



"We are about people having a voice."

Know Your Community: Community Mapping Handbook for Community Radios



Pic: Community consultation by CR Lokobetar, Bangladesh

DEDICATION

This publication is dedicated to the loving memory of late Imam Prakoso who served as the AMARC Asia-Pacific Focal Person for Indonesia and Timor Leste. He made significant contributions towards the finalization of the Community Mapping Toolkit and promoting its understanding and usage in the two countries. His untimely demise on 18 March 2024 has left an irreparable void in the community radio sector and in the hearts of his friends all over the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMARC-AP	World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, Asia-Pacific (AMARC Asia-Pacific)
CM	Community Mapping
CR(s)	Community Radio(s)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

About the Handbook

The Community Mapping Handbook is based on the community mapping toolkit for community radios. The toolkit, developed by Raghu Mainali and Yadab Chapagain, is a practical and participatory resource designed for community radio program producers to better understand the needs, wants, and preferences of their target audience, particularly marginalized and underserved communities.

Through a clearly structured and stepwise process, the toolkit guides CR program producers in receiving meaningful information and feedback from the broadcast community in the shortest possible time. It describes the process, methods, and materials required to carry out community mapping with the aim of finding answers to the following questions:

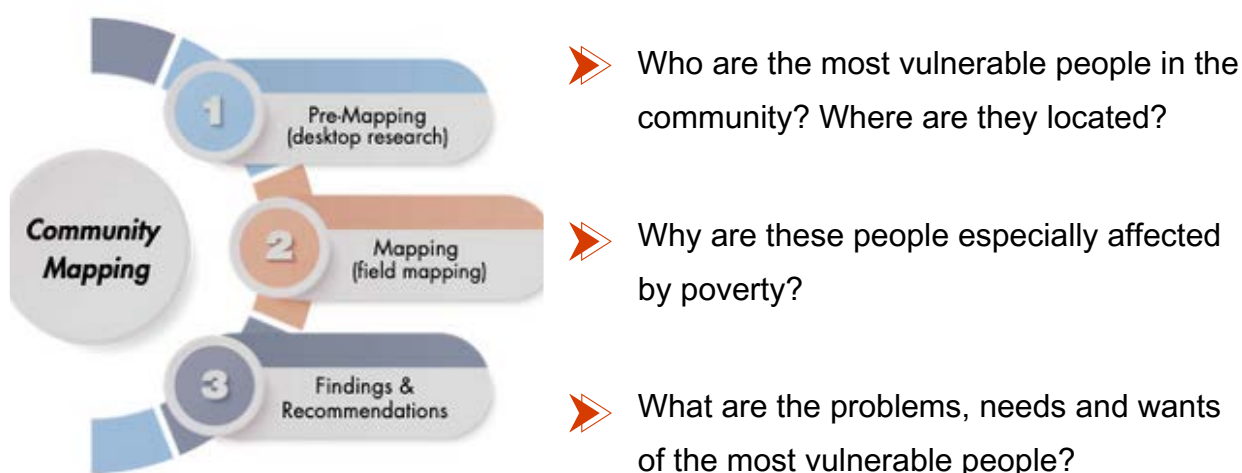


Illustration: The process of community mapping

The logic and the methodology prescribed in the toolkit may also be used by any civil society organization and individual interested in identifying the core concerns of a community that they wish to serve.

The handbook is designed to inspire community radio program producers and reporters to integrate the community mapping toolkit into their work. By doing so, they can better identify the needs and priorities of their broadcast communities, with a particular focus on amplifying the voices of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups.

The handbook also aims to encourage community radio managers and directors to advocate for and support the use of the community mapping toolkit by their production staff.

The handbook was developed following a pilot phase of community mapping exercises conducted in five countries across the Asia-Pacific region: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, and Timor-Leste. It draws upon the valuable experiences of NGO partners and their community radio counterparts who carried out these mapping exercises. Their insights, practical advice, and anecdotes have been incorporated into the handbook to enrich its content and ensure its relevance.

Note: The community mapping methodology outlined in this handbook is generic in nature. Users are encouraged to adapt it as needed to suit their specific contexts and to ensure compliance with the legal requirements of their respective countries.

Stages of community mapping: pre-mapping, community consultation, and ways forward: findings and recommendations

Community mapping, in general, is a participatory process by which communities learn to map their localities and design, prioritize, and initiate the changes required to improve their lives. In other words, community mapping is a methodology aimed at enabling local communities to take ownership of their lives and initiate actions for improvement.

The community mapping toolkit in this handbook is specifically designed for the use of community radio program producers. It is structured to help them understand the concerns of the most impoverished and marginalized community members and to address those through radio content.



Pic: Pre-mapping by CR Sipurenu FM, Indonesia



Pic: Community consultation by CR Henvallvani, India



Pic: Way forward: findings and recommendations by CR Meghna, Bangladesh

Pre-mapping is the initial step in the community mapping process. It involves conducting a general pre-mapping and identifying specific communities within the radio's coverage area for consultation. Community radio program producers work closely with informed and knowledgeable individuals from the coverage area to carry out this pre-mapping phase effectively.

Community consultation follows the pre-mapping stage and serves as a two-way, participatory process that fosters collaboration between the community and the community radio station.

The final stage, **Way Forward**, is developed based on the findings and recommendations generated through the pre-mapping and community consultation processes.

Voices from the field



During community mapping, community members themselves take the initiative and self-responsibility to prioritize issues and find local solutions.

Soumya Jha, community radio expert, India



Pic: Community consultation by Mandakini ki Aawaz, India



Community mapping has allowed the community radio to produce more effective programs for the target community. It feels like the community radio is truly helping to raise the voice of the community and highlight their concerns.



Khushi Maya Gurung, pre-mapping participant, Nepal



Stage One: Pre-Mapping




Pre-mapping is the first stage in community mapping.

Who are the key actors in pre-mapping?

-  Facilitator: Community radio program producer.
-  Participants: Informed and relevant individuals from local government, NGOs, radio boards or management, as well as knowledgeable members of the community within the radio area.



Why is pre-mapping important?

Pre-mapping will help the community radio station to understand:

-  Who is the target community that the radio should aim to serve?
-  Who within the community is experiencing conditions of poverty, and where are they located?
-  How can the vulnerability of identified poverty clusters be assessed?

What will Pre-mapping achieve?

Pre-mapping will enable the CR(s) to:

-  Identify poverty clusters within the target community served by the community radio.
-  Determine the specific cluster to focus on for the mapping exercise during fieldwork.

How to conduct pre-mapping?

Step 1: Identify the target community and audience

- 🧠 Understand and define who your broadcast community is.
- 🧠 Broadcasting community could be a geographic community or a community of interest.
- 🧠 Understand the reach of the CR(s).
- 🧠 Remember to collect or create a map of the radio's coverage area relevant to your community.

Note: Community radio stations usually have a predefined group of people, villages, or communities they aim to serve, which may include individuals with common interests or shared needs. This group may not necessarily cover the entire geographic area reached by the radio signal but should be clearly identified and specified. If this target group has not been formally determined, it is essential to do so in consultation with key stakeholders, such as the community radio's management, board members, and informed community representatives.



Pic: Community members prioritizing the issues identified in the community by Radio Kapilvastu, Nepal

Step 2: Desk Research

Desk research is a valuable tool for gathering background information about the community and gaining an understanding of its key characteristics.

Background information includes:

-  Demographics
-  Livelihoods and occupations
-  Income and economic status
-  Local languages and/or dialects spoken
-  Social or ethnic groups
-  Caste, religion, social practices
-  Civic, administrative, health, and educational facilities



Note 1:

After collecting the background information, you should prepare the profile of the radio's coverage area.

Possible documents include:

- Published village profile (if available)
- Local government data or fact sheets
- Radio Board and Management material
- Other published documents

Note 2:

You may find only partial information (e.g., some information may not be available for certain villages). These need to be specified and compiled as incomplete, indicating the need for future research.

Step 3: Identifying poverty clusters through pre-mapping

To facilitate a smooth pre-mapping process, it is recommended to conduct a preparatory meeting lasting approximately 90 minutes. This meeting should involve a small group of six to eight key stakeholders or informants. Details regarding the suggested participants, materials, and preparatory activities are outlined in **Box 1**.

Box 1: Preparation for pre-mapping consultation



Possible key informants

- Local social workers/NGO workers
- School teachers or health workers
- Local politicians
- Radio workers
- Citizen watch group (if available)



Pick up an appropriate venue, date, and time for the consultation



Inform/invite the key informants



Get the logistics ready:

- Tea/snacks, materials, venue, board, chairs and table



Materials:

- The map (in big size paper showing the boundary of the radio's coverage area (the output of step 1.1)), pen and pencils, markers, sticky notes, stickers



Pic: Stakeholders discussing the pre-mapping by Maubisse Mauloko FM, Timor Leste



Pic: Radio Muskaan, India explaining the process of community consultation

Step 4: Conducting the pre-mapping exercise

Activity 1: Introduction & agenda setting

- 💡 Begin with a round of introductions. Introduce yourself and request all the participants to say a few words about themselves.
- 💡 Explain the reasons for the meeting, the purpose of the exercise, and what you hope to achieve. Clearly describe the process, the dos and don'ts, and how much time the exercise will need.



Pic: Community involvement in the mapping process by Radio Sagor Giri Bangladesh

Activity 2: Identifying the villages/settlements/clusters vulnerable to poverty

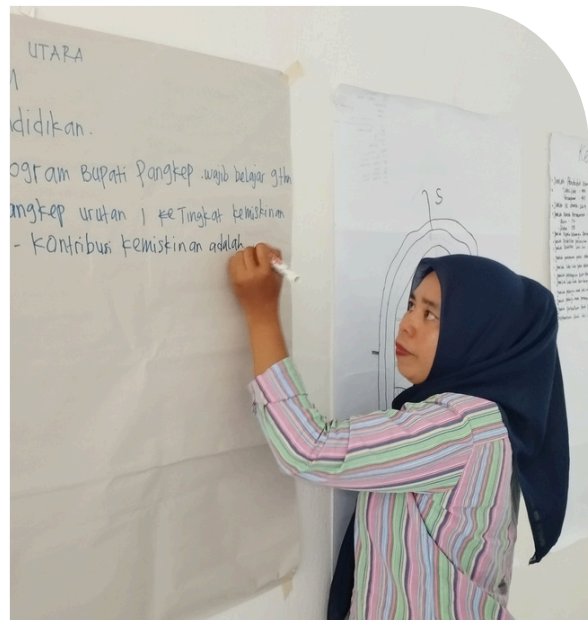
Spread the map of the radio's coverage area. Ensure that all the participants can see it clearly. After they have studied it, carry out the following activities:

- 💡 Ask the group: Where in the radio's coverage area do most of the people experiencing poverty live? What is the approximate number of affected households?
- 💡 Based on the group response, locate the clusters in the map and write down the number in the map itself.
- 💡 Ask the participants: In what respects did you find the people living in those locations experiencing poverty?
- 💡 Note down all the aspects (characteristics) in which each cluster is experiencing poverty. This should be noted on the map itself.

Note: Poverty is multi-dimensional. It is not only about economic well-being but also related to several factors, including social, cultural, and geographical challenges. You should remember to ask or encourage questions related to these issues as well as other subjects like health, gender, and religion. These will help to provide a more complete picture of the poverty-stricken settlements/villages/clusters in the radio's coverage area

Activity 3: Ask key informants to revisit poverty-stricken settlements considering the following:

- 💡 Explain to the group: People may be experiencing poverty due to several reasons—low income, poor housing, poor health, poor education, lack of access to education, social conflict, exclusion, gender-related conflict/issues, poor public services, physical difficulties, infrastructure, etc.
- 💡 Ask the group: Should more clusters be included considering the various reasons for poverty? If yes, then provide the estimated number of households.



Pic: Stakeholder of Sipurennu FM, Indonesia, writing the characteristics of poverty

- 💡 Explain to the group: Poverty can exist between members who belong to the same family because of differences in age, gender, and physical or mental disabilities. Provide examples demonstrating how people can be experiencing poverty even within the same household.
(e.g., children and women can be living poor due to poor care or violence, old age people can be living in poverty while other groups are not, and some social groups can be living in poverty because of discrimination or physical disabilities.)
- 💡 Ask the group: If you want to add more clusters considering various groups of people living in poverty? If yes, then provide the estimated number of households.

Activity 4: Poverty Ranking of Villages/settlements/clusters

- 💡 Based on the results of activities 1, 2, and 3 prepare a matrix (see **Table 1**).
- 💡 Ask the key informants to rank or prioritize the clusters according to their poverty levels. This should be ranked as High Priority, Medium Priority, and Moderate Priority.

Points to Remember:

Prioritizing could be based on the number of people affected, vulnerability and urgency of social, economic, cultural, and infrastructural issues, as well as the number of 'poverty causes' present in the settlement.

(e.g., A village/settlement having a huge number of people, with multiple causes of poverty and who are highly vulnerable, would be given high priority.)

Table 1: Outcome of pre-mapping

SN	Name of Cluster/Location/Village/Settlement	Estimated population or no. of households	Poverty characteristics (mention all the poverty characteristics applicable) for the cluster/settlement/village)	Any special feature of the settlement/cluster/village
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				

Points to Remember:

The matrix (**Table 1**) provides a general overview of key characteristics of the settlements/villages/clusters of the radio's broadcast area. However, it is not sufficient to fully understand poverty since it has not included the perspective of the people experiencing poverty themselves or its effect on their lives. For this, the community radio program producer needs to consult the poverty-stricken themselves (described in the following section).

Voices from the field



Through community mapping, we identified the places (we needed to visit) and who could be the resource persons... and that they (are the most appropriate people) who can tell us about the issue when we are running the radio program.

Prezado Ximenes, Station Manager, Radio Lorico Lian FM,
Timor Leste



The benefits (of community mapping) are enormous, where the crew and radio managers themselves can better understand the potential that exists in the community and complaints in the community, including opportunities that can be developed to minimize poverty that occurs in the community (farmers and farm workers) in Cisewu (the name of the area where the radio is located). The main difference between pre-mapping and community mapping is that during community mapping, the people themselves take the initiative and responsibility to prioritize issues and find local solutions.

Atip Rohyana, Station Manager, Rasi FM, Indonesia



Stage Two: Community Consultation

What is Community Consultation? Who are the key actors?

Community consultation is a participatory and reciprocal process between the community and the community radio station.

Rationale

Pre-mapping cannot be understood without the participation and perspective of the people experiencing poverty. To achieve this, you need to listen and consult with them and learn about the ground realities of poverty through their experience, issues, and aspirations.

Community consultation will enable you to:

- ✓ Understand the underlying causes of poverty in the community cluster.
- ✓ Understand the issues, problems, needs, and wants of the people experiencing poverty (education, health care, income/employment, social/personal tensions, violence, and so on).



Pic: A womens-only group discussing various issues in the community by CR Waqt ki Aawaz, India

Community consultation- step by step

Step 1: Carry out the preparatory work

Below is a checklist comprising points to consider for preparing the community consultation:

- ✔ Facilitation support: Ensure that you are supported by either radio staff or members of the community so that the mapping is carried out smoothly. A gender-balanced team is desirable.
- ✔ Determine date, time, and venue: Choose a venue that is easy to access and conveniently located within the community. The room should be large enough to seat 12-15 persons comfortably and preferably be on the ground floor.
- ✔ Fix a time that is convenient for community members to participate. Specify that the meeting will be at least 2 hours in duration. Adequate notice regarding the date and time should be given to community members.
- ✔ Identify and inform participants: It is important to decide who to invite for the meeting and how to invite. A good number of participants range between 12 and 15 persons. Ensure adequate representation of different groups participating - men, women, ethnic or social groups, persons with disabilities, and sexual minorities.
- ✔ Invitations should be sent giving sufficient notice. You can use more than one medium to invite the participants.
- ✔ Make arrangements for logistics: Provide appropriate refreshments like tea, and snacks.
- ✔ Organize the materials for mapping and the consultation: These include the map, pen and pencils, markers, sticky notes, and stickers.



Pic: Person with disability engaging in the community mapping conducted by Ichchhakamana FM, Nepal

Step 2: Conduct the consultation exercise

It is important to conduct the discussion in a relaxed, friendly, and frank atmosphere. You should maintain a positive spirit throughout the session so that the participants feel encouraged to share their views. You should also clarify at the onset that the meeting will be around two hours duration.

Steps: Agenda setting (10 minutes)

- 💡 Welcome everyone and thank them for their participation. Introduce yourself and request the participants to introduce themselves.
- 💡 Explain the purpose of the meeting – to understand the actual circumstances of the people, which impose poverty on them. What are the reasons for poverty and how can it be addressed?
- 💡 Clarify that a local radio has limited scope – it can raise the voices of the community and broadcast information about the problem and the community's needs and wants. However, it cannot solve the poverty issues on its own. Therefore, one should not keep high expectations from this exercise.
- 💡 Emphasize the need to avoid any bias or judgmental attitude and respect every idea or experience. Share opinions frankly and honestly.
- 💡 Specify the estimated time of the sitting and request the participants to get involved in the process.



Pic: Agenda setting by CR Nina Bayan FM, Indonesia



Pic: Introductions by CR Mahananda, Bangladesh



Pic: Involving the participants by CR Brahmputra, India









Positive questions make a difference:

A team piloting the tool found it useful to ask the following question at the beginning of the session “Have you experienced good changes that have taken place in your life because of the community radio? If yes, what are they?” This was helpful in creating an open environment for discussion.

Another group found it useful to start with positive questions first, such as “What are good things about your village/community/cluster?”, and then only ask “What are the issues or problems they are facing despite so many good things?”

Step 3: Bring out the issues and problems facing the community (45 minutes)

Suggested Activities

-  Ask the question: What are the most important issues and problems you are facing in your daily lives?
-  Ideally, the question should be written in clear and understandable letters on a whiteboard or chart paper. You should read it aloud slowly and request the participants to consider it deeply.
-  Ask participants to write the answer(s) in sticky notes. Assist those who are unable to write by getting the support team to write it for them.
-  Post the notes on a flip chart. While posting the notes, make sure to cluster similar or like-minded cards. Or you can ask a team of 3-4 participants to group the issues and problems in clusters.
-  Possible key clusters could be poverty dimensions related to income, housing, education, health, public services, infrastructure, violence, women, and governance.
-  Prompt participants to think about the issues and problems they are facing in interacting with other social groups (social problems); in obtaining government services (governance); and problems related to superstitious and traditional practices, discrimination, oppression, violence, etc.
-  Encourage participants to add new points if they feel so inclined.
-  Ask the participants to prioritize the issues and problems.

Points to Remember:

The steps suggested are only one method that can be used. There are others that may vary depending on ground realities.

The key is to make each participant at ease, freely think over their situation, and actively engage in the process of mapping.






Pic: Community consultation by CR Sagor Giri, Bangladesh

Step 4: Group prioritization of issues and problems (10 minutes)

Group prioritization can be a sensitive issue as each participant may feel that their issue is the most pressing. Explain to the group that everyone faces many problems and issues in life. These vary - some are more specific, others more severe and others may be more disturbing. Perceptions of difficulties and seriousness also differ from one person to another and from one group to another. In order for the community to determine which are the most pressing and urgent, the following prioritization exercise is recommended:

Suggested Activities






-  List all the problems/issues. Distribute three to five pieces of an object (e.g., matchsticks, stickers, or flowers) equally to each participant. Tell everyone to place these three to five pieces on the issues that each person feels are most important.
-  Give three to five minutes for the participants to place the pieces on the issues/problems.
-  Count the number of pieces each issue has obtained. Announce the score. This will prioritize the order of the issues/problems to be taken up by the community.

Note: Instead of prioritizing as first, second, or third, etc., you can prioritize as high or medium so that more than one issue can be grouped as high or medium priority. Depending on the energy levels in the room, it may be advisable to take a break of around 15-20 minutes between **Steps 3 and 4**.

Step 5: Issue Analysis (30 minutes)

Issue Analysis discusses and analyzes the poverty situation in the community. What are the root causes of poverty? How can these be addressed and what are the constraints that need to be tackled?

Suggested Activities


-  Form sub-groups
 -  Inform the participants that the discussion will focus on the poverty situation in the community. This will take place in small groups.
 -  Divide the participants randomly into groups of three to five. Try to form four to five groups. Pay attention to forming a separate group of women, and also social or demographic groups (for example, a group of elderly and/or ethnic people) if feasible.
-  Provide orientation on the template for analysis
 -  Each group will take two to four main issues/problems identified and carry out the analysis based on **Table 2**.


 Show the template and explain about it.


Table 2: Issue Analysis

Issue/Problem:	
Who is most affected (social or ethnic group, age group, gender group) in the community?	
How it has affected the poor (how it contributes to poverty) in this community?	
How can the situation be improved?	

 Give instructions to the groups

 Print several pages of paper along with **Table 2**, and distribute three blank template pages to each group. Explain that the groups can obtain more pages if they want to analyze more issues.



 Distribute the factors/dimensions/causes for analysis among the group. Give at least three factors to each group. Allow more than one group to analyze a factor should they choose to. Ask each group to provide at least one possible solution to their issue.

 Mention the time available for this exercise. Show the workplaces to the groups. Ask each group to nominate their group leader and rapporteur.



 Announce the start time and let the groups work.

Step 6: Small group presentations (30 minutes)

Suggested Activities

-  Ask each group to present what they did. The rapporteur should read out the content of the analysis table. S/he does not need to explain or justify any point. However, s/he can clarify if other participants want a clarification.
-  Allow other groups to react/add or suggest points after each group presentation. Encourage other groups to ask questions for clarification or suggest their point of view (or express their differences on any idea/point). However, they cannot demand to change the analysis altogether.

Note: If differences in opinions emerge, then the researcher should take note of the differences

-  Ask each group to propose one solution to the issue presented by the other groups.
-  Once all groups have presented their works, thank everyone for their active participation. Summarize the key highlights of the analysis of the groups' presentations. Ask everyone to join the concluding session (debriefing).

Example of a proposed solution by a community in Indonesia:

When there was a crop failure in a village because of rat infestation, the farmers responded by tackling them in their own farm areas only. But the problem was still not resolved because the rats would move to the next area. Through the mapping process, the community realized that the rat infestation covered the entire 130-acre area of cultivation and not just a small area. The farmers understood that the answer lay in collective action. All of them proposed to plant and harvest at the same time so the rats would not keep on migrating to other areas and destroying the crops. After a while, they also succeeded in getting the support of the Department of Agriculture and other stakeholders to resolve this issue.



Pic: A group of female community members actively listening to the conclusions of the community consultation presented by Radio Rudraksha, Nepal

Step 7: Debriefing and Conclusion (10 minutes)

Suggested Activities

- 📖 Debrief (reiterate and summarize) the major point/s that emerged from the focus group discussion.
- 📖 Explain that the information will be utilized in developing or improving the radio programs in the future. Show the participants a roadmap outlining how the radio program can be helpful in reducing poverty.
- 📖 Give suggestions to the community people as to what actions they can carry out and how.
- 📖 Invite participants to share their views, opinions, and experiences of the consultation exercise. Thank them for their active participation, and enthusiasm. Close the session.

Voices from the field



Community mapping is extremely helpful in identifying and understanding the target audience. It provides a new perspective, allowing for more accuracy based on the specific characteristics and challenges of a particular community.

Pata Dey Brishti, Program Producer, Radio Sagor Gir FM 99.2, Bangladesh



Pic: Community consultation by CR Sagor Giri, Bangladesh



Pic: Participation of community members in the mapping process by CR Waqt ki Awaaz, India



Community members were also very happy as they learned something new. Community mapping was more than just group discussions. The mapping gave them a more participative pathway. I have been involved with community radio for many years, but this is the first time that I have done community mapping. I watched with interest as women who had never written before were writing for the first time on paper...Earlier, the women used to feel anxious that if they wrote something incorrectly, there would be a problem, but now they wrote confidently because it was their village and their issues.

Karishma, Program Producer, Waqt Ki Awaaz, India



Stage Three: Ways Forward: Findings and Recommendations

Preparing the pre-mapping results

Who is involved?

Key participants in the community mapping process include the community radio program producers, selected stakeholders, and community members who are actively engaged in the mapping activities. Depending on the project structure, this may involve multiple meetings or group discussions where community members can provide input and collaborate on developing the map.

What is to be undertaken?

The way forward comprises the preparation and presentation of the pre-mapping and consultative community mapping results. These will constitute the findings and the recommendations.

How do you go forward?

Step 1: Prepare a summary of the findings

The following provides the basis for summarizing the findings:

- 💡 Matrix and priority factors of poverty of the different poverty clusters (**Table 1**)
- 💡 Issue analysis tables where the factors and suggestions for improvements are identified by the groups (**Table 2**).
- 💡 Facilitators' observation and experience in community mapping and consultation.



Pic: Program producer from CR Rapti, Nepal, summarizing the points from the group discussion

Step 2: Presentation

Bear in mind that poverty is multi-dimensional. Its roots are deep and many of the factors are complex. The presentation should focus on the relevant areas where action can be taken. Select those that can be addressed by the planned actions of the community radio and/or other local organizations.

A simple tabular presentation of the poverty factors, causes, prevalence, etc., is depicted in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Key Findings

Poverty issues	Affected population segment	How the factor affects the community	Possible means and ways to address with priority	Idea for radio programming

Step 3: Provide recommendations

Suggested Activities



-  The recommendations should be finalized by drawing information mainly from the third column of **Table 3** and the producer's/facilitator's/researcher's experience.
-  **Table 4** provides a template for showcasing the recommendations.

Table 4: Recommendations

Aspects	Issues for radio program
What are the information needs of the community?	1. 2.
What are the empowerment needs of the community?	1. 2.
What is the voice (raising the voice on behalf of the community) needs of the community?	1. 2.
Other	1. 2.

Soumya Jha, Focal Person, India

“ This tool encourages community participation in decision-making, empowering target communities to have a say in the choice of radio program content. By doing so, the radio program becomes more community-centric, enhancing networking and partnerships with social organizations and interest groups, and becoming an effective medium for social transformation. ”

Utsab Khadka, Focal Person, Nepal

“ Community Mapping helped to identify the high-priority issues in the community. The process encouraged and enabled key issues like lack of employment to be identified. It also encouraged local radio producers and the community to get more involved in the process of radio program production. ”

Rajesh Ramtel, Focal Person, Bangladesh

“ The issues and challenges in different areas varied significantly, making it challenging to apply a one-size-fits-all approach. ”

Late Imam Prakoso, Focal Person,
Indonesia and Timor Leste

“ The timing (duration and timing) of the activity can be an area of improvement in the future because it is this factor that makes several aspects of the mapping not optimal, such as limited time to learn tools and limited time for coordination and implementation with radio managers; it is difficult for the field team to improvise or adapt if the situation is not ideal or does not meet the criteria. In addition, in this mapping activity, geographical factors (radio locations that are far apart) make these things more challenging. Therefore, time adjustments must be made, especially with wide area coverage with limited access. ”

Part 1: Learnings

To maximize the impact of Community Mapping, remember:

① One size does not fit all

Local realities will vary and differ. Adapt the principles of community mapping with the legal and socio-cultural realities of the respective country and the local area accordingly.

Suara Waditra FM Community Radio,
Indonesia

“ The activeness of the women was only seen when the male key informants (six people) had left the FGD. They complained about education issues, such as children who are too lazy to go to school and the costs that need to be paid every month. ”

Allaya Ferdous, Station Manager,
Radio Mahananda, Bangladesh

“ While working with tribal communities, we encountered challenges due to their occupation as farmers, making it difficult to find them during the day. When approached, many were initially reluctant to engage, and those who did often diverted the conversation to other issues. Returning later, we faced the added difficulty of collecting data at night in a remote area. Eventually, some girls came forward to assist us with the required information. ”



Pic: Stakeholders of CR Lorico Lian, Timor Leste, participating in the pre-mapping

Radio Lorico Lian FM, Timor Leste

“

Most people who live below the poverty line tend to avoid being interviewed because they are embarrassed and afraid. To be able to interview them, the radio crew must first build a close friendship with the leaders of the community or group leader.

The implementation of community mapping on Lorico radio will run smoothly if it is supported by funds that can help the radio station carry out campaigns via radio to increase community knowledge in eradicating poverty.

”

2 Ensure time management, planning, and design

Community mapping takes time. Coordinating the involvement of stakeholders and representatives from the community, government, NGOs and others requires considerable planning. While community radio program producers often visit communities to gain insights into their environments, gathering all community members at a specific time and place may still be challenging. Sometimes, it's necessary to go to their locations for engagement. Considering that everyone has busy schedules, factor in time for preparation and planning. Design the program schedule carefully to ensure inclusivity.

Karishma, Program Producer, Radio Waqt
ki Awaaz, India

“

Community mapping does take time, but the community was so absorbed they forgot the time. What was very rewarding was that earlier people were reluctant and fearful of carrying out some of the tasks. Now this went away because of the engaging discussions. The women were particularly absorbed...Earlier, the men used to chide them by saying, “What do you know about these activities, and how will you participate?” But now the women participated the most. They now realized that after identifying the problem and the solution, they would spread awareness about it through the radio.

”

3 Manage the expectations of the community

Sometimes communities have unrealistic expectations and a sense of entitlement. It is important to negotiate these by ensuring their active participation, and ownership and nurturing a spirit of confidence.

Venancio de Jesus, Executive Director,
Fraterna, Timor Leste

“What we feel is needed is the cost for the FGD needs because activities like ours need a lot of time to have deeper discussions with the community, and we feel it is not enough time. Positive learning, namely even though we don't provide snacks, the community feels this process is very important for them and can help them to understand the problems faced by them in their area.”

Shivanand, Program Producer, Mandakini
Ki Awaaz, India

“A key challenge earlier was that there was a sense of expectation. If you ask what the issues are, people will bring up a lot of issues, because their expectations are huge. They feel that the NGO will solve all of the problems. They will ask for the solution to the slightest challenge. So, we explained that we are the medium and not the solution. If you have to write an application, we will help you to identify who to send it to, but you have to write and send it. So, the Community Radio station's responsibility is less.”



Pic: Discussion between the community members and CR Mandakini ki Awaaz, India

4 Pay attention to geographical complexities

Factor in time for travel. Field visits and interactions with local communities especially those living in remote areas can involve considerable time and energy. Build this into your preparation and planning.

Samjhana Karki, Program Officer, Radio
Sindhu, Nepal

“Some of the poverty areas were very far. Because of the geographical infrastructure, it is quite difficult to get there. There were also infrastructure bottlenecks. One (of the interactions) was a place called Temba Than. It involved three days of walking—it took eight hours of walking every day to reach the village. There was no electricity. Everyone in the area was a hunter and gatherer.”

5 Consider language and literacy diversity

A region or locality may have communities that speak different languages and/or dialects. Take care to ensure that everyone is included and actively participates in the mapping process.

Samjhana Karki, Program Officer, Radio
Sindhu, Nepal

“We need to consider the difficulty of interpretation and language. No matter how good the community mapping is, the language barrier can come into play—because in Nepal, even within a single community, there are a lot of cultural backgrounds, and people speak different languages. Especially the old people—they do not want to speak any language other than their own.”

Combine Resource Institution, Indonesia

“Some of the residents of Sabutung Island who attended could not speak Indonesian. They can only speak the Bugis language. This barrier can be overcome with the help of radio administrators who act as translators. When residents speak Bugis, the radio manager translates it into Indonesian. Vice versa, when the facilitator speaks Indonesian, somebody will translate it into Bugis. Some of the participants who attended were also illiterate. The solution is for the facilitator and the radio team to help write their opinions in the notes.”

Experiences from all the five countries that participated in piloting AMARC Asia-Pacific's initiative confirmed its multiple benefits. Some of their experiences are shared below:

Community mapping builds ownership & participation

NEPAL

“ Previously, there was no sampling, pre-planning, or pre-mapping process that included all the stakeholders. They would go by themselves with their own ideas of what should be done by the community. There was no pre-planning. But this community mapping tool by Raghu ji and Yadav ji had a pre-mapping process, which included all the stakeholders—government officials, station managers, board members, producers, and various others who knew the community. They came together and sketched out a map of Nepal and a map of their district, and then they finalized it with everyone's participation. All the decision-making was finalized collectively. The stakeholders, who included members of the community, decided this. Earlier, they did not use the map. They (the station manager, reporters, etc.) got together. While they did pre-plan a bit on how to interact with the community, they did not sketch out the maps, but this time they sketched out the maps and identified vulnerable groups through the maps and went there.

Earlier, there was a sense of community entitlement and expectation from the community. They felt that the INGOs and NGOs were here to give food and money. The community even demands it...

When the partner NGOs went to the community and did all the pre-mapping, they talked to the community about what they were going to do. The community people were very happy and very understanding. They just asked for their message to be properly conveyed to the population and also to teach the community some skills. They gave them tea. They had a sense of ownership.

Previously when they went for the mapping process they straight away would go to the people and start asking them some questions. Now that they had clear instructions, they treated it like a small game show. They did not start directly with the recording. They conveyed the message to the people, made them understand the steps, and prioritized, and treated it like a small game so that it would be easy for them to understand. Meta cards, chart papers, and even stones and sticks were used to find out the most common issues in the community and also to segmentize and prioritize which issue comes first. The community people really liked it. Previously, when they started directly recording, the issues did not come out because people were either intimidated, afraid, or shy. Now, because they treated it as a game, the community members themselves did not know when the issues came out. It was very subtle and this way they got out many issues....

”

-Ratna Prasad Shrestha, Chairperson, Radio Sindhu, Nepal



Pic: Community consultation by CR Sindhu, Nepal

② Community mapping strengthens confidence & participation

INDIA



We (the community radio workers) had been doing community mapping earlier, but it was not in detail. Community mapping, as we understand it here, is a very interactive kind of methodology that engages everyone. Everyone had to participate: children, women, men, stone cutters, cow herders, and others.

They participated because they believed that we would do something... Roads were a big issue. So were schools. The primary school was far. There was no Anganwadi, and the two-year-old had to walk along with us for two to three kilometers. We would spend an hour and a half or so going there every day.

25 families came for community mapping, and they participated actively, sharing their views. Village leaders also participated. We spent a lot of time discussing what we could do to resolve the issue. Could we just depend on the government? The terrain was hilly. It was difficult to travel. How could we negotiate it every day?

The community decided to take action themselves. There was a temple that was not in use in the (selected) village. The community felt that it could be converted into a temporary Anganwadi for the two-year-old, and they could study there. The community would raise the money themselves (for a teacher) and give it to a self-help group to coordinate the process. The people (community) said, "We can do it...because we actually did the mapping, and we could collectively see which was the best place for the Anganwadi." Importantly, they now had the confidence and ownership to say that they could take action themselves.

The issue of roads also came up. The people had to travel through jungles for about 25 miles to get to their work. There were virtually no roads. The people discussed how they could make the road through the jungle. It was not easy. The village leader said he could give the money for the material for the road construction. He questioned the villagers if they could cover the labor cost. Everyone said, "Yes. Whoever is a mistry (mechanic) will do mistry work. Whoever is a laborer will do the laborer's work...."

They were able to articulate their vision. They had a sense of ownership and were contributing to the process of change. The people said, “We can do it because we actually did the mapping.

”

-Shivanand, Program Producer, Mandakini Ki Awaaz, India



Pic: Active participation by the community members with CR Mandakini ki Awaaz, India

3 Community mapping builds collective action

INDONESIA

“ There was crop failure in the villages because of rat infestation. The farmers responded by tackling them in their own farm areas. But the problem did not get resolved because the rats would move to the next area.

The mapping process helped to resolve the problem. The community realized the rat infestation covered the entire 130-acre area of cultivation. The farmers understood, through the mapping exercise, that the answer lay in collective action. They decided to plant and harvest at the same time. Significantly, they also succeeded in getting the support of the Department of Agriculture and other stakeholders.

Before community mapping, the involvement of stakeholders in the production of broadcast programs such as the Department of Agriculture and PUPR was not very strong, but after community mapping, they began to take part in field (activities) with radio crews to hear complaints from the community, especially farmers and farm workers.

When farmers complained about rats causing crop failure, it was broadcast by the community radio. The local government (namely the Agriculture Service) immediately took action. They went to the field to deal with these pests.

”

-Rasi FM, Indonesia

TIMOR LESTE

“ Before carrying out community mapping, programs on the Lorico Lian radio station about poverty did not get enough participation from the community, because the program material only broadcast about political policies implemented by the local government that aimed to regulate economic activities that violated regional regulations such as the use of sidewalks. for trading activities, eviction of residents' houses occupying government land for trading activities, etc.

”

After conducting community mapping, Lorico's radio programs focused more on efforts to reduce poverty because the programs had involved communities that experienced direct economic impacts from local government policies. For example, Radio Lorico interviewed sand diggers who were dissatisfied with local government policies that prohibited sand diggers from carrying out their activities. The sand diggers asked the local government to provide new jobs. Through radio programs, their requests were conveyed to the local government and received a response from the local government by providing training and working capital for them.”

”

-Radio Lorico Lian FM, Timor Leste



Pic: Stakeholders of CR Rasi FM, Indonesia, sketching a map of the radio's coverage area

4 Community mapping builds inclusivity

BANGLADESH

“ After completing the community mapping, we have ensured the inclusion of all types of vulnerable populations in our various programs. This process has allowed us to paint a comprehensive and detailed picture of the diverse communities and their inhabitants. We made deliberate efforts to involve representatives from different vulnerable groups, encompassing women, men, girls, and boys with disabilities, as well as non-disabled individuals in the community mapping process. This inclusive approach has added significant meaning to our program. ”

-Allaya Ferdous, Station Manager, Radio Mahananda, Bangladesh

“ Community mapping has had a profound impact, transforming our approach to raising the issues. Previously, our initiatives targeted the entire locality without focusing on the unique challenges of specific areas. However, after incorporating community mapping into our strategy, our work became more targeted and precise. We shifted from addressing common problems to directly engaging with the needs of the local population, particularly those in marginalized or backward areas. ”

-Pata Dey Brishti, Program Producer, Radio Sagorgiri, Bangladesh



Pic: Community members participating in the community consultation by CR Sagor Giri, Bangladesh

5 Community mapping helps you identify the target community

TIMOR LESTE

“ Some of the people live in the city, but they live on the riverside. Most of them come from other districts. They don't have a good place to stay, so they stay on the riverside. Some of them come just to sell small things... some of them dig the sand and sell the sand. Others are stone cutters. They don't have a regular job. They take whatever they get on the river and sell it...

Because of pre-mapping, we could identify this target audience more easily. The focus group discussions, group listening, and other participative games helped and enabled the community to prioritize. Previously people were afraid and not confident.

We (community radio) have also become more confident. We discussed this (community mapping) program with the government when we met their representative. We talked about how community radio programs could influence and help the community to live in good conditions. We not only talked about the need to improve the income of the poor community, but we also talked about how the government can provide some funds to help them (the poor). And also, how they can have access to good public health because that is very expensive.

”

Prezado Ximenes, Station Manager, Radio Lorico Lian FM, Timor Leste



Pic: Prezado Ximenes (left), Station Manager of Lorico Lian, Timor Leste

ANNEX

AMARC Asia-Pacific Partner Community Radio Stations and Partner NGOs

INDONESIA

Eight community radio stations partnered with AMARC Asia Pacific in Indonesia to implement the community mapping exercise. They were located in the western part of Indonesia (Sumatra Island), the central part of Indonesia (Java Island), and the eastern part of Indonesia (Lombok and Sulawesi Islands).

1. Taratak FM Community Radio (Lima Puluh Kota District, West Sumatera Province)
2. Sumatera Province)
3. Magita FM Community Radio (Tulang Bawang District, Lampung Province)
4. Province)
5. Suara Waditra Community Radios (Tasikmalaya District, West Java Province)
6. Java Province)
7. Rasi FM Community Radio (Garut District, West Java Province)
8. Merapi FM (Boyolali District, Central Java Province)
9. Nina Bayan FM (Lombok Utara District, West Nusa Tenggara Province)
10. Province)
11. Sipurennu FM (Pangkep District, South Sulawesi Province)
12. Mosintuwu FM (Poso District, Central Sulawesi Province)

The implementing partner was Combine Resource Institution.

BANGLADESH

Five community radio stations partnered with AMARC Asia Pacific in Bangladesh for implementing the community mapping exercise.

1. Radio Nalta, Nalta, Kaligonj, Satkhira
2. Radio Mahananda, Belepukur, Chapinawabganj
3. Radio Sagor Giri, Sitakunda, Chittagong
4. Radio Pollikontho, Moulvibazar, Sader
5. Radio Mahananda, Belepukur, Chapinawabganj

The implementing partner was the NGO, Rupantar.

TIMOR LESTE

Three community radio stations partnered with AMARC Asia Pacific in Timor Leste to implement the community mapping exercise.

1. Los Palos FM (Radio Comunidade Los Palos) FM, Lautern district, Los Palos city sub-district
2. Lorico Lian FM, centre of Timor Leste capital, Dili
3. Radio Comunidade Maubisse Mauloko FM, sub-district town of Maubisi city

The implementing partner was the NGO, Fraterna.

INDIA

Six community radio stations partnered with AMARC Asia Pacific in India to implement the community mapping exercise.

1. Waqt ki Awaaz, Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh
2. Mandakini ki Awaz, Rudraprayag, Uttarakhand
3. Radio Mayur, Chhapra, Bihar
4. Radio Muskan, Kandhamal, Odhisha
5. Henvavani, Chamba, Uttarakhand
6. Radio Brahmaputra, Dibrugarh, Assam

The implementing partner was the NGO, Shramik Bharti.

NEPAL

Eight community radio stations partnered with AMARC Asia-Pacific in Nepal to implement the community mapping exercise.

1. Radio Kapilvastu, Kapilbastu, Lumbini Province
2. Radio Ichchhakamana FM, Chitwan, Bagmati Province
3. Radio Marsyangdi, Lamjung, Gandaki Province
4. Pratibodh FM, Banke, Lumbini Province
5. Radio Gurbaba, Bardiya, Lumbini Province
6. Radio Rapti, Salyan, Karnali Province
7. Radio Sindhu, Sindhupalchok, Bagmati Province
8. Radio Rudraksha, Mahottari, Madhesh Province

The implementing partner was the NGO Nagarik Aawaz.