DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH METHODS

Week 4, Lesson 3:Participatory Methods and Approaches

Development Research Methods
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What we will cover in today's lecture

1. Participation in development- the concept
2. Considerations for using participatory methods
3. Participatory methods in use
4. Spreading use of participatory methods
5. Participation in development- critical perspectives

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Common meanings attached to 'Participation' and 'Participatory'

- Participation is the voluntary contribution by people in projects, but without their taking part in decision-making.
- Participation is the sensitization of people to increase their receptivity and ability to respond to development projects.
- Participation is an active process, meaning that the person or group in question takes initiatives and assesses the autonomy to do so.
- Participation is the fostering of a dialogue between the local people and the project or programme preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation staff in order to obtain information on the local context and on social impacts.
- Participation is the voluntary involvement of people in self-determined change
- Participation is involvement in people's development of themselves, their lives, their environment.

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Changing Perception of Participation in Development

1960s

1. Sharing of technologies transferred from outside was considered participation.
2. 'Self-help' groups attracts attention

1970s

1. 'Popular participation' of the poor and excluded to gain access to and control over development resources and benefits.
2. Participants as beneficiaries. Perspective of participation *for* their own benefit.
3. Participation as a process owned and controlled *by* those whom development is supposed to benefit
4. Participation as working *with* people rather than for them

1980s

1. 'Projects with people' and a rapid rise in popularity of the use of participatory approaches in projects and programmes.
2. Methods promoted by official agencies
3. Methods promoted by the 'participatory development' school

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Changing Perception of Participation in Development

1990s

1. Participation is viewed more as partnership, coordination or ownership of programmes leading to people's control over their resources.
2. Participation debates move beyond the bounds of 'community', from beneficiary to stakeholder and customer.
3. Scaling out and scaling up of participation.

2000-present

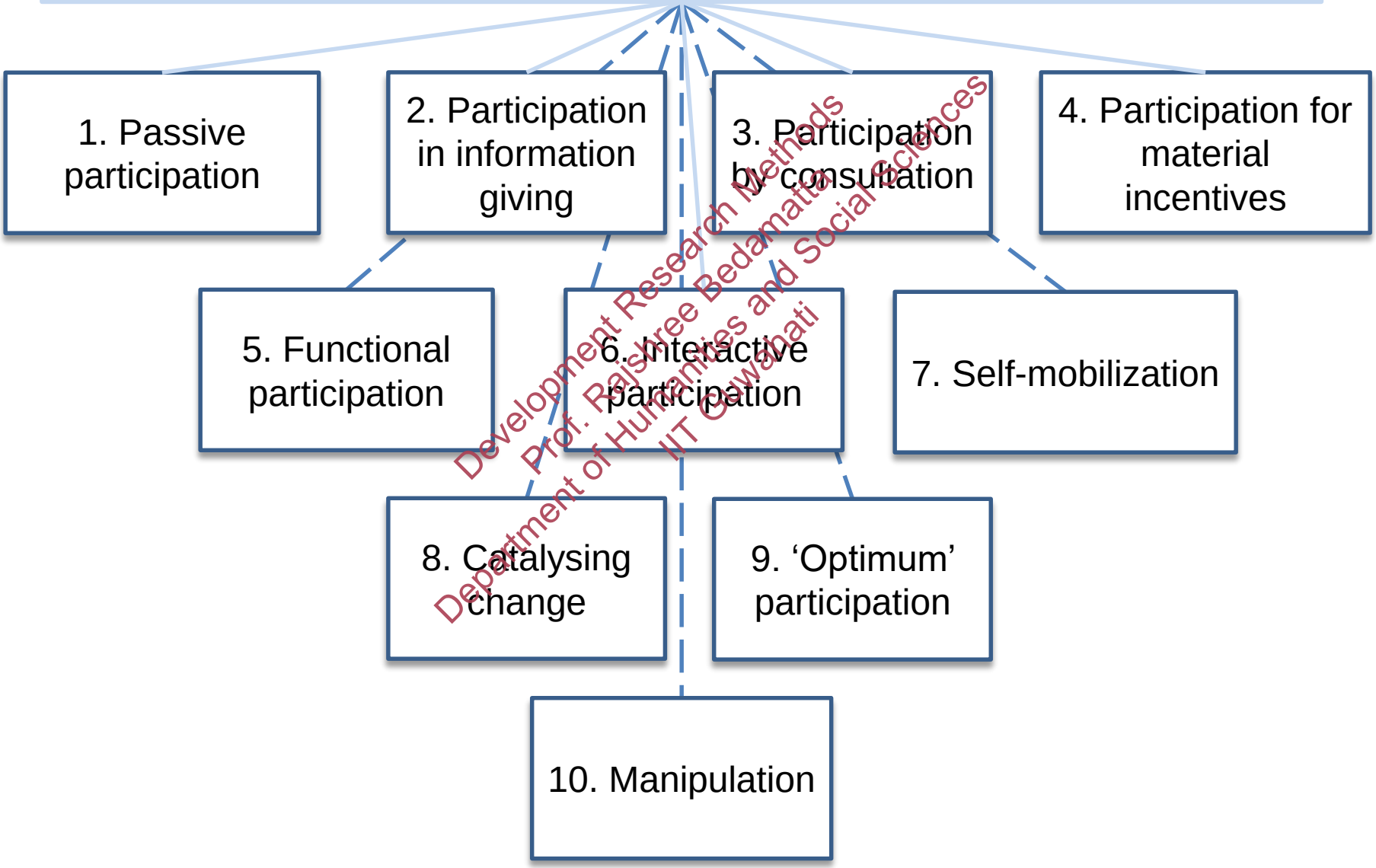
1. With the move away from projects towards sector programmes and macro policy environments, participation also moves from the micro towards meso (sector) and macro levels.
2. Forms of 'invited participation' multiply, expanding into spheres such as policy reform

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Different Strategies and Interests in Participation

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A Typology of People's 'Participation' in Development



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A Typology of Interests in Participation

Form of Participation	What 'participation' means to the implementing agency	What 'participation' means for those on the receiving end	What 'participation' is for (the purpose)
Nominal	Legitimization-to show they are doing something	Inclusion-to retain some access to potential benefits	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency-to limit funders' input and make projects more cost effective	Cost-of time spent on project-related labour and on other activities	As a means to achieving cost-effectiveness and local facilities
Representative	Sustainability- to avoid creating dependency	Leverage-to influence the shape of the project and its management	To give people a voice in determining their own development
Transformative	Empowerment-to enable people to make their own decisions	Empowerment-to be able to decide and act for themselves	Both as means and an end, a continuing dynamic

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Source Nilsson and Woodford-Berger *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

Principles of Applying Participatory Methods

- A reversal of learning
  - To learn from people, directly on the site, gaining from local physical, technical and social knowledge
- Learning rapidly and progressively
  - Not following a blueprint programme but adapting in a learning process
- Offsetting biases
  - Being relaxed and not rushing, listening and not lecturing, being unimposing instead of important, learning concerns and priorities
- Optimizing trade-offs
  - Principles of *optimal ignorance* and *appropriate imprecision*
- Triangulation
  - Using different methods, sources and disciplines, and a range of informants in a range of places
- Seeking diversity
  - Seeking variability rather than averages. ‘Maximising diversity and richness of information’

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Principles of Applying Participatory Methods-2

- Facilitating-they do it
  - Facilitating investigation, analysis, presentation and learning by people themselves
- Critical self-awareness and responsibility
  - Facilitators are continuously examining their behaviour, and trying to do better. Welcoming errors as an opportunity to learn
- Sharing
  - Sharing of information, methods, of food, field experiences, and ideas between people, between them and facilitators, and between different facilitators
- Commitment to equity
  - Empowering those who are marginalised, excluded, and regarded as no capable
- Changing behaviour and attitudes
  - From dominating to facilitating, gaining rapport, asking people, respecting them, handing over the stick, empowering and enabling them to conduct their own analysis

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Participatory Methods in Use

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A ‘Catalogue’ of Participatory Methods

1. **Review of secondary sources**
2. Direct observations
3. Key indicators
4. Semi-structured interviews
5. Ranking and scoring
6. Construction and analysis of maps, models, and diagrams
7. Diagramming
8. Case stories
9. Drama, games, and role plays
10. Workshops
11. Triangulation
12. Continuous analysis and reporting
13. Participatory planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and self-surveys
14. Do-it-yourself

- Documents
- Statistics
- Reports
- Books
- Files
- Aerial photos
- Maps

➢ **Internet**
➢ **Databases**
➢ **Libraries**

*Refer to Week 3 Lesson 1 for detailed information on literature study

❖ **Folklore**: Mythology, Oral tradition, local and topical stories, proverbs and poetry

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- A classical method of anthropology for understanding indigenous knowledge.
- Observation of physical structures, social differences, behaviour, action and symbols. In solitude or with others with whom observations are discussed.

- Key individual
- Focus groups, homogenous or mixed groups
- Chain of interviews, probing questions

*Refer to Week 4 Lesson 2 for detailed information on Semi-structured interviews

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A qualitative or quantitative factor or ‘unit of information’ that provides a basis for assessing importance, achievement, change, or performance

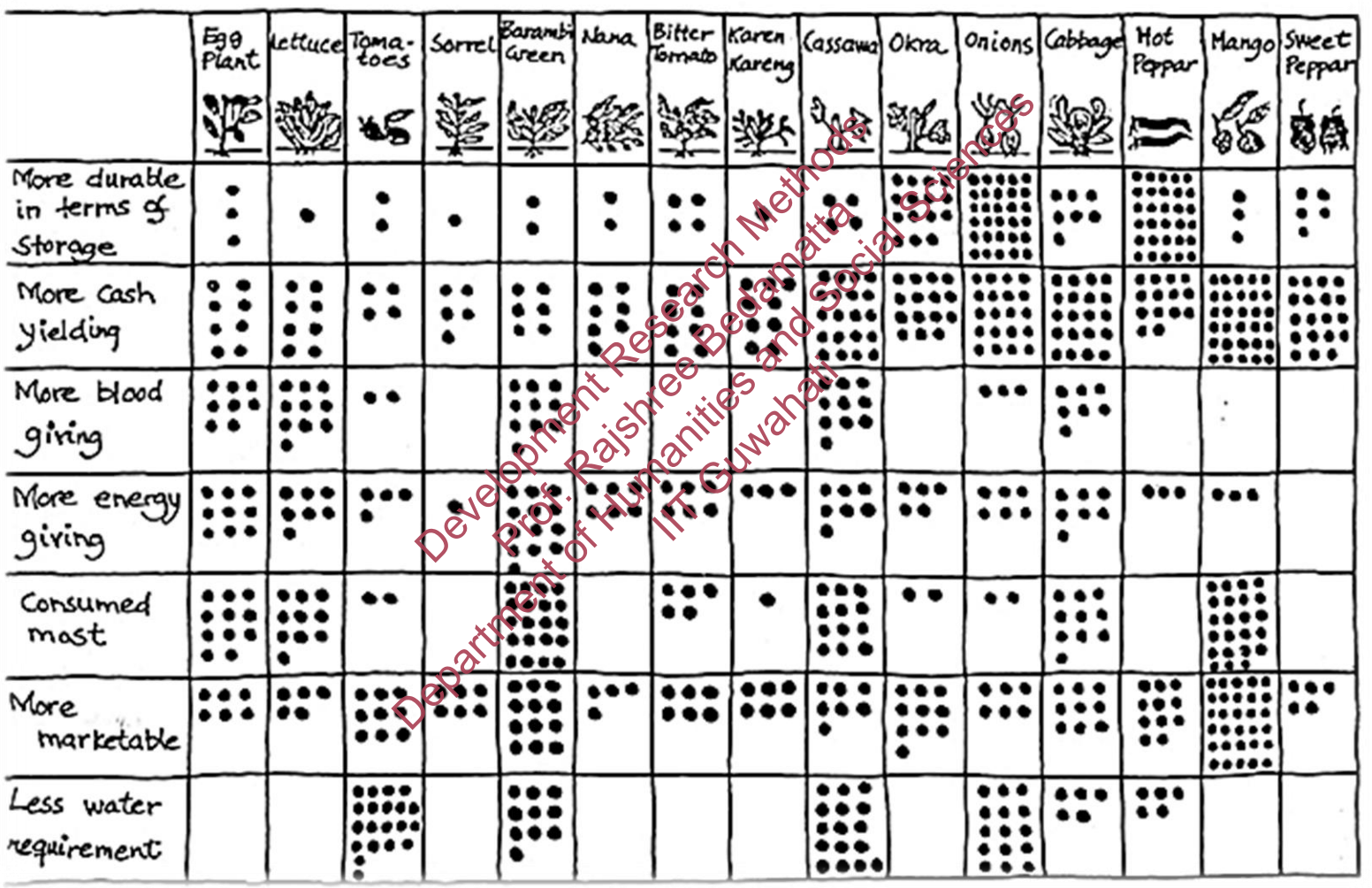
- Local Indicators
- National and global indicators
- Indicators for objectives, for achievement, outputs, and performance

To assess people’s expectations, beliefs, judgments, attitudes, preferences, and opinions

- Scoring and ranking of options
- Matrix scoring and ranking (Figure 1 & Figure 2)
- Well-being or wealth ranking (Figure 3)

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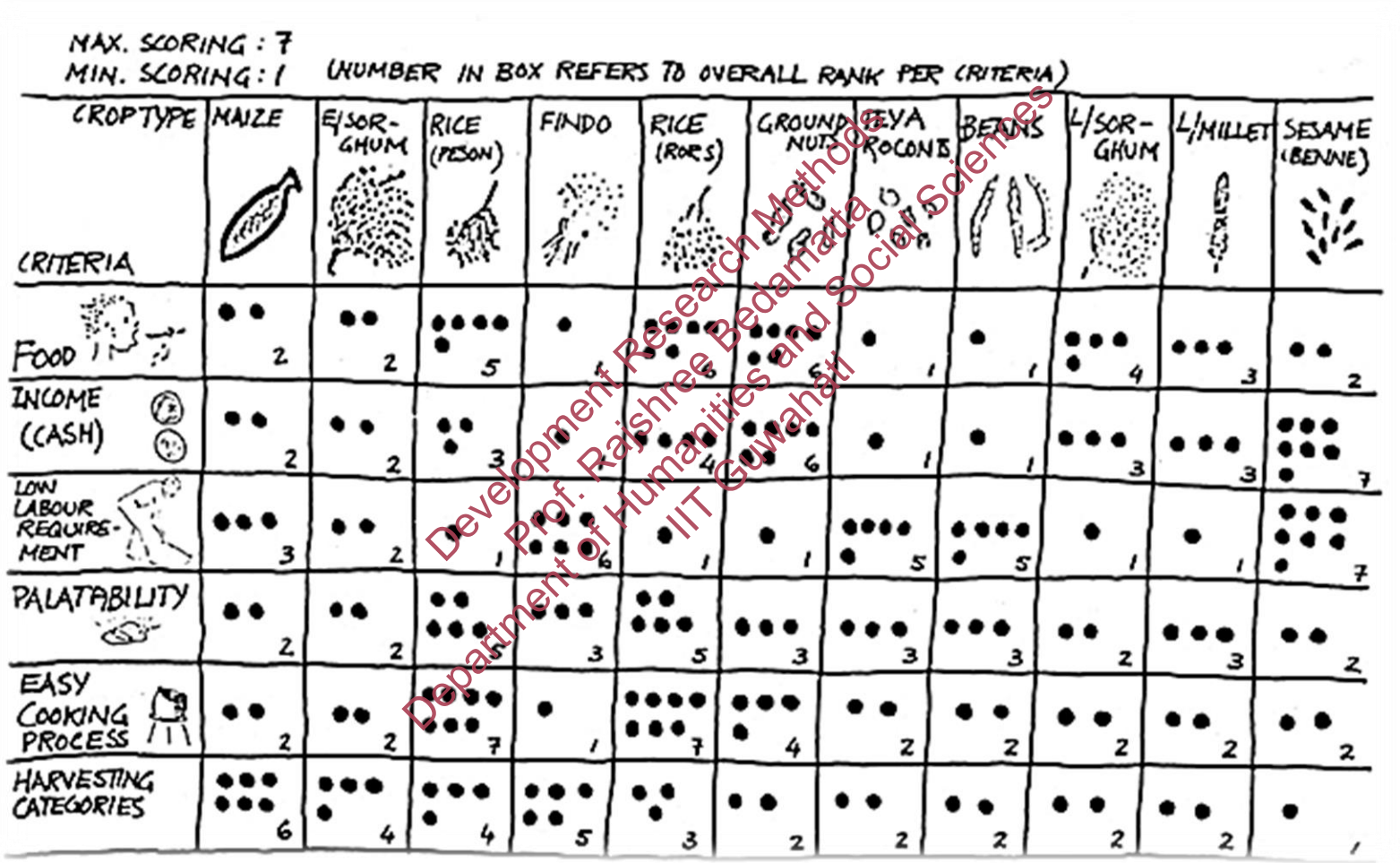
Figure 1 Matrix scoring and Ranking of Vegetables Grown (young women)



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Source ActionAid, 1992 *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

Figure 2 Matrix scoring and Ranking of Crops Grown (old women)



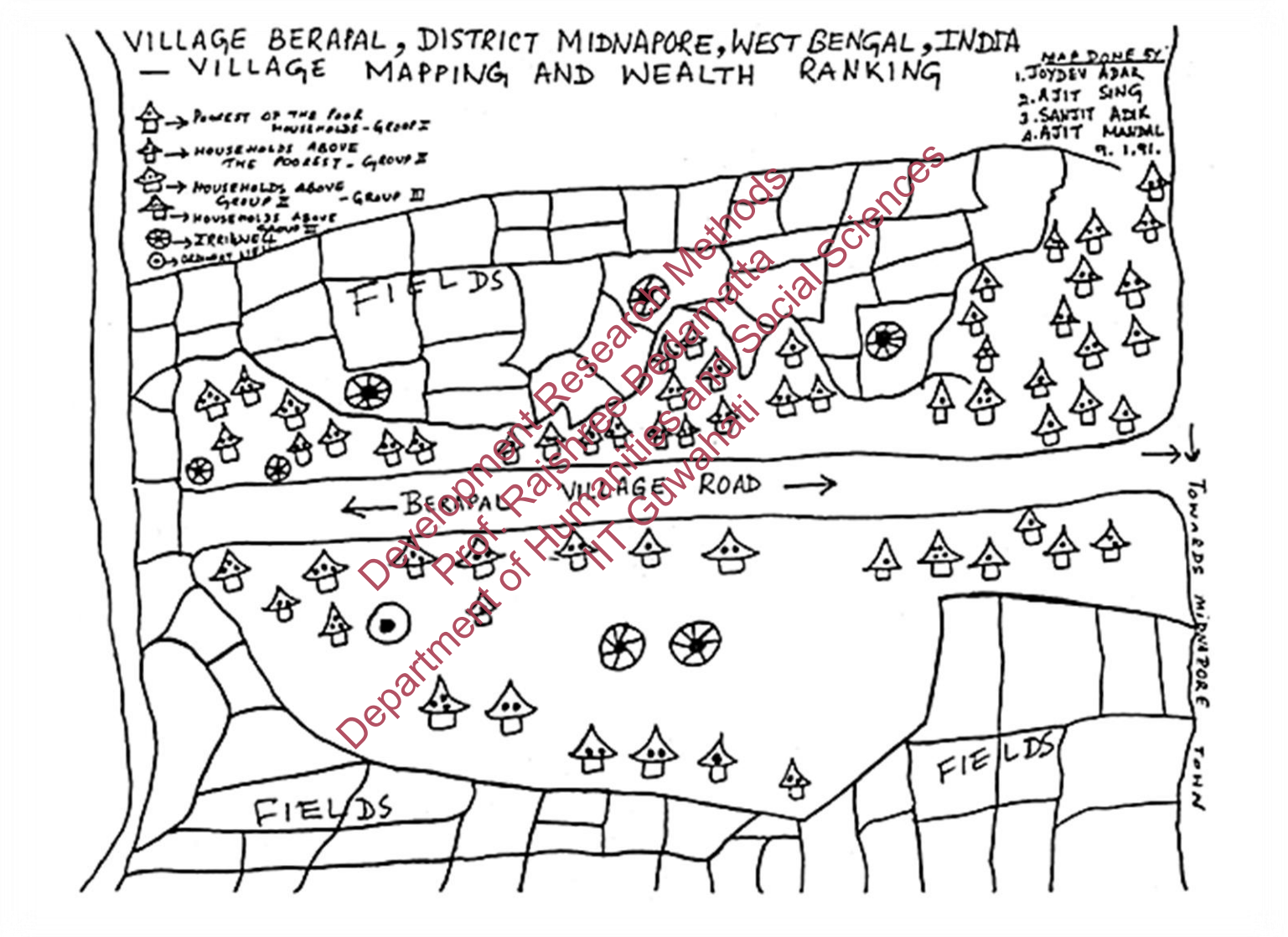
MAX. SCORING : 7
MIN. SCORING : 1 (NUMBER IN BOX REFERS TO OVERALL RANK PER CRITERIA)

CROPTYPE / CRITERIA	MAIZE	E/SORGHUM	RICE (PESON)	FINDO	RICE (RORS)	GROUND NUTS	TEVA ROCONB	BEANS	L/SORGHUM	L/MILLET	SESAME (BENNE)
FOOD	2	2	5	1	6	6	1	1	4	3	2
INCOME (CASH)	2	2	3	1	4	6	1	1	3	3	7
LOW LABOUR REQUIRS-MENT	3	2	1	6	1	1	5	5	1	1	7
PALATABILITY	2	2	5	3	5	3	3	3	2	3	2
EASY COOKING PROCESS	2	2	7	1	7	4	2	2	2	2	2
HARVESTING CATEGORIES	6	4	4	5	3	2	2	2	2	2	1

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Source ActionAid, 1992 *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

Figure 3 The Village Map with Wealth Ranking of Berapal



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Source Mukherjee,1992, *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

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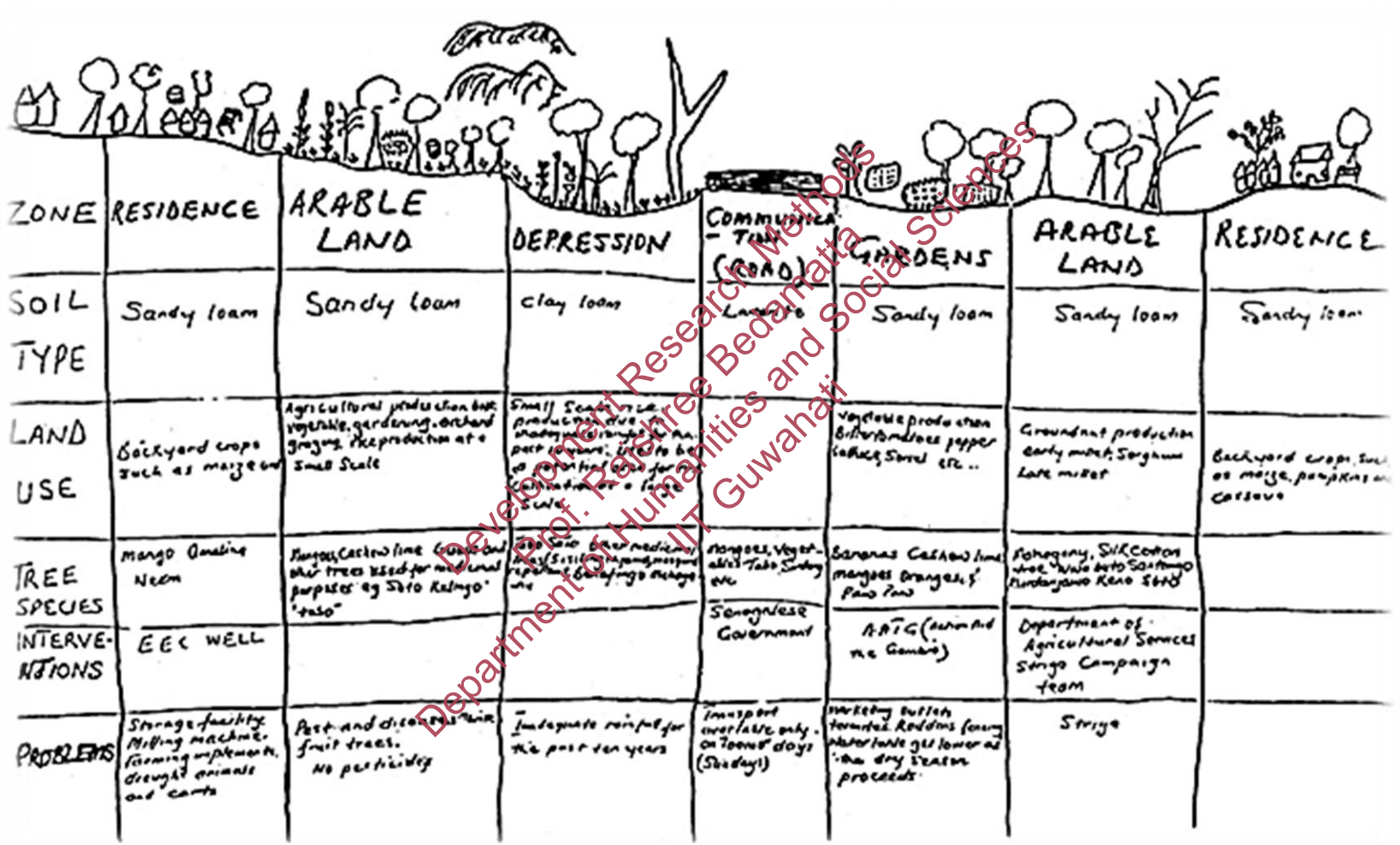
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- Distribution information relating to limited physical space and settlements
- Obtaining local knowledge of physical space and natural resource
- Has the objective of longer lasting demonstration
  - Social and resource maps
  - Three dimensional models
  - Topic and theme maps
  - Census maps and models
  - GIS-based aerial maps
  - Transects (Figure 4)

- Life histories, oral or written stories by key people, e.g., school children
- Narratives

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Figure 4 Agro-ecosystems Transect, Misera (young men)



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Source ActionAid, 1992 *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

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Participatory diagramming is used for

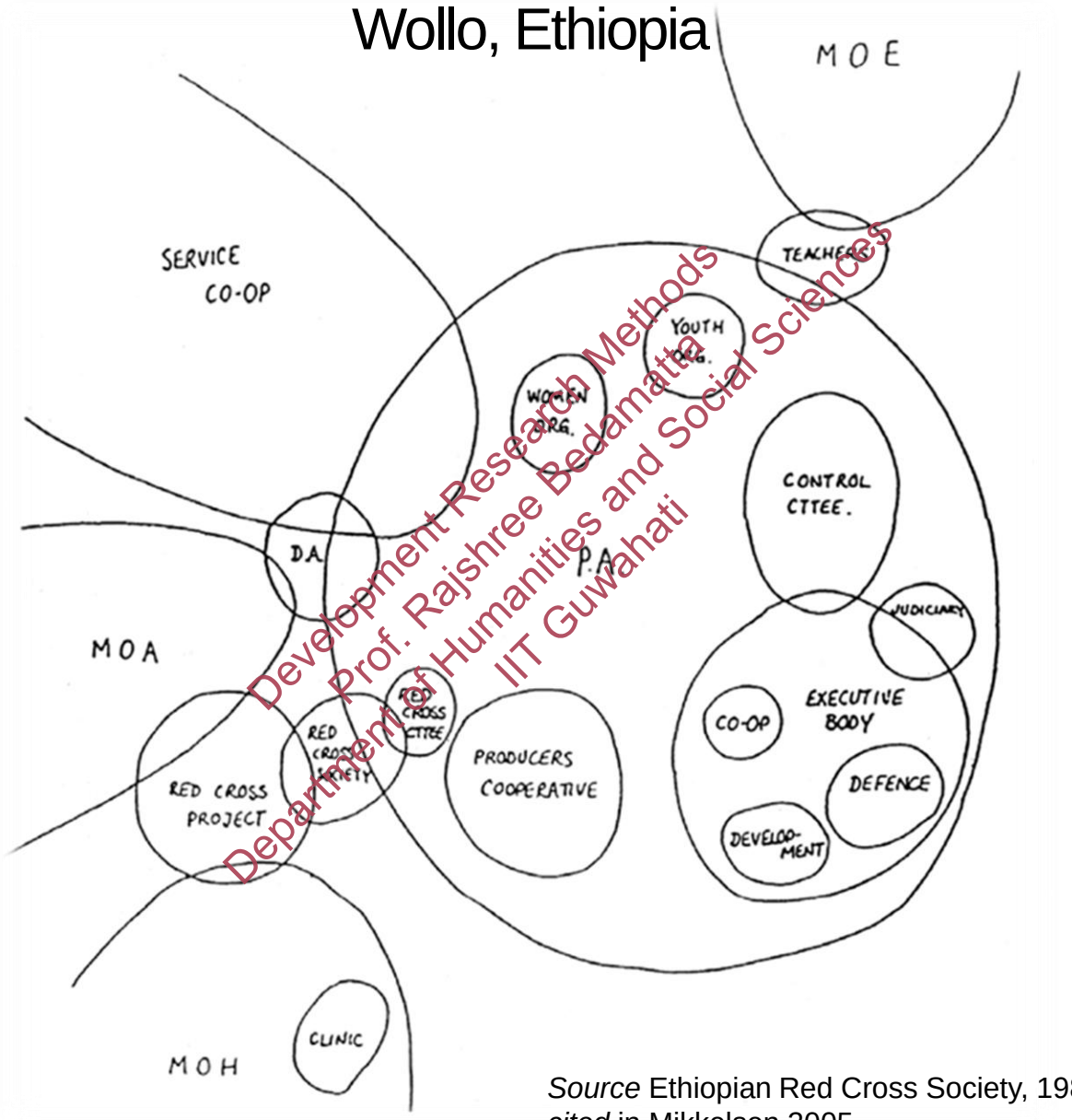
1. Used for summarizing empirical information
2. Summarizing analyzed information

- Causal linkage and flow diagrams
- Force field analysis
- Time lines, trend analysis
- Seasonal diagrams
- Activity profiles
- Daily routines
- Venn diagrams (Figure 5)

- Sometimes the optimal methods for bringing up sensitive issues into the open
- Can also be used for training purposes

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Figure 5 Venn Diagram of Decision makers in a Peasant Association in Wollo, Ethiopia



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Source Ethiopian Red Cross Society, 1988/McCracken, 1991 *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

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- SWOT, Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats- Workshops
- AIC- Appreciation Influence Control
- AI- Appreciative Inquiry
- Possible future and scenario workshops
- Consensus workshops and conferences
- Public hearings

- With or without software for analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

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Looking at things from different points of view-or multiple strategies to overcome problems that stem from studies relying upon a single theory.

- Data triangulation
- Investigator triangulation
- Discipline triangulation
- Theory triangulation
- Methodological triangulation

- Reverses the classical roles, i.e., outsider-insider, observer-observed, of the researcher and researched.
- The outsider gets hands-on knowledge from trying the activities under the insider’s instructions.

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13. **Participatory planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and self-surveys**
14. Do-it-yourself

- Participation in all project cycle activities
- Self-survey methods entail community members undertaking the basic data collection, typically under the guidance of a facilitator.

The assumptions are,

1. Ordinary people’s knowledge is different from but counts as much as the experts’
2. People’s support for a development activity increases when they are actively part of the decision making process

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Classification of Participatory Methods by Space, Time and Relations

Space related PRA Methods

- Social maps
- Resource maps
- Participatory modelling methods
- Mobility maps
- Services and opportunity maps
- Transects
- Participatory Census Methods

Time-related PRA Methods

- Time line
- Trend analysis
- Historical transect
- Seasonal diagram
- Daily activity schedule
- Participatory genealogy method
- Dream map

Relational Methods

- Cause-effect diagram
- Impact diagram
- Systems diagram
- Network diagram
- Process map
- Well-being ranking methods
- Venn Diagram
- Pair-wise ranking method
- Matrix ranking/scoring method
- Force field analysis
- Pie diagram
- Livelihood analysis
- Spider diagram
- Body mapping

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Source Kumar, 2002 *cited* in Mikkelsen 2005

Spreading Uses of Participatory Methods

The applications include analysis, planning, implementation and evaluations in the areas such as:

1. Natural resources and agriculture
2. Technology assessments
3. Rural development and rural infrastructure
4. Programmes for equity
5. Health, water and sanitation
6. Education and training
7. Urban development
8. Policy analysis and reforms
9. Deliberative democracy and inclusionary processes
10. Participatory budgeting
11. Human rights
12. Conflict and dispute prevention
13. Institutional and organisational change
14. Participatory workshops

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Concerns about Participatory Methods from the Field

Legitimization of agendas	PRA being used to legitimize projects that communities might have challenged given more information and time
Depth of coverage	No norms for what are appropriate levels of disaggregation of different stakeholder groups
Detailed or shallow?	Importance of sound and detailed PRA studies are often downplayed
'Facipulation'	Communities are 'helped' to identify predefined project focus as if it were there own primary concern
Pressure of deadlines	PRAs are mandatory in most donor supported programmes but sufficient time not allowed
Varying competence	PRA requires communication skills, personality, attitudes and analytical skills and in many cases un-learning old practices
Vast amount of information	Vast amount of qualitative information generated by PRAs are difficult to sift through, summarise, and assimilate
Difficulty in comparison	Results are difficult to compare when different methods and depth of information have been applied by different teams

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Concerns about Participatory Methods from the Field-2

Institutional limitations	Institutional limitations are constraints in scaling-up and scaling-out of PRAs
Contracting out PRA	Compartmentalising the participatory elements limits learning, continuity, and policy feedback
Focus on the negative?	Departs from problems and can be de-motivating, in contrast to the appreciative inquiry method
Extractive?	e.g., if done to understand people's need for a particular output, but more likely to lead to empowerment if the concern is people's awareness
Raise expectations	PRAs raise expectations that may not be fulfilled either in the short term or the long term
PRA Fatigue	Some easily accessible communities are subjected to frequent PRAs and get tired of participating
Personal consequences	Personal consequences for information providers when those in power are challenged

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Some Questions by Critiques of Participatory Methods in Development

- Are they distorting real democracy?
- Can they really help bring about new forms of knowledge, power, action and know-how, needed to create a different type of society?
- Are they replicating existing social divisions?
- Is the responsibility being transferred onto rural communities for decisions in which they have played only a marginal role?
- Are the able to provide accurate information?
- Are they idealizing community and underestimating NGOs?
- Who actually represents whom in participatory exercises?

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References used for this lecture

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For a comprehensive literature on the topics covered in this lecture it is also suggested that students go through the reference list of the above cited papers.

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