Resuscitating Rapid Rural Appraisal: Emma Flemmig¹, Steven C. Hodges¹, A. Ozzie Abaye¹, Kurt Richter² and Wade E. Thomason¹

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STEP 1. A Brief History of International Development Strategies

Transfer-of-Technology Model (TOT) : *Still Flourishing, albeit unintentionally* • From ag development's inception in the 1940s to the post-Green Revolution 1970s

- How to do it? Transfer the technology in the Global North to the Global South
- Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA): Considered paternalistic, but still flourishing under a different name • Initial response to TOT's shortcomings, in the early 1980s, to increase consideration of traditional practices
- TOT often failed because outsiders paid insufficient attention to non-Western epistemologies
- RRA is usually a semi-standardized set of information-gathering practices
- For "experts" to extract Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) from farmers quickly • RRA focused almost exclusively on rural knowledge deemed "useful" and useable by Western scientists
- As you can imagine, important information was often lost or ignored during many RRAs
- Rural People's Knowledge (RPK) & Responses to RRA: PARTICIPATORY, BUT NOT REALLY • Endless variations, critiques & methodological variations have been pursued as improvements to TOT & RRA
- Collectively transitioning to emphasize RPK in place of ITK
- General-acceptance of outsiders' inability to distinguish between useful & non-useful rural knowledge

Common methods advocated after RRA was (appropriately) deemed inadequate

- Participatory Rural Appraisal
- Participatory/Community Action Research
- Farming Systems Research Agroecosystem Analysis

Our Pragmatic Response to Bureaucracy: Social Science & Agricultural Research Compatibility

- Unfortunately, agricultural research budgets and directives constrain utilization of these participatory methods • Participation Issues: time-consuming, biophysical scientists' discomfort with qualitative analyses, foreign
- language expertise, as well as, potential demand for high-level anthropological or economic research skills
- Essentially, we are still using TOT and giving little more than "lip service" to rural farmers' participation
- Our methodology does not undermine the very important arguments disparaging RRA/TOT attitudes • BUT it does return to the original RRA purpose—making RPK more user-friendly for ag researchers
- This standardized system combines a technically-sound platform to bring farmers' and rural peoples' realities
- to the funding leaders and bureaucratic realities of Western monitoring and evaluation practices

STEP 2. Examples of a Standardized Survey Module

Remember! Western Epistemology vs. RPK / Indigenous Epistemologies Means: • Alternative valuations of varied financial, ecological & cultural capitals exist Sound guidance for outsiders interpreting temporal & spatial relationships is emphasized

	What kind of aloo was planted in this field?
	 Desi
	processing type
	What variety of aloo was planted in this field?
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🗐 ODK Collect > i 💾 🍬	government/university, etc.
C. Farm Layout	
C3. How many fields [plots] were farmed in 2015-2016?	C Local variety/landrace
4	Unknown
	What was the source of your aloo seed?
♥ ☑ ☑ Image: Solution of the second seco	 bajra, rice, rapeseed & some vegetables can be hybrids
	O purchased non-hybrid
C. Farm Layout C1. Draw a layout of the fields and plots.	saved seed
If the land for rabi and kharif were different use black for Rabi and blue for Kharif.	What is the variety(s) of aloo named?
Sketch Image	Kufri chipsona-1
Sketen indge	How many kg/ac of aloo seed are used for sowing this field?
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◯ March	
◯ April	
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◯ June	
◯ July	
 August 	
 September 	
 October 	
O November	
ODecember	
O None or not-applicable	
Which week of that month was planting?	
🔘 days 1 - 7	
🔘 days 8 - 15	

- combine/thresher -- tractor mounted combine/thresher -- self-propelled
- groundnut digger-shaker
- chaff- or stubble-shaver/combine/cutter--any type
- straw baler
- straw chopper-cum-spreader
- vertical conveyor reaper--wheat stacking
- vegetable or potato digger (mechanized)

MORE! ...about the Survey & Method's Features

- All programs designed for open source software the Open Data Kit suite [ODK Collect, ODK Build, ODK Aggregate] for Android tablet-based data collection & R for statistical analysis • Microsoft Excel is our preferential template format [vs. ODK Build], so directions for utilizing open source spreadsheet programs, as well as for common, non-open source programs like SAS and ArcGIS, are developed as supplemental guides • Survey templates are available for both ODK Collect, as well as, paper-based data collection
- Supplemental guides include information on sampling design, for hiring and training enumerators; cultural considerations for survey customization; and **detailed instructions for editing** the template(s)
- Specialist input will be used to develop the **discipline-specific template additions**
- **Needs Assessment** and / or **Monitoring & Evaluation** opportunities are endless

Other

Farm

Land

Preparation

ABSTRACT: International agricultural development workers have tried repeatedly, with limited and variable success, to improve participation from smallholder farmers when designing projects to improve rural food security and agricultural productivity in the Global South. Scores of individuals have continued to modify and reinvent the ways we interact with the rural poor and the research systems of developing nations. The reality is that current funding structures for international development simply offer neither the flexibility nor the project longevity necessary for success when using genuinely participatory designs. This conundrum - the desire to utilize farmer voices while lacking the structural support to implement changes - inspired a hypothesis to flip the strategy.

Could a new kind of participation (i.e. Rapid Rural Appraisal) method be created that naturally feeds into current international development priorities and program monitoring and evaluation practices?

This method would contrast continuing attempts to improve and increase the newer Participatory Rural Appraisal methods by fundamentally-redesigning the more structured, rapid style of assessment. A technically-sound, user-friendly, open-source survey methodology was designed for agricultural development specialists from any discipline, but particularly crop and soil scientists in mind. The methodology details and survey structure, along with supporting examples from the results of 600household surveys recently conducted in rural central Haiti (2014 - 2015) and northern India (2016) are available through the corresponding author.

STEP 3. Add Discipline- or Project-Specific Components

With specialist input, supplemental templates will be designed to augment the versatility Build in cultural dynamism to maximize coverage of non-Western attitudes and knowledge of cultural practices



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Improved Data Accessibility "Propels" **Our R&D System** to more tangible **Food Security** Outcomes

CGIAR, World Bank

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KEY: Non-perfect is better than continuing process— as a whole— because time and limited in international agriculture & food s

Increased documentation of success, ther

invest in 'positive deviants' and practices

and rural livelihoods with less Western int

Easy-to-use programs & easy-to-follow ins

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Raise farmers' voices with a user-friendly

top-down structures towards bottom-up e

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