



**Nikat Charitable Association (NCA)**

# **Participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP) Guideline**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

The Participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP)\* is a collaborative approach that involves stakeholders in evaluating the effectiveness of a program or project. It aims to promote learning, accountability, and improvement by gathering feedback and insights from various perspectives.

PRRP involves a set of participatory exercises that we have to carry out on periodic basis in the spirit of improving our accountability to the poor and vulnerable people, our partners and other key stakeholders. In essence, PRRP exercises enable us to work with stakeholder groups to:

- Assess what has been done
- What has been learnt
- And, within this analysis, articulate what will be done differently in the future.

NIKA recognizes the importance of regular evaluation and reflection to improve program effectiveness and ensure the sustainability of its interventions. This guideline outlines the PRRP process for the programs/projects of Nikat Charitable Association (NCA).

## 1.2. Purpose of the guideline

This guideline aims to provide a framework for NCA to implement a robust PRRP process. By following these principles and guidelines, NCA can ensure that its program interventions are responsive to the needs of female sex workers (FSWs), effective in achieving their objectives, and sustainable over the long term.

This guideline is prepared with a view to:

- Equipping NCA staff and its key stakeholders with the required skills, instruments and attitudes for delivering responsive, participatory and accountable programs;
- Institutionalizing and enhancing transparency and accountability to the community NCA is working with, especially FSWs, and other stakeholders;
- Facilitating organizational learning and improving performance.

## 2. Purpose of PRRP

The overall purpose of the PRRP process is to learn and share learning from achievements and failures to improve ongoing program quality through periodic participatory review. The PRRP provides an opportunity to work with stakeholders on a periodic basis to explore, learn from and improve quality of your work. The periodic reviews are also an opportunity for us to work creatively and are intended to be light and fun. More specifically, the PRRP aims to:

- **Enhance program quality:** Identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

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\* Source: ActionAid, Alps: Accountability, Learning and Planning System, 2000 and as revised in 2006

- **Increase stakeholder participation:** Involve FSWs, community members, and other stakeholders in program/project evaluation.
- **Promote learning and adaptation:** Use feedback to inform program adjustments and future interventions.
- **Improve accountability:** Demonstrate transparency and responsiveness to the needs and expectations of stakeholders.

### 3. Key Principles of PRRP

- **Participation:** Active involvement of FSWs, community members, government agencies, and other relevant stakeholders throughout the PRRP process.
- **Flexibility:** The PRRP process should be flexible and adaptable to the specific needs and contexts of each program.
- **Confidentiality:** Ensure the confidentiality of all information shared by participants.
- **Respect:** Treat all stakeholders with dignity and respect, valuing their contributions and perspectives.
- **Empowerment:** Empower stakeholders to actively participate in the evaluation process and contribute to program improvement.
- **Inclusiveness:** A major aspect of participation is the issue of inclusiveness. Important segments of NCA's stakeholders (e.g. FSWs with disabilities or FSWs who live on streets) may be missed out due to their 'invisibility'. PRRP should strive to transcend any barriers to the engagement and participation of the most vulnerable groups and ensure that all the concerned are addressed with equity.

**"Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."**

*- Albert Einstein*

### 4. PRRP Process

PRRPs should happen at every level of the organization (e.g., at DIC level, at project area level (which could be a sub-city, woreda, town or region), and at organizational level – the whole of NCA). Innovative methods are required to ensure stakeholder participation. Thus, the relevant line managers of NCA will determine at which level and frequency to conduct the PRRP.

The process should be fully transparent and participative. For instance, funding patterns and grant decisions of donors as well as expenditure analyses need to be shared openly. The process should involve as many stakeholder groups as possible (including FSWs, partners, donors, and supporters) and provide space for them to express their ideas, priorities and concerns. However, it may not always be possible for teams to meet up with all stakeholders. Note that involvement of FSWs who are mostly poor and excluded people, along with donors, development agencies, including government and partners, and other stakeholders requires very sensitive facilitating so that all feel comfortable to contribute.

The lessons and findings of the PRRP exercises and agreed actions arising should be noted and feed into the periodic learning and review reports.

## 5. Possible Stages of the Periodic PRRP Process

No uniform and rigid rule governs the PRRP exercises. Each PRRP session may be different. Therefore, you need to be flexible based on specific contexts. This will be determined by the organizing team during each session. These are new processes for NCA and we will have to work out, over time, appropriate ways to facilitate them. It is a challenge to all in NCA to make this a light, enjoyable and meaningful process. In essence, PRRP asks NCA to work with its stakeholder groups to:

- reflect on the period's work
- learn from the period's experience
- analyse and articulate how that learning will improve future work.

Whatever process you decide to follow, initial planning will be important. This section lays out a series of proposed steps (with questions) which may be helpful. However, do remember that the best processes are ones that evolve with input from your stakeholders.

### 5.1. *Step 1: Preparation and Planning for PRRP*

Among other things, the following need to be undertaken prior to conducting PRRPs:

- **Define Scope and Objectives:** Clearly define the scope and objectives of the PRRP for the specific project/initiative.
- **Form a PRRP Team:** Establish a facilitating team (if possible, a multi-stakeholder team, including representatives of FSWs, NCA staff, and potentially external evaluators).
- **Develop a Work Plan:** Create a realistic work plan outlining timelines, responsibilities, and budget for the PRRP process.
- **Get the views of stakeholders who will not participate in person:** Scan the opinions and perspectives of those that can't be physically present on PRRP sessions, through community meetings, stakeholder surveys or other relevant means of enquiry;
- **Select and Adapt Methods:** Choose appropriate data collection methods (e.g., focus group discussions, interviews, surveys, observations) based on program objectives and stakeholder needs. Please note that focus group discussions are the main methods often used.
- **Identify participants and communicate:** Ensure that representatives of the stakeholders are transparently selected and mandated, and adequately familiarized with the interventions of NCA, and the concerns of their respective constituencies regarding your works.
  - Ensure FSWs' interest and commitment to participate in PRRP sessions;
  - Determine the agenda of the sessions jointly with representatives of the stakeholders;
  - Communicate to stakeholders information such as date and venue of the PRRP;

- **Prepare your staff for the sessions:** Ensure that staff participating in PRRP are equipped with the right facilitation skills and attitudes in such ways as developing the capacity to listen, increasing the autonomy of the community, mutual trust and desire to run the program transparently, willingness to accept criticism and make changes.
- **Arrange the required resources and facilities:** Allocate sufficient time and resources for the event. Also make the necessary logistical and administrative arrangements such as setting venues, preparing stationeries, communication and display equipment, documentation equipment, vehicles for possible field visit, translators, rapporteurs, etc.
- **Prepare your presentations:** Compile achievements/under-achievements in the form of physical and financial reports in ways that are accessible to the participants. Responsible managers and/or staff of NCA should prepare their reports that will be presented to the stakeholders during the PRRP session. The report to be presented may include the following:
  - Program works – plan versus actual of the objectives and activities for the period
  - Finance – the budget and actual amount of funds (both income and spending) for the period, by major categories
  - Major successes achieved and/or challenges encountered during the period.

As much as possible, use visual aids (e.g. images, graphs, charts, or other visual representations), instead of narratives, to help participants easily understand and remember the information you provide about NCA's performance.

## ***5.2. Step 2: Conducting the Reflection and Learning sessions***

The fruitful outcome of PRRPs is contingent upon the quality of the conduct of the event itself. The process should, therefore, be fully transparent and participative, and not only consultative. It should involve the appropriate size and mix of stakeholders not leaving out the vulnerable and marginalized segments of NCA's target groups (FSWs). Among other things:

### **Step 2: Reflection and Learning**

- **Conduct a Feedback and Learning Workshop:** Organize a participatory workshop to discuss interventions, share insights, and develop action plans.
  - The process should encourage creativity, critical thinking, honesty and learning, leaving no room for defensiveness, scapegoat, or apportioning of blame.
  - The sessions should be conducted in the language understood by most participants, preferably, the local vernacular. Alternatively, translation can be arranged.
- **Present Performance:** Relevant NCA manager/staff presents program and financial performance versus plan for the period, highlighting achievements and under-achievements.
  - It would be helpful to use various illustrative and audiovisual materials such as charts, graphs, pictures, films, tapes, maps, case studies, and the like
  - The sessions should be interactive, and representatives of FSWs should be encouraged to make their own presentations.
  - If time and resources permit, field visits and community exchanges could generate valuable inputs for the PRRP session.

- **Stakeholder feedback:** Facilitate reflection and obtain feedback (facilitator could use the discussion guide and questions provided below for obtaining stakeholder feedback).
  - The review and reflection should be all encompassing, covering such issues as quality of program inputs, outputs, processes, intended and unintended outcomes, usefulness, timeliness, efficiency, value for money, level of transparency, participation and communication, staff capacity and attitudes, decision making, size, duration and complexity of projects, relationships among stakeholders, extent of delivering on commitments, harmony with the local context, impact on the vulnerable groups, sustainability of outputs and outcomes, etc.
  - These issues can be discussed in plenary and/or groups. FSWs may find it easier to express their views in smaller groups. The role of focus groups and key informants shouldn't be overlooked either.
- **Develop an Action Plan:** Based on the findings, develop a concrete action plan outlining specific steps to address identified issues and improve program effectiveness.
- **Document the PRRP outcome:** The resolutions and findings of the session should be synthesized and captured in such a way to allow the generation of learning, planning for future action, and sharing lessons with others.

### Discussion Guide:

The key topics suggested for discussion during PRRP are:

- Main achievements of the initiatives undertaken or supported by NCA during the period
  - (Probe: why they consider these as major achievements, what has actually changed as a result of the achievements, how sustainable are the results)

#### Questions that could be asked during the reflection

- What was NCA trying to do – original objectives?
- What changed as a result? Who benefited and who didn't? What were the intended and unintended outcomes as perceived by key stakeholder, particularly FSWs?
- What needs improving or changing?
- What could NCA do better?
- What have we learnt?
- What was the financial cost?
- How should the learning from the PRRP alter on-going work plans and strategies next period (and should the overall strategy be changed)?
- How might the FSWs have greater input into leadership of on-going activities?

- Key limitations of the initiatives undertaken or supported by NCA, what could have been done better
  - (Probe: why they consider these as main limitations, what has happened or could happen as a result of the limitations)
- Lessons: major contributing or hindering factors for achievement or failure, including the 'prouds' and 'sorrys' or concerns?
- The way forward (major issues to be considered when planning for the next period, e.g. what should be done to improve effectiveness and sustainability of ongoing initiatives ...)

### 5.3. Step 3: Analysis and processing stage

The analysis stage of the PRRP will inevitably be difficult – particularly if you have used creative methods/tools during the review and involved people at different levels (DIC, project, woreda, town, region, etc.) One thing that you could think about beforehand is how you would like to record the reflection process and communicate learning to others. In PRRP, the attempt is to break down the need for lengthy reports. You might like to think about using other forms of communication, i.e. videos, posters and newsletters.

#### ▪ Discussion on next steps

A final stage of the PRRP is to involve stakeholders in an assessment of how processes or initiatives ought to be changed in the light of their analysis. This is an opportunity to encourage the groups of people with whom NCA works to further drive agendas forward. How can NCA support people to take the lead on initiating change and monitoring effectiveness?

#### ▪ Feedback on steps taken

Finally, all change resulting from the PRRP should be fed back and discussed with relevant stakeholders. After all, people will only contribute and become more involved in initiatives if they know their ideas are being taken seriously and can really guide ongoing work.

#### ▪ Outputs

The lessons from the PRRP should be shared with other program/project areas, units, functions, etc. within NCA. In order to help us learn from these processes over the next few periods, it would be helpful if each project area, unit, function, etc. that undertook PRRP produced (see also Annex B):

- one page on lessons learnt from the program (positive and negative)
- one page on the process and what you would do differently next time
- one page of stories, diagrams and outputs/impacts from the experience.

#### Documentation and Dissemination

- **Document the PRRP Process:** Document the entire PRRP process, including methodology, findings, and recommendations.
- **Disseminate Findings:** Share the PRRP findings and recommendations with relevant stakeholders through reports, presentations, and other appropriate channels.
- **Learn and Adapt:** Continuously review and adapt the PRRP process based on lessons learned and evolving needs.

### 5.4. Step 4: Follow-up of PRRP sessions

PRRP sessions are not end in themselves. But they are instrumental for progressive change and rectification in organizational performance and accountability. To ensure that this happens:

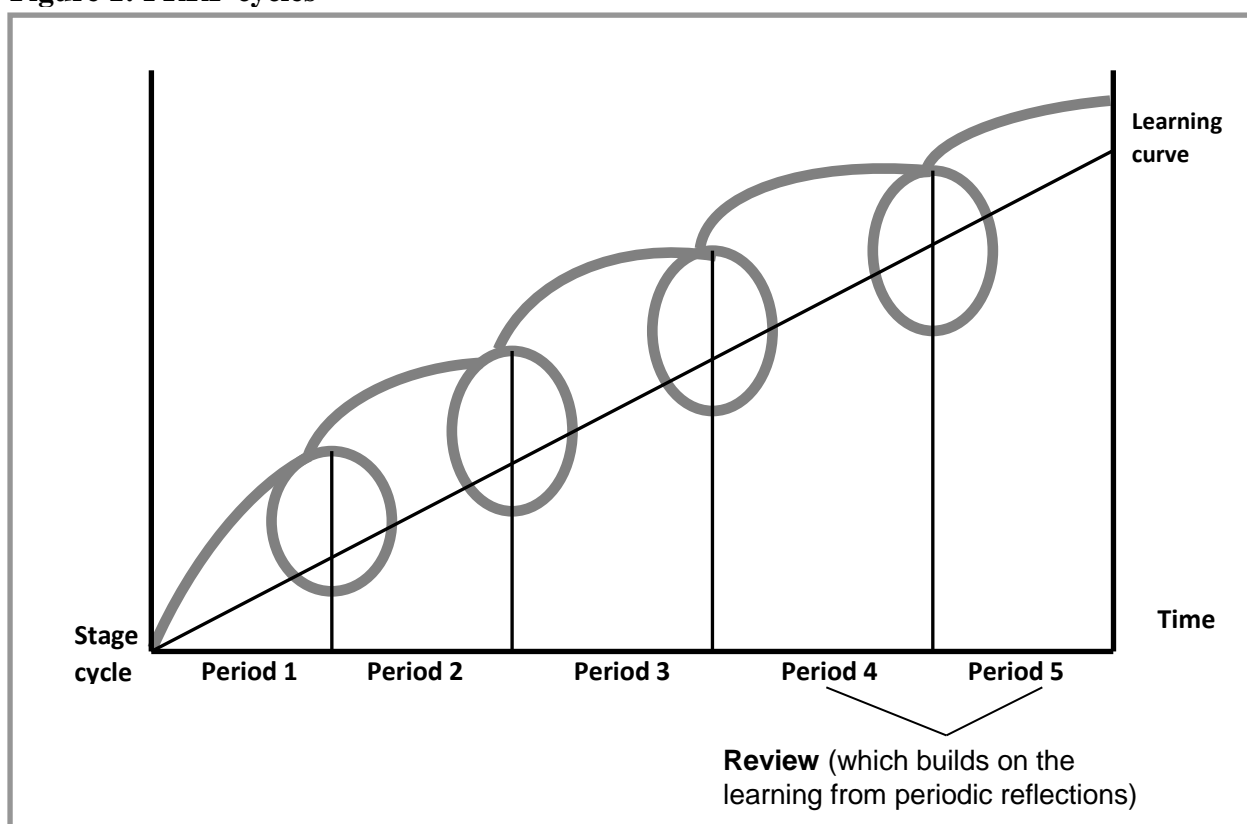
- The results of the PRRP sessions should be compiled and disseminated to stakeholders for them to use as working documents regarding NCA's program;
- The PRRP report should, among other things, contain information on the PRRP itself (date, participants, facilitation, etc.) context, planned objectives and targets,



interventions carried out, the involvement of stakeholders, major changes achieved, factors contributing to success/failure, lessons learnt, things to be done differently in the future, etc.

- These should also be used in subsequent PRRP sessions as benchmarks and reference to gauge progress made in the interim;
- On its part, NCA should incorporate the deliberations of the PRRP in the planning of its operations for the subsequent periods at the local as well as organizational levels;
- In so doing, the organization analyses its context and performance drawing on the feedback obtained during the PRRP session conducted at various levels, and gears itself towards addressing the outstanding and identified challenges;
- Recollecting the assessment of the PRRP regarding what can be influenced by the community, itself, and other stakeholders, NCA draws its plan of action as per its procedures;
- Ensuring compliance with the overall organizational strategies, policies and values, the organization submits its plan to its organs of governance for resourcing and approval;
- It shares its PRRP-inspired plan with its stakeholders, who are expected to own the plan and contribute to its realization, on the basis of an MOU to be signed;
- The PRRP spiral continues towards better learning, accountability, organizational effectiveness, and the subsequent realization of organizational objectives (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: PRRP cycles**



## 6. Frequency and levels for conducting PRRP

When and at what level PRRP is conducted is better determined in consultation with the key stakeholders (FSWs and/or their associations, donors, partners, government) in accordance with MOUs signed with them at the commencement of relationships. However, ideally PRRP should be conducted at least once a year for annual or multi-annual interventions. This should be in good time so as to be able to incorporate findings in the plan for the subsequent period. PRRP conducted for short term projects or at lower levels can be conducted more frequently.

NCA can also opt to conduct PRRPs at different levels such as projects, work units, project area or various administrative levels, and organization wide; the findings of lower levels feeding into the higher ones. PRRP can also be conducted for particular program themes or organizational result areas. While the main principles are shared at all levels of PRRP, different levels could have their specific agenda, duration/frequency, participants, roles and responsibilities, expected outputs, documentation/reporting, and feedback sharing mechanisms. **(See annex A below).**

## 7. Making PRRP effective

PRRP sessions are conducted periodically, and for a limited duration. Nevertheless, conducting effective and worthy PRRPs is a daunting task requiring preparation over a longer period, sensitizing and training staff in proper attitudes and facilitation skills, forging the right relationships, adopting flexible organizational procedures. Among other things, the following need to be in place to make PRRPs effective:

- Developing plans and work programs with the full knowledge and participation of the target communities, and in ways that address their priorities;
- Negotiating and agreeing with communities about roles and responsibilities, expectations, as well as mutual accountabilities;
- Sensitizing staff about organizational values of people-centeredness, accountability, transparency, learning, gender sensitivity, inclusiveness, and the like;
- Developing the competence of staff in technical fields and facilitation skills;
- Building trust and confidence with stakeholders;
- Preparing and sharing the required information;
- Setting PRRP agenda mutually with stakeholders;
- Creating adequate space for the most marginalized and excluded FSWs, and ensuring that their perspectives represented even though they may not be physically available on the PRRP sessions for various reasons;
- Conducting PRRPs with good listening, facilitation and communication skills;
- Creating a relaxed environment for communities to openly express their views, and backstopping them to participate effectively;
- Using the right tools, equipment, and methods for empowering communities to engage;
- Ensuring that lessons learnt are acted upon, demonstrating willingness to accept change;
- Allocating sufficient time and resources for PRRP;

- Ensuring that overall organizational policies and procedures accommodate the results of PRRP, e.g. adjusting next period performance plans or future strategies;
- Undertaking PRRP more as a matter of organizational value and principle than its operational expediency.

The above points are by no means exhaustive. Depending on their specific situations, PRRP facilitators or NCA's work units can develop ways and means of making PRRPs which they conduct more effective, whereby empowering the communities in the process, and enabling the organization live up to its principles, values, and commitments.

## 8. Other issues that need to be considered

### a) Ethical Considerations

- **Confidentiality:** Ensure the confidentiality of all participant information.
- **Informed Consent:** Obtain informed consent from all participants prior to their participation in the reflection sessions.
- **Respectful Treatment:** Treat all stakeholders with dignity and respect, valuing their contributions and perspectives.
- **Power Dynamics:** Be mindful of power dynamics between stakeholders and ensure that all voices are heard.

### b) Capacity Building

- **Train staff:** Provide training to NCA staff on PRRP methodologies, data collection techniques, and data analysis.
- **Build stakeholder capacity:** Empower FSWs and other stakeholders with the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in the PRRP process.

### c) Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Regularly monitor the PRRP process:** Track progress, identify challenges, and make necessary adjustments.
- **Conduct periodic evaluations of the PRRP process:** Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the PRRP process and identify areas for improvement.

### d) Resources

- **Develop a budget:** Allocate adequate resources for the PRRP process, including staff time, training, materials, workshop, and data analysis.
- **Utilize existing resources:** Leverage existing resources, such as databases, libraries, and online tools, to support the PRRP process.

## Annex

### *A) Focuses and expected process and outcomes of PRRPs at various levels*

Suggested different levels at which PRRP can be conducted, process and outcomes

PRRP levels	Focus/Agenda	Frequency	Participants	Facilitation	Expected outcome	Feedback documentation and sharing mechanism
Small community group (beneficiaries of specific project activity e.g. DIC users, PE participants)	With a focus on specific activities or project components implemented at a local level, the discussion pertains to: -Progress on plan and budget for the specific activities; Value for money; -Quality, timeliness and relevance of inputs and outputs; -Implementation modality; -Impact and changes observed; -Quality of participation, inclusiveness, decision making, relationships, information sharing and communication; -What needs to be done differently?	Quarterly	-Selected beneficiaries of the specific project activity; -Relevant local government offices (health, police, etc.); -Frontline staff (e.g. Outreach Workers, PEs), also program and finance staff of NCA -Partners supporting the specific activity; -Other interested parties, e.g. bar/hotel owners (up to 15)	Co-Facilitated by the responsible Supervisor and M&E Officer of NCA	-Identification of good practices, challenges, factors for success and failure, areas/issues needing improvement; -If necessary, ideas for amendment of plan; - FSWs satisfaction; -Way forward; -Renewed commitment of FSWs and stakeholders.	-Session reports to be submitted to Program Manager and Area Coordinator; -Summary to be posted on DIC notice boards, and at appropriate places in the area; -Findings to be discussed on large community group sessions; -Sharing with FSWs Associations in the area.
Larger community group (woreda, town, Sub-city level)	The agenda focuses on similar issues listed above for small community group level sessions, but will focus on all the program works being undertaken in the entire woreda/town/sub-city. -Reflection on findings of small community group sessions	Bi-annual	-Representatives of beneficiaries of the various program activities; -Relevant government offices at woreda/town/sub-city level -Partners working in the area;	Co-Facilitated by NCA Area Coordinator/ M&E Officer and leader of FSWs Association in the area	As above: - Impact/outcome - Level of satisfaction - Way forward but in the context of woreda/town/sub-city	- PRRP report to be submitted to Program Manager and Executive Director; - Compiled multiple woreda/town/sub-city reports for NCA HQ; - Distribution to government offices and

			- Frontline, program, M&E and finance staff (up to 25)			FSWs Associations in the area.
Project level	The issues indicated above, as they relate to a particular project - Reflection on findings of large community group sessions - Coherence to strategic objectives - Compare goals and outcomes, financial analysis against objectives, coverage and - Learning	Annual and before the end of the project	-Selected project beneficiaries -Project staff - M&E Officer, program and finance staff - Relevant government offices - Donor representatives; - Representative of partners - Leaders of FSWs associations - Potential external evaluator	Co-Facilitated by NCA Program Manager or Executive Director and Project Coordinator or Officer	As above, but specific to the project. Also synthesize/strategize findings, reflections on cost against strategic objectives, coverage, activities to be done differently and way forward	- PRRP report submitted to NCA HQ, the donor and project partners; - Distribution to government offices in the area where the project is implemented; - Communication to FSWs through appropriate means.
NCA HQ level	- Assessing progress (both program impact and financial analysis) against the strategic objectives, - Reflection on strategy, learning, any organizational and emerging issues	Annual	Lead team, program/project coordinators/officers at all levels, finance, M&E staff, key staff from support functions	Facilitated by Executive Director or Admin Manager or Program Manager	Assessing impacts (program and finance), strategic review, organizational learning, way forward	Notes to feed into the annual report of NCA and as basis for next Plan and Budget, brief summary to FSWs Associations

## B) Suggested PRRP Report Format

Below is the suggested annual (periodic) PRRP note/report format (1 – 2 pages)

<b>Situational Analysis:</b> How did the situation of FSWs look like in the project area (before the introduction of the project or taking into account specific time as a point of reference? Briefly describe the status of the situation/problem.					<b>Proposed Action:</b> What consensus and agreed action are reached in last PRRP sessions or NCA's plan? Are they adopted? What interventions are proposed to address the problems? By whom?	
Description Period	Targets/ Objectives	Interventions carried out	How and who decided on activities?	Major Outcomes (positive/negative) or Results/Important changes	Lessons Learned	How should be done differently (Proposed action)
Year__ (Quarter_)	<b>Note:</b> What did we plan to achieve in previous PRRP or planning?	<b>Note:</b> How did we intervene? What activities and strategies? How (approach)?	<b>Note:</b> The involvement of primary and other stakeholders	<b>Note:</b> (1) What social changes are observed? Can be complemented by 1 or 2 brief case studies (as attachment) (2) use critical thinking and concepts on rights, gender and power relation, social change and participation	<b>Note:</b> Major contributing or hindering factors for achievement or failure?	<b>Note:</b> Actions or input for ongoing or future plans?
Year__ (Quarter_)						
Year__ (Quarter_)						
Year__ (Quarter_)						
Comments on the process and any other important concerns: _____ _____ _____						
<b>Remark:</b> Attach 1 or 2 brief case stories _____						

Name of the Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Facilitated/Prepared by \_\_\_\_\_ Place/venue \_\_\_\_\_ Report Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Participants' # by sex (keep record of participants) Total \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_