



Creating Action Plans in Kyrdem

**Setting Community Priorities in
Mawblang and Nongthymmai
Raid Madan Kyrdem
Meghalaya, India**

Creating Action Plans in Kyrdem

**Setting Community Priorities In
Mawblang and Nongthymmai,
Raid Madan Kyrdem,
Meghalaya, India**

**Richard Ford
Creamlimon Nongbri
Lhai Singh Khong Shei
Poster Khongsit
Hamlet Khongngain
Shailang Synrem**

with

**David Warjri
Idealmon Mukhim
Dondilang Nongrum**

Prepared by the Capacity Building Unit of the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council, in cooperation with the Unitarian Union of North East India, the Unitarian Church of Kyrdem, and the Unitarian Universalist River Road Church in Washington, D.C. Further information about obtaining copies of this case study or additional information about the Capacity Building Program can be found on the last page. The easiest way to find more information about the capacity building approach is to go to the Partner Church Council's website. It can be found at uupcc.org

January 2009

Acknowledgements

This document and subsequent action plan for the communities of Mawblang and Nongthymmai in Raid Madan Kyrden would not have been possible without major assistance from many people. Most important are the community residents themselves of whom several deserve special mention: Toswel Maring, Executive Director, Dorbar of Raid Madan Kyrdem; Arki Kshiar, Headman, Mawblang; Idealmon Mukhim, Teacher and volunteer facilitator; David Warjri, Teacher and volunteer facilitator; Dondilang Nongrum, Volunteer facilitator; Olibia Nongrum, Member host committee; Shotibon Mukhim, Member host committee; and Lidia Nongrum, Member host committee. In addition, special mention must go to the support of the Kyrdem Unitarian church for reaching out to the entire community to host the workshop.

The Unitarian Universalist congregation of the River Road (Washington, DC) church along with the International Funding Panel of the Unitarian Universalist Association provided financial support for the workshop. Special thanks go to River Road UU member Janet Fernandez and a former church member, Marion Connell. River Road has been an active partner with the Kyrdem Unitarian Church, a member congregation of the Unitarian Union of North East India.

A superb team of local facilitators from Khatarshnong Socio-Organization (KSO) led the actual sessions of data collection and analysis. They included: Lhai Singh Khong Shei, Poster Khong-sit, Shailang Synrem, and Hamlet Khongngain.

Within the Unitarian Union of North East India (UUNEI), we are especially indebted to four people and in particular to Khlur Mukhim, a professor at North East Hill University (NEHU) who managed all of the preliminary arrangements and organized publicity and invitations. The group includes: Rev. Derrick Pariat, President of the UUNEI; Khlur Mukhim, Creamlimon Nongbri, and Rev. Helpme Mohrmen

From NEHU, we were also assisted by Dr. Kyrham Nongkynrih. We owe him special thanks for identifying KSO, joining with us in planning, and visiting the UUPCC program in North America two years ago.

From North America we wish to thank the UUPCC leadership, especially Cathy Cordes, Eileen Higgins, and the entire Capacity Building Committee.

Richard Ford, on behalf of the entire facilitation group.

Summary

Residents of two villages in Raid Madan Kyrdem spent three days in January 2009 conducting a participatory planning exercise that engaged all groups and institutions in their respective communities. Women, men, and youth met for three hours each of three days. The Unitarian church in Kyrdem was the local host institution. The participatory tools included sketch maps, institutional analyses, identifying accomplishments and needs, pairwise ranking, problem analysis, and creation of community action plans. The facilitation team was led by the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (North America), in cooperation with the Unitarian Union of North East India and with the able assistance of Khatarshnong Socio-Organization (KSO). From a list of more than 30 identified needs the assembled members of the community, using participatory tools, debated and discussed their priorities and reached full consensus on four: health, an upper primary school, a public bath house, and a public latrine. The assembled residents spent the final session developing a Community Action Plan that set out procedures for them to identify community resources, meet with local government officials, seek partnerships both locally and overseas, and implement their four highest priorities. The UU Partner Church Council has been sponsoring similar community planning workshops in The Philippines, Transylvania, and other parts of the Khasi Hills for the last five years with enviable results attained in many of the communities.

Glossary of Terms

<p>BDO – Block Development Officer or Block Development Office. Regions of Indian states are divided into blocks which are the primary local development assistance units to deal with village development.</p> <p>Dorbar – A traditional governing body that presides over a Raid. It consists of members elected from individual villages and is the primary governing unit for local development matters.</p> <p>ICDS – Integrated Child Development Scheme. A government program to provide assistance to families in early childhood development.</p> <p>MDC – Member District Assembly. Districts are subsets of the states. District Assemblies are elected bodies that represent residents at the District level.</p> <p>MeSEB – Meghalaya State Electricity Board</p>	<p>MLA – Member Legislative Assembly. The LA is the elected assembly for Meghalaya state.</p> <p>PDS – Public Distribution System. A government program that provides food for the needy.</p> <p>RTI – Right to Information. A national law recently passed that allows individuals and groups to write to the RTI office to seek documents related to questions they have, such as the status of the contract let to a contractor in 2003 to construct a public latrine in Kyrdem.</p> <p>Raid – A cluster of villages presided over by a Dorbar. In the case of Kyrdem, the Raid is Madan Kyrdem.</p> <p>SHG – Self Help Group.</p> <p>Sordar – The elected official who presides over the Dorbar.</p>
---	--

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Why Capacity Building	6
Chapter 2. Background and History of Raid Madan Kyrdem	8
Chapter 3. Getting Started: Sketch Maps to Identify Accomplishments and Needs	10
Chapter 4. Kyrdem's Institutions	14
Chapter 5. Accomplishments and Needs	17
Chapter 6. Ranking Needs	21
Chapter 7. Problem Analysis	26
Chapter 8. Creating the Community Action Plan(s)	30
Chapter 9. Conclusions and Lessons Learned	34

List of Figures

Figure 1. Sketch Map: Men	11
Figure 2. Sketch Map: Women	12
Figure 3. Sketch Map: Youth	13
Figure 4. Institutional Analysis: Nongthymmai	15
Figure 5. Institutional Analysis: Mawblang	16
Figure 6. Preliminary Ranking: Women	23
Figure 7. Preliminary Ranking: Men	24
Figure 8. Final Ranking: Combined	25
Figure 9. Community Action Plan: Health	31
Figure 10. Community Action Plan: Upper Primary School Bath House, Public Latrine	32

Chapter 1

Why Capacity Building

Capacity Building is a development approach alternative to charity. Its primary goal is to equip local leaders with skills in development planning and management. Learning tools of data collection, resource mobilization, conflict mediation, planning, implementation, and management enables community institutions and local leaders to become the architects of their own development.

For the last five years the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUCPP) has been working with partner UUs in Transylvania, the Philippines, and Northeast India to develop tools for community leaders to create their own action agendas. Working with partners including North American UU churches, local government agencies, and volunteers in their communities, many of these churches have helped their communities in health, agriculture, housing, water, livestock, and education. While it is clear that villagers cannot solve all of their development needs by themselves, it is equally apparent that if they take the first step, outside agencies are often ready to join in as a partner.

This case study describes how the UUPCC capacity building team, working in cooperation with the Unitarian Union of North East India, local government officials, a local NGO, the Unitarian Church of Kyrдем, nearly 100 local leaders and representatives, about 30 local institutions in the two villages, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of River Road helped leaders to create an action plan tailored to the needs that the planning sessions identified.

The UUPCC capacity building approach has seven steps:

1. **Preparing the Community** - Khlur Mukhim, a college lecturer, held several meetings in the months before the planning exercise to explain the process and to get their support for the meetings. He issued formal invitations to every resident in the two communities to come to the meetings, held in January 2009. He also worked through the Kyrдем Unitarian Church to have benches, tables, tea, and lunches (they fed an average of 70 participants lunch on three consecutive days — an awesome sight).

2. **Organizing Information** - The second step helps people to organize what they already know as they begin the task of creating their own action plan. The meetings began mid-morning on Thursday, January 8, 2009, with about 100 people present. Details of the activities are found in chapters 3 and 4.

3. **Mobilizing Resources** - The next step is to help communities mobilize what they already have. Exercises helped them review previous accomplishments, to discuss how they were

able, for example, to put in place amenities such as schools, churches, water, and electricity.

4. Analyzing Needs— Another set of exercises focused on the spatial and social distribution of needs and how their analysis could lead to priorities that met broad segments of the community's spatial and social requirements.

5. Building Consensus— The tool known as pairwise ranking enabled men and women, young and old, and residents of both villages to come to consensus on priorities, without voting.

6. Creating an Action Plan— after priorities were set, thorough and detailed discussion led to creation of action plans for the four highest priority needs set in the ranking. The communities can use these tools at a later date to set plans for additional priorities.

7. Finding Resources Inside and Outside the Community— this final step has yet to be accomplished. This step now lies in the hands of local leadership, working in cooperation with their partners in North America and in Meghalaya. The process has worked well in other villages where these tools have been used. There is no reason why, with diligent effort, that the same cannot be achieved in Kyrdem.



Kyrdem's villages are perched on hill slopes or in the valley of a rich rice growing area. This panoramic view is taken from the Unitarian Church. It is winter so the fields are fallow. If you look closely in the middle of the paddies you will see half a dozen huge water buffalo having lunch.

Chapter 2

Background and History of Raid Madan Kyrdem

*We are indebted to Shri W. Toswell Maring and Dr. Creamlimon
Nongbri for their assistance in preparing this section.*

The Raid Madan Kyrdem is located in Ri Bhoi District of Meghalaya about 40 km south of Shillong under the Khyrim Syiemship of Nongkrem. Formerly known as Raid Madan, it is a cluster of twelve villages - Kyrdem, Thadrang, Khyndewso, Kalapamti, Umraling, Sohrublei, Klew, Mawkyrdep, Umked, Umtraw, Mawbsein, and Nongthymmai. Since 1918, each village has had its own elected representative known as the headman. The chief headman is the Sordar. There were five Sordars under the Raid Madan. According to tradition, the Sordar is elected to a term of five years, although over the years there have been a few exceptions. The headmen are the executive members of the Raid Council, also known as the Dorbar.

After 1962, Kyrdem village was integrated into Raid Madan and came to be known as Raid Madan Kyrdem. During this period, there were 7 Sordars the last of which is Shri W. Toswell Maring, the present Sordar who has held office since 1990.

Socially, the Raid Madan Kyrdem had strong community ties and a closely knit society. Brotherhood, trust, and honesty still prevail and respect for the elders and the Dorbar continues. Families helped each other, especially during the planting and harvesting seasons and there was no cash payment as there is today. Feasts were organized on such occasions and sometimes workers received a share of the harvest. A village cleanliness drive was an annual feature of Kyrdem. The entire village turned out for the cleaning. This is still true today.

Economically, the people were very poor and shifting cultivation was the mainstay of the community. Rice was the major crop but production was limited to family needs as there were no markets. A few tried taking their harvest to Shillong but encountered great difficulty as there were no roads. People were largely illiterate and there were no health services. Later two markets appeared at Nongtraw and Makhanu, but were not heavily used. The main road to Shillong was not built until 1962.

The health situation was bleak. Kyrdem experienced its worst crisis in 1950 when there was a cholera epidemic. People retreated to the hills temporarily until Miss E. Lewis, the missionary, came to the rescue of the villages.

Another blow to the Raid was the a malaria outbreak that took the lives of 10 to 15 children each year in each village. The mortality rate was very high and over the years. There were very few children who survived.

Small Pox hit the area in 1961-62 as people refused the vaccination. Only those who vaccinated themselves survived. Diarrhoea was also a problem for the people because of the unhygienic living conditions. Now, the situation is much improved. Kyrdem now has a well-used Primary Health Center, a Sub-Center at Mawbsein, and an Animal Dispensary.

The Raid was culturally rich and the famous dance, the Kalakampong, is still part of the thanksgiving harvest celebration. There are three religious groups in the Raid and people live in harmony, respecting one another's faith. The Presbyterian Church which is about 150 years old was founded by missionaries. The Roman Catholic church at King of Kings, Mawkyrdep was founded 50 years later and Unitarian Church opened only in 1964.



Elders discuss Kyrdem's history and traditions.

Religious groups have largely been responsible for starting schools. Kyrdem's first lower primary school was the Presbyterian LP School, which was taken over by the government and upgraded to upper primary and then later to a secondary school. The King of Kings LP School was next. Rev Fr Balawan located it at King of Kings, Mawkyrdep. In recent years, other schools have been founded and now almost every village has a lower primary school. The Unitarian LP School has recently been upgraded to the upper primary stage.

With the coming of western education, the culture and economy have been shifting to Western institutions and practices. The traditional values have degenerated and the young generations have taken to western dress, music, lifestyle, and recreation. The Khasi traditions grow weaker as each day passes. This loss is lamented, particularly among the older generation.

Notes

The traditional institutions prevailing in the Khasi States:

Syiem is the kingdom, a collection of *Raid* *Syiem* is the King.

Raid – Collection of villages under the same kingship,

Village- A collection of small units called *shnong*,

Sordar is the Chief Headman of a Raid.

Chapter 3

Getting Started: Sketch Maps to Identify Accomplishments and Needs

The first step, once orientation and briefing are complete, is for a small team of facilitators to organize a series of exercises for data collection, analysis, needs identification, priority ranking, problem analysis, and preparation of action plans. This usually takes meetings of about three hours on each of three days. Because time is limited and we wish to involve as many members of the community as possible, we start the data collection exercises with production of the villager's view of the community. We start with a sketch map.

In Kyrdem we had a good turn out of residents so broke into three groups — women, men, and youth. They produced the three maps that follow. The maps enable everyone to be involved and get people thinking about the main goal of the exercise — where are the accomplishments and where are the village needs located in the community?

- **The men's map** identified virtually every square foot where rice was produced, suggesting that they were interested in depicting sources of income. They also showed in detail the areas of the community forest, again indicating their priority. Finally, the men showed many details about houses in Nongthymmai but not so much for Mawblang, perhaps because of a larger representation from the former.
- **The women's map** focused more on services with electrical poles highlighted, churches carefully represented, and schools located. They were less precise about the areas of rice cultivation and forest coverage.
- **The youth map** was limited to Mawblang, possibly because youth from Nongthymmai were fewer in number. The only item included in detail were the schools.

As a result of the mapping exercise, the village learned that the UUPCC team had come to:

- Listen to the village views rather than tell the community what it needed,
- Encourage all members of the community to be part of the planning and decision making
- Use easily understood tools that rely on visual as well as verbal skills, and
- Think about needs of the entire community and what to do about these needs



The women's group produced a highly detailed map of social services in their community,.

Figure 1
Nongthymmai-Mawblang Sketch Map:
Men

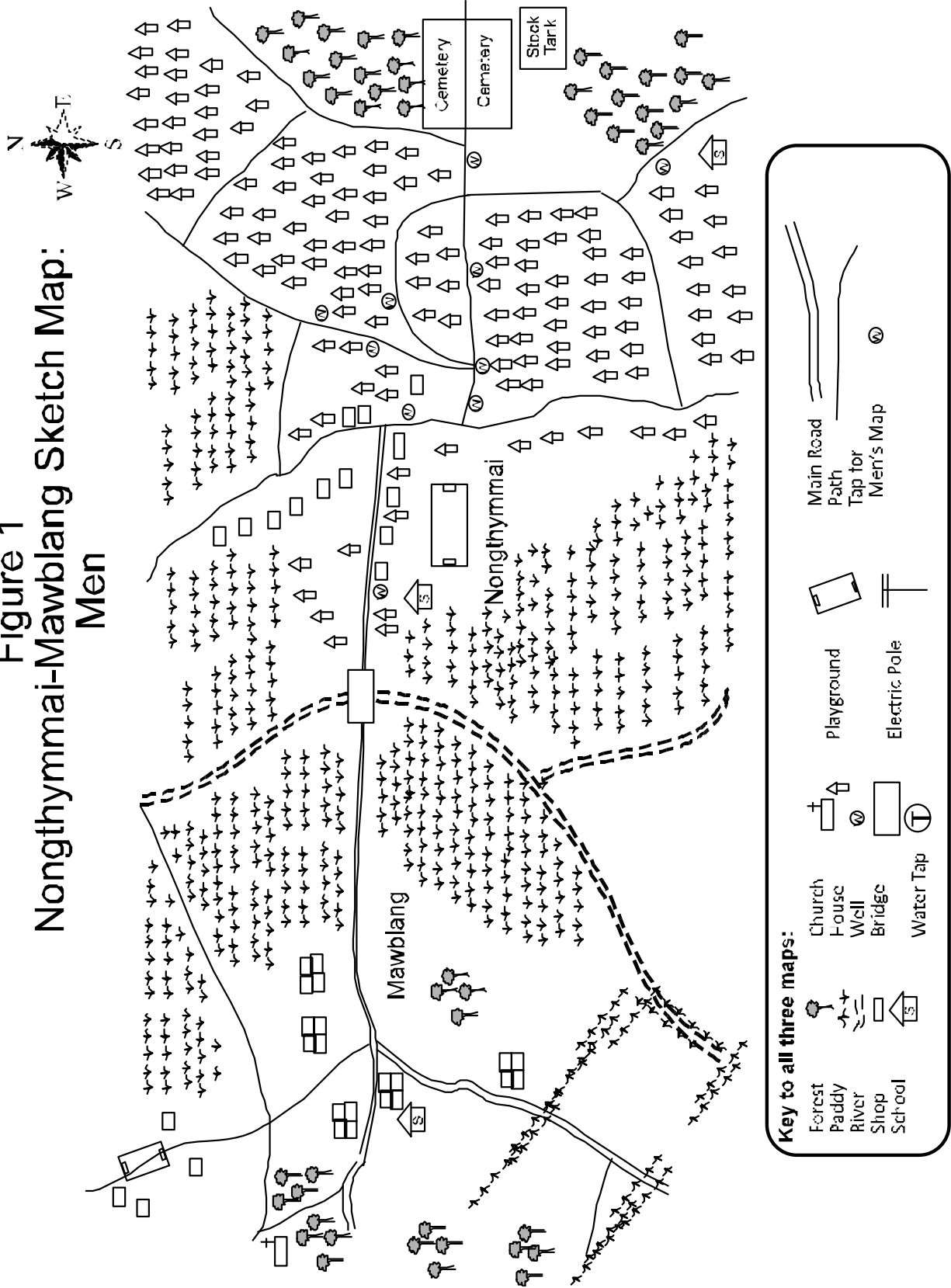


Figure 2
Nongthymmai-Mawblang
Sketch Map:
Women

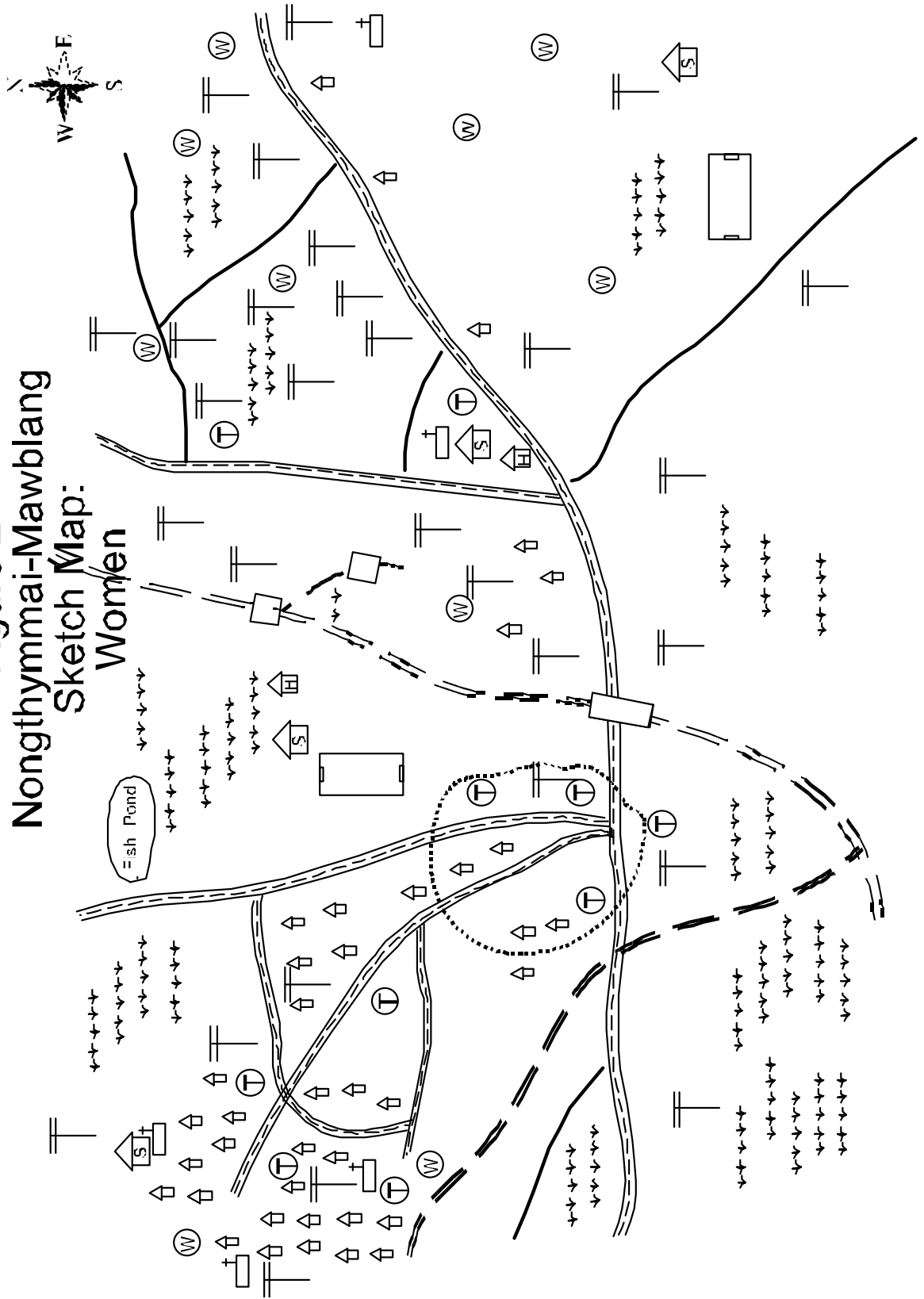
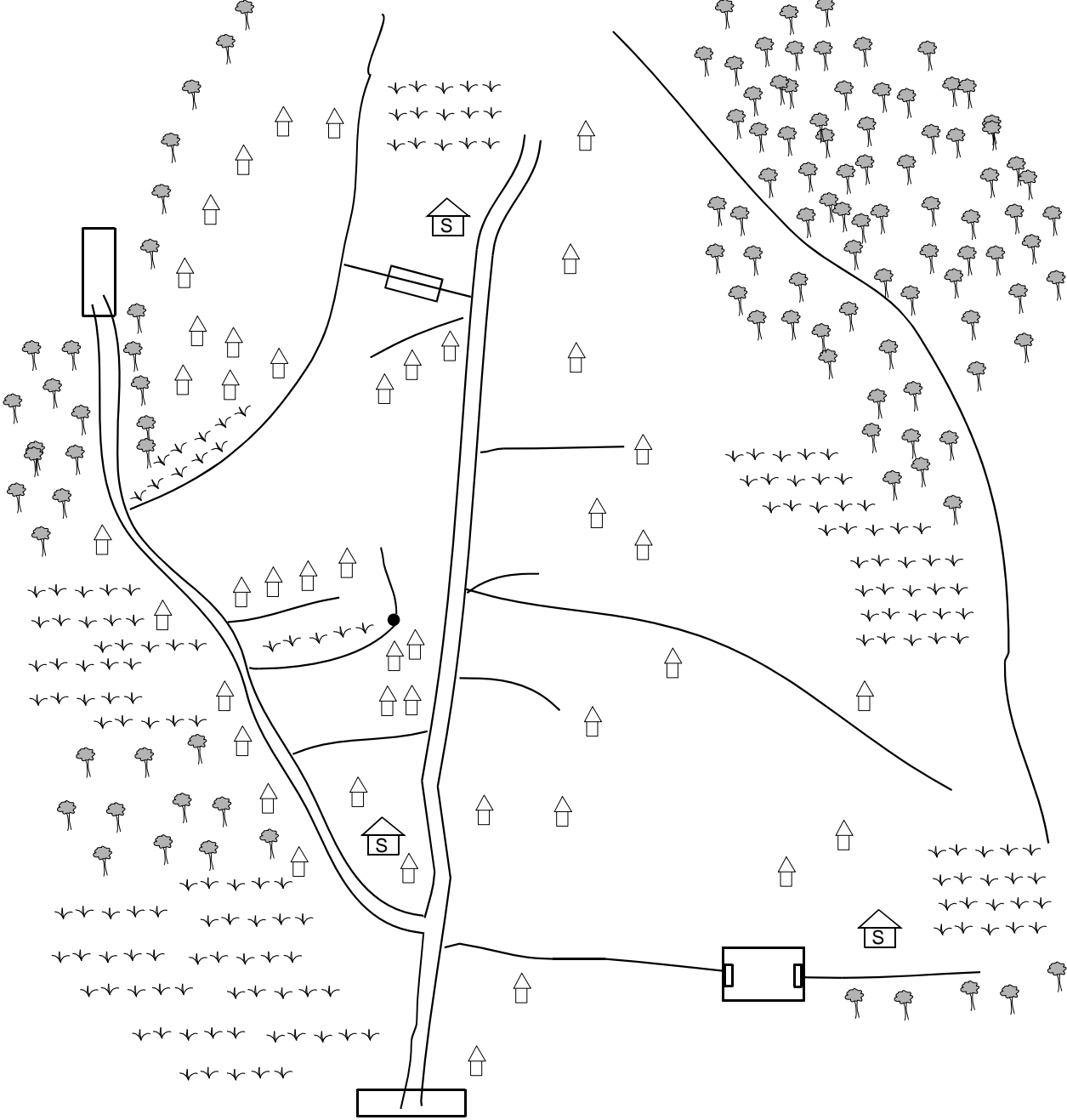


Figure 3
Kyrdem Sketch Map:
Youth



Chapter 4

Kyrdem's Institutions

While the mapping exercise focuses on needs and accomplishments on a spatial basis, the institutional exercise helps the community to consider its organizational procedures and capacity. The group was asked to stay together but chose to split in two, one for each village. As it turned out, one group, Nongthymmai, focused largely on its own community and noted a few government organizations that were external to the community. They represented their community as an oval with village organizations inside and external groups — mostly government agencies — outside the oval.

Mawblang opted for a slightly different approach. They looked at both villages as a unit within Kyrdem Raid. Their interpretation of institutional relationships cited many of the same organizations as Nongthymmai and they also portrayed government institutions as outside the village ring. But Mawblang offered one substantial difference. They depicted the Dorbar Executive Committee as an all-powerful force to manage virtually all aspects of the community — health, education, agriculture, livestock, soil conservation, and security. The arrows in their map link agencies external to the village going through the Dorbar and, in like manner, any needs in the village to the outside are channeled through the Dorbar. The Dorbar thus becomes an important and powerful ally to assist with implementation of any plan.

In discussing past accomplishments (next chapter) there were frequent references to the importance of the Dorbar and how they had helped with, for example, school expansion, health care, the waiting shed, water, electricity, and many other amenities. It is likely that the same will hold for any future programs or projects. The two villages are ably represented by their members so the prospects for continued cooperation are good.

This institutional analysis also shows the variety of school, church, women's, youth, and sport organizations in the villages. Both the sketch map (spatial analysis) and the institutional analysis (social and political relations) helped to get residents thinking about what they have accomplished in the past and how they can organize themselves in the future. The two diagrams follow.

Figure 4

Institutional Analysis: Nongthymmai

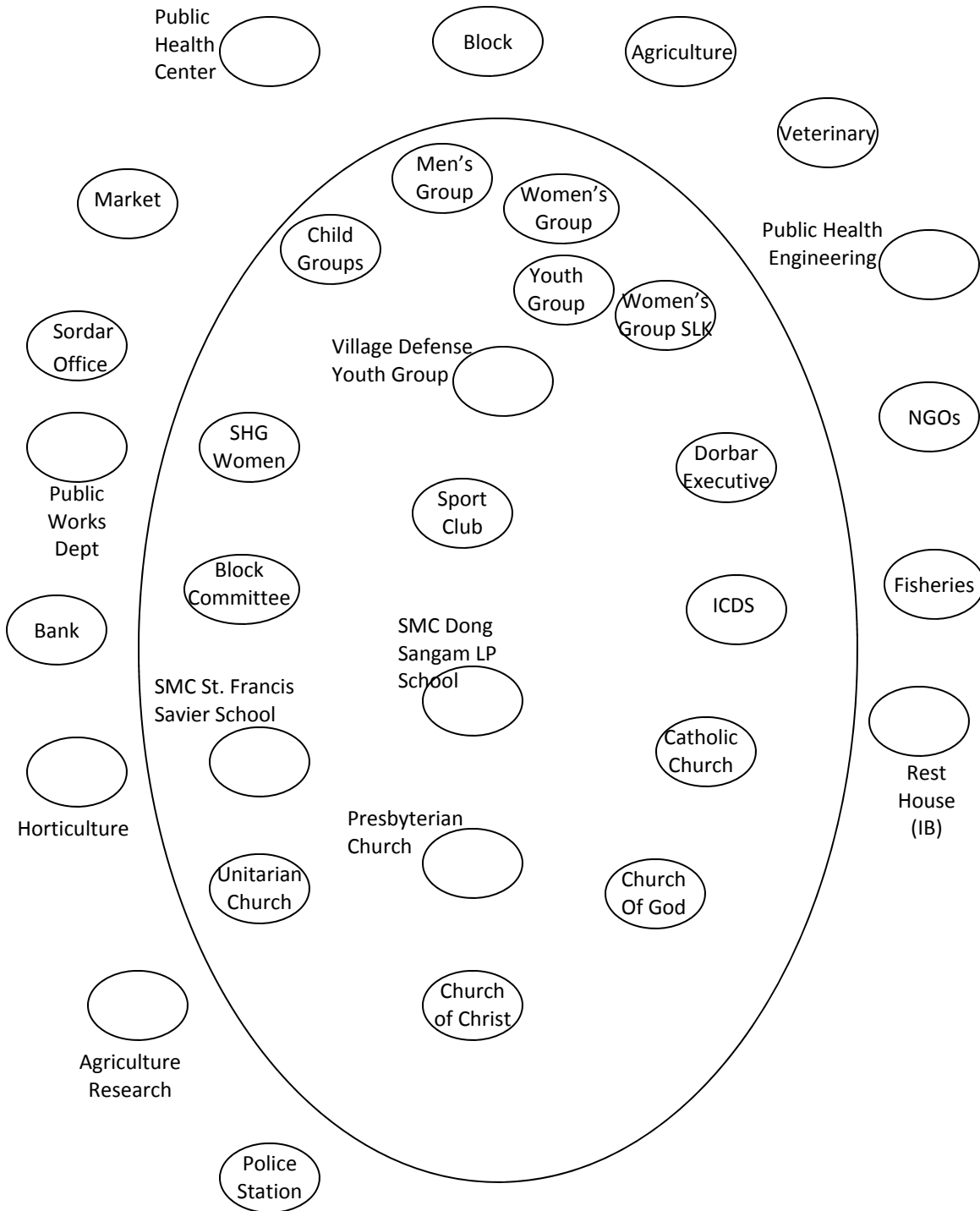
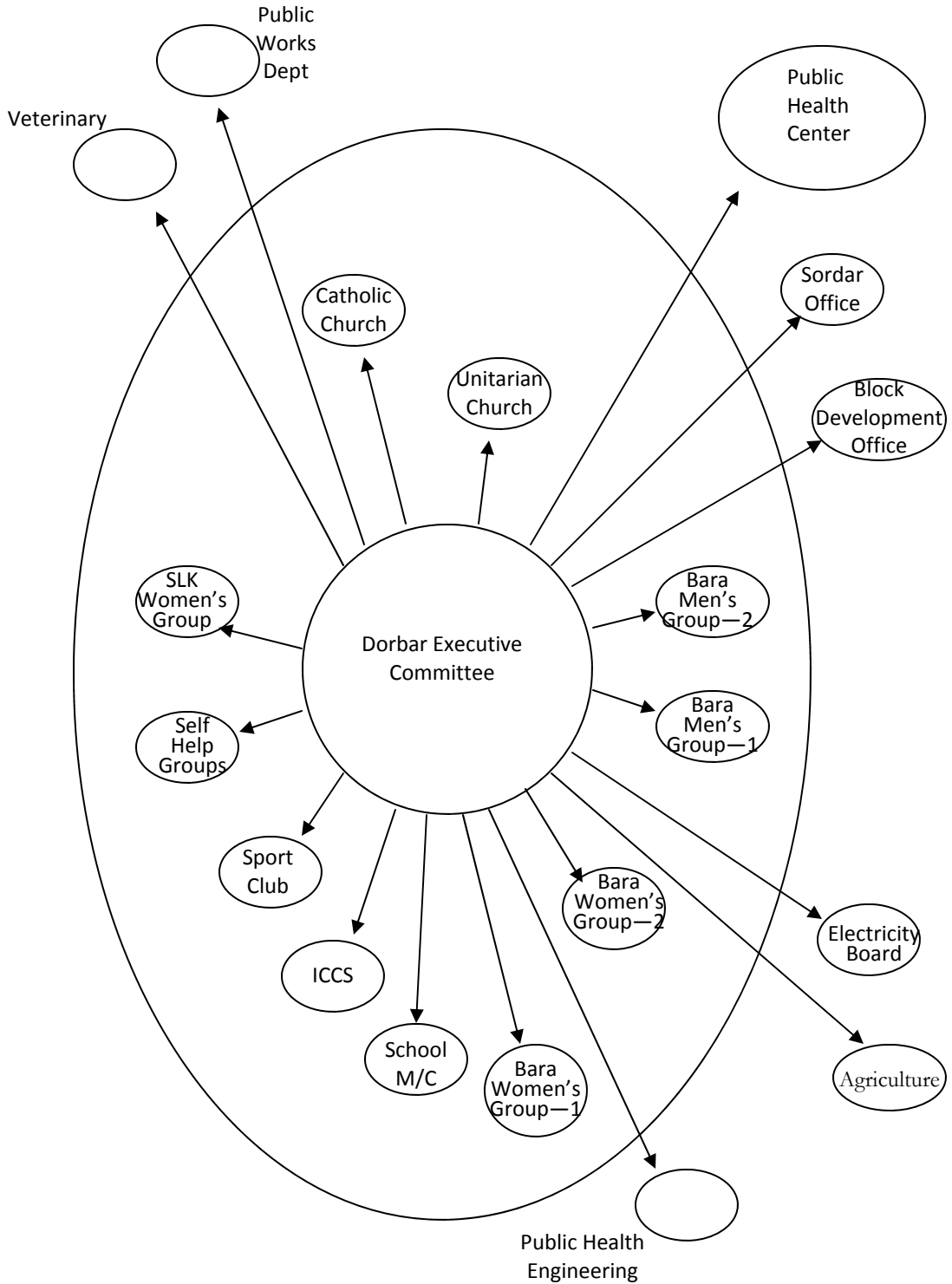


Figure 5

Institutional Analysis: Mawblang



Chapter 5

Accomplishments and Needs

Focus on accomplishments and needs offers a transition into the next stage of setting priorities. Chapters 3 and 4 present the spatial and social review of the communities to get the people thinking about long-term and community-wide needs. The list of accomplishments (roughly 15 per community) were precisely the community-wide activities that were sought. For the most part they paved the way for the second listing — community needs.

Asking for accomplishments served a second purpose. Often when village groups meet to set priorities they quickly turn to arguing about which issues were more important. Or worse, they turn into begging sessions if an external party is present. Starting with accomplishments sets a positive tone and brings a sense of pride and achievement to the discussion. Such was the case with Kyrdem. Note that the women's needs list was based on health, nutrition, housing, and education — all things that relate to families, child rearing, and household well being. Although the women from each village met separately, their lists, with very few exceptions such as day care and electricity, were very similar. No surprise.

The men strayed further afield than the women. First, their lists were far longer — each in the mid 30s in number. Second, several of the men's "needs" appeared to be one step removed from basic human needs. For example, land for newlyweds (an important individual issue but not necessarily a community concern) or an indoor sports arena sound more like pipe dreams than a genuine list of basic human priorities for their community. However, with these few exceptions, the men's other topics focused on realistic and authentic issues.

A small digression is necessary here. Capacity building is not about bringing outside money to support casual wish lists. Rather, capacity building is helping communities to set priorities that they will define and implement. Putting the shoe on the other foot (the community's) changes the dynamic of the negotiation and allows community groups such as churches, civic associations, and theme-focused social organizations to join together in solving their own problems. The exercise sets the stage for the most important activity of the entire workshop: using pairwise ranking to set priorities. The method of ranking leads to community consensus without voting. This turns out to be a major benefit when it comes time for the local organizations to maintain unity and to cooperate as they work toward implementation of their plans.

Accomplishments – Kyrdem

Mawblang	
Community Hall School Building Church Building Water Tap Electric Current Foot Path County Feeder Road Improvement Cultivated Fields are Productive	Well Funeral Home and Mortuary Community Forest Playground Day Care Center (ICDS) Public Distribution of Food for Targeted Populations

Nongthymmai	
School Building (2) Electrical Power County Road Footpath Water Tap Church Buildings (2) Cultivating Land Market	New Shops Bus Waiting Shed Community Forest Funeral Home and Mortuary Playground Day Care Center (ICDS) Public Distribution of Food for Targeted Populations



Men's group preparing their list of accomplishments over the last few years.

Needs – Mawblang and Nongthymmai Men

Mawblang—Men	
Roads Footpath Day Care Building Water Tap Playground Electricity Public Latrine Public Bath House Community Hall School Building Waiting Shed Irrigation Housing for the Poor Waste Collection Bins Ambulance Private Latrines in Houses	Salaries for Teachers Registry of Village Forest Plots Medicine Shop Land for Newlyweds Afforestation Cemetery Fencing Night School Classes Food for the Poor Foot Bridge Fencing for Community Hall Register Sports Clubs Indoor Stadium Old Age Pensions Assistance in Agriculture Well Two Church Buildings

Nongthymmai—Men	
Roads Footpath Day Care Building Water Tap Playground Electricity Public Latrine Public Bath House Public Shop Community Hall School Building Waiting Shed Registry of Village Forest Plots Irrigation Well Housing for the Poor Waste Collection Bins Ambulance	Two Church Buildings Private Latrines in Houses Medicine Shop Salaries for Teachers Medicine Shop Drainage System for Roads Land for Newlyweds Afforestation Cemetery Fencing Night School Classes Food for the Poor Foot Bridge Fencing for Community Hall Register Sports Clubs Indoor Stadium Old Age Pensions Assistance in Livestock

Needs – Mawblang and Nongthymmai Women

Mawblang—Women	
Roads	Fencing for School
Footpath	Housing for the Poor
Day Care Building	Upper Primary School
Electricity	Well
Public Latrine	Food for the Poor
Public Bath House	Health
Cemetery Fencing	Irrigation
Waiting Shed	Private Latrines in Houses
Ambulance	

Nongthymmai—Women	
Roads	Housing for the Poor
Footpath	Upper Primary School
Public Latrine	Well
Private Latrines in Houses	Food for the Poor
Public Bath House	Health
Cemetery Fencing	Irrigation
Waiting Shed	

Women sifting rice in preparation for the noon meal. The village fed an average of 70 people each of three days so they could stay longer for the planning exercises.



Chapter 6

Ranking Needs

Once a list of needs is defined, something must be done to put the list into priority order. Traditionally, the selection of priorities will be determined by the chief or chairman of the village, what a donor group thinks is important, or through voting. Each of these methods is flawed. The leadership or donor solution almost certainly will not reflect the priorities of those in greatest need — women, children, the poor, the minorities, and others in the community without voice. The voting can be even worse. No matter how well-managed the vote, there are inevitably both winners and losers. A small village community cannot afford a substantial minority of losers to undermine or even sabotage community projects. What is needed is local ownership by the entire community of the highest priority needs. Pairwise ranking does is the tool that can do the job.

For details of how pairwise ranking works, go to the UUPCC website (uupcc.org) and find a case study on a water project in The Philippines called “Mato Bato.” It provides detailed instructions about using these tools, including pairwise ranking. For Kyrdem, we helped the men and women, meeting separately, to reduce their lists of needs to the 12 most urgent. For the women, it was easy as they had only 15 or 16 needs for each village. They simply opted for needs that appeared on both community’s lists. For the men it was a bit more difficult to reduce from 35 to 12. However, the same principle was employed — using items that appeared on lists of both villages. The results appear for the men’s and women’s groups in Figures 6 and 7, on the left hand column of the ranking chart.

For the initial ranking, men and women met separately, ranking their own lists. This gave good identification to the choices so that both men and women felt as if their needs were central to the solution. Note that men chose as their top five needs (note tie for #5):

1. Toilets in homes	4. Foot Path
2. Electricity	5. Public Latrine
3. Playground	5. Public Bath House

The rest of their list can be seen in Figure 7.

The women chose as their top five needs:

1. Health	4. Housing for the Poor
2. Food for the Poor	5. Public/Private Latrines
3. Upper Primary School	

These top choices were combined to form a second round of ranking in which men, women, and youth were included in one group. These results can be found in Figure 8. *Inside home toilets* was dropped because it was an individual responsibility, not a community obligation. We then met in the single group to make the selection of priorities. We told the group that there was a possibility that during this second round of ranking the men would stick to their five options and women to theirs. Should that situation arise and a deadlock emerge, we said that we would stop the ranking and let the two separate priority lists stand as the final.

The caution was fully unnecessary. The combined list was a huge success and the final and joint list of community priorities was:

1. Health
2. Upper primary school
3. Public latrine
4. Public bath house

Gaining consensus on these four needs was the turning point for the workshop. It became clear that the assembled residents were responsible about making these choices and were prepared to follow through in energetic ways because these were “their” priorities. Local ownership of the four needs was considerable. Further, they were important needs that would catch the attention of government, NGO, bilateral, and international organizations. Kyrdem had done its homework and was now poised to go to the next step: problem analysis.



Women's group ranking priorities.

Figure 6

First Round Ranking of Problems, Women's Group: Kyrdem

Problem	PB	Toi	W	FP	HP	Sch	Roads	FC	Irr	WS	H	Food	Num.	Rank
Public Bzth House		Toi	W	FP	HP	Sch	PB	PB	PB	PB	H	Food	4	8
Public/Private Toilets			Toi	Toi	HP	Sch	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	H	Food	7	5
Well				W	HP	Sch	W	W	W	W	H	Food	6	6
Foot Path					HP	Sch	FP	FP	FP	FP	H	Food	5	7
Help Poor Households						Sch	HP	HP	HP	HP	H	Food	8	4
Upper Primary School							Sch	Sch	Sch	Sch	H	Food	9	3
Roads								Roads	Irr	Roads	H	Food	2	10
Fence the Cemetery									Irr	FC	H	Food	1	11
Irrigation										Irr	H	Food	3	9
Waiting Station											H	Food	0	12
Health												H	11	1
Food for the Poor													10	2

Ranked Order: Kyrdem Women

1. Health	9. Irrigation
2. Food for the Poor	10. Roads
3. Upper Primary School	11. Fence the Cemetery
4. Housing for the Poor	12. Waiting Station
5. Public/Private Toilets	
6. Well	
7. Foot Path	
8. Public Bath House	

Figure 7

First Round Ranking of Problems, Men's Group: Kyrdem

Problem	Toi	W	PG	FD	FP	BP	Roads	Elec	Tap	GC	PLat	RD	Num.	Rank
Toilets in Homes		Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	Toi	11	1
Well			PG	W	FP	BP	Roads	Elec	Tap	GC	PLat	RD	1	8
Playground				PG	PG	PG	PG	Elec	Tap	GC	PG	PG	7	3
Building for Day Care					FP	BP	Roads	Elec	Tap	GC	PLat	RD	0	9
Foot Path						FP	FP	FP	Tap	FP	PLat	FP	7	3
Public Bath House							BP	BP	BP	BP	PLat	BP	7	3
Roads								Elec	Roads	Roads	Roads	Roads	6	4
Electricity									Elec	Elec	Elec	Elec	8	2
Water Tap										Tap	Plat	RD	5	5
Garbage Collection											PLat	RD	3	7
Public Latrine												PLat	7	3
Roadside Drainage													4	6

Ranked Order: Kyrdem Men

1. Toilets in Homes	3. Public Latrine	6. Roadside Drainage
2. Electricity	3. Public Bath House	7. Garbage Collection
3. Playground	4. Roads	8. Well
3. Foot Path	5. Water Tap	9. Building for Day Care

Figure 8
Final Ranking of Problems: Kydem

Problem	H	Food	Sch	HP	PL	Elec	PG	FP	PB	Num.	Rank
Health		H	H	H	PL	H	H	H	H	7	1
Food for the Poor			Sch	HP	PL	Elec	PG	FP	PB	0	7
Upper Primary School				Sch	Sch	Sch	Sch	Sch	Sch	7	1
Help Poor Households					PL	Elec	PG	FP	PB	1	6
Public Latrine						PL	PL	PL	PL	7	1
Electricity							PG	FP	PB	2	5
Playground								PG	PB	4	3
Foot Path									PB	3	4
Public Bath House										5	2

Final Ranked Order: Kyrdem

1. Health	2. Public Bath House	5. Electricity
1. Upper Primary School	3. Playground	6. Help Poor Households
1. Public Latrine	4. Foot Path	7. Food for the Poor

Chapter 7

Problem Analysis

Once a community completes the hard struggle of reaching consensus without voting on their highest priority needs, then what do they do? The facilitators had two answers. The next two tasks focused on the final steps required to turn their plan into something they could implement: problem analysis and creating their Community Action Plan. The first, problem analysis, is designed to shift the community thinking from setting priorities to finding solutions.

Problem analysis is another very simple task that asks everyone in the assembled group, in a public arena, to think about three questions concerning their four high priority needs:

- What has caused the problem (need) to become so severe that it has risen to the top of more than 30 other community issues?
- What have people tried to do in the past to solve the problem and what lessons have been learned in the apparently unsuccessful attempts?
- What opportunities (solutions) are available to ease or even eliminate the problem?

The responses to these questions form the basis of the charts on the next few pages. For many in the community it was a new experience for community members to analyze causes and previous failed solutions. That did not slow the discussion. In fact, one group (the public latrine task force) became so involved with the analysis that they all signed the chart so that everyone in the large group would know who had created the recommendations.

The charts make clear that all in the community have ideas and perspectives about causes and possible solutions. Another dimension of this transition exercise is to begin building local ownership of the solutions. Asking advice and opinion is a splendid way to do that. After all, if one expects the community ranks to pitch in with some of the implementation and organizing and perhaps even money, they need to feel possession of the entire process of planning, design, and eventual maintenance. Problem analysis is a superb way to start building local ownership.

There is a final dimension to the analysis. Note that the column for opportunities allows for any number of creative thoughts about how to fund, construct, staff, or design the needed amenity. In using this tool in many hundreds of communities over the years, facilitators have unearthed many creative ways to, for example, reduce soil erosion, improve drainage, create a health center, or find meaningful employment for youth. A dictum of participatory planning is that communities have both knowledge and resources. Using this chart to open the way for creating the action plan is an effective way to draw upon these energies.

The next four charts indicate why the problem is severe and what has caused it to increase, what efforts have been tried in the past to solve the problem, and what new opportunities people think may solve it. This exercise helps to get the community thinking about both why the problem persists and what steps they could initiate.

Problem Analysis: Health		
Causes	Previous Solutions	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor available only two hours a day and sometimes does not come even for that • Good medicine not available through present clinic • There is no private pharmacy • Hospital is very far away • Some doctors and nurses are not responsible • No ambulance • Lack of income generating opportunities leaves people in poverty • Many people lack awareness of health needs • Malaria is a big problem • Lack of existing sanitation facilities such as bath house and public latrine • No proper drainage system in village for roads • Lack of clean water to drink • Village depends on others to come fix our needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The village sponsors a self-help project every year to clean the village of trash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore with higher authorities how to create a working system for a Public Health Center in Kyrdem • Nurses to conduct an awareness program in all villages • Get scheme from BDO for sanitation • Do the village cleaning three times a year • Persuade the Dorbar to pass a special law to keep the village drainage system clear • Start a waste collection program

Problem Analysis: Upper Primary School		
Causes	Previous Solutions	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information on how a community in need can build a new school • Inexperienced leadership • Dependent on those who have graduated from Lower Primary School • Lack of support from government • Poverty • No money to build the Upper Primary School • Lack of parents assuming responsibility to send children to school • Many children are in need of additional schooling • Not enough money to pay teachers • No cooperation within the village council (Dorbar) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village has never tried before to create an Upper Primary School • Unitarian church has tried and succeeded • Unitarian church has now applied to government for teacher salaries to be paid by government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through creating a community plan • To have cooperation between churches and village Dorbar • To have cooperation among the parents • To seek donations • Cooperation with NGOs and CBOs

Preparing Problem Analysis



Problem Analysis: Public Latrine		
Causes	Previous Solutions	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No land available for public latrine • Lack of assistance from Durbor • Lack of funds from village • Backwardness of villagers • Lack of clean water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor was approved to do the job in 2003 but work never took place • Village reapplied to BDO for same latrine contract as in 2003, but no action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with MLA and MDC • Seek help directly from appropriate government departments • Seek help from local NGOs • Apply to RTI

Names of working group members who created the Problem Analysis for the public latrine.	
David Warjri Bansara Mukhim Shotibon Mukhim Lidia Nongrum Ristida Nongrum Sunidin Mukhim Twintina Ranshon Phidra Mukhim	Aimon Mynsong Jasper Masharing Blid Nongrum Prek Syiem E K Kharshonoh Philing Mukhim Philumina Saring Yo Mukhim

Problem Analysis: Public Bath House		
Causes	Previous Solutions	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate facilities to enable residents to bathe, especially in cold months • Lack of information about possible ways to obtain assistance • Lack of clean water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One time some residents gathered building stones and wood but were never able to enlist volunteer labor to build a bath house • Another group once tried to build a foundation of clay but it never succeeded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek help from the BDO soil department and Public Health Engineering dept. • Meet with MLA and MDC • Seek help from local NGOs • Seek contributions from village

Chapter 8

Creating CAPS, the Community Action Plan(s)

The final tool, while important, in many ways is an afterthought. There is very little in the CAP that has not appeared elsewhere in the discussion, the maps, the charts, and in the collective memory of the group. However, the CAP is created not so much for the community as it is for agencies, government officers, leaders outside of the village, NGOs, and overseas partners. It forms the beginning of a contractual relationship in which the community is pledging to do certain things or contribute certain resources to meet their goals of choice.

For example, a few years ago a village on Negros Island in The Philippines conducted a village planning exercise and concluded with a plan that set water as its highest priority need. Their CAP noted many things similar to the plans that appear in Figures 9 and 10. One specific item was the community's commitment to provide voluntary labor to bury about 3 kms of water pipe. For the previous five years the village council had gone to the Mayor's office and explained they needed a water supply. The Mayor would always smile and say he had 30 villages in his district and they all needed water supplies. Further, he noted, he did not have enough money to install systems in every village. So, he lamented, he could not help them. The committee then produced its new CAP. The Mayor smiled again and said this all looks very nice, but I have no money. As he spoke, he glanced at the CAP. The paragraph that showed the community's contribution of labor caught his attention. He began to read more carefully and his smile broadened. He looked up and asked, "is it true that you are ready to provide labor to install all of the pipe." The committee responded with an emphatic yes. The Mayor told the committee to come back next week. When they reappeared the Mayor said that if the community was so determined to have a water system that they would invest a substantial portion of labor, he could find some small money (\$5,000) to build a water tank and provide a pump. The village subsequently raised an additional \$5,000 to buy the pipe and in nine months had a fully installed and operational water system.

The CAP is important. The Philippines example is but one instance in which communities were able to negotiate their way to meeting their highest priority needs. Community development is not a series of handouts with money falling from heaven. Rather it is the tough business of organizing, mobilizing, and implementing projects and programs that the entire community supports and is prepared to help create.

Kyrdem now has a plan, a number of partners, a sensitized leadership, a committed community, and the will to do something about solving their own problems. Their three days of planning meetings have been a good investment.

Figure 9

Community Action Plan for Priority Number 1, Health

Activity	Resources Needed	Who	When	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Latrine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money to purchase land for latrine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Dorbar and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness, better health, increase village funds, provided work for village youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve household and road drainage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money to buy sand, gravel and cement Laborers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Dorbar and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year—March 2009—March 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide better disease control, especially malaria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for tea/snacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Dorbar and women's groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 years—March 2009—March 2011 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase incentives for people to observe good hygiene in community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garbage collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for land, labor, and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Dorbar and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce smell, improve community health, and a;; garbage can be burned in the same place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean community 3 time a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for kerosene, white lime, oil, tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Dorbar and women's groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve beauty and health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk with the government about smoother operation of the Health Center at Raid Madan Kyrdem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for building materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village headmen and Sordar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve health in community and reduce expenditures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve quality of drinking water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for building materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Sordar, women's groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve quality and quantity of water in the village
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for community health workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for qualified person to do training plus driver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Dorbar, Asha, Agmwadi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2009 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control emergency diseases and prevent accidents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambulance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special village management committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will improve quality of health, especially among the poor families

Figure 10
Community Action Plans for Priorities 2, 3, 4
Upper Primary School (UPS), Public Bath House, and Public Latrine

Activity	Resources Needed	Who	When	Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a UPS • To have cooperation with village committee • To have donations from the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money to buy land • School building • Money for school equipment • Salary for teachers • Money to pay construction workers • Transportation allowance for school management committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents • Management Committee • Executive member of Dorbar 	<p>Aim to start in 2009</p>	<p>The school will be a success if it helps to increase literacy in the community.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a public bathing house • To arrange for a scheme organized through the BDO <p>Soil Department and Department of Health Engineering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traveling allowances for management committee and people managing project • Labor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Committee • Mothers of children • Members of women's groups 	<p>Begin in April 2009 and hopefully be finished by 2010</p>	<p>To be able to bathe and keep clean, even in cold, windy, and rainy weather</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a public latrine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel allowances for management group • Money for fees and costs of registration • Building materials of sand, cement, gravel, pebbles, and steel rods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Committee • Mothers of children • Members of women's groups 	<p>Begin in February 2009 and finish in April 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help the community keep clean and free from disease • Create jobs for youth who can help keep it clean and collect fees



One of the young men in the village became a skilled ranking facilitator by the end of the workshop



Many young women in the village joined in the planning exercises and figured prominently in helping with the group facilitation



Chapter 9

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

There are several lessons learned and recommendations about next steps.

The process works! Engaging community groups with well planned and competently managed planning exercises brings communities together and creates a good working relationship that cuts across age, education, social class, gender, religion, and even politics. What the people have in common is their community and the quality of life it can support. They have nothing to lose by investing time and energy in such basic issues as the priorities identified in this planning exercise: health, sanitation, and education. This was certainly the case in Kyrdem.

Planning taken seriously. The community clearly thought about their choices and selected serious options. While the school is a major undertaking, the other three are manageable, assuming they are pursued only one or two at a time. The facilitators think that the place to start would be one or perhaps two of the options included under health such as awareness training, garbage collection, village cleaning, or the public latrine. That would provide experience in how the community can work together and how to identify external partners.

Committee structures. The villages already have several self help groups, church groups, and men's, women's, and youth groups. Local leaders need to hold some meetings to determine whether they should form a new development management committee that draws a few members from each community or whether they should work through existing committees.

Meeting with the Sordar. Early in the implementation stage, a small group of leaders needs to meet with the Dorbar and especially the Sordar to share these recommendations and action plans and to assure them that all action in support of these recommendations will go through the Dorbar. The chart in Figure 5 makes very clear that there are established lines of communication and decision making. These should be observed at all times and the Sordar kept informed of plans and opportunities.

Finally, it might be of interest somehow to make contact with Puriang. They are embarked on a similar quest and it is possible that sharing ideas between the two communities would give both ideas and encouragement to your efforts. Our visit to Puriang just before coming to Kyrdem found that Puriang has learned a great deal about local implementation and might have lessons to share.



Food preparation for the workshop's participants was extraordinary. Fires were lit early in the morning. Rice was sifted, chickens slaughtered, place mats and food wrappers prepared from banana leaves and by 1:00 pm lunch was ready for 70 to 80 people. Men helped though the women did the major work. In the picture of the two men, the one on the right is Arki Kshiar, the headman of Mawblang and chair of the governing committee for the Unitarian school.

The authors and sponsoring organizations wish to express their gratitude for the generous support that the Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council (UUPCC) has provided to prepare this case study.

Published jointly by the Unitarian Union of North East India and the Unitarian-Universalist Partner Church Council.. For additional copies, to send comments and suggestions, or to obtain additional information about the UUPCC Capacity Building Program, please contact either:

Executive Director
UU Partner Church Council
P.O. Box 88
Bedford, Massachusetts
01730 USA
email: uupcc@uua.org

Rev. Derrick P. Pariat
President, UUNEI
'Da-e-me' Dum Dum
Upper Nongthymmai
Shillong, 793014
Meghalaya, India
email: derrickpariat@yahoo.co.in
or derrickpariat@gmail.com