

## Rich Picture



### Tool factsheet

#### IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON FRAMEWORK ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (CD) FOR AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION SYSTEMS (AIS)

This factsheet is part of a series outlining tools and approaches to promote capacity development projects for agricultural innovation systems (AIS). The tools described in these pages are designed with a view to the practical implementation of the principles of the Common Framework of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), a G20 initiative. They have been applied in the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project, funded by the EU and jointly implemented by Agrinatura and FAO in collaboration with national partners in Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda.

In view of the complexities involved in addressing the capacity needs of an agricultural innovation system (AIS), it is important to map out the current status of the AIS, and to discover where the actors want to go.

The rich picture tool was introduced to deal with these two requirements, because it can be used both to describe the current situation and to illustrate future plans. A rich picture is a way to explore, acknowledge and define a situation by expressing it through diagrams that create a preliminary mental model. A rich picture opens up discussions and helps participants reach a broad and collective understanding of the situation.

This method can include everything from quick sketches to detailed cartoons. The value of the technique is that it forces participants to think about the innovation partnership in a pictorial way, which helps them arrive at a deeper and more nuanced understanding.

It is important that the picture does not depict the situation hierarchically like a logic tree or process chain. The whole point of a rich picture is to encourage as much reflection as possible about what is going on, without privileging, predetermining, or presuming a particular point of view.



## Purpose of the tool

- It provides a common understanding of the situation;
- It stimulates discussion around the key issues, and helps people brainstorm on future plans.

A rich picture affords an opportunity for discussion about the situation, and leads to a broad and shared understanding. It does not show what has changed - although this is a topic that may come up in discussion. The tool lends itself very well to being one of the first used in the visioning process.

## Step-by-step guide to using the tool

### Preparation:

- Have a large piece of flip-chart paper;
- Put the paper on a table or on the ground so that everyone, whether sitting or standing, can easily draw on it. Make sure each person has a marker (use different coloured markers within the group);
- One person should facilitate the group work. It is essential to encourage everyone to contribute, and to make it clear that drawing skills are not important.

Think carefully about whom to include in a group. If you want to have a representative picture, then the composition of the group will be different than if you want to have focused perspectives to compare.

**Step 1:** Divide the participants into groups of four to eight people. On a large sheet of paper, using symbols, pictures and words, compose a "rich picture" (or "mind map") of the situation of the AIS (present and future). This takes between half an hour and two hours.

**Step 2:** Start by asking people to note all the physical entities involved, for example, people, organizations or features of the landscape.

**Step 3:** Ask people to give a presentation of their rich picture in which they describe the key elements and key linkages between them.

**Step 4:** Compare the different pictures, and note where similar ideas are repeated, as well as where ideas diverge. This method brings the most important issues to the surface, so that it is possible to see what issues are critical and will need to be the focus of the next phases of the CD for AIS cycle, and who the key stakeholders to include.

**Step 5 (Wrap up):** On cards, write down the five main challenges arising by your rich picture.





Examples of rich pictures drawn during a CD needs assessment validation workshop in Guatemala and Bangladesh.



For more information see  
Better Evaluation and Wageningen Centre  
for Development Innovation  
[www.betterevaluation.org](http://www.betterevaluation.org)  
[www.wur.nl/en.htm](http://www.wur.nl/en.htm)



## For further information

### Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP):

<http://www.fao.org/in-action/tropical-agriculture-platform/en>

Email: [Tropagplatform@fao.org](mailto:Tropagplatform@fao.org)

### TAPipedia: <http://tapipedia.org>

Email: [info@tapipedia.org](mailto:info@tapipedia.org)

### Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation

**Systems Project (CDAIS):** <http://cdais.net>

Email: [info@cdais.net](mailto:info@cdais.net)

## Common Framework products:



*Conceptual  
Background*



*Guidance Note on  
Operationalization*



*Synthesis  
Document*

*The implementation of the TAP Action Plan is supported by the EU-funded project  
Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS).*

*The Common Framework documents are also available in French and Spanish  
on the Common Framework pages of TAPipedia.*



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