
COMMUNITY ACTION GUIDE

What is Development?



INTERNATIONAL
ACCOUNTABILITYPROJECT

© Copyright 2020, International Accountability Project
www.accountabilityproject.org

Design by Letizia Farisato
Adapted design and layout by Melissa J. Reese
Illustrations by Haris Ichwan

Table of CONTENTS

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?	2
Activity: What does development mean to you?	6
Did you know?	
You have the right to development.	10
WHAT DOES “DEVELOPMENT” LOOK LIKE TODAY?	12
What Kind of Development?.....	16
Did you know?	
You have the right to be consulted and to say Yes or No!	18
Community Experiences: A story from Nepal.....	23
Activity: Impacts and benefits of development	28
Activity: You have the right to development.....	30
WHAT DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE	34
Activity: Community led development puzzles	38
Community Experiences: Jessica’s story	41
RESOURCES	45

Let's get started!

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

- 6 **Activity:** What does development mean to you?
- 10 **Did you know?** You have the right to development.

We all have dreams for the future of our communities.

For example, maybe in your community:

- People want to build a new school or a better health clinic
- The roads need to be repaired, or wells and pipes are needed to bring safe drinking water
- Young people want a new skills training program
- Farmers need irrigation systems for crops and animals during the dry season
- The village council wants a fish conservation zone or forest preservation area run by the community
- Some people want modern technologies like electricity or computers, while some want to recover older ways of doing things, like practicing traditional farming methods or reviving languages that few people speak anymore
- Others are happy with their community, just the way it is, and hope it stays the same for future generations

These are all examples of priorities for **development**. As you can see, the word “development” has many meanings. There are as many ways to understand the idea of development as there are communities in the world. These different understandings come from peoples’ different beliefs, different priorities, and different visions for their futures.

Development means building roads to ship products for export!



Development means ensuring that women have access to health services!



Development means electricity, jobs, and money for our people!



Development? It would be nice to have better food storage...and maybe a new irrigation system.



Development means improving our lives so everyone's needs are met once and for all.



Often, governments, companies, or development banks declare that big projects (such as roads, mines, hydropower dams, or modern buildings) are necessary for the development of the whole country. They often call these “development plans” or “development projects”.

But are these projects always good for people and the environment? Who is actually benefiting and who should decide what kinds of projects and policies are best for the future of our communities and our countries? Who has the right to say if what is being proposed is “development”? What happens if you disagree with a proposed plan or project? And, how do you **find alternatives** that support the development you want?

Answering these questions can be difficult. In many places, you may not be able to even ask these questions freely, due to restrictions on freedoms. But, in order for development to meet the real needs of people, the people must be involved in planning development - not only institutions that are seen as holding all the power.

Development should be a process where people and communities are able to **reclaim their power** in answering the question, what does development look like to us? The development process should enable all people to live with dignity and thrive on the land they love.

In this **Guide**, you will find activities, tools, and resources to ask and answer with your community, “is this development?” and “what does development look like to us?”



WHAT DOES DEVELOPMENT MEAN TO YOU?



Objectives:

There are many different ideas and models for development. This activity will help your community think about what development means to you



Time: 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the size of the group



Materials:

Flipchart, drawing paper, and markers



INSTRUCTIONS

1 Ask participants to relax, close their eyes and prepare to use their imaginations. When they are relaxed, say to them:

- Think about **your community** - your family, your neighbors, all the people in your village or town. Think about what they do in their daily lives. What are their hopes and concerns?
- Now, think about **your home**, the land and buildings all around, and all of the places that you and your community use and enjoy.

Give participants some time to think. Then, while keeping their eyes closed, ask them the following questions, pausing to allow them time to think between questions:

- What are some ideas that can help improve people's lives in your community?
- What would help everyone be healthier, happier, and have more opportunities?
- How do we grow our community in harmony with nature?

There are many different possibilities. Maybe you are thinking about education for children, or skills training for adults, or better food for families. Maybe you are thinking about a new road, or market, or health clinic. Or, maybe you have an idea for a program you want to start in your community. It could be something just for your community, or something for the whole country. After they have had time to think, tell the participants they will now have a chance to share their thoughts.

2 Break into small groups of no more than 5 people. Give each group or each person a large sheet of paper with a line drawn across the middle dividing the top from the bottom. Ask them to talk briefly about

their ideas for development in their community and then to draw these ideas on the top half of the paper. Ask them to do this in no more than 15 minutes. Make sure that everyone has a chance to speak and to draw.

- 3** Bring the groups back together and ask each person to show their drawing and talk about their visions for development.
- 4** After everyone has shared, ask them to think about the visions of development being promoted in their community and region by companies, the government, or development banks - the institutions seen as holding power. Allow them a few minutes to think about this.
- 5** Breaking into the same small groups, ask the groups to share their ideas. Then using the bottom half of their papers, ask participants to draw these visions of development being promoted by companies, the government, or development banks. Tell them that this can include both projects they like and ones they do not.
- 6** Have everyone tape their drawing to the wall. Bring the group back together, and ask each person or group representative to share about their drawing.
- 7** After everyone has shared, lead a discussion about the different ideas of development included in the drawings.
 - Do all of these pictures represent development to you, or just some of them?
 - Are the ideas of the people similar or different from the projects proposed by companies and the government? What is different?
 - What are the reasons behind these differences?
 - Who has the right to say what development is, and what a community should have?

Facilitator Note: If you have a shorter amount of time or a bigger group of participants, you can skip Step 3 and then have each person or each group share about both parts of their drawing in Step 6.

It may be helpful for some community members, such as women, youth and the elderly, to have their own physical space to discuss this topic where they are encouraged to share their thoughts. You can consider having small groups, for example with only women or youth, and then share differences and similarities across the groups in the larger discussion.

Debrief: Thank everyone for sharing. Point out that, as seen in our drawings and conversations, people have different ideas about development. While it may not be possible for all of us to agree, the important thing is for all of us to participate in deciding what kind of development happens in our community and our country. When more people are truly able to be part of the debate and decisions, development is much more likely to actually meet everyone's needs and make lives better.



DID YOU KNOW?

You have the right to development.

International law recognizes your right to development, and acknowledges the right of peoples to choose their own development model. In the *United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development*, the world has agreed that...

You have the right to participate in all development processes.

- *Article 1.1*: "The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development..."
- *Article 2.1*: "The human person is the central subject of development and should be the active participant and beneficiary of the right to development."
- *Article 8.1*: "... Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process."

You have the right to development that does not harm.

- *Preamble*: ... "the promotion of, respect for and enjoyment of certain human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot justify the denial of other human rights and fundamental freedoms."
- *Article 6.3*: "States should take steps to eliminate obstacles to development resulting from failure to observe civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights."
- *Article 8.1*: "States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realization of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income."

You have the right to fairly benefit from development that affects you.

- *Article 2: "States have the right and the duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting therefrom."*



Questions for Discussion:

1. *Do you think your right to development is being respected and fulfilled? Why or why not?*
2. *Can the right to development help you achieve development you want or oppose unwanted projects or plans you may face? How?*

You can read the full United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish here:

bit.ly/UNright2development

WHAT DOES “DEVELOPMENT” LOOK LIKE TODAY?

- 16 What Kinds of
“Development” Projects?
- 18 **Did You Know?** You have
the right to be consulted
and to say Yes or No!
- 23 **Community Experiences:**
A story from Nepal
- 28 **Activity:** Impacts and benefits
of development
- 30 **Activity:** You have the right
to development

Today, “development” has become a scary word for a lot of people.

Instead of recognizing and respecting the many **different ideas and models of development** that exist, governments and institutions have used their power to promote one idea and one model as the only way forward.

Today, when you hear someone talking about “development”, it usually means:

- Encouraging more investment from companies to promote economic growth
- Changing existing laws, or creating new laws, to promote more investment from foreign companies
- Sponsoring mega projects, like huge dams, open-pit mines, plantations, and highways
- Constructing high-rise commercial and residential buildings
- Giving away land and other common resources for private companies to use for profit, such as through Special Economic Zones or economic land concessions
- Building infrastructure that prioritizes trade and relationships with other countries in a region

Even though every community is different, with different priorities and visions for their future, this one agenda is often forced on people without discussion. Under this model, many institutions like development banks and companies, say that the goal of development is to promote economic growth and end poverty.

Although this is what governments and institutions say, what do they mean by ending poverty? And, if and when economic growth occurs, are the benefits being distributed equally? What is lost in this process, and who bears this burden?

The word poverty may mean very different things depending on who is defining it. Some people who are considered poor by governments and institutions do not see themselves as poor at all. They may not have a lot of money as



Just because we have no money
does not mean we are poor.

We did not even know what it was
to be poor, until the rich people built
their factories nearby and took our
water away.



income, but they have access to traditional medicines, food, and more from the forests, rivers, and oceans that sustain their lives.

People can feel that they are struggling with poverty. They may feel that they are poor because:

- They were not given opportunities for education, or do not have access to education for their children
- Their land, natural resources, and livelihood were taken away
- They do not have access to healthcare when they or their family members become ill
- They belong to a group that is oppressed

It is important to recognize that **often people who are poor have been made poor by political and economic policies**. There are many communities who have been displaced from their lands or lost their livelihoods with the destruction of their environment, which made them vulnerable to increased poverty. Often, the model promoted by governments and other institutions leaves communities worse off than before by prioritizing their vision of development over that of the people.

WHAT KINDS OF “DEVELOPMENT” PROJECTS?

Many governments, development banks, and companies say that development must include projects that support modern infrastructure and grow the economy. They promise that this growth will benefit everybody - especially people living in poverty.

These projects come in all shapes and sizes. However, under this model, these projects are usually designed and implemented without the input of communities likely to be most affected - positively or negatively. Without **meaningful consultation** and safe space to express their opinions, projects of all sizes can have terrible consequences.

Let's start with projects that have the most obvious impact.

Mega projects create profit for companies involved in building them and the banks that finance them, but local people and the environment usually lose the most. Even though communities are often promised jobs, schools, reliable electricity, water systems, or other types of infrastructure, these huge projects often destroy entire villages, forests, rivers, and urban neighborhoods. Often, the promises made to communities are not meaningfully kept, such as creating jobs that are only temporary during construction or building schools without providing funds for teachers or supplies. Over time, many communities find that the lasting effects outweigh the initial benefits, and they regret the loss or impact on their culture, land, resources, and quality of life.

For example, large dams often displace rural people without bringing them any benefits. Around the world, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes when dams are built. Millions more living downstream have lost their resources and traditional livelihoods as a result of flooding from the dams, and often do not even have access to the electricity produced.

Large dams are one example of mega projects, but there are many others. Projects such as mining, logging, and drilling for oil and gas, often destroy natural resources that local communities use, such as forests, rivers, and other natural areas. Even projects that are supposed to be better for the environment, such as solar and wind energy, can still cause serious concern around land use if communities are not involved in the project's design and planning.



We should not have to choose between poverty and pollution!



DID YOU KNOW?

You have the right to be consulted and to say Yes or No!

Consultation is the process of exchanging information, recommendations, ideas, and opinions about possible development plans amongst people and communities whose lives would be affected. Consultations should begin as early as possible, well before any potential plans have been finalized, and should continue throughout the development process. You can also use consultations to discuss your community's own development plans.

Consultation should be the first door that opens many opportunities for you to **participate and engage in development** processes that affect you and your community. Regardless of whether they are conducted by your community or by outsiders, the consultations should ensure that everyone in the community is included and has space to express their opinions. You have the right to know about what is being planned and how it will happen, and to ask questions and receive answers.

A consultation might take the form of a public discussion, or smaller group conversations. However, bringing people into a room to only listen to information from one side and not allow people to contribute their ideas and opinions is not a consultation. A good consultation is planned **by and for the people**, and...

- Allocates time fairly and provides equal opportunity to all participants to voice their concerns, ideas and opinions
- Is conducted in a culturally appropriate manner and place that makes you feel comfortable expressing your thoughts, without fear or pressure

- Happens early enough in and throughout the development process so that feedback gathered can drive the design of a project, and its later implementation
- Is a space where your community has the power to say yes or no, to accept or to reject, the project, plan, or idea being proposed

Consultation processes should begin and be conducted in a manner that is **free** from coercion or threat, **prior** to the finalization or implementation of any plans, and fully **informed** in a language that the community can easily understand. Your community should have the opportunity to collectively approve or reject a project before starting any activities, and at each stage of the project. A decision is reached through an agreed upon community engagement process that respects the rights of all - particularly women, the elderly, and children.

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* protects the right of Indigenous communities to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). FPIC means that you have the **right to give consent** - to say yes or no to a proposed project or plan. The consent comes through a process involving access to relevant information, consultations, internal deliberations, and community-based decision-making processes resulting in a collective decision of either giving or withholding consent.

For more information about FPIC, see:

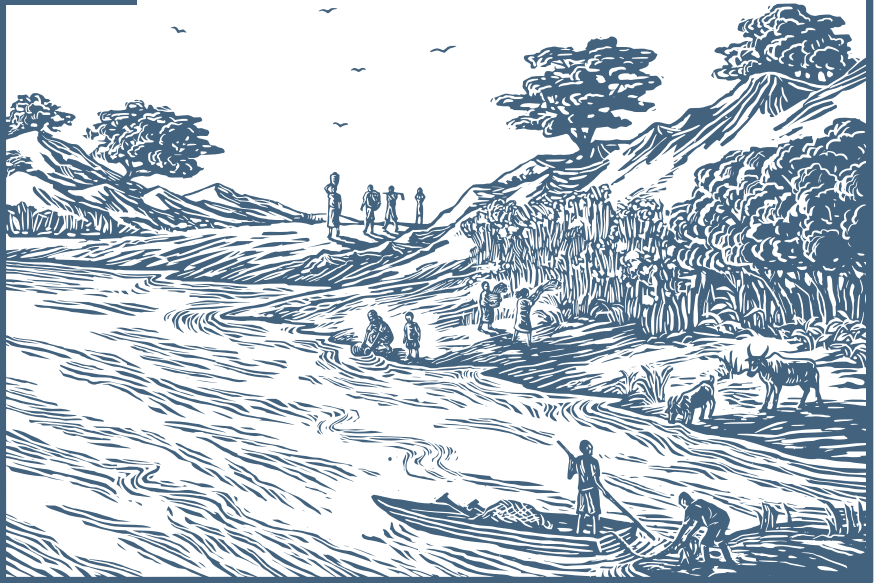
- *Rights in Action: Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for Indigenous Peoples* by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact bit.ly/AIPFPICvideo
- *Training Manual for Indigenous Peoples on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)* by Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact bit.ly/AIPFPICmanual
- *Guide to Free, Prior and Informed Consent* by Oxfam bit.ly/OxfamFPICguide

Sometimes projects that seem promising in theory end up having unintentional impacts that can be damaging. For example, a power plant that creates energy through agricultural waste could be a rewarding project for communities to support. But, if placed in the middle of a residential area, this same project could end up causing serious health problems, damaging the surrounding environment or displacing the very people it should be helping. In the same way, building a power generator based on wind energy could cause noise pollution and kill migrating birds.

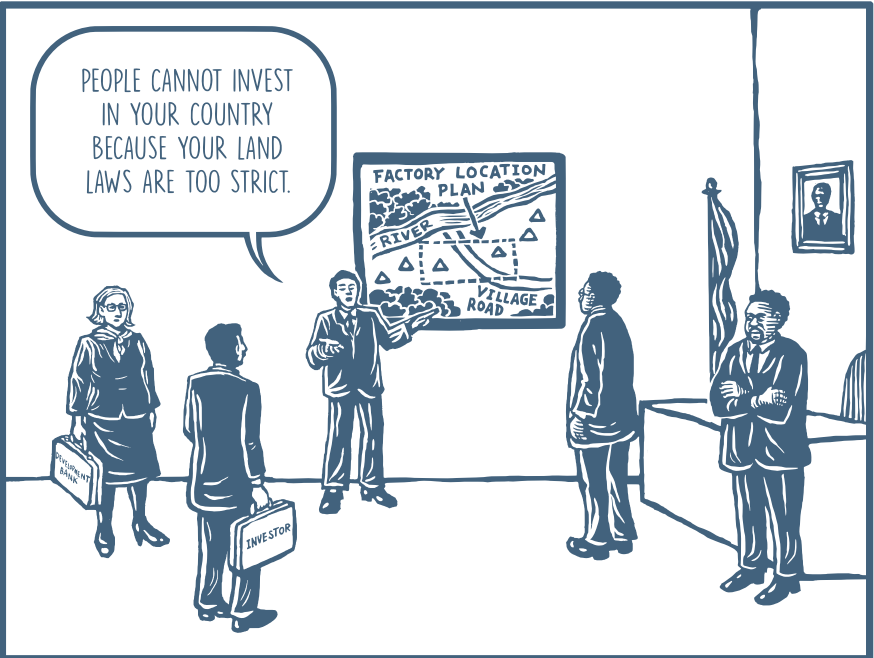
Other types of projects are proposed to create or change a country's laws and policies on investments, concessions, or land titles. Even though these types of projects don't have the same immediate physical impact, they can still have lasting consequences. For example, a project that provides advice for changing the laws to make it easier to invest in a country without preventive measures built-in might allow companies to avoid existing **environmental or social protections**. Changes in laws involving land use may impact the land people live on or use for food, income, and housing. Or, national development plans that focus on building infrastructure and energy capacity might give rise to the kinds of mega projects we discussed earlier. This kind of so-called "development" can cause profound impacts on the lives of people and the fate of the country.

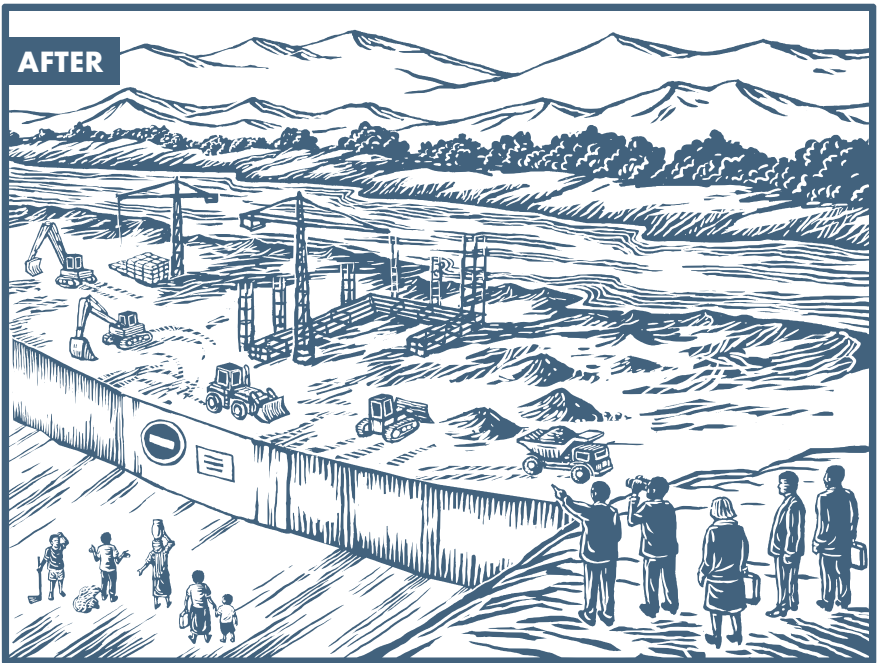
All projects can cause serious harms when affected people are not meaningfully consulted about their development priorities and their plans are not integrated into the project's design, implementation, and monitoring.

BEFORE



PEOPLE CANNOT INVEST
IN YOUR COUNTRY
BECAUSE YOUR LAND
LAWS ARE TOO STRICT.





Community Experiences:

A STORY FROM NEPAL

When the Commercial Agriculture Development Project was proposed, the project developer's stated goal was to reduce poverty in 5 hill districts, 5 lowland districts, and 1 mountain district in eastern Nepal. The project was said to improve the production, marketing, and processing of high value crops such as vegetables, fruits, tea, and spices.

This area is home to many Indigenous peoples who have been farming here longer than anyone remembers. However, the initial assessment conducted by the project developer claimed that the project would not have any impacts on Indigenous peoples, and therefore did not require special provisions for them.

The people in this region have always used local seeds, natural fertilizers, and **traditional methods** of pest management. In order to make their agriculture "more efficient", the Commercial Agriculture Development Project promoted the use of hybrid seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and insecticides. Local farmers were aware of the harm caused by these agrochemicals, but in order to increase their production and



Eastern Nepal is home to many Indigenous communities, many of whom have been farming in the region longer than anyone can remember.

A project promising improvements in the production, marketing, and processing of 'high-value crops' interfered with traditional agricultural practices and threatened community ties to the land and environment.

their earnings they went along with the proposal.

Soon after the project started, farmers began to experience new health problems and observed the loss of birds, insects, and plants from their fields. One of the Indigenous groups in the project area, the Rai, have rituals called ub-hauli **celebrating the agricultural cycle**. These festivals happen at specific times of the year that correspond with the seasons of planting and harvest. But the crops that were now being grown for “more efficient” production were not planted or harvested at the same time, so these celebrations no longer made sense.

Some of the farmers involved in the project have earned more money. But they are losing traditional seeds and farming methods, as well as the cultural celebrations that helped to bond their communities and strengthen their identity and their ties to the land and seasons.

They now see that it was wrong for anyone to believe that the project would not negatively impact Indigenous peoples. Though the project did not take away their land or force them to move, it changed one of the most important parts of their lives - their traditional ag-



“ Farmers are losing traditional seeds and farming methods, as well as the cultural celebrations that helped to bond their communities and strengthen their identity.

“ The project changed one of the most important parts of their lives - their traditional agricultural cycle and celebrations.

gricultural cycle and celebrations, including the fertility of their agricultural lands.

What can we learn from this story?

This project intended to reduce poverty by generating income, but the actions were not consistent with the traditional practices of the affected Indigenous peoples. Some of the activities like pest, seed, and soil management techniques were not compatible with the communities' traditional systems. Therefore, the project had unexpected and serious negative impacts which affected the way of life and cultural practices of the Indigenous communities.



Questions for Discussion:

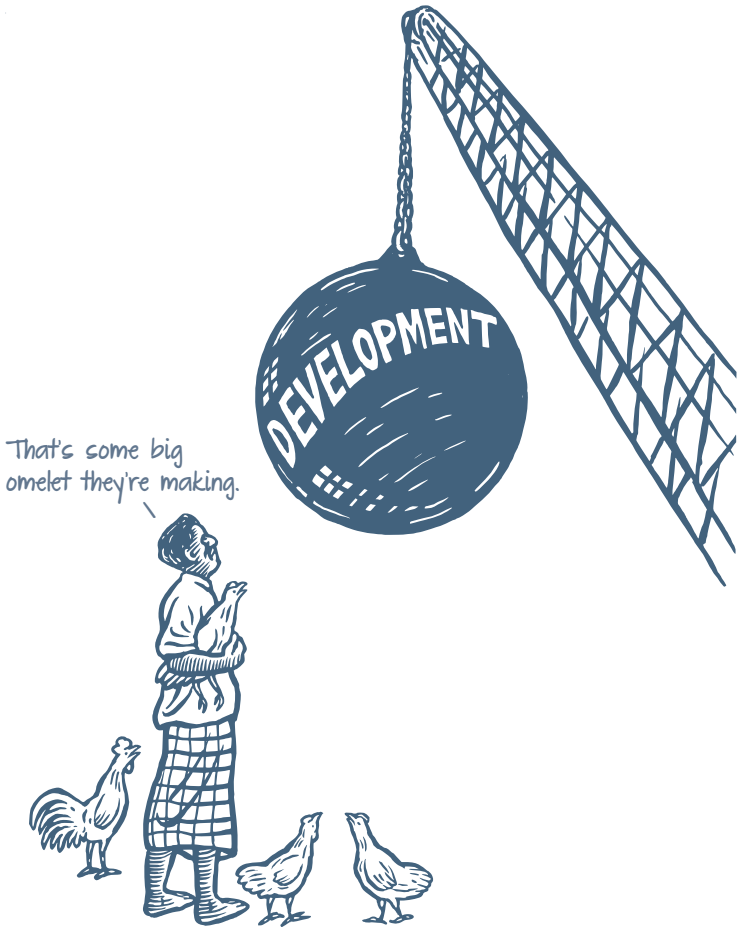
- 1 *Does this project fit within your vision of development? Why or why not?*
- 2 *Aside from money, what other kinds of value does farming bring? How are these important to your worldview, livelihood, and identity?*
- 3 *Is efficiency and increased production the best or only goal of farming? Is commercial agriculture more sustainable than traditional farming practices?*
- 4 *How does the project's focus on income generation clash with other needs and ways of living?*
- 5 *What are some ways traditional practices can still exist alongside improved agricultural production?*
- 6 *What could have been done to make sure this project met the needs of the communities affected?*

Today, we can see that the word “development” is often used to justify projects and plans that further the agendas and visions of those with great financial and political power. By using the language of development, companies, governments, and development banks can rationalize harms that may affect the people, in the name of profits that may benefit the few. Those promoting these types of projects - big and small - say that these harms are necessary for “development”. They say it is necessary for some people to sacrifice in order for the whole country or region to be able to develop.



Thanks to efforts by communities and organizations worldwide, people are advocating for their own **visions for development** to be respected, and for compensation for what is taken from them. But no amount of compensation can bring back the culture, heritage, and livelihoods that were lost along with the forests and rivers, and lasting impacts on the environment.

More and more, people around the world are saying that this model is destructive and not respectful, and is not actually helping their country or their community. They are reclaiming their power, and saying firmly, that this is not development. They are saying that it is time to stop promoting these kinds of projects, and instead **promote alternatives** that respect everyone's rights and enable everyone to benefit and live in harmony.





IMPACTS AND BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT



Objectives:

To think critically about current projects being proposed in your town or region



Time: 30 minutes



Materials:

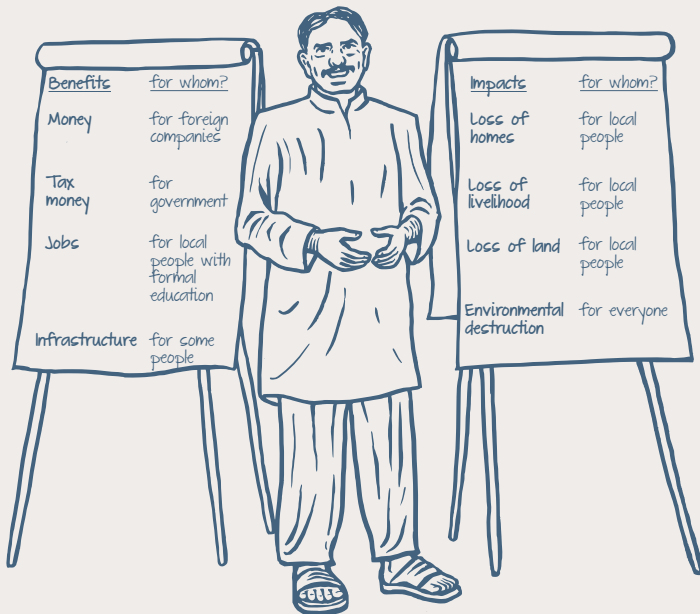
Markers, flipchart paper, or other local materials that can be written on

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Reflect on the projects being proposed in your town or region that were discussed in the last activity "What Does Development Mean to You?". Choose one project to discuss. Ask the group to consider,
 - What is the intention of the project?
 - What is the reality being experienced?
- 2 After a short discussion in which everyone is able to have a say, use a flipchart to note the benefits that the project promises and the positive and negative impacts it may bring.
- 3 Ask the group to name the benefits of the project and list them on a large sheet of paper.
- 4 Ask the group to name the negative impacts of the project that

have happened, or that might happen, and list them on another piece of paper.

- 5 Return to the first list of benefits. Read each one out loud and ask, who will receive this benefit? Note the answers on a large sheet of paper.
- 6 Return to the list of negative impacts. Read each one out loud and ask, who will live with this risk? Note the answers on a large sheet of paper.
- 7 Discuss how each person in your group sees the balance of benefits and impacts, and what can be done to reduce the impacts and increase the benefits. Consider alternatives that might bring more benefits and fewer impacts.
 - Can the project give more real benefits to affected people?
 - What alternatives would bring more benefits and fewer impacts?
 - Should the group mobilize to stop the project altogether?





YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT



Objectives:

This activity will help you and your community define and defend your right to development using the *UN Declaration on the Right to Development*



Time: 40 to 60 minutes



Materials:

Markers, flipchart paper, or other local materials that can be written on

INSTRUCTIONS

1

Ask a volunteer to read the following scenarios out loud:

Imagine you are a member of a fisherfolk community...

Scenario 1 for a community facing a problematic project:

→ One day you see company representatives preparing to construct a huge windmill to generate energy in your fishing area - without consulting with your community. Your community is concerned that the location where they are building the windmill will affect their fishing area and will cause noise pollution.

→ Your community would like to suggest that they move this project to a different part of the land your community uses, but no one listens to you. When asked, the government says that your community should sacrifice for the development of the whole country.

→ You are thinking of writing a petition to the investors of the project and to higher level authorities in the government. Which part of the *UN Declaration on the Right to Development* can you use to demand your rights be respected? Let's try to draft a letter for your community...

Scenario 2 for a community proposing their own development initiative:

→ Recently, your community has been facing challenges because of the rough waves in the sea and strong winds - many changes affecting your livelihoods due to climate change. You also heard a rumor that the government and some community members want to build huge harbors and associated facilities in your area.

→ Your community discussed and collectively agreed that your real need and priority is to build small-scale infrastructure, such as a breakwater wall and small boat docks, to help sustain the community livelihoods - not big-scale infrastructure.

→ You are thinking of writing a petition to potential investors and to relevant government agencies to propose your own development priorities and initiative. Which part of the *UN Declaration on the Right to Development* can you use to demand your right to development? Let's try to draft a letter for your community...

- 2 Ask participants to break into small groups of not more than 5 persons (you can also ask them to do this individually). Give each small group a copy of the scenarios. Each group will have 10 to 15 minutes to read through the *UN Declaration on the Right to Development* and draft the letter using the format below as a guide.

Suggested letter format:

Dear project investors and concerned government officials,

We are

.....

.....

We want

.....

.....

- 3 Ask participants to exchange their letter with another group. Take 10 to 15 minutes to read the letter and discuss in the group what comments or feedback the group can provide to the other group. Consider giving feedback: What makes this letter convincing? What can make this letter even more powerful?
- 4 Invite each group to provide feedback and have parallel discussions among groups. Then ask each group to briefly share useful tips and feedback they received.

Facilitator Note: This exercise can be done individually, in pairs, or smaller groups. For brainstorming and writing exercises it's best to keep the size of the group as small as possible to make sure everyone gets to contribute.

The facilitator could also prepare different scenarios, or different types of projects or problems, and give it to different groups. If your participants are already facing this situation, encourage them to write the letter based on their real experiences. At the end, the facilitator can open up the discussion and ask participants:

- What are some other ways to use or reference the *UN Declaration on the Right to Development* to support your advocacy and campaign?
- Are there other laws, both international and national, or traditional rules that you can use to strengthen the letter?
- What are the most effective and creative ways to deliver your message and statement in the letter?

Other International Law and Agreements that Support the Right to Development

- *Article 19, International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights*
bit.ly/ICCPRa19
- *International Labour Organization Convention No. 169*
bit.ly/ILOc169
- *Guidelines and recommendations by UN Special Rapporteur on the right to development*
bit.ly/UNSRright2devreport

WHAT DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE

38 **Activity:** Community-led
development puzzles

41 **Community Experiences:**
Jessica's Story

Development should always **improve lives** and never cause harm.

Unfortunately, plans and projects are usually designed and funded by a small group of people with the power to make decisions - people who may have never spoken to or met with the communities who will be affected by their projects. In fact, it is rare for communities to be involved in designing a project. Yet, without community involvement, projects are more likely to threaten homes, lands, livelihoods, and the environment.

Development cannot be like this.

Around the world, people are calling for development processes that are led by communities, rooted in local contexts, and address the needs of local people. Development processes that do not harm, but truly provide fair **benefits for all**. To create this environment, we must first end the exclusion and silencing of communities.

The foundation of real development must always be rooted in the right and shared power of the people to decide what they envision for their present and future, and how they prioritize reaching their full potential and quality of life as individuals and collectives. The people who live in and with the consequences of projects and plans, should be the ones designing and making decisions about development. **This is community-led development.** This is real development!

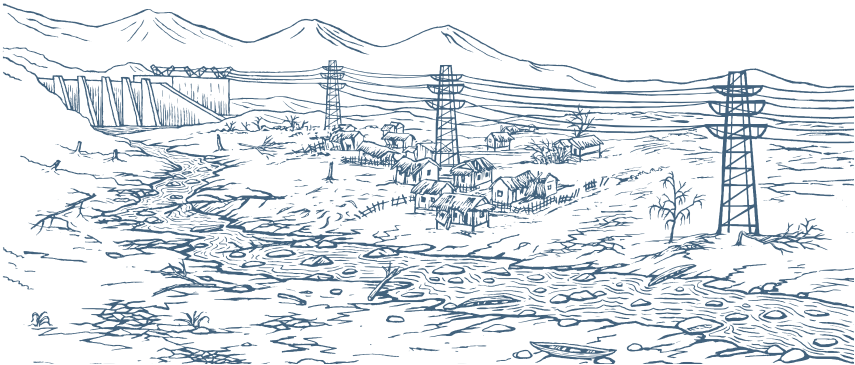
Community-led development grows in an environment and space where all people feel free to discuss, debate, and express their thoughts and opinions in ways that are suitable for them, so that development does not harm and fairly benefits all members of our communities. Anyone involved in building community-led development should assess different needs and accommodate the process to ensure the voices of all members of the community are included.

Community-led development recognizes that communities are experts, and that our priorities and visions should lead the way in creating inclusive and participatory development - whether responding to unwanted projects and plans, or building the future our communities envision.

WHAT DOES COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT LOOK LIKE?



#1 - Look closely at the community in this picture. Use your imagination - how do people earn their livelihood? What do they do for enjoyment? What challenges do they face?



#2 - Many changes happened in the blink of your eye. Can you describe what happened to this village? Is it better or worse than before, why? Is there any way to prevent this from happening?



#3 - Yes, there is a way to prevent harm and bring more positive changes to the community! Forget picture 2, take another look at picture 1 - what changes do you see between picture 1 and this picture? Can the people continue their livelihood and ways of enjoyment in their community?

In order to make this picture a reality and prevent picture 2, what does the community need to have, or do?



COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT PUZZLES

These *8 Steps to Community-led Development* were created by IAP's Global Advocacy Team, an initiative which brings together community organizers who experience development projects first-hand to conduct community-led research and mobilize their communities to change how development is conceived and implemented. Read more at: bit.ly/IAP_GAT



Objectives:

To discuss key elements of community-led development, and assess whether a project meets basic community-led development criteria



Time: 60 minutes, depending on the size of the group



Materials:

Stickers or small rocks, leaves, and copies of printed *8 Steps to Community-led Development* (available for download here: bit.ly/stepstodevelopment)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Prepare the puzzles by cutting a copy of *8 Steps to Community-led Development* into 8 pieces, preferably one step for each piece.

8 STEPS TO COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

Based on one of the most extensive community-led surveys on global development, involving 500 people in 8 countries, these 8 steps show how local expertise can ensure development benefits more people.

8 ALWAYS TAKE A HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

“Everybody will only end if people’s rights are respected.”

Believe the most important way to measure the benefits of a development project is to see if it improves quality of life and if it respects and protects human rights.

7 ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ANY HARM CAUSED

“The government thinks just digging everywhere is development. What we have here is not development, it is killing us slowly.”

Do not know how to file a complaint about the project.

Did not participate in any activities to measure the real value of their homes, land and resources that would be lost or destroyed.

6 UTILIZE INFORMATION FROM COMMUNITY MONITORING

“We exposed companies that were abusing community rights and those that were protecting. We took companies that were polluting to court.”

5 TREAT RESETTLEMENT AS ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

“They call it relocation, but they did not give us land to relocate to, not in life money, which we did not waste.”

4 ENSURE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE INFORMS PROJECT DESIGN

“People who are affected by the project should always be involved in the planning process.”

1 START WITH A PEOPLE’S PLAN

“Have a consultation based on the opinions of people who will be directly affected by the project, not only with government officials.”

Have never been given the chance to propose ideas for development projects.

Were forced to move because of violence and coercion.

Believe that the project was designed to benefit private companies.

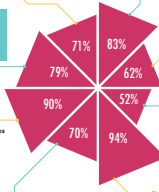
Have never been consulted about their development priorities for the country or region.

2 ADDRESS BARRIERS TO REAL PARTICIPATION

“A good consultation should not include soldiers. People should be allowed to talk freely and the information must be given to all people to read and consult.”

3 PURSUE PROJECT DESIGNS THAT UPHOLD HUMAN RIGHTS

“Develop a project that preserves sustainable livelihoods and has no negative impact on the environment and ecology.”



UNFPA Global Advocacy Team Initiative brings together community organizers, who experience development projects first hand, to conduct community-led research and mobilize their communities to change how development is conceived and implemented. The collective work led to a full report with local findings and recommendations to change how development is practiced. Read the report: bit.ly/backtodevelopment

INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

2 ADDRESS BARRIERS TO REAL PARTICIPATION

“A good consultation should not include soldiers. People should be allowed to talk freely and the information must be given in advance for people to read and consult.”

- Ask participants to create groups of 8 people. Give each group a set of pieces, and divide the pieces amongst the participants.
- Ask each person to read out their piece to the group. Then, ask the group to complete the puzzle.
- Ask everyone to look at the completed puzzle (either on printed copies, or on a screen). Discuss in the group to select which of the 8 steps apply to their community, or the project they are working on. For example, if your community is not facing resettlement, your group may not want to keep Step #5. The group could also propose any other steps or topics that are important but not included in the 8 steps by writing the proposed idea on a leaf or a piece of paper.

- 5 Now, use the selected steps as indicators to assess the development project your community is working on. Discuss if and how the project has implemented or will likely implement each of the steps. Prepare the puzzles by cutting a copy of *8 Steps to Community-led Development* into 8 pieces, preferably one step for each piece. Give each step a score using a scale of 1 to 5, placing 5 stickers or leaves if the project fully implements that step, down to 1 sticker or leaf for the lowest rating. Do this for each step.
- 6 Invite everyone back to the big group. Ask what ratings each group gave to each step and note that on the big paper. Ask everyone to share:
 - Why did each group give the ratings it did?
 - What needs to be done to ensure that the development is community-led?
 - What criteria and indicators do the group think would be useful in continuing their work?

Facilitator notes: Steps 1 to 4 are meant for everyone to interactively learn and understand the 8 steps to community-led development recommended by IAP's Global Advocacy Team. The facilitator may choose to share this in a presentation, if it better suits the participants.

Debrief: These 8 steps were developed based on the actual experiences of communities around the world. It can be used as a guideline to assess development projects proposed by the community or by others outside the community. This activity is best done before the implementation of the project.

Community Experiences:

JESSICA'S STORY

Hi, I'm Jessica! I am a community organizer from the Philippines. Did you know that around the world, people are making plans for their own **community-led development**?

I have been working as a community organizer for more than 20 years. In Metro Manila, I am supporting communities to create and implement People's Plans in response to the threat of eviction from a government infrastructure project.

Because of major typhoons, flooding in Metro Manila became a serious problem, and people living in informal settlements along the Pasig River were being blamed for the floods. The government's solution would move close to 10,000 families away from their homes to a resettlement site around 90km away from Manila. Many people had jobs and lives deeply connected to the city. When they started realizing how much it would cost for them to travel from the resettlement site to the city or to temporarily stay in Manila for work, they refused to be moved. Instead, they



Jessica Amon is an organiser at the Community Organizers Multiversity (COM) in Manila, Philippines.

Jessica is a part of IAP's Global Advocacy Team, an initiative which brings together community organizers who experience development projects firsthand to conduct community-led research and mobilize their communities to change how development is conceived and implemented.

Read more at bit.ly/IAP_GAT

began to organize and explore alternatives that fit with their priorities.

As community organizers, we started to help the people create an alternative to the government's plan, a People's Plan that would propose a permanent solution to the housing issue. We started with these questions:

- What is your concept of a developed community?
- Would you like to see development in your community?
- If so, what development would you like to see?
- Why do you want this kind of development?
- How would you like to realize this kind of development?
- What would you like to do, and what are you able to do, to make this development happen?

Their answers to these questions showed that people are not really against development - they are against development that causes them to be removed from their homes and their livelihoods, and that does not represent their views and opinions.

After **identifying their priorities** for the development they wanted, we started to analyze the laws that would help protect communities' right to



“ The 'Peoples Plan' allowed communities to take control of their futures and advocate for development that will benefit all.

“ People are not really against development - they are against development that... does not represent their views and opinions.

choose where they want to live. We discovered that the laws stated that the people had the right to choose their options for relocation, and that they had the right to stay on the land they were living on - however, the law was not being enforced. The communities knew they would have to fight to make sure these rights were respected!

Our next step was to **use the knowledge and expertise** from the community members to create an alternative plan that presented a permanent housing solution and tried to solve the issue of the flooding in the Pasig River and Manggahan Floodway. We began to use the People's Plan to pressure the government to hear our perspective and then fund and implement our alternative. Thanks to the determination of the people, after 10 years of negotiation with the government, we are finally seeing the People's Plan being realized!

Although it is a slow process, the People's Plan allowed communities to **take control of their future** and advocate for development that will benefit all.

Their answers to these questions showed that people are not really against development - they are against development that causes them to be removed from their homes and their livelihoods, and that does not represent their views and opinions.



Questions for Discussion:

1. *Why did the communities decide to start a People's Plan? How did they start?*
2. *What changes have happened because of the People's Plan process?*
3. *Is the idea of a People's Plan relevant to your community? How?*

Congratulations! You have completed the *Community Action Guide for Community-Led Development*. For more materials and information, please see the 'Resources' page.



IAP would like to acknowledge the following people and organizations for their contributions to this Guide:

Jessica Amon, Community Organizers Multiversity (COM)

Nalori Chakma, Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)

RESOURCES

Co-Creating Fearless Futures: A Feminist Cartographer’s Toolkit by the *The Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID)*

This toolkit helps to articulate feminist futures, and map existing solutions and narratives that make them irresistible. This toolkit can be for both individual and collective use and includes maps as facilitation tools, cue cards, worksheets, and discussion guides.

→ bit.ly/AWIDcartographer

Learning by Doing by *Inspiring Communities*

This handbook is for people and organizations wanting to empower and support community-led development. It provides comprehensive thinking, learning, examples and results from community-led activity across Aotearoa/New Zealand.

→ bit.ly/ICLearningBydoing

Promoting and Fulfilling the Right to Development: Case Studies from Asia-Pacific by *Asia Pacific Women Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)*

This report presents case studies of local level development initiatives, some designed and led by women. It highlights experiences, success and challenges and identifies best practices in designing and implementing policies and programs to advance community-led development.

→ bit.ly/APWLDRight2DevCaseStudies

Realizing the Right to Development by the *United Nations*

This handbook is intended to serve as a resource for all stakeholders in development and human rights. It is an attempt at advancing understanding and, ultimately, the realization of the right to development. It addresses people’s demand for a human rights-based approach to economic policy and development, with the right to development at its centre.

→ bit.ly/OHCHRright2development

Stories from One Village Partners

One Village Partners’s collection of stories feature examples of community-led solutions to social issues faced by communities in Sierra Leone. The stories include how community leadership can design projects and mobilize to address a community’s development priorities.

→ bit.ly/OneVillageStories

The Road to Development Justice by *Asia Pacific Women Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)*.

This video explains “Development Justice” and the corresponding demands of civil society. It discusses why we need a new development model to address the double crises of inequality and environmental collapse.

→ bit.ly/APWLDroad2developmentjustice

INTERNATIONAL
ACCOUNTABILITYPROJECT

accountabilityproject.org
