RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH
A REFERENCE MATERIAL

APPLYING RBA IN THE PROJECT CYCLE
LWF UGANDA PROGRAMME

October 2011
The Lutheran World Federation Uganda Programme is inspired by God’s love, to challenge and respond to the causes and consequences of human suffering and poverty. The LWF Uganda Programme is working toward a harmonious and just Uganda where people are empowered to maximise their potential to achieve an improved quality of life.
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FOREWORD

Moving from theory to practice with a Rights-Based Approach (RBA) has been one of LWF Uganda’s main focuses over the past couple of years. RBA embodies a new way of thinking about how we interact with and make ourselves accountable to the community members. As an organisation we become a facilitator rather than an implementer and the community members become participants rather than beneficiaries. LWF Uganda Programme strives to empower the community members by raising awareness of human rights and building the capacity of individuals and communities to become their own advocates. It is a shared effort and requires cooperation at all levels.

This report marks LWF Uganda’s second RBA document in its attempt to move from theory to practice with RBA. The process began in 2009, when a five weeks assessment was conducted on how RBA implementation in Uganda could be improved. This document is a follow up to that report and aims to assist staff in applying RBA in their work by providing them with knowledge and practical tools. RBA means building rights awareness at all levels, among the rights-holders and the duty-bearers. This report is one more step in a never-ending journey to move from theory to practice, to make human rights a reality for all human beings.

A word of gratitude must be given to Church of Sweden for supporting this, and in particular to Miss Eva Palmqvist for her tireless work and to all those who made this happen.

Jesse Kamstra
Country Representative
LWF/DWS Uganda & Burundi Programmes
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In August 2009 I had the opportunity to meet and work with the LWF Uganda Programme for the first time. Together we conducted an assessment, which resulted in the report Rights-Based Approach, Moving from Theory to Practice, an Assessment of RBA Application in LWF Uganda Programme. It was the beginning of a very interesting, inspiring and worthwhile journey.

The assessment brought out a number of recommendations on the way forward for the LWF Uganda Programme. One of them was capacity building of staff on the Rights-Based Approach (RBA). Between August 2010 and August 2011, eleven RBA workshops were conducted in LWF Uganda’s four sub-programmes, as well as in the Kampala head office. This means that almost all staff members of LWF Uganda, in their different capacities, participated in two RBA workshops. The Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum, developed by the Aprodev Rights and Development Group, was enormously useful when developing and conducting these workshops. With its participatory methodology and well designed activities, it created a great learning environment and stimulated the participants to reach higher levels in their internalisation and application of RBA. Some of the tools and activities of this curriculum are also included in this document. I would like to express my appreciation to the Aprodev Rights and Development Group for its important work.

Another important recommendation of the assessment was to develop a reference material that could provide knowledge and guide the LWF Uganda staff on RBA. The process of developing this document has been participatory and interactive. In consultation meetings in each sub-programme, LWF Uganda staff expressed their expectations of this reference material and preferences regarding its content. Draft versions of the document were shared with staff members, who provided their comments and advise. The LWF Uganda sub-programmes, as well as the partner organisation ACTogether, have contributed examples, illustrations and case studies. Hopefully, the document fulfils at least some of the expectations.

However, it is important to remember that RBA application is a work in progress, and so is this document. When it comes to RBA we cannot say that we are done. As long as people’s rights are still not fulfilled, in Uganda and worldwide, we have a mission to continue working for the fulfilment of everyone’s human rights.

I am deeply indebted to all staff members of the LWF Uganda Programme. Your enthusiasm and fighting spirit, generosity and warmth, knowledge and wisdom, will always be my inspiration. Without you it would never have been possible to develop this document. It is yours. I would also like to extend my appreciation to colleagues at the International Department of Church of Sweden for valuable discussions and advise on this document. Thank you all.

Eva Palmqvist
Programme Officer, Rights-Based Approach
LWF/DWS Uganda Programme
ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>Complaints and Response Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>DWS</td>
<td>Department for World Service</td>
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<td>LWF</td>
<td>Lutheran World Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>OVC</td>
<td>Orphans and Vulnerable Children</td>
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<td>PLWHA</td>
<td>People Living with HIV and AIDS</td>
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<td>RBA</td>
<td>Rights-Based Approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSLA</td>
<td>Village Savings and Loans Association</td>
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

RBA, these three letters have become more and more common in the development sector. Being one of many abbreviations used in this sector, RBA stands for Rights-Based Approach. When applying a rights-based approach to development, the fulfilment of everyone’s human rights is the end goal. The three letters, RBA, have become part of the strategic plans of many development organisations.

However, there is a risk that RBA becomes theoretical and abstract. What do these three letters actually mean? How can the letters of RBA be translated into practice and applied in development projects? What difference does RBA make to development work? These are some questions that this document tries to respond to.

_Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, Uganda Programme_ is committed to RBA when planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating its projects. In 2009, an assessment of the application of RBA in the LWF Uganda Programme was conducted. It was based on interviews and focus group discussions with LWF Uganda staff, community members and local authorities. One of the recommendations of the assessment was to develop a reference material on RBA, which is easy to read and understand. This document is an attempt to implement that recommendation.

STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document is designed as a reference material on RBA. It starts with introducing three key terms: human rights, gender equality and development. Thereafter RBA and its principles are presented and explained. The subsequent and primary section is called “RBA in Practice – Applying RBA in the Project Cycle”. It focuses on RBA in the different steps of the project cycle:

- **STEP 1:** Situation Analysis
- **STEP 2:** Developing the Project
- **STEP 3:** Implementation
- **STEP 4:** Monitoring and Evaluation

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1 Save the Children, 2005: Child Rights Programming. How to Apply Rights-Based Approaches to Programming. A Handbook for International Save the Children Alliance Members, p. 14

The content of the document will be illustrated with different examples and case studies, suggested activities and exercises, as well as photos.

2.0 BEFORE WE GET STARTED-THREE KEY TERMS

When getting to know more about RBA, there are three words that are important to become more familiar with:

- Human Rights
- Gender Equality
- Development

These three terms will be described below, with the main focus on human rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are based on respect for the dignity of all human beings. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

By being born as a human being, we are entitled to human rights, such as the right to life, food, education etc. This means that all individuals are entitled to human rights regardless of their age, sex, national or ethnic origin, religion, language or any other factor.

Through the United Nations, almost all countries in the world have agreed to protect, respect and fulfil the human rights. In this way, human rights are protected and upheld by international treaties and national laws (see Appendix 1 for further information on this).

One way of defining human rights is to explain them as: “Universal legal guarantees that belong to all human beings and that protect individuals and groups from actions and omissions that interfere with fundamental human dignity.”

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4 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 1.
6 http://www.amnestyusa.org/research/human-rights-basics
7 A treaty is an international agreement among nations. It is legally binding. The words convention and covenant have the same meaning. A declaration, however, is not legally binding. See Appendix 1 for further information on different human rights declarations and treaties.
### Activity: EARTH 2

This activity gives people a chance to get to know more about human rights in a lively and practical way. If many people are participating it is good to work in smaller groups with a maximum of six people in each group. Small coloured cards in blue and red and marker pens are needed. The facilitator of the group explains the background and instructions to the participants:

The participants are to imagine they are going to make a very long journey. It is not an ordinary journey, but one using a spaceship. This group and hundreds of other people from all over the world are to travel to a new planet, which is called “Earth 2”. The journey takes thirty years and upon arrival the travellers’ memories have been wiped clean, so no one remembers who they are, where they lived or what the rules were previously.

The task of the participants is to discuss what will guide their life on Earth 2. Half of the team will form red groups (using red colour cards). They have the task to decide what they are entitled to, individually or collectively, on Earth 2 (i.e. what rights they have). Half of the team will form the blue groups (using blue colour cards). Their task is to decide what they, individually or collectively, should be responsible for on Earth 2. The participants are to write each point on a separate coloured card that can be posted onto a wall or board.

When the groups are done, let the red groups present the entitlements and the blue groups the responsibilities and put them up on a wall or board. Compare the two and try to match the rights with responsibilities. Discuss that for each right there is a corresponding responsibility. Read through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to get to know the different human rights, and compare with the rights and responsibilities on the red and blue coloured cards.

(This activity is from the Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum by Aprodev Rights and Development Group)

### Rights-Holders and Duty-Bearers

**Rights-holders:** We learned above that human rights are for everyone; that we all have human rights. That means as human beings we are all rights-holders. As rights-holders we are entitled to:

- human rights
- claim these rights
- hold duty-bearers accountable (see below)

In addition, as rights-holders we have the **responsibility to:**

- respect the rights of others.  

**Duty-bearers:** The actors responsible to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights. The overall responsibility for this lies with the **state**, including its parliament, ministries, local authorities, judges, and etcetera. The state is the **legal** duty-bearer. Other actors and individuals with power to affect the lives of rights-holders are often described as **moral** duty-bearers. Among the moral duty-bearers are churches, civil society organisations, international organisations like LWF, and private companies.

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**Relationship between Rights-Holders and Duty-Bearers**

The relationship between the rights-holder and duty-bearer is a crucial part of RBA. As illustrated below, the rights-holder is entitled to claim his or her right from the duty-bearer. The duty-bearer is responsible to fulfil the right of the rights-holder.

Important to remember:

→ for each right, there is a corresponding responsibility, for example the right to education and the responsibility to make sure the right to education is fulfilled

→ for each right, there is a responsible duty-bearer

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**Example of Rights-Holder and Duty-Bearer**

To make this a bit more concrete, let us imagine a case where the rights-holder is a nine year old girl. As a rights-holder, this girl has a right to go to school (the right to education). However, in her country girls are often discriminated against and therefore she is not able to go to school. The legal duty-bearer in this case, at the local level, is the school headmaster. The rights-holder, the girl, has the right to claim her right to education from the duty-bearer, the headmaster. To do this she will probably need support, for example from her parents, or maybe there is a Parent-Teacher Association in the school.
Principles of Human Rights

As mentioned above, there are many different human rights. They are all written down in human rights treaties, adopted by the United Nations. Some rights are civil and political, for example the right to life, liberty and the freedom of expression. Some rights are economic, social and cultural, such as the right to food, education and work. However, they are all equally important.

There are several principles which apply to all human rights:

1. **Inalienability**
   Human rights cannot be taken away from a person nor given up by a person.

2. **Universality and Non-Discrimination**
   Every human being is entitled to the same rights. All people have equal rights everywhere all of the time.

3. **Indivisibility and interdependence**
   All rights are equally necessary for life and dignity. Some rights cannot be suppressed to promote other rights. Fulfilling some rights often involves the fulfilment of others, e.g. the right to education requires fulfilment of the right to name and nationality, birth registration, health and nutrition and the right to information.

4. **Accountability**
   States and other duty-bearers are responsible for and have duties related to rights.

5. **Participation**
   The fulfilment of rights requires active, free and meaningful participation. Rights-holders participate actively in claiming rights (empowerment).

6. **Internationally guaranteed**
   Human rights are internationally guaranteed and are legally protected.

7. **Human rights go beyond state sovereignty**
   The protection of human beings does not depend only on the authority of each state. Internationally recognised human rights limit the scope of state sovereignty. 

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*The explanations of the principles are from the Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum by Aprodev Rights and Development Group, 2011.*
GENDER EQUALITY

Human rights are for all human beings, men as well as women. This means that women are entitled to the same human rights as men. However, all over the world women have historically often been discriminated against in many ways, due to the fact that they are born as female and not male. Even though there have been some improvements, unfortunately, this kind of discrimination still exist in our societies. When trying to explain gender equality, it is good to start with a definition of the words sex and gender.

Sex: Biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women.
Gender: Socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. They may vary among societies and cultures and change over time. Examples:

→ In the US and many other countries women earn less money than men for similar work
→ In Saudi Arabia men are allowed to drive cars while women are not
→ In most of the world, women do more housework than men

Gender equality is actually a precondition for the fulfilment of human rights. If there is no gender equality, human rights are violated. There is a close link between human rights and gender equality.

Gender equality is about the relationship between men and women. Therefore it is not mainly about women, which is a rather common misunderstanding of the concept.

Definitions

Gender Equality:
“All human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without limitations (...). The different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.”

(International Labor Organization, 2000: ABC of Women Workers’ Rights and Gender Equality, p. 48)

Gender Equity:
“Fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different (...). In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women.”


DEVELOPMENT

To put it in brief, development is what non-governmental organisations and many other actors are striving towards – a better, more prosperous and just world. When looking at development from a human rights perspective, it is important that:

→ development benefits everyone and not only a few
→ all categories of people, men and women, young and old etc participate in the development process
→ it is sustainable for both people and the environment

The United Nations defines development as: “A comprehensive economic, social, cultural, and political process which aims 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 benefits resulting there from.”

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RBA - BRINGING IT TOGETHER

With RBA the three concepts explained above are brought together. Applying RBA means linking human rights and gender equality to development. A development project will become more successful, sustainable, and have a stronger impact if human rights and gender equality are integrated. When designing, implementing and evaluating development projects, we need to put on our “human rights glasses” as well as our “gender glasses” to make sure these principles are applied.

3.0 RBA – FROM NEEDS TO RIGHTS

A rights-based approach to development requires a change in perspective, attitude and working methods compared to other approaches. RBA represents a major shift in development work, a shift in mindset, a shift from needs to rights:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FROM: Needs (Needs-Based Approach)</th>
<th>TO: Rights (Rights-Based Approach)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals are objects of development interventions</td>
<td>Individuals are empowered to claim their rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in development projects are passive beneficiaries, receiving assistance</td>
<td>People in development projects are active participants by right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some needs may not be recognised in some cultures</td>
<td>Rights are universal and inalienable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs can be prioritised, e.g. basic needs</td>
<td>Rights are indivisible, e.g. there is no hierarchy of rights or “basic rights”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs do not imply a duty or obligation, although may generate promises</td>
<td>Rights always imply correlative duties; someone is responsible to fulfil each human right</td>
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</table>

Applying RBA means “beneficiaries” are recognised as team players and social actors, capable of identifying and analysing problems and addressing their own situation. It means all groups in society are involved and discrimination prevented.

When applying RBA the process is as important as the outcome. In this process the development organisation has the role of a facilitator rather than implementer.

Using RBA means looking beyond the effects of poverty and other rights violations and identifying and addressing their root causes. For example, gender inequality is one of the root causes of poverty and discrimination.

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4.0 PANEL- THE PRINCIPLES OF RBA

One way of summarising RBA and its principles is to use the abbreviation “PANEL”. It stands for Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Empowerment, and Links to Human Rights.  

Participation

Participation is far more than a set of tools. It is a state of mind, where community members are at the heart of the development processes and projects, recognised as social actors with unique insights on their situation. It means people we work with, rights-holders as well as duty-bearers, are involved in and contribute to the development projects. Participation is not something to be imposed, but the product of the joint efforts of the community members, with support from the development organisation, which has the role of facilitator.

There is a close link between participation and ownership. When community members participate and feel they can influence the activities in their communities, they will develop a sense of ownership. This means the community will assume responsibility for addressing the problems they have identified, as well as for the continuity and management of the activities.

When applying RBA, the ambition is to achieve genuine participation, where community members are able to raise their voice and are listened to without any discrimination; where they are involved from the analysis of the situation and identification of the problems, to the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the project. There are, however, different levels of participation, ranging from informing, consulting, deciding together, acting together and supporting independent community-based initiatives.

Despite high ambitions there are often challenges to reach the “higher” levels of participation where it is genuine and inclusive. For example, the priorities of the development organisation might differ from priorities expressed by the communities, or the organisation could be limited by other actors, including their donors, when it comes to certain thematic focuses. In addition, power structures, discrimination, etcetera in the society could have a negative impact on people’s chances to genuine participation.

Accountability

Accountability refers to the relationship between the rights-holder and the duty-bearer. As mentioned above, needs do not trigger obligations, however rights do trigger obligations. This is one of the main differences between a right-based and needs-based approach. For each right there is a corresponding responsibility. For each right, someone, the duty-bearer, is responsible for ensuring the right is fulfilled. And importantly, the duty-bearers can be held to account for their responsibility.

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In that way, accountability involves a two way flow; it is a dialogue between the rights-holder and the duty-bearer. One way of explaining accountability is to simply say that it is “the right to a say and the duty to respond.”

It is important to remember that applying RBA means not only to support the rights-holders to claim their rights, but also to support the duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations. Working for improved accountability does not necessarily mean confrontation with the duty-bearers, but could include dialogue, support, capacity building etc.

**Non-Discrimination**

Non-discrimination means recognising that all human beings are equal. Every individual is entitled to his or her human rights without discrimination on any grounds, including sex, ethnicity, age, language, religion, disability etc.

Using RBA to design and implement development projects means making sure all people involved have equal access to the process and its benefits. Furthermore, it requires us to give special attention to and include people in vulnerable situations in projects and make sure the projects do not contribute to discrimination. For example, among the groups that are at risk of discrimination in Uganda are widows, orphans, people with disabilities, people living with HIV and aids and many more. It is important to identify and include people living in vulnerable situations in each specific case and project.

At the same time it is crucial to identify and build on people’s strengths and assets, including natural, physical, financial, human and social assets.

**Empowerment**

Empowerment is closely linked to and implies participation. But it also includes components of building the capacity and confidence of the communities to enable them to claim their rights, become social actors and gain control of their lives.

LWF/DWS defines empowerment as:

A process that builds people’s capacity and competence, both as individuals and as participating members of families, groups and communities, to achieve results for themselves. By equipping people and local groups with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that broaden their options, their confidence can be built up and they can be empowered to take more control of their lives.

Empowerment is a crucial step towards the goal of achieving development by people (not for people). Empowered communities take an active role and feel ownership of their projects. They have access to decisions and resources, the capability to change their lives, and spearhead their own development.

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16 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 2: “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”


18 LWF/DWS, 2010: Rights-Based Empowerment Guidelines, July 2010 draft: p. 1
LINKS TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Links to Human Rights summarises RBA as an approach firmly based on the international human rights. With RBA human rights are integrated into development. Human rights bring legitimacy to development work. Each state that has ratified the human rights treaties are obligated to translate them into national legislation. In that way human rights become legally binding and the state (the legal duty-bearer) is held accountable to fulfil them.

RBA is a method, which aims to make sure all rights-holders can claim their rights. In order to do that the rights-holders need to have access to human rights mechanisms like justice systems, courts, government resources and services. It is important for a development organisation committed to RBA, to make sure this access exist, to be a link between the rights-holders and the duty-bearers.

An organisation committed to RBA has to make sure attempts to support the fulfilment of one human right do not cause any violations of other rights. In addition, human rights must be an integral part of the organisation, its working environment, policies, and processes.

RBA IN A NUT SHELL

To summarise, RBA is an approach, a way of working, which aims to:
→ identify and address root causes of rights violations
→ empower rights-holders to claim their rights and
→ support duty-bearers to meet their obligations

5.0 APPLYING RBA IN THE PROJECT CYCLE

There are many ways of applying RBA in the project cycle. RBA has to be adapted to each specific situation and therefore there is no blueprint on how to apply this approach. This section will provide some ideas and tools on how to put RBA into practice. They can be adjusted to suit the particular situation of each setting and organisation.

STEP 1: SITUATION ANALYSIS

STEP 1, the preparation phase, is given comparably large space in this document. It is important to apply RBA from the very beginning of a development project. The first step is to make a rights-based analysis of the situation in the geographical and thematic area of operation. This is often a time consuming task requiring the commitment from staff at all levels of the organisation. However, if the situation analysis is done thoroughly, there is a lot to gain:
→ the project will target the “right” issues – those prioritised by the community members themselves
→ the project will involve both rights-holders and duty-bearers who will feel ownership of the project, which will lead to sustainability

→ conducting a situation analysis will strengthen the staff members’ understanding of the situation, their relation to both rights-holders and duty-bearers, and enhance their commitment to facilitate change

Therefore, it is a good investment to allocate time and resources to this first step. Some of the tools and exercises presented in STEP 1 are intended for staff and the organisation’s internal work, and some are suitable to use with community members. When it comes to community participation, it is important to be aware of who is participating and thus representing the community. One of the principles of RBA is non-discrimination, meaning we have to make sure the focus is on excluded and marginalized groups in society.

We need to find out who is excluded and denied equal opportunities in the community; is it people living with HIV and AIDS, children and youth, elderly, women headed households, people living with disabilities? It is important to make sure the community representation is as broad as possible.

In our ambition to strive towards genuine participation it is crucial to remember that as a development organisation our role is to be a facilitator, enabling community members to raise their voices and concerns, and identify their problems without discrimination.

Identify the Problems

The very first step is to identify existing problems in the communities where the organisation works. There are different ways and methods of doing this, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, ranking and scoring and drawing maps. In this section we will look into two ways of identifying problems in the communities.

Draw a Map

This exercise is suitable to use with community members. It is good to gather at an open space, indoors or outdoors. Flip charts and marker pens in different colours are needed. It is advisable to divide the people into smaller groups to ensure the discussions are not lead and influenced by a few leaders in the community. Their perception of the situation and problems in the community may not be the same as everyone else's and it is crucial to let everyone participate and contribute with ideas.

The task is to draw a map of the area where the community members live, an illustration of their village/town. The participants are to illustrate who lives where, where there is water, land for cultivation, central meeting points, access to health care, education etc. This gives a good overview of the situation and living conditions of the inhabitants of the village/town.

The next step is to identify where there are gaps and problems, based on the illustrations of the map. Ask the groups to include statistics about their community:

→ How many persons live in their community, divided into men, women, children, older people, people with special needs?

→ How many people have access to services, like health care, water etc? How many children go to school?

→ Do those with special needs have access to services they need, for example water, necessary health services, education, and food?
If many problems are identified, a next step could be to prioritise which ones are most urgent and which ones the organisations need to address (see below for more information about prioritising).

**Brainstorm and Prioritise in Groups**

This exercise is suitable for both staff and community members and preferably done through group work, with six to eight participants in each group, guided by a facilitator. Flip charts and markers pens are needed. Let each group select a team leader to facilitate the discussion and a secretary to take notes. In each group the members are to brainstorm (think freely) on problems in the communities they think need to be addressed. The groups are to list the problems on flip charts and present in plenum. Then the facilitator will summarise and categorise the problems under different themes if need be.

Together in the big group, the participants will then prioritise the problems, based on what each member thinks is most important for the organisation to address in the community (not based on their individual but their community’s interest). One way of prioritising is to give each participant the opportunity to indicate three “ticks” (check marks) with a marker pen next to any of the problems identified. They are free to use their three ticks they way they want. This means the participants can prioritise three problems, or decide to put all three “ticks” next to one of the problems if they think it is very important to address.

When all participants have indicated their priorities, the facilitator will count and summarise. Based on the outcome of this exercise, one or several problems to be addressed can be identified.

**Analyse the Problem**

Once the problem has been identified, be it lack of access to water and sanitation, quality education or food security etc, the next step is to make an analysis of the problem. This includes identifying its root causes and effects, and which human rights are being violated.

The last aspect, linking the problem to human rights, is crucial and makes RBA different from other ways of working. The problem analysis helps the community members and the organisation to find ways of addressing the problem.

**Problem Tree**

One way of analysing the problem is to develop a “problem tree” (shown below: example of a problem tree on HIV and aids). This exercise is suitable for both staff and community members. Again, it is good to do this exercise in groups of six to eight members. Make sure there is inclusive participation, where different representatives of the community participate.

It is important that the facilitator is well familiar with the exercise and able to explain the method to those who are new to it. Flip charts and marker pens in different colours are needed.

Each group starts with drawing a dying tree on a flip chart, with roots and branches. The tree is affected by a problem and therefore has no leaves on its branches. Write the problem identified on the trunk of the tree.
**Effects**

Thereafter, the group members start brainstorming on how people are affected by this problem, and write down the effects along the different branches of the tree. The following questions could guide the group discussions:

- Are all groups affected equally? Who are the most affected?
- Are both men and women affected equally? If so, are they affected in the same way or differently?\(^{20}\)

To illustrate the findings of the discussions, different colours could be used to represent different groups. For example, if one effect only relates to men or boys, the branch could be in blue. Similarly for women or girls, it could be marked in red.

The participants are then to review the effects again and identify if they are related to specific human rights. The human rights are written next to the effects, for example the right to health, right to food, right to education, non-discrimination, and etcetera.

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**Root Causes**

The next step is to reflect on what is causing the problem. The causes of the problems are written at the roots of the tree. The root causes could be economic, social, cultural, political etc. Participants should keep on asking what “caused the cause” until they cannot come up with other causes.

It is good to start thinking about how the root causes could be prevented, since that is the only way to actually address the problem. Applying RBA means not only addressing the effects of a problem, but to try to address its root causes as well.

Analyse the Human Rights Situation

When applying RBA, a problem is looked at from a human rights perspective. That includes identifying which human rights are being violated in relation to each specific problem. Furthermore, it is vital to find out more about what laws and policies are in place to protect these human rights. This is a task for the organisation and its staff. The following questions could guide this mapping/analysis:

→ Which international human rights treaties, relevant to the specific problem, exist?
→ Have your country ratified these treaties?
→ Have these human rights treaties been translated into national and local legislation?
→ Are the laws upheld and enforced, with systems of redress?

Identify and Analyse the Rights-Holders and Duty-Bearers

As mentioned earlier, a key aspect of RBA is the relationship between the rights-holder and the duty-bearer. Having identified and analysed a problem, the next step is to identify who the rights-holders and duty-bearers are in relation to that specific problem; and to analyse their roles and responsibilities, capacity and willingness to act.

This can be done in different ways. The activities and tools below are mainly suitable for staff of the organisation. At the same time, it is crucial to have a continuous and close dialogue with the communities, including on issues relating to roles and responsibilities of rights-holders and duty-bearers. This close dialogue is actually necessary in order to conduct the exercises below.

Rights-Holders

For each problem it is important to look into the following:

→ Who are the rights-holders? (for example, if the problem identified is poor access to education, the rights-holders are boys and girls of school going age)
→ What is the situation of the rights-holders?
→ Do the rights-holders know they have human rights? Do they know how and where to claim these rights?
→ What are the strengths and assets of the rights-holders? There are difference types of assets, including:
  ✓ Physical: for example land for farming, water etc.
  ✓ Financial: for example savings in a savings group
  ✓ Social: for example community networks and groups, mutual relationships and trust
  ✓ Human: for example information, knowledge, experiences, skills (not only through formal education, but also traditional, local knowledge which is transferred verbally)
  ✓ Institutional and political: for example ability to influence duty-bearers through advocacy or other means

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22 Please refer to Appendix 1 for more information on international human rights treaties.
**Duty-Bearers**

As mentioned above, for each right there is a corresponding responsibility. This means each rights-holder has a corresponding duty-bearer to turn to and claim his or her rights from. Therefore, for each problem to be addressed, it is crucial to identify who the duty-bearer is at different levels.

⇒ **Circle of Influence Diagram**

The “Circle of Influence Diagram”\(^{23}\) is one way to find out who the duty-bearers are. This tool is suitable for staff of the organisation. It is preferably done in groups of six to eight people. Flipcharts and marker pens in different colours are needed.

The groups are to draw six circles, as per the illustration below. The inner circle represents the household level, the second circle the community level, followed by local, national, regional and international level. The idea is to identify relevant duty-bearers at each level in relation to the specific problem.

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\(^{23}\) Aprodev Rights and Development Group, 2011: Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum.
As an example: If the problem identified is poor access to education, the following duty-bearers could be identified in a Ugandan context:

- **Household Level:** Parents
- **Community Level:** Parents-Teachers Associations, Community Leaders, Churches, Community Based Organisations
- **Local Level:**
  - Sub-County Level: Secretary for Education, Sub-County Chief, Community Development Officer
  - District Level: District Education Officer, Secretary for Education, Chief Administrative Officer
- **National Level:** Ministry of Education
- **Regional Level:** East African Community (EAC), Sectoral Council on Education, Science and Technology, Culture and Sports
- **International Level:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

**Analyse the Duty-Bearers**

Having identified who the duty-bearers are, the next step is to analyse them in terms of:

- the nature of their **responsibility** to make the necessary changes (legal/moral)
- their **interest** to make or support the necessary change (low/medium/high)
- their **influence/power** to make a change (low/medium/high)
- their **capacity** to make the change (low/medium/high)

This kind of analysis/mapping of the duty-bearers makes it easier for the organisation to decide how to best support the duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations. For example, if the duty-bearer has high interest to make a change, but low capacity, one way of providing support would be to build capacity where needed. If the capacity, as well as the influence is high, but interest low, another kind of strategy is needed, for example advocacy. See the examples in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DUTY-BEARER</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>INTEREST</th>
<th>INFLUENCE/POWER</th>
<th>CAPACITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Open Discussion with Communities**

As mentioned earlier, the tools explained above are mainly intended for staff of the organisation. When interacting with community members, it is good to have an informal and open discussion where the term duty-bearer is introduced and explained, where their roles and responsibilities are discussed, that they exist at different levels, which levels etc. Based on this knowledge, the community members could start identifying duty-bearers they interact with and possible ways of influencing them. This could be the beginning of an advocacy plan at the local level.
**Rights-Based Analysis in a Nut Shell**

To summarise STEP 1, a rights-based situation analysis is guided by the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- What particular human rights are violated?
- Who is most affected by the problem/rights violation?
- Why is this happening? What are the causes of the problem?
- What laws and policies are in place? Where are the gaps in relation to human rights standards?
- Who have the obligations? Who can change the situation? Why are they not acting?  

**STEP 2: DEVELOPING THE PROJECT**

Through STEP 1, the rights-based situation analysis, a lot of important information has been collected. This information will guide the development of the project. If STEP 1 is done thoroughly, it will become much easier to do STEP 2 and the project itself will become much better since it will:

- Focus on the “real” issues, identified by the communities
- Address not only the effects of a problem, but also its root causes
- Involve both rights-holders and duty-bearers

**Objectives**

It is important that the objectives of the project reflect the outcome of the rights-based situation analysis in STEP 1. The objectives should capture the change we would like to achieve as a result of the project.

At the same time it is crucial to make sure the objectives are not too ambitious, broad or vague. The abbreviation “SMART” can be used as a guide when formulating the objectives. The objectives should be:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable (how will information be collected to measure if the objective has been fulfilled? See more on this in STEP 4)
- **A**chievable (Is it possible to achieve the objective, given the resources, personnel, the situation on the ground?)
- **R**ealistic (Is it realistic to reach the objective within the given time frame; are the necessary skills available?)
- **T**ime bound

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Furthermore, when developing the rights-based objectives, the following guiding questions could be used. Do the objectives:

- Reflect the problem(s) identified by the community members in the situation analysis?
- Specify the desired change for both rights-holders and duty-bearers?
- Address the root causes of the problem?
- Refer to human rights and rights violations?
- Have a gender dimension?
- Specify which rights-holders and duty-bearers will participate in the project?  

Activities

Having formulated objectives, we need to develop activities that will lead to the fulfilment of the objectives. The specific activities will of course depend on the focus of the project and its objectives. However, in general, activities of a rights-based project should promote and apply the principles of RBA.  

It is important to make sure enough time is allocated for the activities; for example when it comes to ensuring active and genuine participation.

STEP 3: IMPLEMENTATION

RBA is not only about making a situation analysis or developing objectives and activities in a rights-based way. It is to a great extent about how the projects are implemented. No matter how rights-based the project design is, if the principles of RBA are not applied in the actual implementation, the intended results will not be achieved.

PANEL in Practice

Participation

It might sound self-evident to involve the communities we work with in every aspect of the project, but it is often easier said than done. Once a project is up and running it sometimes takes on a life of its own, and it is easy to become occupied by targets, time plans, reports and budgets. Therefore, the principle of participation has to be continuously prioritised and applied in the project implementation. The community members, their voices, concerns and situation are and should remain the focus. The project is theirs.  

Community participation in the project should be constant, and as an organisation we need to create space for participation, both in terms of time and human resources. Having participated in the formulation of the project the community members should also be in charge of making sure indicators and objectives are met (see STEP 4). It is vital to discuss if the project goal and results remain relevant during the implementation of the project. Maybe the conditions have changed, which make the project goal less relevant. It may be necessary to reformulate the goal. Therefore, the principle of participation should be

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27 The principles of RBA: PANEL (Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Empowerment and Links to human rights)
applied throughout project. But the project should also aim to improve community members’ capacity to participate in decision-making in their community, at sub-county, district and national level. In that sense participation is both a means, a way of working, and a goal in itself.

Participation of the different actors involved in the project has to be genuine. Only if the communities are involved from the beginning and define their own problems and priorities they will feel ownership of the project and contribute to its sustainability. One way of working with communities and promote community involvement is to hold focus group discussions.

Advise on Focus Group Discussions

- It is good to have one staff member as facilitator of the discussion
- And one staff member in the role of minutes taker
- Prepare a number of open ended questions beforehand to guide the discussion of the topic
- Allocate enough time for each focus group discussion; often 2 to 2.5 hours is needed
- Invite the participant ahead of time to make sure they are informed and prepared
- Let each group consist of maximum 15 people
- Diversity: Make sure focus group discussions are held with different categories of people, including, women, men, children and youth, elderly, leaders etc, to enable all voices in the community to be heard.
  - Depending on the specific context, it could be possible for the different groups to participate in the same discussion. In those cases it is important for the facilitator to make sure everyone gets a chance to talk and feels comfortable to share their views with the other group members.
  - Sometimes it is advisable to conduct separate focus group discussions for different groups. For example one discussion for children only, to make sure that children are able to contribute with their advice and experiences. Make sure the children have permission from their parents/guardians to participate in the focus group discussion and that the parents/guardians are informed about the purpose of the discussion. It is also advisable to have separate focus group discussions with women, for example if the discussions are to focus on sensitive issues like gender based violence.

- Make sure the venue for the discussion is conducive and peaceful. It is good to let the participants sit in a circle so you can all see each other.
- Introductions: Let everyone introduce themselves
- Purpose: Before going in to the actual focus group discussion, make sure that everyone knows why they have gathered; the purpose of the discussion, for example, to hear their views on the situation of a particular area, like education, food security etc, or to follow up on an ongoing project.
- Inclusive participation: make sure that everyone gets a chance to talk during the discussion
- Language: Try to use as simple language as possible and avoid complicated words
- Do not ask several questions at the same time, but take them one at a time.
- Try to be as practical as possible. If the discussion is not going in the right direction, try to give practical examples as a way to make people get back on track.
- Make sure the group will get continuous feedback of the outcome of the discussion
Accountability

During the implementation of projects, it is crucial to support rights-holders to demand accountability from the duty-bearers and at the same time enable the duty-bearers to fulfil their responsibilities. Working for strengthened accountability also means making sure there are meeting points between rights-holders and duty-bearers, with meaningful dialogue and interaction. The development organisation could be an important bridge, a link between rights-holders and duty-bearers.

Advocacy is an important tool to promote accountability, a way to influence the duty-bearers to take their responsibility and fulfil human rights. Advocacy can be done at different levels of society, and can take different forms.
From the Grassroots to Geneva – LWF Uganda Advocating for Women’s Rights

In May 2010, the LWF Pader Sub-Programme participated in collecting information on the situation of women in Uganda together with staff of LWF in Geneva. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with community members in the three sub counties of Adilang, Acolibur and Lapul in Pader District, northern Uganda. The data was analysed and included in to a shadow report that was presented to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), in Geneva.

In October 2010, the Government of Uganda (GoU) was reviewed by the CEDAW committee, composed of 23 experts on human rights and was attended to by a staff member from LWF Uganda, Pader Sub Programme, and two staff from LWF Geneva. The interactive dialogue had very concrete and meaningful recommendations on how to improve the human rights situation in Uganda. The delegation from the GoU responded too many of the questions posed by the committee. During the session many references were made to the shadow report submitted to the committee by LWF. One of the committee members challenged the GoU regarding access to justice, where the majority of the Ugandan women are illiterate and do not understand the language used in court. She was then referring to the LWF shadow report. During the review, other critical issues that were addressed in the shadow report were raised by the committee members, including girls’ access to education, reproductive health of women and access to land rights for women.

This was a great opportunity of advocacy for LWF Uganda, where the voices of the communities were heard at the international level, at the United Nations in Geneva. This was a motivation not only to us as LWF Uganda, but also for the communities we work with.

After the review meeting in Geneva, feedback meetings were held in Pader. The groups of women and men were interviewed on how they felt about their participation in the process and their representation at the international level. They had the following to say:

“We feel great that we have a sense of belonging; our views are represented to the international bodies for action. We feel we are part of the development process and we pray that our recommendations are channelled to the Government of Uganda for action.”

As a result of their participation in this process, the women in Pader have formed their own groups. In these groups, they sensitisise their communities on the importance of participation of women in the development of their communities. They also assist women in handling cases of domestic violence and property grabbing. We hope that the women will keep strong and continue changing their communities.

By Esther Akao, Project Officer, LWF Uganda, Pader Sub-Programme and Patrick Simon Okello, Field Extension Worker and RBA Focal Point, LWF Uganda, Pader Sub-Programme
The example of the CEDAW reporting process represents one way of holding the state of Uganda accountable. Such type of high level advocacy needs planning and special resources. But advocacy can also form a natural part of the project throughout its implementation. If we work with the communities to empower them to claim their rights, we can carry out advocacy work together. We can for example discuss strategies on how they can achieve a new school building in their community (right to education), another health worker at their clinic (right to health) etc., and accompany them in meetings with the duty-bearers.

A powerful instrument that can be used in advocacy work is to subsequently gather statistical data. Often the state and even local decision-makers lack specific and disaggregated data on the situation on the ground. On the other hand, together with the communities we can quite easily gather such information. Involving the community and the groups we work with in such information gathering also forms part of an empowerment process. Community members get tools of accessing information and gain understanding of the power of information. Updated, reliable and disaggregated data can present their living conditions in an efficient way. Such information can support their demands and also form the foundation for formulating projects together with their local decision-makers.

LWF Uganda’s partner ACTogether (Active Communities Together) has experiences in this kind of advocacy together with slum dwellers in Kampala.
Enumeration and Mapping in the Slums of Kampala

Lack of information on the informal settlements has been a key factor in fostering neglect and hindrance to recognition for many slum dwellers that live in the urban slums. The idea of enumerations and mapping arises from the need for government recognition of slum areas, as well as for communities to identify themselves for effective negotiations with governments on issues of basic services and security of tenure.

In order to promote active citizenship in communities of the urban poor in Kampala, communities are being supported by ACTogether to undertake settlement enumeration and mapping. This is also an important vehicle for building community cohesion and capacity for collective action in slum settlements.

In this process slum dwellers are involved in collecting and analysing data from their settlements. To collect the information communities formulate and administer their own enumeration forms, household questionnaires. These questionnaires capture important information, including details of the tenant (level of education, occupation, daily household expenditure) number of people in the household, period of stay in the settlement, amount spent on rent, details on the ownership of the house, type of house, house size, services available in the house (water, toilet, electricity), how waste is disposed etc.

The uniquely rich information gathered is a powerful tool for communities pursuing active citizenship. It fosters an accurate understanding of the local environment and facilitates more effective and targeted community negotiation for services. The information also empowers communities to engage with other urban development stakeholders as equals, contributing with invaluable information.

In the Kisenyi settlements in Kampala, the community has used the information collected to advocate for toilets, water, improved drainage systems and garbage collection skips. As a result three public toilets were constructed in Kisenyi III and II, 13 water points were extended to the residents of Kisenyi III and water trenches were improved. The information has also supported the slum dwellers to fight evictions from private land owners. They have presented reports to leaders, who have offered guidance and support to stop the evictions.

The enumeration process has facilitated ongoing projects of solid waste management, water extension and sanitation provision to the slum dwellers of Kampala. The management of these projects is spearheaded by the slum dwellers with support from the Kampala capital city authority. As the texts on the t-shirts of the community members involved in the enumeration says: "Information is power – count me in!"

By Muhammed Lutwama, Operations Coordinator, ACTogether

At the same time it is important to remember that development organisations, like LWF Uganda, are moral duty-bearers. That means we have to be accountable to the communities we work with. We have a responsibility to act according to the commitments made, be transparent and have an open dialogue with the communities. Together, we need to spell out clearly who is responsible for what and create opportunities for the community members to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the activities. 29

One way of promoting accountability to the communities we work with, is to establish a Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM). It provides a formal way for communities to raise their concerns regarding the implementation of projects, conduct of staff etcetera.

When LWF Uganda Programme developed its CRM, community involvement was crucial. Focus groups discussions were held with different groups that LWF Uganda works with in all its sub-programmes to share the idea and purpose of a CRM and ask the community members how they would prefer to lodge their complaints, which channels to use etcetera.

The CRM aims to help LWF Uganda to understand its projects from the communities’ perspective. This leads to improved quality of the work, enhanced trust and confidence of stakeholders and identification of areas that might need to be improved.30

Non-Discrimination

Even if the principle of non-discrimination is part of the organisation’s core value and clearly spelled out in the project plan, it often requires time and effort to make sure that it also translates into reality. There could be challenges to uphold the principle of non-discrimination when implementing a project in a community where different forms of discrimination exist, for example where girls are not allowed to go to school because they are girls, or where children with disabilities are hidden.

Often the rights violations are greater than the project budget, which makes it difficult to involve as many people as one could have wished. This could lead to grudges and disappointment among community members who are not involved in the project. For the implementer on the ground this can be very challenging to face. Therefore, it is very important that the targeting criteria are well defined and explained so that community members know why certain people are participating in the project.

Rights-based targeting criteria should:

→ clearly define both gender and other forms of systemic discrimination in the community
→ be specific
→ be transparent
→ identify the most vulnerable
→ be selected in a participatory way

“Giving differential treatment (affirmative action) to different groups is good RBA practice if it is based on clear criteria and good assessments, and not on privileges.”31

30 LWF/DWS, Uganda Programme, 2011: Complaints and Response Mechanism.
31 Aprodev Rights and Development Group, 2011: Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum.
Importance of Clear Selection Criteria

The two cases below illustrate the importance of clear selection criteria when implementing a project.

**First case:** In 2007, LWF Uganda received funding to implement a food security project in 13 sub counties in eastern Uganda. The farmer group approach was used as a key strategy in the implementation of the project. In this case farmers were mobilised into groups of 30 members each. They accessed farming inputs, including cassava cuttings, groundnut seeds and rice, as well as trainings on different farming methodologies.

In each of the groups, five members, thought to be more vulnerable than the others, were selected to benefit from four oxen and one ox plough. However, the selection criteria used to identify these five members were not clear. This caused conflicts in many of the groups. The members who were not selected believed that since they were all in the same group, with similar challenges, the oxen should have been for all the group members.

In one of the sub-counties, the sub-county leadership recommended the groups to let the oxen be handed over to the whole group. LWF reversed the strategy in all the groups by handing over the ownership of the oxen to the whole group. However, this also had its challenges, since some group members, had kept, fed, and treated the oxen did not buy the idea. This shows the importance of having clear selection criteria and transparent processes from the beginning of a project.

**Second case:** In 2009, LWF Uganda started implementing a project to support orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) in three sub counties in eastern Uganda. The project targeted two parishes in each sub county. LWF staff carried out stakeholder consultations to map out the parishes for the intervention. In each sub-county, the local council leadership, the technical staff and other partners were invited for the meetings. The participants mapped out where different partners were already focusing on OVC livelihood support to guide the selection of parishes.

In order to select the households and OVCs to be supported, the guiding document on mapping provided by Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development was used. The local councillors, the technical staff, the parish chiefs and LWF staff formed the mapping team in each sub county. They were placed in groups of four members that included one councillor, one parish chief, one parish development committee member and one staff from LWF. The teams moved out to each of the villages in the selected parishes.

In each village, community members participated in putting together their own criteria of whom they thought was an OVC, in addition to what is provided in the guidelines by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. Community members participated in drawing their own village maps, indicating the OVC households, number of OVCs in those households, their ages, sex and category of vulnerability.

The project that was initially meant for one year is now in its third year. The district, sub-county and community leadership appreciated the transparent and participatory process of identifying the most vulnerable households. They have clearly exhibited their support in making sure that the project succeeds in fulfilling the rights of the children in vulnerable situations.

*By Stella Amorioit, Field Extension Worker, LWF Uganda, Katakwi Sub-Programme*
Empowerment

Empowerment is a process, something that happens within a person. It can never be imposed from outside, we can never empower others. But as a development organisation we can support the process of strengthened capacity and confidence, of realising the inner potential that exist within each one of us.

“I Feel Elevated and Confident” - the Story of Kobusingye Aziidah

Kobusingye Aziidah begins her day with prayers, followed by preparation of breakfast for her six children, who all go to primary and secondary schools. Thereafter she goes to her garden to work until two o’clock in the afternoon. From the garden, she prepares lunch and also cleans her house and compound.

“I always want my compound and house to look tidy because I am a responsible person. In my society many people look up to me,” Aziidah says.

Aziidah is a 39 year old widow, living in Lubaga village, Kasambya parish in south western Uganda. She is a mother of four boys and two girls. She is a person living with HIV and aids and a trained Volunteer AIDS Counsellor (VAC), working with LWF Sembabule Sub-Programme in her parish. Aziidah is also the chairperson for Twekembe women’s group, a Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) group for women in her village. She is respected and listened to because of her status as a Counselor and a role model in the area. She can freely expose her background and HIV status. Aziidah has, through assistance, gained access to resources, information and decision-making. She has built her capacity and taken control of her life. She feels empowered and independent, and is confidently claiming her rights.

However, this has not always been the case. In 2007, Aziidah’s husband died. She was left with the children in a dilapidated grass thatched house that was soon falling down. Through the LWF Uganda Sub-Programme’s assessments she was identified and supported with a house and water tank to improve her housing condition and increase access to safe and clean water for domestic use. In 2010, she was also supported with two goats, maize, beans and ground nuts seeds to improve on her household income and increase food security.

The support from LWF Uganda helped Aziidah and her children to change their life style. They do no longer experiencing cold nights in the old leaking house, which often caused sickness. There is also protection from pests and rodents that used to enter freely in the old house.

“When we were supported with a house and beddings, life changed. We now sleep comfortably, we no longer fall sick as often as was before. We feel safe because it is a permanent house and we feel that we can now fit confidently within the community. We feel elevated and confident”, Aziidah says.

“We had lost hope because we felt inferior in our community; some people could feel sorry for us, while others could just laugh over our situation,” Aziidah laments.

Recently, Aziidah said that she no longer needs material support from LWF Uganda, because she has utilised the support given to her previously, especially the seeds, to improve her standard of living. She says she has enough food for her household. She is even able to sell the surplus to buy family basic necessities and to reserve some seeds for the next planting season.

“I feel empowered and independent,” Aziidah concludes.

By Muhammed Kiweewa, Field Extension Worker and RBA Focal Point
LWF Uganda, Sembabule Sub-Programme
For the empowerment process to succeed, the development organisation has to take the role of a facilitator and not implementer. This is a task, which could be rather challenging, not least for the development organisation, since it requires a new way of thinking and being; it requires trust and confidence in the people it works with. When empowerment is realised, the rights-holders will take control of their lives and claim their rights.

**Links to Human Rights**

The principle of links to human rights might be the trickiest one, when it comes to the practical application. How do human rights become relevant for the farmer in a farmers group, the member of a water user committee, the woman in a support group for people living with HIV? What difference does it make if we tell them they are rights-holders, entitled to human rights, like the right to food, water and health care? To let people know that they have human rights is important, but it is only a first step. Knowledge has to be put in practice.

Trainings on human rights often remain at an abstract level, with technical language of declarations and treaties agreed on by the international community. However, in daily life these rights may seem distant to many people. It is important to find a way of integrating human rights in the implementation of the project, so that it does not becomes a separate activity.

To be realised, human rights need to be translated into national legislation and more importantly into actions taken by decision-makers, the duty-bearers. In order to claim their
rights the people we work with need to be aware of how their rights are safe-guarded in national legislation and what actions are being taken to implement these rights.

As an example, the right to water includes both the right to clean water for personal use and the rights to sanitation. Questions important to discuss with the community groups we work with, for example water user committee members, include:

→ Do the rights-holders have access to clean water in their community?
→ Do they have access to sanitation?
→ What measures are their local decision-makers taking to ensure access to water and sanitation?

The right to food is a right to access to adequate food and to be free of hunger. Primarily, it is a right to feed oneself in dignity, through one’s own efforts and own resources. This requires living conditions that allow people to either produce food or to buy it. In certain situations, for instance because of armed conflict or natural disaster it may not be possible for people to feed themselves with their own means. Then the state has an obligation to step in and provide direct means. When interacting with the community groups we work with, for example farmers groups, it is important to discuss the following:

→ Do community members’ living conditions allow them to produce or buy their food?
→ What preparedness is there at a local level for situations of disaster?
→ What do the local decision-makers do to ensure that everyone’s right to food is fulfilled?
   How do they work to combat and prevent malnutrition, for example?

With knowledge on what national legislation is in place and what measures the government is taking to implement this, the communities can claim their rights and discuss with their local leaders how their rights can be realised. The rights to food and water belong to the economic, social and cultural rights, which states are responsible to implement, but progressively, using all available resources.²²

Furthermore, it is important to communicate about human rights in a culturally sensitive way, using accessible language. Human rights are sometimes misinterpreted by community members and some people might, due to different reasons, be resistant to the messages about human rights. One reason of misunderstandings could be when the aspect of responsibilities are not clearly communicated or understood.

As highlighted by LWF staff:

“There is a lot of information relating to human rights, but one important point is missing – the responsibility of rights-holders.”

“They [community members] inter-mingle rights and responsibilities. Some people don’t respect other people’s rights.”³³

²²The economic, social and cultural rights are endorsed by the UN in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESR). States that have ratified the Covenant are obligated to progressively realise these rights. This means they have to show there is progress that steps have been taken to fulfil the rights. The states also have to use the maximum of its available resources to implement these rights.

Hence, it is important to talk about the rights-holder’s responsibility to respect other people’s rights. It is also vital to make sure there is shared understanding and awareness of human rights in the communities, so that it is not only one group, for example women, that attend meetings and participate in learning and discussing about human rights.

**STEP 4: MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The last step of the project cycle, monitoring and evaluation, is as important as the other steps. In a way it is not only a last step, but also a first and a continuous cycle. In the situation analysis (STEP 1) and when developing the project (STEP 2), the aspect of monitoring and evaluation are all part of this continuous cycle included in this process. For example, when formulating the objectives in STEP 2, they have to be measurable (the M in “SMART”). This means we have to find a way to measure the impact of our project.

The participation of the communities in all the steps of the project cycle has been continuously stressed in this document; this is equally important when it comes to monitoring and evaluation. We have to find ways to involve the communities, for example when developing the objectives, indicators etc and when following up on these.

Importantly, monitoring and evaluation has to be done regularly during the project cycle, and should involve all the stakeholders in the project, both the rights-holders and the duty-bearers. Monitoring could also become a way to promote human rights. Collecting
information and documenting unfulfilled rights could be used to put pressure on duty-bearers to fulfil their responsibilities.34

There is no blueprint for RBA, and that also goes for monitoring and evaluation. It is therefore important that each development organisation develops its own M&E system and methods for ensuring that it is rights-based.

**Definitions of M&E Words**

**Monitoring:** is the ongoing collection of relevant data. It helps us to know if the project is on track or not.

**Evaluation:** takes place at certain times throughout the project cycle, but not as often as monitoring. An evaluation uses the data collected during monitoring to compare how things are now with how they were when the project began, to find out if the objectives have been achieved.

**Inputs:** These are the resources, human and financial, training, equipment and others that the project invests to achieve outputs.

**Outputs:** These are the immediate products of project activities because of the inputs, for example number of boreholes drilled.

**Outcome:** As a result of the outputs above, the project realises outcomes, for example increased access to clean and safe water or reduced waiting time at water sources.

**Impact:** These are the lasting changes in people’s lives and at the population level. For example, a reduced incidence of waterborne diseases because of increased access to clean and safe water.

**Indicators:** An indicator provides evidence that a certain condition exists or certain results have or have not been achieved. Indicators enable the organisation to assess progress towards the achievement of intended objectives.

**Sources:**
- Save the Children, 2007: *Getting it Right for Children. A practitioners’ guide to child rights programming*
- Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, Uganda Programme December 2010: *Power point presentation by M&E Manager*

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Measuring Change

When applying RBA we are interested in finding out if there have been any positive changes in people’s lives as a result of our project. Rights-based monitoring focuses both on rights-holders’ level of enjoying their rights and the duty-bearers’ commitment to fulfil these rights. When looking at the principles of RBA and PANEL, we are interested in seeing a positive change in the following:

Participation: involvement and influence of rights-holders in both public and private spheres
Accountability: extent to which the duty-bearers fulfil their responsibility
Non discrimination: levels of inequality and abuse experienced by rights-holders
Empowerment: rights-holders’ self-esteem, leadership capacity, networking, capacity to claim their rights and hold duty-bearers to account
Links to Human Rights: rights-holders’ access to remedies, human rights mechanisms and legal entitlements.

Baseline Study

When starting a project it is important to conduct a baseline study where information on the current situation is collected. The purpose of a baseline study is to provide an information base against which to monitor and assess a project’s progress during implementation and after its completion.

The information collected in the baseline will later on be compared with the situation after the project has started. Mid-term reviews, project reports and other evaluations will inform about the progress, mainly by comparing recent data with the information from the baseline study. In that way we will find out if, for example, rights-holders have increased awareness of human rights and what impact this knowledge has had.

Projects which apply RBA often include elements of behaviour changes. Therefore, it is important to interview people and ask them about their attitudes and behaviour, when doing the baseline, during monitoring and evaluation.

Involving the communities in carrying out the baseline improves the quality of the project. The people involved in the project are the ones who are directly present in the communities where we want to achieve a change. They will be the ones who are best fitted to assess if a change is really taking place or not. To promote community involvement a few community members could be selected to carry out interviews (using open ended questions or following a specific format) with other members in their community, to assist in conducting the baseline. The community members may more easily access information on certain topics from their neighbours than staff of the organisation.

36 Aprodev Rights and Development Group, 2011: Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum.
Indicators

When trying to measure the change made through our rights-based projects it is important to develop indicators to assist in this work. LWF Uganda Programme has started this process. Below are examples of indicators for each of the RBA principles, which can be tailored and specified to the specific focus of each project. It is important to find ways of making these indicators concrete and applicable together with the communities involved in the projects. For further information on these indicators and suggested questions to be used in baseline studies, please refer Appendix 2.

Participation

→ Rights-holders participate actively in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of the project
→ Duty-bearers are involved in the project
→ Increased space and opportunities for rights-holders to participate actively and freely in both public and private spheres
→ Increased influence of rights-holders, including women, in decision making process, in both public and private spheres

Accountability

→ Increased capacity and willingness among duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations
→ Improved capacity among rights-holders to identify and be in dialogue with duty-bearers and to hold them accountable.
→ Increased capacity of LWF Uganda to support and implement advocacy initiatives at different levels (village, district, national)
→ LWF Uganda is more accountable to the communities it works with

Non-Discrimination

→ People in vulnerable situations, affected by discrimination, including people with disabilities, children, women, people living with HIV and aids, elderly, ethnic minorities, are involved in the project
→ Cases of discrimination in the communities are identified and addressed
→ Reduced levels of discrimination within the communities

Empowerment

→ Increased access to relevant information among rights-holders on issues that affect them
→ Increased ability among rights-holders to influence decisions, put things on the agenda and negotiate new ideas
→ Increased awareness among rights-holders of their human rights
→ Strengthened self-esteem and capacity among right-holders to claim their rights

Links to Human Rights

→ Rights-holders have increased access to human rights mechanisms, legal entitlements and remedies
→ LWF Uganda is linking up with and using the internal human rights mechanisms (UN) to address rights violations

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38 LWF/DWS, Uganda Programme, 2011: Suggestions on Impact Indicators of Rights-Based Programmes, first draft.
To measure change by using indicators is an important component of many monitoring and evaluation systems. However, it might sometimes seem quite abstract and make it difficult to assess and relate to changes achieved. Other methods of monitoring and evaluation, involving the communities more directly, do exist.

One example is the Most Significant Change (MSC) method, in which the community members identify stories that show changes that have happened in their community as a result of the project implemented. These stories of change are discussed within groups. Through sharing and discussing achieved results, important information on the outcome and impact of the project is captured. Some stories are selected to show the desired changes. Project reports could include indicators, but be complemented with stories of change.39

6.0 REFERENCES

Aprodev, Rights and Development Group, 2011: *Rights-Based Development and Gender Equality Curriculum*


Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, Uganda Programme, 2008 draft: *A Guide to Community Participation*


Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, Uganda Programme, December 2010: *Power point presentation by M&E Manager*

Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, Uganda Programme, 2011: *Complaints and Response Mechanism*

Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service, Uganda Programme, 2011: *Suggestions on Impact Indicators of Rights-Based Programmes, first draft*


Save the Children, 2007: *Getting it Right for Children. A practitioners’ guide to child rights programming*


**INTERNET SOURCES**

- Amnesty International  

- The Australian Government, AusAID  

- HAP, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership  
  [http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/m112-beneficiary.pdf](http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/m112-beneficiary.pdf)

- IFAD, International Fund for Agricultural Development  

- United Nations Treaty Collection  

- WHO, World Health Organization  

**7.0 APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX 1: HUMAN RIGHTS**

In 1948, the United Nations adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR). It is a milestone document. For the first time, an internationally agreed document set out that human rights, entitled to all human beings, are to be universally protected.

In its 30 articles, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates different human rights, civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. In 1966, two UN treaties were adopted that incorporates these rights: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The UDHR and the two covenants ICCPR and ICESCR form the **International Bill of Rights**.

The words **treaty**, **convention** and **covenant** are all used to describe an international agreement between nations, which is legally binding. Hence, if a state **ratifies** a treaty, convention or covenant, it is legally obligated to fulfil the human rights therein. This also means the content of the treaty has to be incorporated into the domestic legislation of the state.
Core International Human Rights Treaties

In addition to the International Bill of Rights, other international human rights treaties have been adopted by the UN. They focus on different thematic concerns, for example racial discrimination, and specific groups in vulnerable situations, including women, children, migrant workers and people with disabilities. Below is a summary of the core international human rights treaties:

**ICCPR** - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
→ adopted in 1966
→ entered into force in 1976
→ 167 states have ratified

**ICESCR** - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
→ adopted in 1966
→ entered into force in 1976
→ 160 states have ratified

**ICERD** - International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
→ adopted in 1966
→ entered into force 1969
→ 174 states have ratified

**CEDAW** - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
→ adopted in 1979
→ entered into force in 1981
→ 186 states have ratified

**CAT** - Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
→ adopted in 1984
→ entered into force in 1987
→ 149 states have ratified

**CRC** - Convention on the Rights of the Child
→ adopted in 1989
→ entered into force in 1990
→ 193 states have ratified

**ICMW** - International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
→ adopted in 1990
→ entered into force in 2003
→ 45 states have ratified
ICRPD - International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
→ adopted in 2006
→ entered into force in 2008
→ 104 states have ratified

ICPED - International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
→ adopted in 2006
→ entered into force in 2010
→ 30 states have ratified
Accessed 25 September 2011)

APPENDIX 2: SUGGESTIONS ON IMPACT INDICATORS OF RIGHTS-BASED PROGRAMMES

The suggestions below are trying to capture ways of measuring the impact of applying the RBA principles in our work. They are indicators, as well as questions that could be used when conducting baselines.10

Participation

→ Rights-holders participate actively in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of the project
  ✓ In what way did the target group/individuals participate in the project?
  ✓ How did different categories (women, people living with HIV and aids, children, people with disabilities, widows, elderly etc) of people participate in the project?
  ✓ What did they see as a result of their participation?

→ Duty-bearers are involved in the project
  ✓ Have you been informed about this project? (question to duty-bearer)
  ✓ What contribution are the duty-bearers making towards the project’s implementation?
  ✓ What are the roles and responsibilities of the duty-bearers?

→ Increased space and opportunities for rights-holders to participate actively and freely in both public and private spheres
  ✓ Where are decisions made (i.e. within the family, community, etc...) affecting you?
  ✓ How are you involved in making decisions that affect you?
  ✓ Do you have access to decision-making forums?
    ▪ If so, which one(s)?
    ▪ Do you know of people who do not have access to these?

10 LWF Uganda Programme, 2011: Suggestions on Impact Indicators of Rights-Based Programmes, first draft
→ Increased influence of rights-holders, including women, in decision making process, in both public and private spheres
  ✓ Have you ever experienced that your participation in a decision-making forum influenced the decision taken? If yes, in which situation? If not why do you think you were not able to influence?
  ✓ In what way have you experienced that your participation in decision-making had results?

**Accountability**

→ Increased capacity and willingness among duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations
  ✓ How do you define your role and responsibilities as local government official? (question to duty-bearer)
  ✓ Do you experience any gaps or capacities in fulfilling these roles? (question to duty-bearer)
  ✓ Do you perceive that the duty-bearers are willing to fulfil their obligations? (question to rights-holders)

→ Improved capacity among rights-holders to identify and be in dialogue with duty-bearers and to hold them accountable.
  ✓ Do you know who has the main responsibility of providing (health care, water, education etc) in your area?
  ✓ If yes, mention them. Do you know what their specific responsibilities are? Do you feel they are fulfilling these responsibilities?
  ✓ Have you ever been in contact with this person(s) / office(s) regarding the fulfilment of their responsibilities?
    ▪ If yes, how did you feel about this encounter?
    ▪ If yes, was there any change/improvement regarding your concern after you had this meeting?
    ▪ If no, would you have liked to contact this person(s)/office(s)? Was there anything hindering you from approaching these person(s)/office(s)

→ Increased capacity of LWF Uganda to support and implement advocacy initiatives at different levels (village, district, national)
  ✓ Questions to LWF:
    ▪ What advocacy initiatives have been developed in your sub-programme?
    ▪ What are the challenges you face in doing advocacy?

→ LWF Uganda programme is more accountable to the communities it works with
  ✓ Procedures are in place: CRM is rolled out, complaints are received and handled
  ✓ Questions to stakeholders involved in LWF Uganda’s projects:
    ▪ What do you know about LWF Uganda’s interventions in this area?
    ▪ In what ways are you given feedback about project’s progress?
    ▪ Do you know about CRM? What do you know about it?
    ▪ Describe how you think it is of benefit to you.
Non-Discrimination

→ People in vulnerable situations, affected by discrimination, including people with disabilities, children, women, people living with HIV and aids, elderly, ethnic minorities, are involved in the project
  ✓ LWF Uganda’s selection criteria are taking issues of non-discrimination and people in vulnerable situations into consideration, in consultation with the respective communities

→ Cases of discrimination in the communities are identified and addressed
  ✓ Do you know of cases where people are discriminated against in your community? If so, which ones?
  → Have these cases been addressed and if so, how?
  → What role has LWF Uganda’s projects played regarding non-discrimination?

→ Reduced levels of discrimination within the communities
  ✓ Do you feel that the cases of discrimination have increased or reduced during the past three years? Give examples.

Empowerment

→ Increased access to relevant information among rights-holders on issues that affect them
  ▪ Do you know where to get information about issues affecting this community? E.g. decisions regarding social service, public spending, changes in local government
  ▪ Have you been able to access this kind of information? Give examples

→ Increased ability among rights holders to influence decisions, put things on agendas, and negotiate new ideas.
  ✓ Have you ever tried to bring up an issue or a new idea that you feel is important with your leaders at sub county level? If so what issue? What was the result?
  ✓ If no, was there anything that prevented you to do so?

→ Increased awareness among rights-holders of their human rights
  ✓ Have you heard about human rights?
  ✓ What do human rights mean to you?
  ✓ Where did you learn about human rights?
  ✓ In your opinion, what are the common cases or situations where human rights are abused?

→ Strengthened self-esteem and capacity among right-holders to claim their rights
  ✓ Do you feel that you have the confidence to stand up for your rights?
  → If yes, could you give an example when you did that
  → If no, what would be needed for you to do that?
  ✓ If you feel that some of your rights are not fulfilled e.g. right to water, education, and health services, where would you go to claim these rights?
  ▪ Do you feel that you have the capacity to claim these rights?
  ▪ If no, what kind of capacity would you need?
**Links to Human Rights**

→ Rights-holders have increased access to human rights mechanisms, legal entitlements and remedies
  ✓ If there is a case where your or someone’s rights have been abused, for example cases of GBV, rape, child abuse etc, what would you do?
  ✓ Do you know where to report cases of rights violations?
  ✓ Is the justice system able to handle these cases?
    ▪ If not, what are the problems?

→ LWF Uganda is linking up with and using the internal human rights mechanisms to address rights violations
  ✓ Strengthened cooperation with LWF Geneva Head Office, for example on advocacy and reporting to the different UN Committees
  ✓ Improved coordination with other NGOs focusing on human rights in Uganda, to monitor and address rights violations

**APPENDIX 3: CHECKLIST ON RBA**

As mentioned in this document, there is no blueprint on how to apply RBA. RBA has to be adapted to each specific situation. However, it could be useful to have a “checklist”, a number of questions that can function as reminders as we continuously try to strengthen the application of RBA when planning, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating our projects.

☐ Is the project contributing to the fulfilment of human rights? Which human rights and how?

☐ Is the project responding to the root causes of the problems and rights violations identified?

☐ Are people in vulnerable situations, exposed to discrimination, involved in the project?

☐ Is the project working against discrimination in the communities?

☐ Is the project empowering rights-holders to claim their rights and supporting duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations?

☐ Is the project ensuring continuous and genuine community participation in all different steps of the project? How?

☐ Is the project process owned by the communities involved?

☐ Is participation seen as both a means and a goal in the project implementation?

☐ Is the project addressing gender inequalities and promoting gender equality? How?

☐ Is the information collected during the planning (baseline etc), implementation and follow up, used in advocacy at local, national and international level?