report-back to community and to the District authorities for validation and accountability after the summary report has been written	Summary report Computer and projector (if possible)
	1 hour	ACTIVITY 14: Definition of the limits of the territory where the data reported would be applicable, together with the community	Map of the area in big format
Afternoon	2 hours	ACTIVITY 15: Visit to the areas surrounding the studied locality and visual check of the characteristics of the area	Vehicle Map Camera

7. IDENTIFICATION OF LOCAL HOUSING DESIGNS OR TYPOLOGIES

Two household or individual interviews should be carried out per type of housing design in a given area. It is not always simple to decide how many different designs exist in a place. When you arrive at a new area, it is necessary to identify the most representative construction types for dwellings in that place. Three steps are presented as part of this method for the identification of local housing designs.

1. VARIATION IN WALLS AND ROOFS MATERIALS

Hereafter is presented a proposal of method to decide on the number of housing designs which should be studied in a given area regarding variations in wall materials and roofing materials. The idea is to cover all the types of design which are present in an area.



➔ As an example: in a village where there are various dwellings with adobe and burnt brick walls both with thatched and iron roofs, then there would be four different designs to be studied (adobe walls and thatched roof, adobe walls and iron roof, burnt brick walls and thatched roof, burnt brick walls and iron roof). As it is necessary to study two examples of each design, in that hypothetical village there would be a need to study eight houses and so, eight individual interviews should be carried out (2 houses with adobe walls and thatched roof, 2 houses with adobe walls and iron roof, 2 houses with burnt brick walls and thatched roof, 2 houses with burnt brick walls and iron roof). Normally, if there is a lack of time, it will not be necessary to analyse typologies which are not common in an area. For example if a concrete house is the only one present in that village, it does not constitute a category, but rather an exception and it is better to focus on more common designs.

2. OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSING

The materials of walls and roofs are not the only important aspects to be taken into account in order to study the housing typologies of a given area. Several other aspects should be taken into consideration when choosing what houses should be studied so the picture is as complete as possible:

- Make sure you cover different **forms of roofs (gable and hipped roofs)** when they are present in a locality.
- Make sure you study houses **with and without veranda** and different **types of veranda** (four sides, one side...) when these types coexist.
- Make sure you analyse different **types of foundations** if they vary (no foundation, stones, burnt bricks...).
- Make sure you don't forget to cover buildings constructed on **raised earth platforms** in the areas where they exist or even dwellings built on stilts, or demountable, etc.
- Etc.

Taking into consideration the previous points does not necessarily mean that the number of housing designs will increase.

➔ *In the example of the imaginary village where we need to choose eight different houses to study (2 houses with adobe walls and thatched roof, 2 houses with adobe walls and iron roof, 2 houses with burnt brick walls and thatched roof, 2 houses with burnt brick walls and iron roof), it is possible to choose the eight housing designs seeking to have all the different possibilities regarding verandas, forms of roofs, foundations, raised platforms, etc., if they exist:*

- *1 adobe house with thatched hipped roof built on a raised earth platform and with a four sides veranda,*
- *1 adobe house with thatched gable roof built directly on the ground and without veranda,*
- *1 adobe house with iron gable roof built on a raised earth platform, with stone foundation and with one side veranda,*
- *1 adobe house with iron hipped roof built on raised earth platform, without foundation and with four sides veranda,*
- *1 burnt brick house with thatched gable roof built on a raised earth platform, with stone foundation and with no veranda,*
- *1 burnt brick house with thatched hipped roof built on a raised earth platform with four sides veranda,*
- *1 burnt brick house with iron gable roof and one side veranda,*
- *1 burnt brick house with iron hipped roof and one side veranda built on a raised earth platform.*

3. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

Finally, there is a need to answer the following question: are there any **ethnic or religious minorities, displaced persons or returnees, specific vulnerable groups (e.g. socially marginalised because of caste system, sexual orientation, repudiated persons, extremely poor persons...)** in the area who have a different housing design (in terms of construction, for cultural reasons)? If yes, it is necessary to consider their housing design and to study it as a separate category.

➔ *If we imagine that in our village there is a group of displaced persons living in a very different housing model (for example very small and precarious houses or using tents...), they would constitute a separate housing design, and so two more individual interviews should be undertaken.*

8. HOW TO DELIMITATE THE AREA WHERE THIS ANALYSIS IS RELEVANT?

When a contextualised analysis of local construction is undertaken, it is usually carried out in a particular village or location. This does not mean that the analysis is only valid for that particular village, as many times the situation can be pretty similar in the surrounding villages or areas. Therefore, it is necessary to define the area where a particular analysis will be relevant even if it was not possible to deeply analyse the entirety of the area, the totality of the villages and the whole population living there. Some steps are proposed hereafter to try to define the area where an analysis will be considered as representative of the general situation.

Step 1

ACTIVITY 2: STUDY OF EXISTING DOCUMENTATION

Analyse existing data (desk review):

- a. Maps regarding mainly: geography, soils, hazards, administrative maps, ethnic maps...
- b. Statistical data regarding mainly: occupation of inhabitants, number of inhabitants per household, level of income, ethnic groups...

After analysing these data, cross the information gathered and try to make a first approach to what could be the area with **common characteristics regarding environmental, sociocultural, economic and administrative aspects**.

Step 2

ACTIVITY 14: DEFINITION OF THE LIMITS OF THE TERRITORY WHERE THE DATA REPORTED WOULD BE APPLICABLE, TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY

When reporting back to the community for validation and accountability after the summary report has been written and after presenting them the results, **use a map of the area** (if possible a big format one to stick it on a wall) **and try to define with the community where would be the rough limits of the territory where the data reported in the presentation would be applicable**. Try to create a map asking questions about the following topics:

- a. extent of the area where different ethnic groups live,
- b. area of prevalence of main religions,
- c. differences in the access to land (customary, men-women, traditional authorities),
- d. conditions of access to the area (roads, paths...),
- e. prevalent hazards,
- f. types of housing,
- g. available construction materials and skills,
- h. ways of building houses,
- i. etc.

Step 3

ACTIVITY 15: VISIT TO THE AREAS SURROUNDING THE STUDIED LOCALITY AND VISUAL CHECK OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AREA

Visit the surrounding areas (mainly by car) after reporting back to the community and deciding with them about a first proposal of area concerned by the analysis. During the visit **visually check the following points:**

- a. Type of landscape (trees, rivers, lakes, mountains...);
- b. Orography (flat, hilly...);
- c. Potential hazards (flood prone area, exposed to winds, landslides...);
- d. Types of soil (presence of clay, stone, sandy soils...);
- e. Agriculture (products, type of agriculture: subsistence farming, industrial agriculture...);
- f. Access (roads, practicable paths...);
- g. Urban-rural differences;
- h. Type of settlement (grouped, dispersed, lineal);
- i. Organisation of the compounds (fences or not, presence of trees, constructions present in plots...)
- j. Types of local housing designs: presence dwellings built on raised earth platforms; materials used in foundation, walls and roof; form of the dwellings (round or rectangular); form of the roof (conical, gable, hipped); presence of veranda or other differential aspects; etc.

9. GUIDANCE ON THE INDICATIVE SAMPLE SIZE OF THE GROUPS AND PERSONS INTERVIEWED

What follows is a proposal of indicative sample size of local persons taking part of each activity of the analysis. The size may vary according to each place and this numbers must be seen as a guide. It is important to note the names and the number of persons taking part of each activity to have a view of the representativeness of the analysis.

ACTIVITY AND TARGET GROUP	SAMPLE SIZE OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED
ACTIVITY 4: Meeting with the local authorities , chiefs, community notables, according to local context. (Form 1)	At least 1 person representing local authorities; ideally around 5 persons to have a greater variety.
ACTIVITY 5: Visit to the target area.	At least 1 person accompanying the interviewers; ideally 2 to 3 persons
ACTIVITY 6: Collective interview. (Form 2)	At least 10 persons. Maximum 20 persons as there will not be possibility of real participation if they are more numerous. A wide representation of the community makes necessary the presence of men, women, young persons, persons with disabilities, elders, representatives of minorities.
ACTIVITY 7.1: FGD women (Form 3.1)	Around 10 women.
ACTIVITY 7.2: FGD people with disability (Form 3.2)	Minimum 5 persons if possible.
ACTIVITY 8.1: FGD or visits to tradespeople/ suppliers and manufacturers of local materials (Form 5.1)	Depending on the availability of tradespeople / suppliers / manufacturers. Ideally at least 3.
ACTIVITY 8.2: FGD with local construction workers/ artisans self-builders (Form 5.2)	From 5 to 10 construction workers / artisans.
ACTIVITY 9: Several interview teams (Form 4) Individual interviews with households according to the different local housing designs (2 households per design)	Depending on the number of different local housing designs (see section 7 for further explanation on how to identify local housing designs). Examples: - In a location with only 1 local housing design: 2 households; - In a location with 10 local housing designs: 20 households.
ACTIVITY 10: Additional focus group according to the profile of the area (example: displaced persons, refugees, returnees, ethnic or religious minorities...). (Form 6)	Around 10 persons for each eventual Focus Group Discussion depending to the reality of each location: - 10 displaced persons or refugees (if applicable); - 10 returnees (if applicable); - 10 persons of other groups: for example ethnic or religious minorities (if applicable).

ACTIVITY 11: Overall report-back to the community and District authorities of the assessment just before leaving the locality and before writing the report.	Whenever it is possible, it is recommended to report-back briefly about the activities undertaken during the assessment to a representation of the community, including the authorities and to the District authorities. Some of the persons having participated to the different activities should be present in this final exchange before writing the report. Ideally, no more than 10 as it is very fast and it is not necessary to keep distracting people from their occupations.
ACTIVITY 13: Report-back to community for validation and accountability after the summary report has been written	Open meeting where the community can be widely invited if it is possible to organise. Around 20 persons could take part of this presentation and discussion, representing all the different groups: authorities, men, women, young persons, persons with disabilities, elders, representatives of minorities.
ACTIVITY 14: Definition of the limits of the territory where the data reported would be applicable, together with the community.	Continuation of Activity 13, maybe with the same persons.
ACTIVITY 15: Visit to the areas surrounding the studied locality and visual check of the characteristics of the area	Visit of the extended area. Whenever it is possible, the presence of a representative of the local authority in the vehicle can be a strength.