Rapid Ethnographic Assessment
Final Report

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I. Introduction

The objective of this effort is to provide U.S. military planners/analysts and their U.S. Government (USG) Interagency partners with an improved method to quickly discover critical aspects of a society with respect to humanitarian, security, reconstruction or stability missions.

DoD Directive 3000.05 requires that the military collect social and cultural data in support of the military’s Security, Stabilization, Transition and Reconstruction (SSTR) missions. The aim is to better understand the socio-cultural context in which these military missions operate. A Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REA) program, such as the one presented here, offers new models and methodologies to improve and augment data collection efforts currently being undertaken. When applied appropriately, the capability allows military analysts not only to collect data, but to know which data matter and how to use meaningful data to make sense of tribal, ethnic and socioeconomic relationships, understand socio-environmental factors (for example, who controls water use in arid climates), land rights, disputes, the role of religion in everyday life, and community power structures, to name a few examples relevant to military operations.

Methodologies considered for this effort include: cognitive anthropology, social network analysis, structuralist methodologies, linguistics, applied anthropology, development anthropology, and computational approaches. This effort will provide analysts with new capabilities for analyzing ethnographic data in ways that are informed by ethnological theory and contemporary anthropological approaches. A rich, scientifically sound, description of society and the relationships of the various parts of society, are the result of rapid ethnographic assessment.

We present a literature review on current ethnographic theory, pose a new model for rapid ethnographic research but with an emphasis on lay use, and techniques (again, with a focus on lay use). Finally, we present findings as a result of applying these techniques in a quasi experimental setting involving water resources in two water-stressed villages in Tigray, Ethiopia.

II. Background

A. Discussion of the Challenges of Rapid Assessment

The goal of this project includes explicating and testing a set of REA methodologies designed specifically for military use and usable as a computerized tool complete with field guide, quantitative and qualitative survey instruments, and web-enabled computer
modeling. The computerized tool will enable military users to draw on existing databases and geo-spatial tools to help inform them as they prepare to engage in an REA protocol, and will also enable the results to be systematically analyzed and compared with other REA results of similar kinds. A goal of the work is to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to gradually build databases that simplify the work of REA military analysts so they can infer quickly and accurately from data, benefit from lessons learned, and share information easily.

REA is highly applicable within a military context as Soldiers are placed in diverse cultural situations and required not only to participate in combat, but also in “hearts and minds” operations during which they may be required to help to rebuild schools or water systems or assist in other infrastructural arenas. It is imperative for Soldiers to be able to critically assess a situation, prioritize true needs and produce a plan of action while also working alongside host country nationals (HCNs).

Understanding “culture” is not an objective of the applied research of this REA effort. Rather, a key objective is the understanding of incentives, constraints, motivations, subtleties, and decision-making processes, in the broader context of functional networks “tapped in the field.” This understanding can be achieved by:

- careful study of the literature as it relates to field-tested interventions, REA experiences and innovations, and socio-cultural factors impacting political/military operations;
- distinguishing between beneficiaries’ felt needs and the perceived needs identified by agents of change. The emic (culture-specific) and the etic (culture-general) both must be addressed;
- using a “landscape approach” that assures that topographic/ecological factors are incorporated into the understandings of local communities and indigenous institutions;
- searching for ongoing bases for “ground truth”;
- reiterating that REA methods and computational models are not end-points, but outputs. Ultimate outcomes will be programmatic, benefiting military applications such that adverse field interactions are minimized and stabilization/rehabilitation efforts are maximized.

B. Users

The potential users of an improved REA protocol include members of regular SSTR-oriented units to specialty teams. The goal is for the comparatively untrained military user to apply the method – with a modest amount of training coupled with use of a Field Guide – and obtain needed information quickly. Users are not limited to but may include: Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Civil Affairs units; analysts; and Human Terrain Teams.
1. Provincial Reconstruction Teams & Civil Affairs Units

A Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) is a special military unit that provides security and helps with reconstruction in unstable nations. PRTs first began in Afghanistan in late 2001. Each team consists of civilian and military specialists who work to assess, deliver assistance, and perform reconstruction projects as well as provide security for others who are involved in aid and reconstruction activities. PRTs are backed by local and international security forces. A PRT typically includes a military component (Civil Affairs/Force Protection, etc.), civilian police advisors, and civilian representatives of US (or other national) Government Foreign Affairs Agencies. There is no lead agency or department, which makes it essential that REA capability inhere in the team.

PRTs and Civil Affairs units have a number of challenges that REA can address. For instance, though “the deployment of PRTs created a new context for civil-military interaction ... a persistent cluster of issues continued to cloud the relationship—specifically differing views on preserving ‘humanitarian space,’ establishing a secure environment, providing assistance, and coordinating and sharing information” (Dziedzic & Seidl, 2005). REA can address these challenges by providing clear data that all parties can agree on as factual. This data can facilitate dialogue and planning, especially among team members with disparate training, ideas, and experiences.

REA can also help reduce wasteful duplications of effort, a known problem that has plagued interdisciplinary teams, such as Civil Affairs units and PRTs. “[M]ilitary as well as various civilian agencies insist on doing their own assessments, leading to redundancy. Village leaders usually do not understand that NGO projects entail long lead times and ask other assistance providers, including PRTs, for the same assistance” (Dziedzic & Seidl, 2005) The implications of this duplication of effort include “inadequate coordination with civilian assistance providers leading to duplication of effort, and a disregard for the long-term capacity of the local population to sustain their projects,” a situation which undermines the reputation and efficacy of innovative teams (Dziedzic & Seidl). In the most egregious cases, waste of effort and resources are the result: “Schools were built without teachers and clinics without doctors. Multiple wells dried up shallow aquifers. With few, if any, technical criteria, some of the construction was substandard” (Perito, 2005).

2. Human Terrain Teams

Human Terrain Teams, or units that will replace them, are another potential user of improved REA techniques. A benefit for HTT is that the method is fast and clear, using the methodology and ethical standards of applied anthropology. Using REA for tactical purposes is frequently problematic, and users will be able to infer what can and cannot be done appropriately in terms of interacting with host national communities.
C. Discussion of Relevant Computer Modeling Efforts

Formal analysis following field team interpretations of local conditions and relations has included computer software technologies such as those developed by Kathleen Carley and her colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). These analysis programs generally fall into the category of “network analysis,” where the patterns, characteristics and relations between a number of people and/or groups can be assessed for their implications.

The use of computational CMU programs like ORA (organizational risk assessment), DyNet (dynamic network simulation assessment), and Automap (text content analysis) enable review of data and determination of patterns and variations in patterns, as well as communications, ideas and actions among the network(s) of people/groups involved. More specifically, the programs can show:

- who shares information and influence with whom in the network,
- the extent to which there are groups of actors and isolates involved,
- who controls the information/influence processes in certain regards,
- what the general characteristics are of people who are more central in the interpersonal/group relations, and what comparative characteristics/views there are of others involved,
- how this all fits together as a complex “network” of relationships (shown visually),
- and where in the network logical points of potential influence are to be found that can be managed strategically by the military (or others) in an effort to effect mutually beneficial outcomes.

III. Research

A. Literature Review

1. Academic and Field-Based Literature

History of REA

Perhaps the first scientist to write on short-term field observations, in the context of a theory of measurement, was Adolphe Quételet. As early as 1830 he discussed issues associated with the taking of one-time observations, of short-term research, and of the “formal nature” of variables as measurements are being taken on “the qualities of people”. This was in the broader context of what he called “moral statistics” (Lazarsfeld, 1961, 169, 171).
In depth, lengthy field studies using “classic” ethnographic methods were emphasized during the next 100 years and more, as professional anthropology came into its own. World War II saw tangential interest in methods that might inform military maneuvers and incursions, but substantive progress was not made. Even the classic volume edited by Raoul Naroll and Ronald Cohen, *A Handbook of Method in Cultural Anthropology* (1970), does not deal substantively with what have become known as rapid ethnographic assessment (REA) methods. RA methodologies were first formally described in the mid-1980s, as Trotter, Needle, Goosby, Bates, and Singer note (2001). These complement rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and participatory action research (PAR) methods also being developed during this period, with the latter first having been described a decade earlier. There are several types of REA: rapid environmental appraisal, rapid epidemiology, and rapid ethnographic assessment, the latter the focus here.

Robert Chambers became the first anthropologist of the modern era to write substantively on, and provide critiques of, what variously has been called “quick and dirty” – or, preferably, “quick and clean” – research (1980). REA methods became of particular interest to those working on agricultural and water development projects, including Van Arsdale in Indonesia (PRC/ECI, 1981).

Many of the successes of REA have been reviewed by Trotter et al.; they emphasize the health arena, including some sites in Africa (2001). Other successes have been noted by Water for People, a non-profit for which Van Arsdale has served as a consultant. Successful outcomes employing REA are more likely when the data collected complement – and can be compared with – other extant data; where the methods are sound; when the researchers are experienced; when indigenous counterparts are available; and when the topic is not too complex.

Several variations of rapid assessment have been developed in the post-World War II era. Among the most innovative is the sondeo. As Hildebrand (1983) noted, the sondeo was developed by the Guatemalan Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology, as a response to budget restrictions and time constraints in order to complement data gathering in regions where agricultural technology was being promoted. It is a type of reconnaissance survey that utilizes anthropologists, rural sociologists, economists, and others. It is unusual in that indigenous scientists played leading roles in its development. The sondeo falls within the domain of farming systems research (FSR), itself linked to efforts to establish integrative agricultural systems (inclusive of water rights and usage) which benefit from indigenous farmer expertise. It has been used by Van Arsdale and his colleagues in Indonesia, Guyana, and El Salvador.

In *Quick Ethnography*, Penn Handwerker suggested that “something beyond” REA is needed. The increasing demands on ethnographers working in educational, health, business, and international development settings has necessitated “doing effective ethnography more efficiently” (2001, 4). His toolkit consists of conventional means of data collection like key informant interviewing, but also text analysis and the use of management tools such as PERT and Gantt charts. Of particular interest is Handwerker’s concern with “a theory of culture” in his attempt to solve central fieldwork problems.
While his methodology is not a focus of the present review, one point about culture is: “How do people experience specific social relations, events, and processes to create, maintain, and change the meanings by which they currently interpret and respond to the world around them?” (Handwerker, 4).

Another innovative variation of rapid assessment is termed gender-focused rapid response. It has been promoted by the Boulder-based Urgent Action Fund for Women’s Human Rights (2003), among others. Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) are mobilized in various sectors to act upon human rights violations against women in a swift, decisive manner. RRTs are intended to expose rights violations, draw attention to forgotten crises, voice the truth about women’s rights violations, and provide authoritative analyses. From a methodological perspective, issues of accountability are of particular concern.

An extremely rapid appraisal/reconnaissance method was tested by Van Arsdale and two students in New Mexico on October 2, 2004. On a single day, in a single valley, in the northern part of the state, brief observations and interviews were conducted in the four towns of Gallina, Coyote, Youngsville, and Canones. Demographic estimates (by community size), employment estimates (by job type and estimated income), and cultural profiles (by ethnicity and pattern of internal migration) were obtained. Those interviewed represented a wide spectrum, e.g., rancher, café hostess, mini-mart worker, postal clerk, out-of-town homeowner. The following day these preliminary data, as well as the methods used, were compared with those of other, similarly constructed teams working elsewhere in the state. It was determined that a rough “landscape overview” could effectively be constructed, but with numerous caveats as to specificity.

In short, while much progress has been made in REA methodologies, substantial opportunities remain. Those involving the military remain among the most challenging (Van Arsdale & Smith, in prep.). Following Michael Cernea, who pioneered certain REA techniques at the World Bank, Kedia and van Willigen note that Rapid Assessment now can include “novel forms of direct observation and participant observation; researcher’s participation in the studied activity; semi-structured interviews; group interviews; focus groups; mapping; aerial photographs; group walks; diagramming [and] sondeo techniques and small team investigations” (2005, 13-14).

Additional Contemporary Sources on REA

The effective intersection of theory and practice can be termed praxis. In providing guidance on REA praxis in humanitarian settings that are conflictive or post-conflictive, the work of Thomas Weiss and his associates in the Humanitarianism and War Project is relevant. An important book is Weiss’ Military-Civilian Interactions: Humanitarian Crises and the Responsibility to Protect (2005), which details the seminal crises from 1991-2004 in Northern Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti, East Timor, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, with emphasis on military-civilian cooperation and conflict in the context of humanitarian intervention. Hoffman and Weiss’ Sword & Salve: Confronting New Wars and Humanitarian Crises (2006), addresses these issues in Afghanistan and other places.
To consider how the military can effectively collaborate with NGOs, it proved useful to turn to Nockerts and Van Arsdale’s article, “A Theory of Obligation,” which focuses in part on humanitarian intervention. Based on field research conducted in Bosnia and elsewhere, they contend that pragmatic humanitarianism emerges where the “morally possible” and “materially possible” intersect. Principles of fairness and equity, linked to resource availability, are crucial.

The foundation of our effort’s approach to induced culture change and intervention is Ward Hunt Goodenough’s classic work, Cooperation in Change (1963). Goodenough argued for community activities as the basic units of analysis; he saw actions or coordinated groupings of actions that affect existing arrangements as the appropriate focus of analysis. The study of individual actors’ actions and their objectives, in context, follows from looking at those of the larger group or network.

**REA Methods and an Ethiopian Field Work Context**

The most prominent version of RA (Rapid Assessment) is now referred to as REA (Rapid Assessment Process) or Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REA), the term we use here. James Beebe of Gonzaga University is the pioneer of contemporary REA methodology. His widely respected book is Rapid Assessment Process: An Introduction (2001). The principles Beebe describes are straightforward, well tested, and form the basis of the present REA effort.

REA is highly inductive and empirical. Stated differently, it is much less dependent on deductive, theoretic assumptions. If circumstances permit, it is iterative, i.e., repeat versions allow closer and closer approximations of the desired results. It is issue-driven (rather than hypothesis-driven), i.e., targeted to identified or emergent problems in a community. It can accommodate any number of specific methods, and can target projects, services, or systems (Schwartz, Molnar, & Lovshin, 1988). For example, in the domain of water resources, an RA could focus on operation, maintenance, and repair associated with a new well; target water services and associated fiscal issues in a community; or target the overall water system (including natural and human-made elements) in the context of resource availability.

Following Hildebrand (1983), REA allows “boundary targeting and landscape delimitation.” Relatively homogeneous (i.e., straight-forward, simple, integrated) systems can be assessed. Innovations can include the use of “proxy variables.” For example, following Schwartz et al. (1988), “type of house” can serve as a proxy for “construction method.”

REA is intended to be speedy, to be employed by researchers who are not necessarily highly experienced, and to tap the expertise of indigenous individuals (Harris, Jerome, & Fawcett, 1997). Community counterparts are essential, not only for the wisdom they possess but to pave the way for the REA team.
Incentives and Constraints to REA

Broadly speaking, field-based social scientists are only concerned with three kinds of data. Demographic data refer to basic population characteristics, to the “profiles” of people in the context of their family networks, birth and death, migration, education, and employment. Archival data are also included in this category, to the extent they provide similar types of information. Behavioral data refer to what people do, the actions they engage in. Observations and targeted reporting are key to obtaining this type. Attitudinal data refer to opinions, to what people think. Semi-structured interviewing and focus groups allow this type to be collected. All three types of data can be obtained if a well-triangulated REA is utilized.

The problems associated with RA have been summarized by Beebe (2001), Harris et al. (1997), and Schwartz et al. (1988). The most important are:

- The need for appropriate sampling frames and sampling sizes, even where non-probabilistic (as opposed to probabilistic) samples are being sought.
- The “meshing of methods” given time constraints and personnel movements.
- The ability to develop rapport with the populace.
- The establishment of external validity; assessments ideally should lead to conclusions which are generalizable beyond current conditions.
- Representativeness; conclusions ideally should be representative of conditions in locales not studied.
- Reliability; other things being equal, the results (and application of methods) should be replicable.

REA is best at description leading to basic analysis, less strong at explanation, and least strong at prediction.

From these considerations an obvious – and essential – question can be raised. What is the minimum time necessary in the field to conduct REA? As Devereux and Hoddinott stress, there is no ideal maximum or minimum (1993). All things being equal, longer field sessions allow for more comprehensive research. Greater flexibility is gained through greater time spent. A longer session allows corrections to be made, iteratively. Yet a shorter session can introduce a healthy tension and force a sharpness in observation; key disadvantages to short time-frames can be mitigated by repeated visits to the same locales and/or by sequential visits by similarly-trained members of different teams.

The Ethics of Rapid Assessment Process (REA)

The ethics and values, like scientific findings, are not statements that come from an invariant source. They do not reside in a world of abstract ideals. Rather, ethics (like all plans of action) consists of meanings subject to the most complex of political arguments (Denzin, 1989).
All field research, including that which is quasi-experimental, must take careful account of ethical considerations. The four watchwords are truth (research accuracy in the context of a people’s voice), justice (conducting research in ways that respect people’s autonomy and dignity), benevolence (conducting research in ways that promote human welfare), and non-malevolence (conducting research in ways that do no harm, even indirectly, to those who participate, as well as those in their broader networks). “No compromises can be made nor shortcuts taken” (Van Arsdale, 2005, 184). The protection of privacy, in the context of informed consent, is paramount. The lessons of Project Camelot and other ill-fated research ventures must not be forgotten (Winfield, 2005, 159-160).

There are immediate, concrete benefits for the U.S. military and its missions and personnel when REA are conducted using existing ethical standards. For instance, when a Soldier emphasizes that all field work, needs assessments, and related interpersonal interactions will follow known ethical guidelines – and the Soldier can explain them in detail, as needed – the host country national(s) will likely respond with trust and comfort, and rapport-building will be accomplished more easily and quickly. Also, it is important that each Soldier applies the same ethical standards so that host country nationals can have confidence that if a Soldier is replaced by another Soldier, the same standards apply. Thus, trust-related rapport need not be lost due to personnel transitions. Continuity of behavior over time among Soldiers and a shared understanding – between host country nationals and Soldiers – of procedures and protections of human subjects will offer significant benefits to all REA-related military missions.

REA methods can be used as an integral project development tool and are based firmly on ethical standards established by the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA). The ethical standards are available on-line at www.sfaa.net and can also be found in Beebe’s *Rapid Assessment Process: An Introduction* (2001, 143). The SfAA highlights the fact that all human subjects must participate in research voluntarily and inherent respect of human life is of utmost importance for whoever is conducting the research. With any type of field research—whether it is conducted by a well-known anthropologist or a Naval officer—ethics must be taken into careful consideration. Truth, justice, benevolence and non-malevolence are basic pillars of ethics and are wholeheartedly applied within the realm of REA. With the proper training, personnel engaging in REA can carry out the work in a highly ethical manner. The ethics behind the methodology proposed in this effort concur with the principles set forth in the Belmont Report (1978)—of “beneficence, justice and respect” (Afonja, 1992). The Belmont Report contributed substantially to ethical guidelines for research in the biosciences. It also applies within the social sciences as the basis for federal guidelines.

The roles of anthropologists who work with the military are being hotly debated at the moment. Balanced perspectives have recently been presented by Susan Andreatta, president of the Society for Applied Anthropology (2007), and Bill Roberts, an active member of the Society (2007). Ethical considerations, especially regarding non-malevolence, remain key.
Ethics-based research when implementing military projects is in the best interest of the U.S. government. The general purpose of rapid ethnography is to enhance cooperative rapport with a target population based in understanding of and sensitivity to interests and concerns of host country nationals (HCNs). To achieve such understanding, it is important to establish early rapport with key contacts and informants. A “parallel path” to the rapid ethnographic procedures in preparations for fieldwork should be followed. Those conducting REA work should try to “level the field” by simultaneously soliciting and sharing information—getting and giving within limits of local norms of respect and privacy, research ethics (e.g., confidentiality), and research purpose and strategy (focus on tangible topics of presumed interest rather than general concepts). In short, cooperative rapport-building based in increased understanding and mutual benefit and trust should be among the first concerns of rapid ethnographic assessment. If it is not, the process is flawed from the start and cannot be expected to be very successful.

There is great controversy surrounding the use of REA methods within the ranks of the U.S. military because there is no Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight or use of Informed Consent Forms (ICFs). Ethical considerations, especially regarding non-malevolence, remain key. Even without IRBs and ICFs, these methods can be ethically applied if military researchers have received sufficient orientation in REA. Designing software that will help military members from all ranks be able to discern ethical vs. unethical behavior will be helpful when conducting REA and related work. In the case of the current project, IRB approval was sought and obtained through the University of Denver, and ICFs were obtained from all appropriate parties.

2. Military Documentation

a) Military Review

During the past three years, a number of articles, commentaries, and briefs have appeared regarding the intersection of the anthropology/ethnography and military/intelligence communities. Summative, balanced, and highly comprehensive is the report of the AAA Commission (2007). Roberto González’ book, American Counterinsurgency: Human Science and the Human Terrain (2009) provides a longer historical perspective that is primarily critical in nature. Most recently, in Anthropology News (February, 2009), Lucian Gomoll recapitulates some of the sessions held on these issues at the two most recent annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association (2009). Again primarily critical, the sessions nonetheless presented a wide array of perspectives.

b) Oral Interviews

One of the authors of the present research, Dr. Peter Van Arsdale, interviewed several senior anthropologists and military specialists to obtain their perspectives on military-anthropology issues and other questions relevant to REA. Particularly useful were the
comments of anthropologist Robert Albro, new chair of the AAA Commission (which will continue, *ad hoc*, through 2010). As the debate about the engagement of social scientists with military personnel in conflictive and post-conflictive environments continues to unfold, Albro believes it particularly helpful not to reify either “anthropology” or “the military.” These entities are not monoliths, but rather, highly diversified and complex enterprises. Similarly, he believes it best not to be simply for or against HTS. Engagement with the issues, especially in the context of public anthropology, is preferable. Jim Peacock, former commission chair and former AAA president, told Van Arsdale that “engaged discussion” is essential. Albro believes the ethics discussion – which has a number of dimensions, ranging from obtaining of informed consent to sharing of the information obtained – is best engaged programmatically, cross-referencing specific cases, as opposed to assuming an *a priori* “thou shalt not” stance. Indeed, the commission’s 12 members are pursuing “case books” as “anchoring precedents.” An evaluation of HTS will be produced, in part relying on a questionnaire that is being developed.

As Albro notes, this topic is being broadly engaged at three levels: 1) policy, 2) program, and 3) implementation. The Department of Defense is particularly concerned with policy; the AAA Commission with program; and groups like the authors with implementation. Choice of method and assessment of method fit within the latter category.

Also particularly useful were the comments of Cpl. Greg Farrell, a “psy ops” specialist in the Army Reserves who recently returned from Anbar Province, Iraq, where he was serving with the 324th Psychological Operations Company, based at Camp Haminiyah. Van Arsdale asked him to discuss HTTs in the broader context of other “special team” operations. Farrell noted that some Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), long the by-word in on-site assistance, are morphing into Enhanced Provincial Reconstruction Teams (EPRTs), with even greater civilian involvement. This has occurred in Ar Ramadi and Fallujah, where the Army is operating at strategic “umbrella levels”; their Marine counterparts are working more at tactical levels. Civil Affairs Groups (CAGs), with approximately 20 persons per team, continue their work with the civilian side of reconstruction and also are charged with securing funding for certain projects. Human Exploitation Teams (HETs), with approximately 6 persons per unit (attached to a battalion), continue to serve in more traditional intelligence gathering operations; their “humint” specialists operate tactically, usually under the supervision of a warrant officer. “Psy ops” teams also continue traditional operations, but with somewhat less intelligence gathering than previously. Farrell’s unit had a broad spectrum of duties, from making public announcements to dealing with shopkeepers to leafleting. In Anbar Province, Farrell’s unit had a combined medical engagement where both Iraqi and American doctors helped villagers. Farrell gathered “atmospherics” on the landscape, while also assisting in teaching on topics related to health care.

Each type of team mentioned above would intersect, on occasion or regularly, with HTTs. The large International Recovery and Development Group (IRDG) would have an HTT attached to it. Although some were as small as two persons, the HTTs would often recruit 50 or more local nationals (LNs) as part of their support networks. Farrell saw
their roles as important, but no more so than other of the myriad teams on-site. Civil Affairs officers remained essential to maintaining an effective military-civilian interface and to securing useful sociological information. The training/expertise of other personnel doing this important work varied widely in his opinion.

Farrell expressed the opinion that ideal traits for team members would include an outgoing personality, public speaking skill, an openness to different cultures and ethnicities, and curiosity. He believes that at least one member of each team should have formal social science training (this is particularly useful as kin structure, patronage systems, and subtle political customs are broached); team-building skills; computer/data entry skills; mechanical skills; and administrative skills. In regard to Rapid Assessment, he stressed the immense value methodologically of using “engaged local interpreters.” He saw competent Sudanese interpreters, for example, who were not treated well by Iraqis.

**B. A Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

The theoretical and conceptual framework for this effort includes field methodology in the form of the VASK Model, with its varied ethnographic information gathering strategies, followed by data coding, editing, and analysis. The project began with careful planning and IRB approval from the University of Denver, including approval of a range of ICF documents for all relevant research subjects.

1. **Field Methodology**

**VASK MODEL: Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Training Guide – Training Syllabus**

The following training module outline – related to training designed by senior anthropologists Peter Van Arsdale, Jack Schultz, and Ed Knop -- is intended for various organizations and personnel who have decided to utilize Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (“REA”) techniques, generally, and the VASK Model (short for “Van Arsdale, Schultz, and Knop), specifically, to maximize the results obtained through this type of research strategy. Usage of the VASK Model requires a minimum of eight hours of intensive training for end users in order to successfully progress through its various stages and achieve the desired results. See pg. 14 for Suggested Training Guidelines.
### THE VASK MODEL

FOR RAPID ETHNOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

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Suggested VASK MODEL Training Guidelines

I. INTRODUCTION

This is a brief introduction of rapid ethnographic assessments strategies, their strengths and weaknesses, relevant terminology, and methodology limitations.

II. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GENERAL RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

This is a detailed discussion of common ethical requirements to be followed when utilizing these types of research strategies. These considerations will allow for continuity in data collection when personnel are rotated through the research arena in short term intervals or on a regular basis, as well as when follow-up work is required by different personnel.

III. SELECTED AREA OVERVIEW

A general discussion of the area targeted for the research effort. These data will include available knowledge of the local terrain, village or town settlement patterns, socio-cultural and religious make-up of the communities and other general geographic, tactical, linguistic and ethnographic data relevant to the selected research areas.

IV. THE VASK MODEL: QUALITATIVE COMPONENT

A detailed review of the various triangulation and research strategies involved in each stage of the model. Training will focus on each component, the specific data to be gathered, the rationale, explanation and justification for each line of questioning. Further, researchers will be instructed on how to gather relevant data demonstrating real “ground truth” in a culturally holistic framework.

V. THE VASK MODEL: QUANTITATIVE COMPONENT

In this section of the training, researchers will be utilizing the various appendices associated with each section of the model in which they will make subjective evaluations that will allow their data to be quantified and amenable to computer modeling at a later date. Specific criteria for each evaluation will be discussed so that the coding procedures are well understood.

VI. THE VASK MODEL: ROLE PLAYING

In this section of the training, researchers will engage in several role playing exercises related to the various phases of the VASK Model. The purpose of this exercise is to allow the researchers to become familiar with the lines of questioning, gain exposure to the types of responses they may encounter and become comfortable with applying the instruments in a real-time setting.
VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The final section of the day’s training activities will be devoted to summarizing the main points of the researcher’s upcoming activities and allowing for questions from the researcher audience so there is no ambiguity procedurally in their work in the local communities.

APPLICATION OF THE VASK MODEL

The IRB-approved field work conducted for this effort was designed to test a set of integrated RA methods, using two graduate students, one female and one male, from the University of Denver, in a challenging post-conflictive environment. See Appendix D for ICF forms and other project support materials. The field work targeted systems (specifically, water systems) as opposed to projects or services. It follows what Van Arsdale terms a “landscape approach,” i.e., one intended to quickly ascertain basic physiographic, ecological, and socio-economic parameters. It does not focus on abstract political variables nor does it address particular “ideological stances.” These are not as amenable to RA methodologies.

The research was carried out in the villages of Mai Misham and Beleho, both located in the province of Tigray, in northern Ethiopia. Along with several colleagues, Van Arsdale had conducted rapid appraisals of water systems there in 1994. Partnerships were formed as conditions were assessed (Van Arsdale & Witten, 2006). In a sense, the present work serves as a reprise. This area was accessible to eCrossCulture owing to contacts resident there, but did present some risks. It is just south of the Ethiopian – Eritrean battle lines which were drawn in the mid-1990s and again within the past two years, a conflict recently described in *Time* magazine as one of “the world’s least known”. Accommodations were secured in the nearby town of Edaga Arbi, located just 5 km from Mai Misham.

The villages are located on a mesa and are near natural springs, hand-dug wells, and small streams. All of these water sources are used for drinking, cooking, bathing, gardening, and small-scale agricultural endeavors. In 1994, women walked as far as 5 km to secure water during the dry season. Water access, availability, and cleanliness were perennial problems.

Graduate students of both genders were intentionally selected, to demonstrate that both genders can safely and effectively carry out RAP work in almost all contexts, and that there are advantages and disadvantages to each gender in relation to collecting data from same sex and opposite sex informants. Some of these issues are culture-dependent and vary by context.

The methods employed, in triangulated fashion, were as follows:
Transsecting (i.e., group walks) – these enabled “the village landscape” to be sketched physiographically. This technique was piloted in 1994 in another Tigrayan village, situated about 100 km to the east. At that time, two intersecting transects were devised, each involving three team members. Each team literally walked through the village in as straight a line as was possible, one heading from the SE to NW and the other heading from SW to NE. Notes were compared as the groups met in the middle.

Participant observation – this entailed “low-level, low-intensity participant observation,” recognizing that in depth rapport could not be developed. Work activities targeted included water gathering, farming, grain milling, and firewood collection.

Key informant interviews – these initially targeted district- and village-level administrators, but gradually expanded to include church deacons, educators, former military personnel, and water specialists. They were non-structured. ICFs were used and retained in project records. Certain of the field data collected were especially useful for the computational modeling.

Structured and semi-structured interviews – these included members of the baito (village council), as well as farmers, laborers, and transport workers. Adult males and females were included, and ICFs were obtained. The information gathered was used to set the stage for the focus groups, conducted later. Certain of these data were especially useful for the computational modeling.

Event calendars – this method builds on emically-defined events of importance in the lives of certain respondents (e.g., a birth, a death, the historic visit of a dignitary, the digging of a major well). Decision-making processes “spin off”, and are tracked accordingly.

Focus groups – these were first conducted in 1994 in Mai Misham with three groups of women. These worked well; husbands served as “observers,” thus respecting local courtesies and customs. ICFs were obtained. The foci were local needs (defined socio-economically), work opportunities, and educational advancement. For the current effort, water system incentives and constraints were the focus. “What works” and “what doesn’t work” questions were featured. In a broader sense, insights into Tigrayan culture – of the type queried by Handwerker (2001) – also were obtained.

Standardized surveys and Likert scales were employed in conjunction with the above. Problem identification (not “problem solution”) in the context of water systems was the central thrust. Identifying the network of social relations was also a target, as this pertained to decision-making processes associated with water usage.

The field work was a variant of the model established by Trotter, Needle, Goosby, Bates, and Singer (2001), whereby rapid assessment was integrated into a protocol also encompassing response and evaluation. That is, (1) new data were compared with “old data,” i.e., secondary data previously collected in similar environments; (2) there was oversight by professionally trained ethnographers with experience in RA methodologies;
(3) there was use of a triangulated suite of methods, coordinated so as to maximize the possibility of obtaining accurate insights; (4) work included direct involvement of community leaders; and (5) a meta-evaluation was done, *ex post facto.*

Among several possible paradigms, ranging from positivism to constructivism, the present research is best considered from (and framed by) the perspective of post-positivism.

The present effort included obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the creation and administration of Informed Consent Forms (ICFs), and obtaining letters of introduction from the Ethiopian embassy and introductions to local government figures in the Tigrayan region where the field work was conducted.

## 2. Researcher Findings

The graduate students, one male and one female, who conducted the REA protocol in the two Ethiopian villages, Mai Misham and Beleho, were instructed to keep daily journals recording their observations, in addition to completing a number of more standardized survey and interview instruments in the Field Guide (see Appendix A). It is noteworthy that the researchers were quickly able to draw inferences about the communities, inferences that remained remarkably stable as the field work unfolded. At the same time, the researchers’ understanding of each community’s ethnographic aspects, water-related needs and attitudes, and impediments to meeting their needs were more clearly understood with each passing day in the field. The qualitative data of the journal of one of the researchers, who focused on Mai Misham (below), can be used for computer modeling as a supplement to the Likert-scale questionnaires in the Field Guide:

Day 2: Transect: No potable water system; the two water sources seen (mountain creek and river) are far for many households.

Day 3: There are very few public spaces. Many of the people who don’t live near the water pump don’t even know where it is or that it exists…. People do not go out of their way to meet me or introduce themselves when I meet them on the path, but several people I’ve sat down and talked with mentioned they had seen the previous day(s). From what I have seen so far, the gender roles in Mai Misham seem to be fairly traditional. Women are primarily in charge of taking care of the household and children and men primarily work in the fields. Initially I was hesitant to interview men and women in the same group but no one there seemed at all concerned about it. In the end, I think the group interview was very effective. With more people present there was much more discussion and I think people felt more comfortable letting their feelings come out.

Day 4: Villagers see administrators as their voice with the local government and the local government as their voice with the national government. But [there
appears to be] no organic leadership or even interest in proactively trying to push the government to improve conditions or get the villagers to raise money to fix the water spigots in Upper Mai Misham. Seems as though the villagers feel they are poor peasants—always have been and always will be. They don’t see a lot of potential or hope for change…. I have not met anyone openly resistant to change… However, in general most people seem to be content “waiting” for a change to come to their village (if it will at all) rather than actively seeking to create change. Community seems fairly cohesive and egalitarian. People seem to occupy roughly the same social status and largely think/feel the same about major issues in the community (such as the lack of water).

People are concerned that the water from the mountain stream (near the “Holy Water”) will dry up in a couple of months. However, they largely accept these problems as part of the difficulties of life and not something they work to change. The administrator equally is not very motivated to find a solution to problems such as the broken tank (water spigots) in Upper Mai Misham, as he didn’t even ask the villagers for money to fix it for roughly five years after it had broken… It turns out that [the interviewees] did not know the village was responsible for the water source’s maintenance costs…

Day 6: The group interview process seemed to work much better than an individual or two person interview. When people had others in the group to talk with there seemed to more comfort, openness and discussion and thus, I got more info. From what I have observed, communication between the villages and officials in Edaga Arbi [district administrative headquarters] seems to be a major obstacle to potential future development projects.

Day 13: [There is] only one person with any official leadership, the administrator. Women seem to have a voice and be involved in decisions. Some people in the village may have a little more money or animals or land, but people seem to be of relatively same status (in terms of income and education and occupation). Status [is] gained with age and possibly knowledge or access to info [from the outside world]… Status [is] gained through age and military service (men). Very old people also have a level of status (respect) that accompanies their age.

Day 15: Definitely [my] being there as an outsider (not just foreigner, but not from Mai Misham) caused tension and resulted in the men being wary and distrustful (according to [host country national informant]). Also the fact that I was only doing research and not providing any service in return to the community was a point of tension. The men expressed frustration that people always come to Mai Misham for “research” but never to help.
Data Coding, Editing, and Analysis

The procedures followed parallel those outlined by Beebe (2001), as expanded by Maroofi (2005). Data logs were used in the field; data logged as specified by Beebe (2001) were coded, and complemented field notes. Coding of gathered data was dependent upon proper (1) categorization, (2) unitizing of the categorized material, and (3) developing the units of enumeration. As Beebe stressed, the data gathered – especially from semi-structured interviews – were logged properly within 24 hours.

C. Field Testing in Ethiopia

REA Constructs:

The VASK model provided information that produced meaningful quantitative and qualitative results, especially in terms of matrices of influence among human actors controlling water access, policies, and rights, the main issues investigated here. The following indicators and constructs were successfully investigated in the course of the field work in Tigray, Ethiopia:

- key indicators associated with degree of community cohesion, degree of privilege, power differentials within and among communities, degree of factionalization;
- constructs/concepts associated with formal and informal leadership hierarchies, surface and sub-rosa communication patterns, “straightforward” and “manipulative” strategies for internal intervention and change;
- relevant network analyses;
- all of the above as relevant to obtaining data on water access, usage, and distribution.

Introduction: Five REA methods proved particularly effective in gathering data about the structure and function of the water systems in the Tigrayan villages of Beleho and Mai Misham by two University of Denver students: Transecting, participant observation, key informant interviewing, structured and semi-structured interviewing, and a variant of event calendar usage. Particularly regarding the latter four methods, the guidance and assistance of the two Tigrayan interpreter/counterparts proved essential. (Focus groups did not prove effective because of time limitations in this context.

Landscape: One goal of the present research was to determine (at least in outline form) the physiography of the watersheds which surround the villages of Mai Misham and Beleho. Using the REA methodologies, what in fact emerged was more of a snapshot of a “dynamic landscape which includes water resources” than of a “watershed.” Analytically bridging the emic and etic, what can be described is a rocky terrain which accommodates villagers in unforgiving fashion. Mesas, hills, ravines, and valleys create an environment that supports scattered villages and a few larger towns. Most streams are
small and seasonal. It is not unusual during the dry season for three months to pass without rain. Extensive terracing of hillsides (through governmental soil and water conservation initiatives) aids the retention of moisture and enhances the growth of wheat, teff, and barley. Lakes and ponds are few and far between. Some respondents perceive that “there is no groundwater in Mai Misham, and little in Beleho.” Emically defined notions of ecology are replete with political and economic referents and connotations.

Constructs: For Tigrayan people, a value is linked to a need, and a need is linked to a practicality. Water resources illustrate this well. It was difficult for our student researchers and their translator/counterparts to engage a discussion about values in the philosophical sense, but easy to engage one about values in the livelihood/development sense. A working, well-maintained pump and well are valued, much as an educated child is valued or a successful Timkat ceremony is valued. More generally, a well-run local administrative office is also valued.

In the obvious sense, water represents a resource. However, in another sense, it represents a construct. It is a practicality, a need, and even an abstraction. It is life-giving, and in its absence, life-constraining. It helps shape the landscape; wells (e.g.) are disproportionately dominant on transect-related diagrams and hand-drawn maps. Distances – usually presented in “walking time” rather than “kilometers” – radiate from water sources, as well as from schools, churches, and market centers. Water shapes relationships among people and the government. It can become monolithic, consuming, conflictive, contradictory. Meetings about community business can become “water meetings.” Everyday people can become “water experts.”

Respondents also stressed, on a number of occasions, that “water researchers” had come before. Research without results (read: without a new or improved pump, well, or spring) is deemed inferior, even unacceptable. Research that produces a pump is highly valued, and in a sense, constitutes an emically-defined construct.

“Government” also constitutes a construct. It is the source of much innovation and development, the boon of water specialists, and the bane of villagers’ whose sources have run dry.

NOTE: Irrigation was not a primary focus of this research. Nonetheless, the limited information obtained indicates its importance for those few farmers who can develop it. Small plots of wheat, teff, and barley (as well as flava beans, jalapeños, and vegetables) benefit from irrigation. Simple innovations, such as those used in constructing a temporary ditch or headgate, are reported and appreciated. Most farmers are not able to develop even the smallest irrigation systems, however.
IV. HRAF Comparison

Cross-referencing the HRAF (Human Relations Area Files) database has proven an essential component of the present project. HRAF and eHRAF World Cultures provides subject-indexed ethnographic information on hundreds of societies world-wide.

As Frank Moore (1970) noted in his classic article on the origins and intent of HRAF, it grew out of the Cross-Cultural Survey founded in 1937 at Yale University. It was incorporated as a separate entity in 1949. The system is based on two universal codes – the *Outline of Cultural Materials* and the *Outline of World Cultures*. The classifications and codes for the ethnographic (often text-length) materials it contains were developed by George P. Murdock and subsequent colleagues. Anthropologists like Melvin Ember (during the 1970s), Thomas Schweitzer (during the 1980s), and Carol Ember (during the 1990s) have discussed the evolution of the system as a research tool, and have contributed to its further development. The medical anthropology book by the Embers (2003) is but one of many examples that build upon these premises.

HRAF and eHRAF are organized into 82 broad categories; some of these cover informational sources, methods, and archaeological measures. Most feature “cultural taxa” derived from the application of what Melvin Ember (1970) correctly identified as nominal and ordinal measures. Yet, from “ethnographic entities,” “ethnographic indicators” and “ethnographic constructs” can be derived. The latter two are of particular interest to the eCrossCulture team. HRAF provides a metric base from which already-collected data can be extracted and compared, and thus from which generalizations can be developed. But, it also provides a template upon which research designs and RAP protocols can be built: Our three-person team of senior anthropologists “worked forward” from a number of existing HRAF categories as the Denver-based training for the two student researchers and the Field Guide were produced.

These numbered meta-categories and associated taxa proved especially helpful: 310 Exploitative Activities (including 312, water supply); 360 Settlements (including 361, settlement patterns); 460 Labor (including 463, occupational specialization and 467, labor organization); 510 Living Standards (including 512, daily routine); 560 Social Stratification (including 561, gender stratification); 570 Interpersonal Relations (including 571, social relationships and groups); 620 Community (including 621, community structure and 623, councils); 630 Territorial Organization (including 631, territorial hierarchy); 650 Government Activities (including 653, public works and 658, public education); 660 Political Behavior (including 661, exploitation).

Time and resources did not permit a complete re-integration of the data obtained in the two Tigrayan villages by the student researchers from the above categories. The ethnographic material contained in the appendices (on water systems), as well as the computational model and diagrams, are intended to be illustrative. Our analytic techniques worked well.
Those meta-categories which we hope to explore in future research include 420 Property (including 421, property systems); 430 Exchange (including 436, medium of exchange and 437, exchange transactions); 470 Business and Industrial Organization (including 471, ownership and control of capital and 474, cooperative organization); 690 Justice (including 692, judicial authority); 700 Armed Forces (including 701, military organization); 730 Social Problems (including 731, disasters); 870 Education (including 871 educational system).

We believe that the following taxa-derived indicators and constructs (which build on but extend beyond HRAF, and which are noted elsewhere in this report) will be particularly important to the applied research that continues in this field:

* degree of community cohesion
* power differentials within community
* degree of factionalization
* formal leadership hierarchies
* surface communication patterns
* “straight-forward” change strategies
* degree of privilege
* power differentials among communities
* degree of external socio-political support
* informal leadership hierarchies
* sub-rosa communication patterns
* “manipulative” change strategies

**V. Computer Modeling Results**

Consistent with most rapid field study approaches, basic analysis and interpretation of observations in Ethiopia were done incrementally by two field worker graduate students who accumulated observations by a process associated with the development of “grounded theory”. The procedure called for combining field notes with progressive quantitative and qualitative summarization and interpretation of observations. The parameters of the observations were made clear in the Field Guide, with its guiding conceptual model that uses questionnaire-like “rating forms” in the field. The forms, in combination with field logs, provide the basic input for statistical analysis and modeling approaches. The modeling approaches provide information on patterns in the data, their meanings and warnings, and implications for successful interventions. Had there been more time for analysis, there could have been more advanced causal analysis and “what if” simulations that would suggest probable results of potential strategic interventions.

In the field work conducted for this effort, there were various “actors” involved in our project, including members of the lead team, the field workers and their interpreters, local Ethiopian officials, influentials (influential people) and informants, and local Tigrayan interviewees.

This summary data section on the Ethiopia field work is intended as a sample application of some of the analysis options possible in the context of our limited field data. The goal is to illustrate what can be done with appropriate modeling and limited data. We begin with a basic social network analysis among actors in our project case. Note the actors listed for our field work effort above, and recognize that there were more actors involved in most categories. Key actors as well as typical actors for whom we had more complete
data were used here to illustrate aspects of modeling capability. The modeling results were put together by manual means and by using field work rating forms. The rating forms provided important input into model analysis, supported by field notes. In future applications, fairly simple modifications of the Field Guide and rating forms could allow direct data input (via an Excel spreadsheet) into the ORA network modeling program. It is also feasible to design interview recording procedures so that resultant field notes could be scanned and run through AutoMap, a CMU companion program, for direct entry into ORA for network analysis.

Figure 1, Computer-generated Network Model of Communication-Influence Relationships Underlying Rapport Among Participants in the eCC Ethiopian Rapid Ethnology Project, shows basic communication-influence links among actors in the Ethiopian field work, and patterns among them that illustrate group networks with inter-links (directional flow arrows have been suppressed here to make it easier to create a less-cluttered diagram, but are included in other statistical analyses).
In the upper center (UESLnk) is an Ethiopian from the study area now residing in Denver who was a key resource in planning and arranging fieldwork contacts. To his upper right is an Ethiopian official (EOffA) who helped arrange clearances, letters of introduction and contacts, and who has authority in the geographic area studied. Immediately below, near the center of the diagram, are our two field team members (FtAn, FtJn), and near them are their translators (ETrA, ETrB), all central to the effort. Very important to the whole set of local relations in Tigray (the football-shaped cluster to the lower right) is the single elected Administrator (Eadm) for both study villages. Pulling back our field of vision a bit, the larger football-shaped local network cluster shows two parts or “ends”, one for each study community (coded A and B in actor ID codes) with some links between. Specifically, we see in the lowest portion of the diagram beneath FtAn the field team member for village A, two local influentials/informants (EInfA1, EInfA2), and four of the village A citizens interviewed (EItvA1 to EItvA4). To the lower right of FtJn, our community B field team member, are influentials/informants EInfB1 and EInfB2, plus a sample of others interviewed there (EItvB1 to EItvB4). Apparent here is the greater centrality (being involved in more communication/influence links) of the local influentials, the links between them, and also of certain other more prominent locals who were interviewed (e.g., EItvA1, EItvA3). From interview summary/rating forms and field notes, we know much about the characteristics and thinking of these key people, compared with others, which is especially useful information in rapport-building and influence efforts.
Another depiction of this set of relations is shown in the circle diagram, Figure 2, which enables certain characteristics of relationships to be more easily noted. Statistical analysis of these relations noted in Figure 3, Summary Network Analysis Statistics and Identification of Key Actors Fulfilling Various Network Positions and Functions. This table summarizes various features of the analysis in statistical terms. Table B does an excellent job of identifying particular actors, or sets of them, who play certain significant roles in the overall process.

These measures take as input only the network [agent] x [agent] and output a single value (network-level measures) or a collection of values (node-level).

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Accompanying model data from our summary rating forms and field notes clarify locals’ interests, preferences and taboos overall, and note distinctions among certain categories of local people (e.g., young/old, men/women, more educated, higher status, etc.). These themes regarding interests and expectations were originally proposed in our guiding conceptual model of rapport-building processes, oriented by Human Relations Area Files categories and observations. They generally proved supportive of our conceptual rapport-building model.

Space here does not permit a full review of findings, but some highlights should serve to illustrate the value our conceptual and field methods approaches to building strategic rapport in contexts similar to ours as well as in general. Importantly, data patterns in both study communities were similar. For instance, sampled people in this rural area were generally fairly open to contact with officially approved, friendly outsiders who approached with honesty and apparent sympathy for locals and their expressed interests.
(a mean openness score of 7 on a 1-10 scale, 10 highest; slightly higher for men, more traveled, teen and younger, more educated, adults). Similarly, it was common to welcome the idea of local change/development consistent with resolving perceived problems (mean about 8 of 10), but not wanting to take initiative in pursuing it, and to assume that responsibility and ability to make change lay with public institutions with support from outside sources. Higher status persons seem to have somewhat greater responsibility for taking the initiative to improve conditions (although there is not much status difference among those who stayed local), with most initiative falling to institutional functionaries (officials, priests, teachers, who are sometimes defensive-reactionary and/or conservative-leaning).

Data suggest the area where the Tigrayan villages are located is quite egalitarian (as opposed to authoritarian (8 on a scale of 10), but that individual communities are not especially cohesive (about 6 on a scale of 10), being family-oriented, economic and natural resource-poor, and preoccupied with coping with great home labor demands without surplus resources for community support. Interviews showed key values and interests in the area include: family life, education/knowledge, morality/religion (women and older people slightly stronger on these indices), local environment/natural resource protection (considered a major challenge, especially regarding water availability and soil erosion), and realizing the material benefits of modernization. The latter two are considered major local challenges dependent on outsiders’ assistance, and were slightly more emphasized by men and younger individuals.

Insights such as these suggest to military and other users key people to court, in terms of SSTR collaboration or other mission, as well as issues of value and concern to support in the process of strategic rapport building. The information also gives useful insights on the operations of teams involved in engaging networks of other people in mutual-interest endeavors where cultural differences pertain.

VI. Recommendations

Specifically, the challenge of this effort was to determine how to instill ethnographic skills in lay-users; these skills are typically developed through considerable experience in the field by professional social scientists. The challenge is compounded by the fact that rapid ethnographic skills may have to be taught rapidly due to crowded military and USG civilian training schedules. Although we feel that ethnographic skills can be taught to lay-users, it is still an open issue how much time is needed or whether any lay-user can be taught. However, many ethnographic skills such as observational, interviewing, and listening techniques have been demonstrated in this effort to be rapidly teachable to relatively naive students who were then able to study a population and environs in a highly foreign environment and produce accurate results quickly.

Rapid ethnographic assessment (REA) in many venues is challenging enough; REA in post-conflict areas which the military typically finds itself during SSTR missions is highly problematic. A key issue is trust. Accurate ethnographic assessment is often derived from long term exposure to a subject population, developing trust, and
establishing rapport. Rapid assessment is challenging because it seeks to perform ethnography in the absence of carefully built rapport and bonds of trust. Post-conflict areas (e.g. Iraq and Afghanistan) are more difficult still because trust is hard won and especially difficult by ethnographers wearing military uniforms and carrying weapons. However, two issues are worthy to consider: interpersonal skills; and informed consent.

First, interpersonal skills are crucial to establishing trust quickly. One key interpersonal skill is the act of listening. This is a key tenet of psychotherapy where there is an emphasis on building trust quickly. It is beyond the scope of this paper to address the development of interpersonal or even cross-cultural skills. However, we stress that in many cases good interpersonal skills are crucial to good ethnography.

Second, trust can be facilitated by the use of informed consent. While informed consent is standard practice amongst social scientists, it is hardly a mainstay in military settings. It is beyond the scope of this report to address the moral and ethical rationale behind informed consent. However, we address practical reasons why ethical treatment of host nationals in the long term furthers the U.S. military’s interests and in the short term protects Soldiers and ethnographers. Again, we reiterate that the focus of this effort is to develop REA for lay-users which include Soldiers, Marines, and civilians (e.g. USAID personnel). One challenge with this population is that frequent rotations and operation out of Forward Operating Bases makes rapport building very challenging. This is highly problematic with many cultures which build trust over long periods of time. However, consistent ethical treatment of host-nationals provides a lasting bridge which survives personnel rotations and infrequent visits. If a host-national knows that a Soldier in a specific position (e.g. Civil Affairs) will treat them ethically then it makes the Soldier’s replacement’s job easier. “Ethical treatment” is a very broad term and can range from personal actions to the consistent application of principles of informed consent (including formal documents).

The authors’ overarching concept is that the lay practice of rapid ethnography can be augmented through the use of computational processes. As a test of this, we investigated how specific interviewing techniques and compilation of field notes could produce readily ingestable data into computational analysis tools. This was demonstrated with the use of influence and relationship automated analysis tools. We recommend that much more is possible. For example, there are several areas which are ripe for development. First, we feel that computational processes may provide a chronological playbook for obtaining specific information. These processes can take into account the socio-cultural factors in a specific region, geo-spatial factors, resources available, and even the makeup of the military or USG civilian team. Given a specific set of goals and time available, computational tools may suggest how and when to apply ethnographic techniques, methods to obtain informed consent, and even specific questions which may most quickly elicit crucial information. Second, computational processes may ingest the lay-users’ ethnographic information and identify “holes” in the data. Third, the dynamism of post-conflict environments often produces rapidly changing spheres of influence and alliances. Computational processes may suggest ways to triangulate information or spot validate information which might have grown “stale” or inaccurate. These computational
processes involve a wide range of possibilities and can be hosted within a variety of environments such as current Social Network Analysis efforts or products such as i2’s Analysts’ Notebook.

VII. Conclusion

This effort has demonstrated that rapid ethnographic techniques can be taught and practiced by relatively naïve subjects. We developed a field guide, syllabus, and trained two college students – a male and a female - in 20 hours over several calendar weeks. The students performed a month of field work in a remote area of Ethiopia to gather data related to water and sanitation issues. Portions of this data were used for comparison with HRAF taxons to determine the students’ accuracy in correctly deriving information; other data was used to derive a water system and compared to ground truth extant from Ethiopian immigrants from the same region.

We also developed interviewing and observational techniques which could quickly produce field data which could be readily ingested into computational analysis tools.

In conclusion, we suggest that rapid ethnographic assessment – a key tool in SSTR environments – can be taught to Soldiers and Marines. Further, the process of gathering, analysis, and even orchestrating field work can be augmented through computer processes.

VIII. Bibliography


IX. Appendix A: Field Guide

**eCrossCulture Fieldwork Guidebook**

**Executive Summary**

eCrossCulture was awarded an Office of Naval Research (ONR) grant recently to design a rapid ethnographic capability. The objective is to:

*Provide US military planners/analysts and their U.S. Government (USG) Interagency partners with an improved, rapid ethnography capacity, so that military planners can quickly discover critical aspects of the society with respect to their particular mission, be it humanitarian, security, reconstruction or stabilization.* See the entire topic in Appendix A.

eCrossCulture proposed to combine best practices from applied anthropology with advanced computer methods to create methods and tools utilized by Soldiers and Marines. Initially, computers might suggest the ethnographic *who, what, where,* and *how* based on situational variables. The variables might include: goals; time available; resources available; host-national culture; and security situation. For example, the variables might include: drill a well; lay user; 2 days; jeep with no other participants and a budget of $3,500 USD; Tigrayan Ethiopian culture in a village of 300 residents; and no threat.

Again, lay users - civil affairs officers, Marines, and USG personnel - would perform the ethnography. The products of the ethnography (i.e. from semi-structured interviews, transects, and focus groups) would be input to computers which would identify “holes” in the data and possibly suggest what other data was needed or how it should be gathered. In some cases, specific projects might be recommended.

Our six-month effort has sought to test some specific components of a tentative design. ONR’s suggestion was to evaluate the effectiveness of any new ethnographic methods through the generation of Human Relations Area Files (HRAF)\(^1\) taxons by relatively naïve users. Consequently, we have extracted best-of-practices rapid assessment techniques from the literature, developed a “rapid training” syllabus for two social science university students (however, they are unfamiliar with the HRAF or its uses) to conduct Rapid Assessment (RA) over a three-week field period in the Tigrayan Province of Ethiopia. They demonstrated that they were able to rapidly elicit specific HRAF taxons. Further, their data is being ingested into ONR funded models to exercise the raw data to computer analyses concept.

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\(^1\) HRAF Inc. is a financially autonomous research agency of Yale. The HRAF are a series of electronic and conventional data which include structured knowledge about many cultures. “Taxons” are low-level groupings of a series of classes; it is borrowed from biological categorization schemes.
Overview

Introduction: Purpose and Procedures in Overview

The purpose of this project is to develop, test, and refine a set of rapid ethnographic assessment procedures. These procedures could be used by Soldiers and Marines or Government aid workers to quickly and efficiently understand relevant local/regional field conditions and orientations important to establishing cooperative rapport with citizens and their leaders in support of their and our mutual benefit. In the process, key topics to be identified include host-national key values, ideals, concerns, fears and taboos, prevalent views toward outsiders, the people’s openness, solidarity and divisions, levels of trust/risk tolerance, and their views of options for benefits. These abstract issues are best approached with apparent focus on a limited set of tangible concerns of the people that bridge private/family interests, public coordination, and cultural continuity with the prospects of developmental change. In this effort, we chose topics of water and sanitation issues as a basis for a field study in Ethiopia.

Since the general purpose of such rapid ethnography is to enhance cooperative rapport with a target population based in understanding of and sensitivity to their interests and concerns, and the way to such understanding is to establish early rapport with key contacts and informants, we begin with the procedural principle: from the start we must “walk the talk”. We follow a “parallel path” to the rapid ethnographic procedures in our preparations for fieldwork, our initial contacts, and the style and spirit of early interactions in the field, ensuring that they are friendly, respectful, sincere and of seeming mutual benefit. In so doing, we try to “level the field” by simultaneously soliciting and sharing information—getting and giving, within limits of local norms of respect and privacy, research ethics (e.g., confidentiality) and research purpose and strategy (focus on tangible topics of presumed interest rather than general concepts). In short, the goal of cooperative rapport building based in increased understanding and sense mutual benefit and trust should be the first concerns of rapid ethnographic processes. If they are not, the process is flawed from the start and cannot be expected to be very successful.

In overview of the content of this guide, we begin with basic pre-field preparations that need attention, both practical (e.g., visas, local contacts and arrangements, etc.) and orientational (having basic background on key cultural and political circumstances, etc.). Then we give brief attention to getting started in the field setting, satisfying mutual curiosities, concerns, and establishing initial rapport. The rapid ethnography procedures we propose then takes on a “tiered” and “sequenced” character as summarized in Schultz’s VASK model (Figure 1, Page 8) with some iterations and overlaps.

First attention in the field will be with observing the geographic, demographic, economic, institutional, and socio-cultural conditions and beginning to form some tentative hypotheses as to field conditions and their implications following suggestive check-lists and general issues to watch for. This is done consistent with the Glaser-Strauss “Grounded Theory” process, where preliminary hunches, hypotheses and insights are noted and verified and/or revised in on-going cycles of speculating, observing, refining, incrementally building knowledge and understanding. Emerging impressions will be recorded as possible, hopefully multiple times daily and reflected on and summarized at days’ ends—ideally in dialogue with
the field team colleague(s). Typically, recording will take two forms: (1) narrative field notes with key terms/emphases underlined, and (2) simple paper forms with topics, questions and often pre-coded, general response categories provided for efficiently noting information in comparable form.

Observational procedures will begin upon arrival, and include personal impressions to be noted along with what is being told, what can be photographed, etc., gradually becoming more organized and systematic in the first few days. “Systematic” procedures will involve walking “transects” of community areas with guidelines provided of things to look for and suggestions for interpreting them and looking for related/alternate patterns.

During the early days of honing and recording direct observations, attention will logically shift to identifying some sample informants, building rapport with them, and gradually initiating lower-risk questions about the setting and community (e.g., basics of the land tenure system, the water system and rights in it, sanitation/health concerns, hopes for the future, especially with children’s/grand children’s opportunities, the values of kinds of education, etc.) Guides to informant relations are provided later.

As insights into the setting and cultural patterns (including changes in them) grow through observation and informant interactions, it is time to begin “testing” the representativeness and completeness of information, and to fill possible voids with additional purposive observations and informant relations. Guidelines for this are provided later. Once at this stage, it is time to take a day or two to review and reflect on growing information and insights, doubtless together with the teammate(s), update notes with additional thoughts, and identify key topics/ideas and issues for later filing/searching, and plan fieldwork of the next stage, which is systematic interviewing of a sampling of citizens (guidelines are provided).

Depending on circumstances (need for information, time, personnel and other resources available), several interview strategies can be followed. One type is to identify sample individuals, or family members, for traditional home interviews following an interview schedule with some general “unstructured” questions to be recorded in summary narrative style, and some fairly specific questions to which answers can sometimes be noted in pre-coded response categories corresponding with some Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) codes. A reasonably limited number of these interviews (a dozen or so) may suffice if time is scarce and/or not much new information is being gained, otherwise as many as feasible makes methodological sense.

Another interview strategy is to use “group interviews,” “panels,” or “focus groups” (following Richard Kruger) of five to eight people. This alternative style gives somewhat different kinds of information—the substance of dialogue among people with somewhat different perspectives and vantage points, permitting views of the variations and negotiations of “correct” information in a fashion similar to the operational dynamics of communities as issues are faced. Thus these are often used in combination with individual/family interviews, which typically focus on the practices and opinions of the person or family in its own way.
An important methodological point to introduce here is that there are often differences between what people do and say in *public* and in *private*, within the confines of their home or fields. Neither is necessarily “more real,” rather they are somewhat different *kinds* of reality. Public discourse tends to at least superficially honor the spirit of the shared/communal culture in its more traditional form, making some allowances for current problems not well covered by traditions. Public discussions reflect this. Life in the family compound, out of public view, however, is often somewhat different, allowing for many “exceptions” to conventions and norms, or for “practical” considerations. For instance, “proper” behavior of women or youth in public is often rather reserved, non-assertive and non-confrontational, but in the home is commonly much more spontaneous, assertive, and frank with less sign of gender status difference. Thus, once rapport is obtained, what is observed, or told to us, “in private” in the home or field may be more “the way we actually do/think about things,” more so than “the way things should be done from some others’ views.” Thus private interviews *and* organized group interview discussions may provide important differing, complementary information reflecting public-private culture differences.

As purpose and needs for special information dictate, and/or additional time and resources are available, a variety of further, more-focused, systematic field methods may be chosen. Making “sociograms” or “social network assessments” of interaction or influence patterns in the locality are examples, as are enumeration of certain topics (numbers of households, estimated proportion of local people who go to another town weekly, or speak another language, or have finished secondary school). Presently, these are beyond the scope of concerns addressed here.
Literature Review of Rapid Ethnography & Modifications

Several families of rapid appraisal approaches have been developed in the last twenty-five years with many refinements being introduced in the interim. There is no need here to review their details or their differences. It is sufficient to note some basic commonalities among them, their relative merits and limitations compared with other field method approaches, how we have capitalized on the strengths of their typical themes and methods, and then gone beyond past practices in innovative ways to make them more useful.

There are several approaches to what is called Rapid Ethnography. One emphasizes highly efficient data acquisition and analysis using a combination of informant’s inputs, available documents (e.g., Human Relations Area Files--HRAF) and computer scanning, analysis and modeling in the “information systems” tradition (examples include Millen, 2000; Kathleen Carley, sometimes with colleagues, [a series of dates to be added]). Another Rapid Ethnography approach is more basic and involves efficient small-team field data collection and on-site interpretation without a later computer analysis component (a good example is offered by Edward Liebow in an i-net PowerPoint summary, 2008).

The “grand daddies” of the rapid assessment approach are detailed in the similar work of James Beebe (2001), Robert Chambers (2005), and Peter Hildebrand (1981, with subsequent developments nicely summarized in Lorna M. Butler, 1995, and in Jeffery Bentley, et al., 2004).

The main emphases of the approaches are summarized by Liebow (2008).

Rapid Evaluation and Assessment Methods:

- Many names with modest variations on a set of common themes:
  - Rapid assessment and Rapid ethnographic assessment
  - Participatory rural appraisal
  - Real-time evaluation
  - Rapid-feedback evaluation
  - Rapid evaluation methods

- Common Themes:
  - Participatory [sometimes locals are part of the team; teams are usually interdisciplinary]
  - Usually involves the collaboration of team members throughout process (from planning and data collection to the interpretation of findings)
  - Iterative
  - Usually involves the analysis of data while they are still being collected and the use of preliminary findings to guide decisions about additional data collection
  - Focus on constraints and facilitating factors
  - Evidence of outcome effectiveness suggestive at best
  - Short-term engagement

Common Methods Repertory:

- Qualitative observations:
  - Formal and informal interviews with key informants/stakeholders
Focus groups and community interviews

Limited naturalistic observations

- Quantitative observations:
  Collected through mini-surveys and the review of existing data sets
- Mapping [geographic and/or conceptual] is commonly used
- Increase in innovations such as local video and digital photography

The method basically follows these points with aspirations to add computer analysis and modeling eventually as part of the process in the style of Carley, Millen, et al., noted above. In order to facilitate this intention, and to expedite data collection, coding and recording in reasonably comparable form, field team members should work both with traditional narrative notes of field observations and informant reports following a standard outline with keywords emphasized for later computer analysis, and also use forms/schedules of observation and interview questions that produce data which, in response, is quickly coded in standardized categories following observations and interviews. To simplify the latter process, little data will be recorded in true quantitative form (i.e., actual counts); rather, we favor “ordinal” categories (e.g., 5=definitely, 4=maybe, 3=unsure/ambivalent, 2=probably not, 1=no way) and “nominal” ones (own farmland? 1=no, 2=yes; occupation: 1=commercial business; 2=farming; 3=public employee…. ) to keep the process more manageable, quick and comparable.

Additional methods’ details (sampling, interpretation guides, etc.) will be introduced in discussions of types of field data collection. Then there will be description, explanation, and justification of the proposed methods as needed. It should be noted that it is assumed typical field team members will have a sufficient background in basic scientific methods so that language and ideas like measures, indexes, comparative/experimental designs, qualitative and quantitative data, representativeness, sampling, generalizations, etc. have meaning. If not, a brief “research methods/philosophy of science basics” crash course would be desirable, and is available from Internet and print media (fn samples to be added). Likewise, specialized tutorial topics like establishing rapport in the field, making and indexing field notes, and standard ethical expectations, among many other topics, are provided on the web, often even in specific cultural context via the HRAF methods codes (topics 120 – 129).

This guide is intended, along with an intensive training period before fieldwork, to prepare a field team to test the preliminary methods proposed in a challenging field case, note data for later analysis as well as note problems with applying the methods in this case, suggestions for improving these Rapid Ethnographic procedures, and notes on personal experiences, insights and feelings/concerns that occurred to one in the process. While we have attempted to develop sound guidelines and procedures for the team’s field work under very “rapid response” constraints, we assume they are a “first cut” set of procedures that will be experimented with in the field, and significantly revised with team member input following fieldwork. And finally, the activity is intended as a pilot activity, hopefully leading to follow-up work in moving this first effort toward further development and refinement. In short, some things will go wrong, experimentation will be called for, and military users will all benefit from those insights leading to corrections in the field, and modifications to the process afterwards.

A-6
Approach in Summary

Past rapid ethnographic assessment models and programs have demonstrated some rather serious limitations which have raised questions regarding their ultimate utility. These limitations include, but are not limited to, the fact that past models are basically static in nature, have limited end user applicability, too project specific, and all are rather standard in procedures and methods employed.

A comprehensive survey of existing literature in this area has led us to conclude that the model proposed herein represents a superior alternative to these past efforts in that it is more dynamic in nature, is progressive or evolutionary in its application rather than static, and addresses a broader range of potential end users such as Human Terrain Teams or Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Civil Affairs units, provincial government organizations, trainers, analysts and HMO organizations involved in various humanitarian efforts. In each case, end users can collect “relevant” and usable data to the degree they be limited by time constraints, resources and formal training prior to embarking on their respective objectives.

The information listed below provides a detailed outline of the procedures, observations and type of data to be collected as end users progress through the various stages of the “VASK” Model summarized in Figure 1. By following the instructions provided in each Stage closely, the data can be cross-compared with a variety of Security, Stability, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) projects, in a variety of different pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict settings. Further, close adherence to the model will also allow for coding of the data according to the Human Relation Area Files (HRAF) system.
**THE VASK MODEL**

**FOR RAPID ETHNOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Tier 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Informal Interviews)</td>
<td>TRANSECTS</td>
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<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Tier 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Informal Interviews)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION</td>
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<td>Stage 3</td>
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<td>KEY INFORMANTS AND STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS</td>
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<td>Stage 4</td>
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<td>FOCUS GROUPS</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADDITIONAL REA METHODS</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Social Network Analysis, Profiling, Decision Tree, etc. as Time and Resources Permit)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.
Practical Matters

This includes items such as getting IRB clearances, visas, shots, tickets, making contacts with people there, arranging for housing, what to take from clothes, insect repellants to equipment and gifts.

Orientational Preparations

Several topics are relevant here. Perhaps the most important topic is knowing what to expect and how to relate to citizens in the field setting in ways that immediately contribute to building a rapport with them. Informational packets filled with useful information about the given country and locale, especially about demographics, geography, economics, communication logistics, contact information (where relevant), and other important issues are important, and free up the Soldier or Marine to attend to issues such as styles of interaction, sensitivity to symbolic communications like gestures, body language, etc., and, of course, awareness of taboos and insulting actions (like allowing others to see the bottom of one’s shoes, or dressing inappropriately). It also includes topics like a big, genuine, friendly smile is almost always welcome, as is a real interest in their views, concerns and hopes. Further advice like being careful with well-meaning but unrealistic promises, and being fundamentally honest, not deceptive, even if strategically not being fully forthcoming about purposes and plans, should be kept in mind, as are ethical principles of research and reporting, and striving to serve their interests as cooperators and new friends along with serving our own interests.

One issue that has been considered and only partially resolved concerns what is to be told to the local contacts, leaders and citizens about why we have a team there and why we are interested in them. Tentative resolution seems to be: they are graduate students who are expected to do field study for their degree programs and some funds were available through the University for such work. They chose Ethiopia because of contacts with Dr. Van Arsdale and his Tigrayan experiences and friends. The choice reflects student and faculty caring about people there, and particularly concerning issues related to water and sanitation, matters the students understood to be of local concern and of interest to them. Thus water, sanitation/health and related development issues make a good focus with the possibility of follow-up program work that may be of future local benefit. In the meantime, the student team and local people can enjoy learning about each other as people, and about the two countries and citizens.

Much literature is available on the topic of initial rapport building, including the eHRAF topics 123, Observational Roles in Research—Techniques for establishing rapport, handling status issues, etc., and 124, Interviewing in the Field. Since team training has addressed such issues, let us give attention to a second, related concern, having fair pre-knowledge of the culture and field conditions.
By definition, rapid appraisal methods do not usually allow a lot of time for advance preparation, yet some initial understanding of the context and culture is very important for getting off on the right foot in rapport building and “hitting the ground running” in knowledge acquisition. Without time to do much review of related anthropological or historical studies of the area and people, at least one can obtain easily a range of background data and general information on the setting and culture(s) to (1) get going without problematic incidents, and (2) have a modest folder of reference data that can be extremely useful in the field.

In these days of internet summaries and queries, we have a great array of quality data and insights that can be obtained quickly. Some is nation- or region-specific, while others focus on groups/cultures and issues. The following are some especially useful sights to visit (we have focused on those relevant to Ethiopia and the Tigray subculture here). They are in no particular order.

Global Knowledge File, country profiles: [www.globalknowledge.org](http://www.globalknowledge.org)
Global Development Network: [www.gdnet.org](http://www.gdnet.org)
Global Data Monitoring Information System (re: UN Millennium Goals, etc.): [www.developmentgoals.org](http://www.developmentgoals.org)
Development Gateway Portal: [www.developmentgateway.org](http://www.developmentgateway.org)
Eldis Global Development Info: [www.eldis.org](http://www.eldis.org)
Lonely Planet Travel Guides: [www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/)

In addition, more specific regional information is to be had through a Google search of Tigray, Ethiopia, etc. The Tigray region/subculture is not included in the eHRAF data base, but their Ethiopian neighbors to the immediate south who occupy similar highland country and culture are included as the Amhara cultural group.
Entering the Field: Direct Observations & First Field Data for the Newer Observer

When one gets off the plane and on to a train, bus or car for the trip to a field destination, a flood of impressions of the new environment is almost overwhelming. If one is moderately prepared for the cultural immersion, these are very valuable data that should be captured. Veterans of the foreign service give such advice to the novice as:

1. Right away, start making notes of things that catch your attention, and that prompt feelings which you can share, so that you can, at the first opportunity, pass then on to friends and family back home. Doing this in taped letters is good if they will keep them for you; e-mail correspondence from computer cafes can be saved to your files, and hand written letters can often be copied (look for a place right away to make copies of your letters, notes, documents you can borrow, etc.—perhaps a drug store, bank or government office). Even if you cannot copy these, you will remember the message, and probably the wording, by putting them on paper to significant others. Significant others are a very important reference at this point: they are a very personal anchorage in your accustomed world who you will feel comfortable, even excited, about sharing thoughts more freely and candidly with than you would with an abstract field log (notebook/diary) intended for project uses. And thoughts of friends and family help to keep one grounded in manageable reality, as a bridge between home and field realities.

2. Also for less experienced team members, assuming you brought along lots of film/memory chips, and insofar as local norms permit, take pictures of most everything that impresses you as things you want to share with folks back home, and/or that you feel you should remember as a part of the record (significant sights, signs, maps, etc). Veterans say at first so much impresses, excites and concerns you as unique experiences in a new environment that you want to record on film, but soon it all becomes familiar and you are no longer inclined to capture the impressions. Looking back and realizing why you chose to record what you did on film or tape originally, and comparing that with your current impressions of the place and people, is valuable interpretive information on your evolving views of the setting and people.

3. Keep separate personal notes on your emotions, frustrations, excitements, fears as you enter the field and get settled in and immersed in project work. It too is useful data upon reflection, helping to keep you objective, and it is good therapy to help keep you grounded (just as people who have been through traumatic, or heroic, experiences are encouraged to write about them to be anchored in social normality).

You will have arrived with certain curiosities and expectations. As you begin to experience the field environment, make careful note when you are aware of (a) what you anticipated, (b) what you are now sensing, (c) how consistent the two are, and (d) what implications are of divergences—i.e., in what ways are you forming new impressions, and sensing verifications of early expectations. These are the beginning of hypotheses to be refined in the fashion of “grounded theory”—anticipating, seeing, revising, anticipating anew. Keep a separate list of emerging impressions of local facts and relations among them, and how they change in your views over time.
At this point in the observation process, you face a dilemma. You want to be objective, unprejudiced, but you need a sense of preliminary prior orientation to help you cope with and make sense of the situation. Expressed otherwise, you do not want to unreasonably pre-judge the place and people, but you want to be prepared and sensitive to interpretive clues, often subtle, that make the experience sensible—to bring a “head start” to the situation. Accordingly, we advise a dual observational approach: some things you simply observe and record as apparent facts of the setting (e.g., what public institutions are present in the community, as schools, churches, stores, community centers, water and sanitation systems, etc.), while other things you need to interpret/judge (how open versus guarded does the community seem to be, or how stratified, who are the privileged citizens, and why)—for these topics we provide observational and interpretive guidance.

Systematic Observations: Transects, Walkabouts and Rough Mapping

After a day or so of getting settled in the communities and making initial contacts, it will be time to take systematic observation guidelines and form into hand and begin to walk about in systematic fashion as a team either without an interpreter or with one (probably initial community viewing can be done well without talking with locals, but if circumstances suggest it is advisable to be accompanied by local help, some of the early observations to be recorded should be done independent of their interpretive assistance).

One of the first set of observations to be noted and recorded concern the general “lay of the land,” including the geography, proximity of other settlements/cities, the social “ecology” of main settlements, and the infrastructure present in and between them. More specifically, using narrative comments, maps/sketches, check-lists with topics and some pre-coded response categories, we want to observe:

1. Is the land is rugged/mountainous, level or a mixture. Is it dry, irrigated, rain fed or a mixture? Are fields expansive or small, long and narrow, with or without dividers between them, protected from encroachment or not. What is the balance of crops and animals, and which crops and animals seem more or less represented. All of these issues are signs of social structure issues, as will be discussed.

2. Regarding “social ecology,” how would you generally characterize the “pattern of settlement” in the communities: squarish “plaza” settlement with a central public core around which main old institutions/services (church, school, administrative center, main stores and houses) are located with other newer, less prominent quarters being nearer the edge? Or, a “line village” spread out along a road, river, railroad, valley, etc. so that it is “a mile long and two blocks wide” with services scattered in mixed fashion along the course? Or, a “cross-roads community” which combines some features of both of the previous forms? Or, a non-descript “hodge-podge” of streets that resemble old burro trails with services and institutions scattered around in non-descript, essentially unpredictable ways? Each of these says much about the socio-cultural character of the place to the informed observer, to which we shall return in our offering of interpretive guides provided in Appendix B with general explanations and specific
interpretive guides offered as footnotes to observation/interview topics.

3. What institutions, services, transportation forms and utilities are present, where are they located/centered, are they primarily for local service or do they serve a broader range of settlements, making this a service center with which other communities are interdependent and citizen contact is more frequent? Which are (national/state) government provided/managed services and which are local government and private services? Here a knowledgeable interpreter will be called for, and the information will be most valuable in understanding the options, autonomy/initiative, public attitudes, frustrations and fatalism of locals. A check-list of services and some implications of locations and control will follow.

4. Are there signs of citizens’ and the communities’ general openness to outsiders, or do they seem cautious, or even very defensive and closed, to external contact/influence? How does this seem related to the local stratification and power systems?

5. What are signs of recent and current change in the forgoing regards? Are there new constructions, services, infrastructure, new neighborhoods, lost/abandoned facilities? Is there evidence of how people feel about changes in these regards, positive, negative or unsure. A knowledgeable translator or informant becomes important at this point.

A checklist of questions developed as guides for early field observations in these regards follow. These correspond with the Figure 1 VASK procedural model (see page 8). We will later offer notes on recording and interpreting observations regarding these concerns.
STAGE 1 – TRANSECTS

This is the initial method to be employed. It is designed to accomplish two primary objectives: (1) identify the descriptive patterns existing in the research area (in other words, to address the question: “What is Here”); and (2) to begin establishing rapport within the community (remember – courtesy, respect and smiles go a long way in any cultural setting). Transects can be employed in a number of ways. These “educational walks” can be done in a straight-line fashion or in the case of larger villages, by dividing the village in quadrants and mapping each quadrant separately. Researchers conducting REA find that transects are an excellent way to become oriented to a community, though in villages that are spread out or have unusual topography, straight-line walks may be impossible.

Descriptive Data to be Collected

1. Approximate size of village
2. Approximate population of village
3. Approximate number of households
4. Types and provenience of domesticated animals (cows, goats, pigs, etc.)
5. Types and provenience of crops
6. Location of water sources (wells, river, etc.)
7. Presence or absence of potable water system
8. Approximate distance of water sources from user requirements (households, crops, etc.)
9. Presence or absence of schools and types (primary, secondary) and number
10. Presence or absence of health facilities (type and number)
11. Number, types and locations of churches
12. Number, types and locations of government offices (local, provincial, etc.)
13. Number, types and locations of buildings related to commercial activities (stores, large general merchandise store)

General Observational Data to be Noted

1. What appears to be the primary sources of employment or wage labor for adult males.
2. What are the women doing in the course of their daily activities.
3. Where do individuals (males and females) congregate during the day and evening hours (central plaza area, general store, government buildings, taverns, etc.)
4. Transportation – access roads within village, condition of roads (year-round, seasonal, etc.). Is the transportation aspect of the infrastructure able to meet the needs of the population.
5. How remote and isolated are the villages – are there links to larger regional and national commercial and political centers *(specify)*.
6. The physical village structure (is it spread out, compact, linear in design).
7. Degree of village “openness”. Do the windows of households face out towards roads, etc. or are they more closed off with separate household walls, fences, etc. Does the village give you an impression of being open and inviting or more designed to make you feel like an outsider to a closed community?
8. What (if any) are the signs of development within the villages. If so, where is the development taking place and with what does it appear to be associated?
9. What public and commercial services are there?
10. Finally, a complete mapping of location of government buildings, clinics, schools, churches, etc.

*Refer to and complete Appendix B at the end of each day and preferably twice a day. See below. Refer to and complete Appendix C as needed.*

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**Appendix B**

**Notes on Interpreting Observations and Interview Comments in Field Context**

*A Brief Introduction.* Our aspirations are to develop/refine methods to (a) obtain sound ethnographic and related information that can be (b) input into (computer) simulation models, in order to (c) gain guidance in rapport-building processes in challenging situations. We have noted several times that we are, to an extent, following a combination of rapid ethnographic procedures and “grounded theory” building (that is, we anticipate, see/hear things, tentatively hypothesize about them, observe more, modify/accept as appropriate and expand on growing hypotheses, observe more …) The end objective is a reliable, complete, perceptive understanding of the situation, how it works, and what this means for our wise action in it. Figure 3 summarizes the situation.

**Figure 3. Summary Interpretive Understanding Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Prior Preparations</th>
<th>In the actual, systematic situation: Observations + Things Heard (objectively)</th>
<th>In our conscious, creative minds: Anticipations + Things Heard (objectively) + Conceptual Abstraction + Interrelation (general)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>+ Contextual + Knowledge (factual) + Interrelation (general)</td>
<td>Understanding (meaningful interpretation with action implications)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A-15
This view is based in a mixture of cognitive theory and scientific methods, wherein a beginning point is our mental and procedural preparations for fieldwork which leads us to look for certain things in ways we trust, and to recognize additional things as being relevant when they occur. Thus we observe and/or hear events and take note of them as “facts” in/of the situation. But we are less interested in the facts, per se, than what they ultimately mean in the situation, and to us as interested observers. So we creatively make sense of it all first by noting the context or aspects of the situation to which the facts are relevant, and then by fitting them into our gradually emerging conceptual framework, “conceptualization,” or mental picture of the situation. The latter process initially involves our creatively deciding on appropriate abstract, general ideas (concepts) that summarize lots of specific behaviors or events in the situation (for instance, the idea of “friendliness” for lots of smiles, kind words, handshakes, etc. experienced). Then we interrelate these ideas as we think they occur, usually keeping it fairly simple at first, but later developing reasonably complicated models of key interrelationships in the system’s architecture and operation. For instance: If we approach people with “respect,” they are likely to be “friendly”; and later we add: especially if they learn we are “trustworthy” and we have “mutual interests”.

As we add these insights into the situation, they have automatic “feedback” relevance to what we anticipate there next time, and they also become part of our growing set of personal and professional experiences/preparations that will likely be relevant to new situations we will encounter. All of this growing understanding eventually enables us and those we share our understandings with to meaningfully interpret the operation of the system in general, and especially under certain special circumstances that we might be interested in or concerned about, including the suggestion of implications for action in support of desired outcomes. That is the epitome of informed action, rationality and effectiveness.

An implication of this process when done as a participatory process across cultures/subcultures is that mutual understanding and effectiveness are likely to occur: as they help us to understand their circumstances, both we and they grow our understanding of them, and as we share insights into us (necessary for rapport), both they and we come to a better understanding of us. And in the process, we all become more effective in our mutual-interest interactions.

Some Specifics and Examples in Observation Interpretations. We shall later shift to offering a series of footnote interpretive guidelines for specific topics of field inquiry included in our observation and interview guides. For now, let us a couple of case examples, starting with a fairly straight-forward one, and then moving to several more-complex cases.

1. Preparation plus questions. The observation guidelines suggest looking at things like climatic conditions and their reflections in agriculture practices. If armed with knowledge of area weather cycles, land tenure, etc. observations can be interpreted more accurately, but even so they should prompt a series of questions of knowledgeable locals to clarify more complete, contextual interpretations. For instance, in one case we know of in Mexico, inexperienced field observers looked at a desert-like setting and initially wondered what the people lived on without much for green fields or livestock. They wondered if it was welfare.
Mexico mostly doesn’t have welfare programs as we know them. If they had known that, and that this area has a summer monsoon (rainy) season from July 1 into September, and again briefly in December – January, they would have reached other conclusions. Also, not seeing many cattle and horses, they assumed they were rare there. Yet if they had pre-knowledge, or had asked, they would have learned large animals are moved to area highlands and more lush valleys until the summer rainy season arrives.

They could and should have reacted to apparent desert landscape with pointed observations concerning the presence of irrigation works in the valley area, and gardens that provided some fresh produce year round. Likewise, the absence of fences around the long, narrow fields made them appear more desert-like and the lack of observed large animals, should not have led to the hypothesis there were few fields and animals, but rather to consideration of other “hypotheses of practicality” such as that they had special ways of producing and storing staple foods like corn and beans, and the impracticality of fence stripping fields required other practices. A few observations and questions would have revealed that much was done cooperatively there, as this was partly ejido (cooperative farming) land. People shared draft animals and plows, etc…. and they used large, collective pastures and pens for animals, or kept cows and horses tethered pet-like.

With these insights, more-accurate hypothesis of good, cooperative relations among families in the area could have been obtained. The fact that the area was both quite poor and remote with small villages, might have suggested there was not much national government presence or services, that the people were comfortable with that, and were used to pulling together as a series of communities to do the best they could of pursuing a satisfying life dominated by the values of family, friends and community. That suggests effective, largely informal management of local affairs based on leadership of key family heads that take turns occupying local offices. Rapport must include them, as influence begins with them. Without much government presence, one might accurately speculate that once a bit of rapport was achieved between those people and outsiders willing to help with some local projects, the welcome mat was cautiously laid out.

2. What can a house, or a shop, tell us? The observation guide suggests that we note clues about houses like ample or few outside/front windows, the presence or absence of fences that divide properties or block public views of the home rather than simply keep animals in or out without impeding views, evidence of outdoor living in view of the street (front porches with chairs, welcome signs, etc.), color added to simple houses and/or outdoor decorations like flowers, attractive trees and statuary to attract attention and suggest invitation all are suggestive about the spirit of openness, communalism, trust that exists there. Human presence outside the home, sitting or visiting, amplifies the message. Typically homes testify to approximate status of the family. What homes suggest about the importance of the occupants, are they in “old” locations (e.g., near the center of town) suggesting long-time family influence, or newer and on the edge, suggesting wealth obtained outside or recently, but with no assurance of long-term honor. Overall, are most homes basically similar, or are there clear signs of major status differences in the community/area? Are rural homes similar to town ones, or are there signs of distinct life-styles, thus probably social breaches?
When visiting shops, survey the items offered. With those offering general merchandise, what is the prominence of religious artifacts (prayer candles, rosaries) and do these suggest faith homogeneity or divisions? How much emphasis is given to children’s interests (toys, candy, school supplies, clothes) is suggestive of strong familism with hopeful concern for the future. Are there signs of integration with the outside world, as contrasted with isolation? Are there books, magazines, newspapers, radios, tapes and tape players, maps, travel items like suitcases apparent/obvious? Also, are there prepared foods, like canned meats and vegetables, boxed cereals, sterilized milk? Such signs, together with those suggesting the openness of households, suggest higher receptivity to change and readiness.

3. Geo-political “lay of the land”: Ecological clues. This is perhaps one of the first and most powerful sources or initial hypotheses about a place and its people outsiders encounter. It is also one of the more complicated to interpret because of various intersecting considerations. To begin most simply, we can easily see the physical arrangement of an area’s settlement, and we can initially translate that into a series of preliminary hypotheses. Specifically, let’s consider two quite different local ecological patterns: a “line community” (built along a road or minor river, stereotypically “a mile long and two blocks wide” with mixed commercial and residential activities along the course) versus a “plaza community” (more square, with a central plaza and/or “downtown,” many public (government, commercial, educational, commercial) buildings and prominent homes of important families near the center, and with newer additions (medical clinic, agricultural services, recent residences) near the periphery.

A “line community” typically evidences considerable contact with the outside, and a superficial openness, often because of the profit of commerce. Such places are a bit misleading; the local decision structure and processes are often carefully protected from outside meddling, so it takes time and local sponsorship of an influential to penetrate it. Generally, such places and people are reasonably pragmatic, flexible, democratic, cheerful and easy to relate to superficially. Given a common commercial, touristic or government service orientation, there is considerable interest in and knowledge of outside affairs, and reasonable receptivity to change and risk-taking. Usually lacking economic sector districts, like a clear downtown, industrial, or transportation/motel-restaurant area, this symbolizes/reflects little effective domination by “old elites” who prospered in a sector, and suggests options for upward mobility and a fairly egalitarian process of public pursuit of situationally emergent common interests, wherein the community sometimes rallies to “causes” but otherwise is congenial and mildly competitive.

A “plaza community,” on the other hand, is often characterized by an element of closure to the outside (sometimes historically being a walled community), frequently with homes within the community being of “compound” or “internal plaza” forms. These are inward looking rather than outward oriented, and tend to have significant protective elements as a part of their organization (e.g., an evasive “know-nothing” attitude and actual barriers to access). Given the sense of potential threats from outside, they tend to be suspicious of outsiders, and for this and other reasons are quite hierarchical in status and decision organization. In brief, they tend to be traditional, conservative, authoritarian with a great and
multidimensional status hierarchy, curtly pragmatic in dealing with outsiders, and generally ideological. They often have a fairly “drab” appearance and feel along with a sense of uniformity, order and simplicity. Organization, at least of the older parts of the community, will reveal a central core, often with a public plaza or park, containing main, traditional public buildings (religious, government, commercial) and homes of some dominant families. The priorities and power structure of the people is commonly illustrated by prominence and proximity of certain institutions and residences in the core. Evidence of change in these communities is more likely apparent on the periphery. A frequent characteristic of “plaza communities” is a difference in patterned activities between those occurring in public view (more culturally traditional) and in private places like homes and fields (more pragmatic, showing “exceptions” to traditional patterns). Given that the most public of places are symbolically at the core, expect more innovative activities and people to be found in near the edge, where newer public institutions like medical clinics, secondary schools, industrial and technical sites are often located.

A common composite of the two forgoing ecological sets of patterns is the “cross-roads community.” Both sets of patterns are typically evidenced, but in more moderate ways, and varying some by location (whether on the main roads, near the downtown or edge, etc.) These are often district government centers and commercial service centers. Because intersecting patterns make the local culture of such places more complex and conditional, it is common for people there to be cautious in dealing with outsiders and with one another, to decide things situationally rather than more generally, even concerning public life and policies, and to depend on a special category of people who are intermediaries working informally to negotiate and reconcile differences. In a cross-roads context, the intermediaries are important people to know, although they are not always easy to identify given that they often work subtly and behind the scenes. Questions about who are helpful in resolving local issues may be needed. Cross-road communities are often reasonably diverse in kinds of people and groups represented, rather stratified in privilege and power structure with subtle competition between groups, and lacking a high level of social integration and cohesion. Larger towns and cities typically show these patterns.

There are yet other patterns of local ecology and socio-cultural tendencies, but these should illustrate the point of taking cues from initial reading the “lay of the land” to generate some early hypotheses about life there to check out in further observations and interviews.

Appendix C

Information Recording and Coding Procedures and Standardized Forms

Following are several kinds of materials, including a few procedural notes and some sample forms for recording some data in standard, comparable, quantifiable ways.

Observations: Summary “Rating Forms” and Hypothesis Development Worksheets
Approximate Interpretations from observations. (For periodic use after a few full days)

Date___________________  Location _____________________  Observer_____________

1. Estimate the community’s/area’s overall/average level of openness to outsiders with a check on the following continuum:

    (Consider things like how welcoming they are to you, their curiosity about/interest in you, how friendly and seemingly willing to be helpful; also, signs of their interest in going beyond the community, get information from outside; also, physical signs of being “outward looking,” as discussed under interpreting the “lay of the land” above.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Open</th>
<th>Fairly Open</th>
<th>Cautious</th>
<th>Nervous/Suspicious</th>
<th>Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What evidence are you basing this estimate on? ____________________________________

At this point, how confident are you about this estimate? (Check as appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Confident</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Pure Guess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What considerations might help to explain the overall/average level of cohesiveness here?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

What might be some consequences of this overall/average level of openness for the community/area and the people? _______________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Does the level of general openness seem fairly uniform in the community/area, or fairly variable/different among subgroups or types of people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Uniform</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Highly Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more:

Open

Closed/protective
2. Estimate the community’s/areas overall/average **cohesiveness, cooperation, solidarity** (v. competition, divisions, factionalism):

(Consider things like “Social Capital” issues of recent instances of “pulling together,” having developed local, conciliatory leadership, how integrated the community is, how common their interests and goals seem, how much there is a balance between local agreement and acceptance/tolerance of differences, participatory, egalitarian spirit, etc.) (Check)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very cohesive, participatory, egalitarian, etc.</th>
<th>Coping via separate groups, interests, fair coordination</th>
<th>Serious divisions, organized antagonisms, some rebellion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What <strong>evidence</strong> of this?______________________</td>
<td>_______________________________________________________</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At this point, what is your confidence of this estimate? (Check)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Confident</td>
<td>So-so</td>
<td>Pure Guess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What considerations might help to <strong>explain</strong> the overall/average level of openness here?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What might be some <strong>consequences</strong> of this overall/average level of openness for the community/area and the people?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the level of general cohesiveness seem fairly <strong>uniform</strong> in the community/area, or fairly <strong>variable/different</strong> among subgroups or types of people? (Check)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more: <strong>Cohesive, Cooperative</strong></td>
<td><strong>Divided, Antagonistic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Your sense of the community’s/areas **authority structure**:
(Consider how hierarchical, consolidated, controlling, rigid the stratification is, how much it is hereditary, is national/regional/local in scope, and what it is based in (in contrast to personal achievement, consider political and/or religious position, wealth in land and/or commerce, industry, whether it is general authority or fairly situational/sectorial, etc.).

| Egalitarian, situational, democrat-participatory, communal-entrepreneurial, fairly “flat” | Diversified, sectorial, limited gen. authority | Very hierarchical, consolidated, familistic/hereditary authoritarian/controlling |

At this point, how **confident** are you about this estimate? (Check as appropriate)

| Very Confident | So-so | Pure Guess |

What considerations might help to **explain** the authority structure here?

What might be some **consequences** of this overall/average level authority/egalitarianism for the community/area and the people here?

---

4. Estimate the community’s/area’s general **level of development**:

(Consider the status of their *technical infrastructure* (water, health, ed., transport. services, etc.) and home technology (TV, running water, plumbing, electricity, equipment. and vehicles, computer, etc.); also consider how progressive are the personal/family *attitudes and mindsets*.)

| Advanced, Modern | Mixed, Semi-modern | Poor, Developing | Primitive Conditions |

What **evidence** are you basing this estimate on?

At this point, how **confident** are you about this estimate? (Check as appropriate)

| Very Confident | So-so | Pure Guess |
What considerations might help to explain the level of development here?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

What might be some consequences of this level of development for the community/area and the people?

___________________________________________________________________________

Does the level of development seem fairly uniform in the community/area, or fairly variable/different among subgroups or types of people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uniform</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Highly Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more:
- Developed
- Under/less developed

5. Estimate the local populations’ overall/average receptivity to change, development and associated risk-taking: (Check)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very receptive to change, w/sense of consequences, plan to deal with it</th>
<th>Cautiously hopeful</th>
<th>Nervous, ambivalent</th>
<th>Very unreceptive, negative, reactionary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Variations in/exceptions to this pattern here?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

What might be some consequences of this overall/average level of receptiveness to change and risk taking for the community/area and the people?

___________________________________________________________________________

Does the level of general openness seem fairly uniform in the community/area, or fairly variable/different among subgroups or types of people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uniform</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Highly Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more:
- Receptive to change/development/risktaking

A-23
6. Concerning main local *values and challenges/problems*, note whether it seems the following are (1) key values/norms in community/family life and/or (2) perceived *challenges/problems* in the community:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Value</th>
<th>Concern Challenge/Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close family life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security, safety, health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cooperation, cohesive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environ., natural resource protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, knowledge, wisdom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morality, religion, propriety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local development, income/employment, publ.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infrastructure improvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory democracy, status systems change,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy, independence, flexibility, pragmatism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material acquisition, wealth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>status, influence/power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others noted:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments re these values/concerns:______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
Informal Interviews

In this stage, Soldiers or Marines will be allowed a fair amount of latitude in questioning local individuals. The primary objectives are: (1) to cross-check and verify the data collected during the Transect Stage; and (2) to integrate yourself further into the community and begin to talk with and identify potential key informants to be utilized in Stage 3 involving more in-depth structured interviews. Use Appendix D, below, to record data from individual interviews. Use Informed Consent Forms (ICFs) in the local language (if needed), read them aloud to participants (if needed), and explain any provisions that may confuse community residents. Note that written ICFs can be alienating to members of oral cultures and that participants are likely to prefer short, simple forms.

Appendix D
“Summary Rating Form for Interviews”

Sample Interview “Rating Forms” For Summary Interpretations

Several similar interview summary “rating forms” have been developed. These include codes for rating both (1) the estimated quality of data based on how the interview went, and (2) what the information says in summary form about key variables of interest, like respondent’s openness, receptivity to change, etc. Their form is similar to the example above for observations of openness, but they do not give much attention to the “hypothesis worksheet” questions, or to variations within community or family.

(Note: Following questions suggested, narrative summary of responses and other observations should be written with keywords or emphasized terms underlined, and reviewed later--as soon as there is time, but by the end of that day-- with additional “ratings” made on this form.)

ID______________________________

___Informant, ___Sample Indiv./Family; est. Age____; Gender____; Occ._____________; Est. Local Status:                        ________________________________________________

(Respect, Influence, Power, Office)                          Very                              Friendly but                              Guarded,
                                                      High                                    Cautious                                    Distant

Basis of Status Estimate: ____________________________________________________________

________________________

In Interview style, person was generally: Very                              Friendly but                              Guarded,
Open                                    Cautious                                    Distant
### Field Guide: Stage 1: Transects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete, Thorough</th>
<th>Brief, to the Point</th>
<th>Evasive, Withholding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Knowledgeable, Insightful</td>
<td>Rather Informed</td>
<td>Seemed Not Knowledgeable or Insightful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Person in general seemed rather:**

| Modern, Progressive | So-so, Mixed | Conservative, Traditional |

**Basis for this estimate:**

In interview content, indicate the extent to which (1) the person’s emphasis seemed to be on each of the following sets of values/norms, and (2) how much the person seemed concerned about local problems in each context?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Concern/Problem:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close Family Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty, Fairness, Lack of Corruption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security, Safety Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Cooperation, Cohesion, Integration:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environ., Natural Resource Protection:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Education, Knowledge, Wisdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Morality, Religious Practice, Propriety:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Status Syst. Change, Particip. Democracy, Egalitarianism, etc.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Autonomy, Independence, Flexibility, Pragmatism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Material Acquisition, Wealth, Status, Power:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional and Summary Comments re: the person’s views of values, norms, priorities, and of the concerns and problems expressed:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Your sense of the person’s comparative emphasis on the wellbeing of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Area</th>
<th>Mix, Balance</th>
<th>Personal/Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Public Emphasis/Concern)</td>
<td>(Private Emphasis, Conc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
Estimate the person’s overall view of the value of the community’s feeling:

It is good/wise to be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open to Outsiders, Influence</th>
<th>Friendly but Cautions</th>
<th>Guarded, Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

It is good/wise to be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receptive to Change, Development</th>
<th>Conservative, Traditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Any comments on why the person thought so in these regards (including historic precedents and events)?:

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Your estimate of the person’s view of the present level of local cohesion or division:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Cohesive, Coop., Pulling Together</th>
<th>Fair Competition, Minor Divisions, Independence</th>
<th>Divided, Factional, Conflict, Not Integr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Your estimate of the person’s view of the present local authority structure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Egalitarian, Flat, Participatory, Dynamic</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Clear Elites, Disadv. w/Family Status</th>
<th>Great Ranking, Authority/Privil. Control, Ascript.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Clear Elites, Disadv. w/Family Status</th>
<th>Great Ranking, Authority/Privil. Control, Ascript.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In summary, major problems, limitations, challenges, constraints in area to cooperative, mutually beneficial development, including relations with outside interests, or being linked with greater system?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________
In summary, major opportunities, advantages, strengths to be valued, used in improved management, development of local conditions, perhaps with outside assistance?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

STAGE 2 – PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

The primary objectives for this stage of the village assessment are: (1) to further integrate the Marine or Soldier into village dynamics; (2) to delve more deeply into the daily associational patterns of village life; and (3) to further validate their initial observational impressions while engaged in transect activities. In these respects, observations should focus on the following:

1. Various signs of concern for specific community issues such as health, education and security. Note - how big are the schools; are they well constructed and maintained; and the number, type and condition of the clinics – are they well stocked and staffed (full-time and part-time staff, hours of operation and emergency capabilities).

2. How receptive does the community appear to be with respect to change and the introduction of new material culture items and knowledge of the outside world – magazines (type), satellite dishes, travel items, condoms, over-the-counter medicines, etc.

3. Try to identify the “social mood” of the community – how friendly are the people, behaviors such as observing, eye contact, smiles, signs of family and community festive activities. Are there public wells, restrooms and markets. Are residents commonly seen out on the roads – do your observations in this area lead you to conclude that there is an open collective approach to community living or an emphasis on more closed, protective individual and family life.

4. What physical signs do you observe in the community that indicate the community in general is conservative and resistant to change. Consider items such as talismans on the home or body, symbols of “evil eyes”, other local traditional world views.

5. Observations that assist in identifying various social patterns and social classes. What items and types of mechanization are present and who owns or controls them. What gender groups exist in the community and what activities do they engage in separately and jointly (drawing water from wells or rivers, tending animals and/or crops, etc.).

6. Observations regarding formal and informal public and private meetings – are they open meetings or closed to one group or another.
7. Observations determining what types of goods, services and organizations are not present in the village, where are they located and how are they linked to the local community.

8. Observations of the local cemetery or cemeteries. Type, location, composition and size of headstones. Also, if possible, the associated names. Often this provides insight into class and wealth distinctions within the community.

Informal interviews conducted here should be more conversational in nature rather than pointed, specific questions as is the case during the next stage of structured interviews with key informants.

*Refer to and complete Appendix E.

## Appendix E

**Comparative Interview Interpretation Guide: Toward More Hypotheses**

To facilitate developing some hypotheses of similarities and differences within the community/area in regards summarized on the interview “rating forms,” we suggest after eight or so of those forms have been completed for informants and others who have done structured interviews, they should be reviewed in terms of the following questions, and notes be made about emerging hypotheses. These should be reconsidered several more times and revised or added to as input from more interviews is summarized on interview “rating forms.”

Looking down the topics on the interview rating forms one at a time, and comparing across persons interviewed, note what occurs to you as:

A. Some common themes that rather consistently come through in interview responses, suggesting only minor differences in patterns of views in the community/area, include (note which ones seem more emphasized, or priority ones).

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

B. Some differences that seem to be occurring in patterns of views for topics by such personal characteristics as (Note + for major differences, √ for some, leave blank for little/none):

(Personal Characteristics)
Field Guide: Stage 2: Participant Observation

(Topics) | Ger | Sta | A | Occup | Educat | Etc.
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Personal Openness in Interview
Personal Completeness in Interview
Personal Knowledge in Interview
Values/Norms and Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Life</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security/ Safety</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/Public Pers./Fam. Emphasis</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Openness</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Receptivity to Change</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Community Cohesiveness</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View of Community Authority Structure</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Problems, Challenges</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Opportunities, Advantages</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Concern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other differences in patterns among types of local people noteworthy in the context of opportunities/challenges for rapport building with outside groups/influences:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
Conceptual Foci: Key Concerns, Concepts, Questions and Rationales

Once the field team has a fair “grounding” (a fundamental sense) of the setting and people, it is time for focus on the main issues of concern. These are of several sorts. First, we must recall the ultimate purpose of the study is to support mutually beneficial rapport-building through (a) greater mutual understanding between them and us and (b) by our approaching them in culturally and practically appropriate ways. These, in turn, depend upon our learning more about the most relevant features and expectations of their socio-cultural system(s) and our managing our relations with them accordingly. Thus we are interested in gaining general insights into many of their ways and thoughts but, as has been noted, issues of socio-cultural sensitivities and study efficiency call for focus on more neutral and tangible issues that concern both personal and collective living. Thus our general questions about them will take the initial form of inquiring about water and sanitation concerns with more general follow-up questions.

To provide a sense of order and purpose to the general and specific questions we propose, and to introduce a basic interpretation framework for field data, consider the following summary conceptualization in Figure 2 which provides us guidance. (It is admittedly very abstract and over-generalized in part, but it serves our purposes of having a preliminary rationale for what we should look at and why, and it will be revised some based on field experiences and data.) Implied in it are a number of hypotheses.

Briefly, in narrative form, the Figure 2 diagram intends to say in part:

Cooperative Rapport (our goal) is influenced by (1) our approach to people (non-threatening, friendly, potentially beneficial), (2) their socio-cultural nature (especially how open, trusting and ambitious/risk-taking they are), and (3) the apparent mutual benefits that may result. In turn, their socio-cultural nature will influence our approach to them, as will potential benefits. The issue of mutual benefit can be tricky if the local participants are sharing information but do not believe any tangible benefit will result. There are times when receiving information in return for information may not satisfy a community, and thus it is important to know what the community’s history of working with military, research, or NGO entities has been, how the community feels about the exchanges, and what the community wishes for or expects in the present context.

Their socio-cultural nature and circumstances, a most significant and central focus, are influenced by various factors that should be understood and kept in mind. These include the amount, nature and consequences of their past cross-cultural experiences. The influences also include the effects of their natural resource base relative to population numbers, wherein there are some general patterns (e.g., ample food, water, land resources in a warm, even climate tend to result in heightened individualism/familism with considerable personal autonomy; generally adequate access to life-sustaining resources in moderate climatic conditions usually favors communal social organization among families with a federation form of relations between communities; scarce life-sustaining resources, or considerable competition for them, often along with challenging environmental conditions, commonly
produce quite-hierarchical social structures with clear division of labor and differentiated
privileges among subgroups in which strong authority tries to maintain order).

As well, the socio-cultural nature and circumstances of a place reflects the level and style
of development the people have experienced.
Figure 2. Summary Conceptualization

Cooperative Rapport

Our Tactical Approach To Them

Apparent Mutual Interest/Benefit

Prior Cross-Cultural Experiences:
- Lots………………….-Little
- Recent……………….-Distant
- Positive…………….. -Problematic

Strategy Considerations
- Opportunities
- Constraints to be Managed
How Ready are They to “Take Off”? (-Remedial Action Needed?
- Socio-cultural Variability in the System?)

Natural Resources, Climate Considerations and Implications
Ample:………... Adequate:………... Limited/Challenging

- Individual/Family
- Communal/
- Hierarchal, Clear
- Collaborative
- Division of Labor

Their Socio-Cultural Legacy:
More developed/Rational/Pragmatic …………………... More Traditional/Defensive/Ideological

More Egalitarian and Participatory …………………... More Authority Control-Oriented

More Cohesive w/Shared Proactive Views …………… More Differentiated w/Coping/Survival (Reactive) Views

Figure 2. Summary Conceptualization

Our Tactical Approach To Them

Apparent Mutual Interest/Benefit

Prior Cross-Cultural Experiences:
- Lots………………….-Little
- Recent……………….-Distant
- Positive…………….. -Problematic

Strategy Considerations
- Opportunities
- Constraints to be Managed
How Ready are They to “Take Off”? (-Remedial Action Needed?
- Socio-cultural Variability in the System?)

Natural Resources, Climate Considerations and Implications
Ample:………... Adequate:………... Limited/Challenging

- Individual/Family
- Communal/
- Hierarchal, Clear
- Collaborative
- Division of Labor

Their Socio-Cultural Legacy:
More developed/Rational/Pragmatic …………………... More Traditional/Defensive/Ideological

More Egalitarian and Participatory …………………... More Authority Control-Oriented

More Cohesive w/Shared Proactive Views …………… More Differentiated w/Coping/Survival (Reactive) Views
These, in turn, are influenced by form of relations between communities; scarce life-sustaining resources, or considerable competition for them, often along with challenging environmental conditions, commonly produce quite-hierarchical social structures with clear division of labor and differentiated privileges among subgroups in which strong authority tries to maintain order.

As well, the socio-cultural nature and circumstances of a place reflects the level and style of development the people have experienced, and these, in turn, are often influenced by natural resource and climatic/locational considerations, as already noted in a brief way. Although there are exceptions and qualifications needed, a gross set of patterns permits the hypotheses that people who have undergone more extensive and balanced social and technical development have a greater likelihood of being more egalitarian and participatory in public and private life, and more cohesive on a “natural,” voluntary basis of shared core values, ideals and expectations. In contrast, it is likely a less-developed setting, or one that has distinctly “unbalanced” sectorial development, will evidence characteristics of being traditional (backward-looking versus forward-oriented), emotional, defensive-protective and quite ideological. Such circumstances commonly result in a more authority-dominated social structure between and within levels, with social divisions and clear subgroup differentiation, and a coping, survival-oriented lifestyle.

The significance of such considerations become apparent in the context of how we might best approach and manage cooperative rapport-building concerns. In developing settings that are reasonably egalitarian and participatory, we can approach people directly with an appeal to their interests, expecting them to be open and trusting enough to listen and consider potential developmental benefits, and likewise with their leaders and officials. Quite another matter is experienced with traditional, defensive-protective people who are dominated by authorities, who are the only real opening we have to influence in rapport-building.

Another related consideration is important as an influence both on the socio-cultural nature of a people and on how we can effectively approach them in rapport-building efforts. That consideration is how ready (prepared) they are to respond to our initiatives and proposals. The “launch pad” metaphor is common in this context: Are they ready to “take off” if someone “lights their fuse,” or are they likely to “fizzle” because they are not yet ready enough? In the latter case, sound strategy demands that the management of rapport building first take account of what preparations are important prerequisites to getting them on the launch pad. Strategy also needs to consider the extra time and more basic approaches called for when remedial socio-cultural development is needed to increase openness, trust, hopefulness, risk-taking, etc. in preface to mutual-benefit cooperation.

Another way to approach “how ready they are” issue is to consider the opportunities and constraints to be managed in rapport-building. These are obvious matters of main concern in assessment of the situation, along with interests, needs, concerns and fears in the population. These topics bring us full circle toward rapport building, as illustrated in the Figure 1 model.

Consistent with the foregoing, there are some important social science concepts that we will focus on in our Rapid Ethnographic Assessment process. They include several clusters
of ideas that need to be examined and this process begins with an applied anthropology framework of “defining the situation” that asks basically: (1) what is the situation in most relevant regards (e.g. needs, opportunities, constraints)? (2) what could it be to the satisfaction of the people considering their desires, concerns, various kinds of resources (natural, social, fiscal)? (3) what needs to be done to set processes in motion? and (4) where to start?

Some key focal concepts and research questions in this context include:

A. What are leadership patterns, authority structures, facilitation and control patterns, and norms related to these?

B. Regarding understanding opportunities and constraints, what, in general, are the levels of personal and community “readiness,” openness, assertiveness, pragmatism, flexibility, receptivity to change and risk-taking? And how different or variable are these traits in the population/area? What sorts of people have greater “readiness,” and are they in a position to act on it (e.g., are they leaders or authorities)?

C. What is the level of “social capital,” or cooperation/coordination, developed community capacity (in social relations, organizations and infrastructure) to aid people’s ability to pull together and work toward common goals?

D. Similarly, how much agreement, cohesion/solidarity exists in the population, and how consistent/integrated is the socio-cultural system? United momentum depends upon reasonable consensus and commitment, and these provide “risk management” (social safety net) benefits for people engaged in creative collective activities. In contrast, divisions, segregation/separation of activities and people, factionalism seriously impede united movement and increase the risks to innovators.

E. What are major ideals, values, aspirations in the population and major concerns and fears? Is there considerable consensus about these in the community/area, or are they more variable? If variable, what kinds of people are more hopeful (proactive) or fearful (reactive)? Where do leaders/authorities fit into these patterns?

**From Observations to Interviews: Key Informants**

Based on early insights into the local society and culture, we are ready to pursue our research questions in-depth. Here key informants are particularly valuable for efficient acquisition of reliable, complete understandings of the local/area system(s). Several matters are important to consider here. First, good rapport between key informants and team members is critical for breath and depth of quality information. Accordingly, it is prudent to use informants who are more accessible to us. In addition, however, good informants should be (a) knowledgeable about local issues and affairs, (b) generally self-secure (self confident) and respected/trusted by segments of the community, and (c), in aggregate, be representative of the various subcategories in the community (occupations, religions, ages,
etc.) In general, once rapport is achieved with several key informants, they will usually be willing to introduce you to other informants.
STAGE 3 – KEY INFORMANT/STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

At this point, the research team should have a good “feel” for the nature of the village or community under study. Tier 2 of the Model is designed to: (1) uncover the actual “ground truth” of village dynamics; (2) identify public and private spheres of influence that govern the decision-making apparatus in operation; and (3) uncover any cultural variables that may function as potential barriers to progress in the SSTR arena. Particular care should be taken by the research team in the selection of key informants for the structured interview session. Informants should represent both the public and private sectors of the community, both sexes should be represented and individuals who characteristically have a good working knowledge of all the intricacies of the community should be included. Commonly, individuals like barbers, hair dressers, healers, undertakers, postmasters and postmistresses, local veterinarian, storekeepers, etc., make excellent prospects. Previous informal interviews conducted during Tier 1 should have aided considerably in this selection process. Even if they are not selected, Marines or Soldiers conducting RAP should identify to whom at least courtesy calls should be made so as not to inadvertently alienate someone in a position of power and authority however discreet their position may be.

Structured Interview Guide

The following questions should function as “lead-in” questions to be followed by additional probes at the research team’s discretion. “Lead” questions should be asked to all key informants so the resulting data can be standardized and compared within and between villages. Note that good ethno graphic interviewing techniques encourage additional, spontaneous questions and are served best by questions that can’t be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”.

1. We have a saying: “Water is Life.” Do you have a similar saying? If yes, explain.

2. Describe how water supply is organized and operated—that is, what is government’s role and what is up to cooperating people or private families?

3. How does this compare in general with other community services, such as health care, sanitation, education, etc.?

4. What are some of the concerns or problems people here have with water supply or access or quality or disputes?

5. Do people here pretty much agree on these concerns or problems, or are there some real differences in views? If differences, what are they? What helps to explain why there are differences in views?
6. When problems with water occur, what are some the things people do, or could do, to help get them solved?

7. What are a few other main concerns, fears or problems in community life people here have? How did they come to be?

8. Do most people here pretty much agree on them and their reasons?

9. What are some of the main things people here value—that bring them happiness, make them satisfied?

10. When people here feel that local improvements could be made to improve the community’s conditions, who would they turn to—who is in charge, or has the most important influence? Government officials or professionals or leading citizens?

11. If an outside organization were to come here and want to begin a project on some water use or sanitation issue, how should they start out in the area, and whose permission would they need?

12. Who else (what kind of other local people) should they consult or involve to be successful, and why?

13. What are some of the things that have changed here during your lifetime? Which have been more beneficial and which have involved some problems?

14. How could those problems have been avoided?

*Refer to and complete Appendix D for each individual interviewed and complete Appendix E after several (6 to 8) interviews are completed.
STAGE 4 – FOCUS GROUPS AND/OR GROUP INTERVIEWS

With an iterative format, the focus group data should cross-check and validate the key informant interviews on a larger community-wide scale. These groups should include a minimum of 4 to 6 individuals and be representative of the spheres of influence identified through the key informant structured interviews. Perhaps, one group of recognized public officials, one group of religious leaders and/or healers, one group of local prominent business leaders and a group of local wage earners would be ideal. Focus groups do not work well in all countries or with very short time-frames for the REA work. There needs to be adequate time to establish rapport with informants, the Soldier or Marine (rather than the interpreter) would do best to select the participants, and in countries where there is more hierarchical power structure, an elder may do all the talking while younger community members listen politely. Nonetheless, focus groups are worth undertaking.

Questions one, two, three and nine of the structured interviews could be repeated in this context, plus the following additional questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the most important needs in terms of water or water-related issues in the community?
2. In your opinion, what is needed to address and improve or resolve these issues?
3. What factors presently exist that are keeping things from moving forward in these areas?
4. Do you think everyone in the community agrees with you that these are the main water-related issues and problems?
   A. If not, why not. Which individuals or groups do you think might not agree?
5. Are there any rules or regulations as to who can use the different water resources here (river, well, etc.) and when they can be used? If so, who made the rules and how are they enforced?

*Refer to and complete Appendix F after each group interview.

Appendix F

Group Interviews: Interpretation and “Rating Forms”

Less formal group interviews are easier to implement under rapid appraisal circumstances, e.g., group of 4-6 or so people who are representatives of somewhat different types/groups in area/community (e.g., rural + town, occupational differences, educational/leadership differences, age, etc.). Circumstances dictate the need for the session to be recorded and conducted by the translator, later to be translated by that person. Team members should
observe and takes notes (knowing what topic is with the translator’s prompting), on the style of interaction among participants.

Sample Group Interview “Rating Form:”

1. Summarize significant content in response to questions raised, including main themes of agreement and some of the differences/variations of interpretation by question.

__________________________________________________________________________ …

2. Assessment of interactional styles in group discussion:

Note patterns of (a) cooperation/and (b) disagreement/competition among participants. Specifically note evidences of self-interested assertion; emphasis on public/private benefits and responsibilities, negotiation processes, and leadership/deference patterns.

__________________________________________________________________________ …

3. In reflecting on the above, try to offer some hypotheses regarding some patterns in group processes leading to (a) success, agreement, etc. and (b) causing sensitivities, tensions, and challenges to their management.

A. Patterns leading to success:__________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________  ….

B. Patterns causing sensitivities, tensions, challenges: _______________________________

______________________________________________________________________  ….

Concluding Notes

This research guide has been designed to accomplish several objects: (1) to gather as much culturally “relevant” data representing “ground truth” within a limited timeframe; (2) to gather such data in a manner that it allows for cross-cultural comparisons and ultimately to be amenable to social network analysis computer modeling efforts; and (3) to gather data that corresponds (as far as possible) to existing Human Relations Area Files taxons. Therefore, it should be adhered to as closely as possible.

It is recognized that as is the case in any fieldwork, certain questions from the research guide may illicit responses that open new lines of related inquiry and the Marine or Soldier should probe these areas as well. The concise nature of this guide should allow the Marine or Soldier ample time to explore these areas of inquiry as well.
The model is designed to be approached in a progressive fashion from Stage 1 through Stage 5 depending on such factors as time constraints, training received before the actual collection of data and the resources available to the Marine or Soldier. As envisioned, that in order to progress through tiers and the entire five stage sequence of the model, actual field time of approximately four weeks is required, though most of the work can be conducted in less time, if needed.

**SUMMARY: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

This Field Guide was tested in Tigray, Ethiopia by two graduate at the University of Denver in late 2008. The graduate students were not trained in anthropology, and received over 15 hours of preparatory training in methods and goals before they departed for their field work on water issues in two villages in Tigray. Some of their recommendations about the Field Guide have already been incorporated into the Guide, while others are mentioned here and will be considered for upcoming revision.

The two students requested less “anthropological theory” in the training and more concrete information about where they were going, the purpose of their work, and what they would find at their assigned locale in-country. They requested that the Field Guide contain a “Practical Matters” section with information on in-country logistics. They also wished they had received a clearer “job description” about their assignment, especially about the expected “work product”, and that they had had opportunities to practice role-plays and other communication strategies they would need. They reported that the Field Guide was a big benefit to their work, but requested that the Appendices (especially those with forms that needed to be filled out) be inserted in the body of the Field Guide where they would naturally be used, and that the Field Guide be prepared with sufficient copies of all needed forms so that there would be no need to photocopy materials. They also noted that Informed Consent Forms were too long and technical, and would benefit from being shorter and simpler.

The students reported that transects, individual interviews, and group interviews were all quite successful. They did not find, however, that focus group interviews worked well in Tigray, for reasons of gender, power, and frustration that the students weren’t in a position to provide tangible help with the water problems of the area. Also, successful focus groups require a high degree of rapport with the communities in question, and the students – with only about three weeks of active field work time – did not have adequate time to build this rapport. The issue of not having a “better deliverable” to offer the community in exchange for its providing information on a perennially frustrating set of problems – lack of sufficient water for the community year-round – frustrated both the local people and the two students. It is a subject that bears careful reflection; it is hoped that military users will be in a better position to meet some of their subject communities’ needs.

The students were instructed to stop work two days before they left the communities where they were working so that they could say thank you and goodbye (in the appropriate local way). They said that this was important and that this information should be added to the Field Guide.
Appendix A

Original Topic Solicitation

The following italicized text has been extracted verbatim from ONR’s original solicitation published in the Fall of 2007:

OBJECTIVE: Provide US military planners/analysts and their USG Interagency partners with an improved, rapid ethnography capacity, so that military planners can quickly discover critical aspects of the society with respect to their particular mission, be it humanitarian, security, reconstruction or stabilization.

DESCRIPTION: DoD Directive 3000.05 requires that the military collect social and cultural data in support of the military’s new mission, describes as SSTR: Security, Stabilization, Transition and Reconstruction. The aim is to better understand the socio-cultural context in which these military missions operate. What is needed is a Rapid Ethnographic Assessment program: New models and methodologies to improve and augment the data collection efforts being undertaken in these missions. This capability will ensure that military analysts will not just collect data, but also be able to know what data matters, in order to make sense of tribal, ethnic and social class relationships, understand environmental factors (for example, the control of water in arid climates), land rights, disputes, the role of religion in everyday life, and the structure of the elites, to name but a few examples relevant to military operations. Candidate methodologies include: cognitive anthropology, social network analysis, other methodologies with a structuralist focus, linguistics, applied anthropology, development anthropology, and computational approaches. This effort will provide analysts with new capabilities for analyzing ethnographic data in ways that are informed by ethnological theory and modern anthropological approaches. A rich, scientifically sound, description of society and the relationships of the various parts of society, will be the result of rapid ethnographic assessment.

The Rapid Ethnographic Assessment program complements on-going efforts to improve data collection on culture and society. This program will provide a more comprehensive, scientifically sound framework for understanding the individual social facts that are being collected. Because all of culture is too large a concept for the limited time and funding of this effort, it is expected that the proposal writer concentrate on one, significant scenario in one, actual culture. Example: Power structure in Afghanistan, Tribal structure and political affiliation in Sudan, Humanitarian relief in Pakistan, Reconstruction in Iraq.

Some sections shown above are available from Wired Magazine at:
The complete text available is available from
Appendix B

Notes on Interpreting Observations and Interview Comments in Field Context

A Brief Introduction. Our aspirations are to develop/refine methods to (a) obtain sound ethnographic and related information that can be (b) input into (computer) simulation models, in order to (c) gain guidance in rapport-building processes in challenging situations. We have noted several times that we are, to an extent, following a combination of rapid ethnographic procedures and “grounded theory” building (that is, we anticipate, see/hear things, tentatively hypothesize about them, observe more, modify/accept as appropriate and expand on growing hypotheses, observe more …) The end objective is a reliable, complete, perceptive understanding of the situation, how it works, and what this means for our wise action in it. Figure 3 summarizes the situation.

Figure 3. Summary Interpretive Understanding Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Prior</th>
<th>In the actual, systematic situation:</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>In our conscious, creative minds:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>Observations + Contextual + Conceptual Understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Preparations</td>
<td>Anticipations</td>
<td>Things Heard</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(objectively)</td>
<td>(f actual)</td>
<td>Interrelation</td>
<td>(general)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This view is based in a mixture of cognitive theory and scientific methods, wherein a beginning point is our mental and procedural preparations for fieldwork which leads us to look for certain things in ways we trust, and to recognize additional things as being relevant when they occur. Thus we observe and/or hear events and take note of them as “facts” in/of the situation. But we are less interested in the facts, per se, than what they ultimately mean in the situation, and to us as interested observers. So we creatively make sense of it all first by noting the context or aspects of the situation to which the facts are relevant, and then by fitting them into our gradually emerging conceptual framework, “conceptualization,” or mental picture of the situation. The latter process initially involves our creatively deciding on appropriate abstract, general ideas (concepts) that summarize lots of specific behaviors or events in the situation (for instance, the idea of “friendliness” for lots of smiles, kind words, handshakes, etc. experienced). Then we interrelate these ideas as we think they occur, usually keeping it fairly simple at first, but later developing reasonably complicated models of key interrelationships in the system’s architecture and operation. For instance: If we approach people with “respect,” they are likely to be “friendly”; and later we add: especially if they learn we are “trustworthy” and we have “mutual interests”.

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As we add these *insights* into the situation, they have automatic “feedback” relevance to what we anticipate there next time, and they also become part of our growing set of personal and professional experiences/preparations that will likely be relevant to new situations we will encounter. All of this growing *understanding* eventually enables us and those we share our understandings with to *meaningfully interpret* the operation of the system in general, and especially under *certain special circumstances* that we might be interested in or concerned about, including the suggestion of *implications for action* in support of desired outcomes. That is the epitome of informed action, rationality and effectiveness.

An implication of this process when done as a participatory process across cultures/subcultures is that *mutual understanding and effectiveness* are likely to occur: as they help us to understand their circumstances, both we and they grow our understanding of them, and as we share insights into us (necessary for rapport), both they and we come to a better understanding of us. And in the process, we all become more effective in our mutual-interest interactions.

*Some Specifics and Examples in Observation Interpretations.* We shall later shift to offering a series of footnote interpretive guidelines for specific topics of field inquiry included in our observation and interview guides. For now, let us a couple of case examples, starting with a fairly straight-forward one, and then moving to several more-complex cases.

1. **Preparation plus questions.** The observation guidelines suggest looking at things like climatic conditions and their reflections in agriculture practices. If armed with knowledge of area weather cycles, land tenure, etc. observations can be interpreted more accurately, but even so they should prompt a series of questions of knowledgeable locals to clarify more complete, contextual interpretations. For instance, in one case we know of in Mexico, inexperienced field observers looked at a desert-like setting and initially wondered what the people lived on without much for green fields or livestock. They wondered if it was welfare. Mexico mostly doesn’t have welfare programs as we know them. If they had known that, and that this area has a summer monsoon (rainy) season from July 1 into September, and again briefly in December – January, they would have reached other conclusions. Also, not seeing many cattle and horses, they assumed they were rare there. Yet if they had pre-knowledge, or had asked, they would have learned large animals are moved to area highlands and more lush valleys until the summer rainy season arrives.

They could and should have reacted to apparent desert landscape with pointed observations concerning the presence of irrigation works in the valley area, and gardens that provided some fresh produce year round. Likewise, the absence of fences around the long, narrow fields made them appear more desert-like and the lack of observed large animals, should not have led to the hypothesis there were few fields and animals, but rather to consideration of other “hypotheses of practicality” such as that they had special ways of producing and storing staple foods like corn and beans, and the impracticality of fence stripping fields required other practices. A few observations and questions would have revealed that much was done cooperatively there, as this was partly ejido (cooperative farming) land. People shared draft animals and plows, etc…. and they used large, collective pastures and pens for animals, or kept cows and horses tethered pet-like.
With these insights, more-accurate hypothesis of good, cooperative relations among families in the area could have been obtained. The fact that the area was both quite poor and remote with small villages, might have suggested there was not much national government presence or services, that the people were comfortable with that, and were used to pulling together as a series of communities to do the best they could of pursuing a satisfying life dominated by the values of family, friends and community. That suggests effective, largely informal management of local affairs based on leadership of key family heads that take turns occupying local offices. Rapport must include them, as influence begins with them. Without much government presence, one might accurately speculate that once a bit of rapport was achieved between those people and outsiders willing to help with some local projects, the welcome mat was cautiously laid out.

2. What can a house, or a shop, tell us? The observation guide suggests that we note clues about houses like ample or few outside/front windows, the presence or absence of fences that divide properties or block public views of the home rather than simply keep animals in or out without impeding views, evidence of outdoor living in view of the street (front porches with chairs, welcome signs, etc.), color added to simple houses and/or outdoor decorations like flowers, attractive trees and statuary to attract attention and suggest invitation all are suggestive about the spirit of openness, communalism, trust that exists there. Human presence outside the home, sitting, visiting, amplify the message. Typically homes testify to approximate status of the family. What do homes suggest about the importance of the occupants, are they in “old” locations (e.g., near the center of town) suggesting long-time family influence, or newer and on the edge, suggesting wealth obtained outside or recently, but with no assurance of long-term honor. Overall, are most homes basically similar, or are there clear signs of major status differences in the community/area? Are rural homes similar to town ones, or are there signs of distinct life-styles, thus probably social breaches?

When visiting shops, survey the items offered. With those offering general merchandise, what is the prominence of religious artifacts (prayer candles, rosaries) and do these suggest faith homogeneity or divisions? How much emphasis seems to be given children’s interests (toys, candy, school supplies, clothes), suggestive of strong familism with hopeful concern for the future. Are there signs of integration with the outside world, as contrasted with isolation? Are there books, magazines, newspapers, radios, tapes and tape players, maps, travel items like suitcases apparent/obvious? Also, are there prepared foods, like canned meats and vegetables, boxed cereals, sterilized milk? Such signs, together with those suggesting the openness of households, suggest higher receptivity to change and readiness.

3. Geo-political “lay of the land”: Ecological clues. This is perhaps one of the first and most powerful sources or initial hypotheses about a place and its people outsiders encounter. It is also one of the more complicated to interpret because of various intersecting considerations. To begin most simply, we can easily see the physical arrangement of an area’s settlement, and we can initially translate that into a series of preliminary hypotheses. Specifically, let’s consider two quite different local ecological patterns: a “line community” (built along a road or minor river, stereotypically “a mile long and two blocks wide” with mixed commercial and residential activities along the course) versus a “plaza community”
(squarish, with a central plaza and/or “downtown,” many public (government, commercial, educational, commercial) buildings and prominent homes of important families near the center, and with newer additions (medical clinic, agricultural services, recent residences) near the periphery.

A “line community” typically evidences considerable contact with the outside, and a superficial openness, often because of the profit of commerce. Such places are a bit misleading; the local decision structure and processes are often carefully protected from outside meddling, so it takes time and local sponsorship of an influential to penetrate it. Generally, such places and people are reasonably pragmatic, flexible, democratic, cheerful and easy to relate to superficially. Given a common commercial, touristic or government service orientation, there is considerable interest in and knowledge of outside affairs, and reasonable receptivity to change and risk-taking. Usually lacking economic sector districts, like a clear downtown, industrial, or transportation/motel-restaurant area, this symbolizes/reflects little effective domination by “old elites” who prospered in a sector, and suggests options for upward mobility and a fairly egalitarian process of public pursuit of situationally emergent common interests, wherein the community sometimes rallies to “causes” but otherwise is congenial and mildly competitive.

A “plaza community,” on the other hand, is often characterized by an element of closure to the outside (sometimes historically being a walled community), frequently with homes within the community being of “compound” or “internal plaza” forms. These are inward looking rather than outward oriented, and tend to have significant protective elements as a part of their organization (e.g., an evasive “know-nothing” attitude and actual barriers to access). Given the sense of potential threats from outside, they tend to be suspicious of outsiders, and for this and other reasons are quite hierarchical in status and decision organization. In brief, they tend to be traditional, conservative, authoritarian with a great and multidimensional status hierarchy, curtly pragmatic in dealing with outsiders, and generally ideological. They often have a fairly “drab” appearance and feel along with a sense of uniformity, order and simplicity. Organization, at least of the older parts of the community, centers on a core, often with a public plaza or park, containing main, traditional public buildings (religious, government, commercial) and homes of some dominant families. The priorities and power structure of the people is commonly illustrated by prominence and proximity of certain institutions and residences in the core. Evidence of change in these communities is more likely apparent on the periphery. A frequent characteristic of “plaza communities” is a difference in patterned activities between those occurring in public view (more culturally traditional) and in private places like homes and fields (more pragmatic, showing “exceptions” to traditional patterns). Given that the most public of places are symbolically at the core, expect more innovative activities and people to be found in near the edge, where newer public institutions like medical clinics, secondary schools, industrial and technical sites are often located.

A common composite of the two forgoing ecological sets of patterns is the “cross-roads community.” Both sets of patterns are typically evidenced, but in more moderate ways, and varying some by location (whether on the main roads, near the downtown or edge, etc.) These are often district government centers and commercial service centers. Because
intersecting patterns make the local culture of such places more complex and conditional, it is common for people there to be cautious in dealing with outsiders and with one another, to decide things situationally rather than more generally, even concerning public life and policies, and to depend on a special category of people who are intermediaries working informally to negotiate and reconcile differences. In a cross-roads context, the intermediaries are important people to know, although they are not always easy to identify given that they often work subtly and behind the scenes. Questions about who are helpful in resolving local issues may be needed. Cross-road communities are often reasonably diverse in kinds of people and groups represented, rather stratified in privilege and power structure with subtle competition between groups, and lacking a high level of social integration and cohesion. Larger towns and cities typically show these patterns.

There are yet other patterns of local ecology and socio-cultural tendencies, but these should illustrate the point of taking cues from initial reading the “lay of the land” to generate some early hypotheses about life there to check out in further observations and interviews.

Some Notes on Interpreting Interview Cues

For several reasons, it is good practice to have and use developed interview guides for both informant and sampled individual/family use. As with the above questions, these contain questions to be asked in approximately the order suggested, where one introduces and leads to the next topic, but they should be followed flexibly with additional follow-up questions inserted when that seems appropriate. One important reason to follow a written interview schedule when working with an interpreter is that it enables detailed discussion about the meaning of terms, how they should best be translated, with that (those) person(s) prior to interviews, it affords an opportunity for cautionary feedback from the translator before going into interviews, and it helps orient the translator as well as the interviewer to the order of progress—what to expect when, more or less.

Some notes on recording observations and interview can be found in Appendix B. Several points are suggested there that deserve specific note here. The quality of data obtained depends on a series of conditions, all of which should be considered throughout the process and managed as possible.

1. Good rapport with translators is essential, as is having agreement on interview “game plan,” appropriate ways to ask questions and act, what questions and terms mean to each, etc. How knowledgeable, neutral in community affairs, and respected the translator is should be considered.

2. The choice of informants and interview subjects should both consider how “typical” they are of people in the community, and how, in aggregate, the number of people who serve as informants or interview subjects are “representative” of the different kinds of local people.
3. Tentative rapport with those being interviewed is essential, and begins with friendly, simple, honest explanation of the purpose and procedures along with a respectful, appreciative attitude. What psychologists call “active listening” is useful.

4. As interviews progress, monitor for any signs of dishonesty, being “closed” or withholding,” lack of knowledgeability, being self-interested or non-objective in answers, being incomplete in responses. In part, pay attention to what is not being said as well as what is said. Also, make sure you are really hearing what is being told to you. These potential challenges can be managed by watching visual cues, learning to “read between the lines,” and asking follow-up questions, perhaps for an example, elaboration or clarification.

5. Data needs to be recorded as accurately and completely as is feasible (not always easy in field conditions), and in ways most useful for the purpose. In this case, data will be put in field logbooks in narrative form with keywords or emphases underlined, and also summarized on standardized, partly pre-coded “rating forms” (see Appendix D to facilitate later computer modeling of results.

    In general, one can get good insight into the quality of information being given in interviews by evaluating the “style” of interaction. How relaxed, comfortable and friendly is the informant or interviewee, do they seem serious about the information, are they highly “playful” in responses (watch out, it could be friendliness but it likely is testing you and/or playing games with the translator). Do they seem to promote their special interests or subgroup’s perspective and interests? Do they ask you questions in the process, seeming to want to understand your questions well, or being interested in you, your perspectives and activities? Do they seem to want it to end and be over, or are they comfortable going on? Are there lots of interruptions, breaking trains of thought and the continuity of context? Do they give indication of being open to a “follow up” interview if you decide later clarifications are desired? Consider such things during the interview, and make side notes on any suspicions about the quality or completeness of information given.
Appendix C

Information Recording and Coding Procedures and Standardized Forms

Following are several kinds of materials, including a few procedural notes and some sample forms for recording some data in standard, comparable, quantifiable ways.

Observations: Summary “Rating Forms” and Hypothesis Development Worksheets

Approximate Interpretations from observations. (For periodic use after a few full days)

Date_____________ Location_________________ Observer_____________

1. Estimate the community’s/area’s overall/average level of openness to outsiders with a check on the following continuum:

(Consider things like how welcoming they are to you, their curiosity about/interest in you, how friendly and seemingly willing to be helpful; also, signs of their interest in going beyond the community, get information from outside; also, physical signs of being “outward looking,” as discussed under interpreting the “lay of the land” above.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Open</th>
<th>Fairly Open</th>
<th>Cautious</th>
<th>Nervous/Suspicious</th>
<th>Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What evidence are you basing this estimate on?

__________________________________________________________________________

At this point, how confident are you about this estimate? (Check as appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Confident</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Pure Guess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What considerations might help to explain the overall/average level of cohesiveness here?

__________________________________________________________________________

What might be some consequences of this overall/average level of openness for the community/area and the people?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Does the level of general openness seem fairly **uniform** in the community/area, or fairly **variable/different** among subgroups or types of people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uniform</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Highly Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more:
- Open
- Closed/protective

2. Estimate the community’s/area’s overall/average **cohesiveness, cooperation, solidarity** (v. competition, divisions, factionalism):

(Consider things like “Social Capital” issues of recent instances of “pulling together,” having developed local, conciliatory leadership, how integrated the community is, how common their interests and goals seem, how much there is a balance between local agreement and acceptance/tolerance of differences, participatory, egalitarian spirit, etc.) (Check)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very cohesive, participatory, egalitarian, etc.</th>
<th>Coping via separate groups, interests, fair coordination</th>
<th>Serious divisions, organized antagonisms, some rebellion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What **evidence** of this?

What might be some **consequences** of this overall/average level of openness for the community/area and the people?

At this point, what is your confidence of this estimate? (Check)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Confident</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Pure Guess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What considerations might help to **explain** the overall/average level of openness here?

What might be some **consequences** of this overall/average level of openness for the community/area and the people?

Does the level of general cohesiveness seem fairly **uniform** in the community/area, or fairly **variable/different** among subgroups or types of people? (Check)
### 3. Your sense of the community’s/areas authority structure:

(Consider how hierarchical, consolidated, controlling, rigid the stratification is, how much it is hereditary, is national/regional/local in scope, and what it is based in (in contrast to personal achievement, consider political and/or religious position, wealth in land and/or commerce, industry, whether it is general authority or fairly situational/sectorial, etc.).

| Egalitarian, situational, democrat-participatory, communal-entrepreneurial, fairly “flat” | Diversified, sectorial, limited gen. authority | Very hierarchical, consolidated, familistic/hereditary authoritarian/controlling |

At this point, how confident are you about this estimate? (Check as appropriate)

| Very Confident | So-so | Pure Guess |

What considerations might help to explain the authority structure here?

What might be some consequences of this overall/average level authority/egalitarianism for the community/area and the people here?

### 4. Estimate the community’s/area’s general level of development:

(Consider the status of their technical infrastructure (water, health, ed., transport. services, etc.) and home technology (TV, running water, plumbing, electricity, equipment. and vehicles, computer, etc.); also consider how progressive are the personal/family attitudes and mindsets.)

| Advanced, Modern | Mixed, Semi-modern | Poor, Developing | Primitive Conditions |

A-52
What evidence are you basing this estimate on?  
__________________________________________________________________________

At this point, how confident are you about this estimate? (Check as appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Confident</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Pure Guess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What considerations might help to explain the level of development here?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

What might be some consequences of this level of development for the community/area and the people?
__________________________________________________________________________

Does the level of development seem fairly uniform in the community/area, or fairly variable/different among subgroups or types of people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uniform</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Highly Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more:
Developed _________________________________________________________________
Under/less developed_________________________________________________________

5. Estimate the local populations’ overall/average receptivity to change, development and associated risk-taking: (Check)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very receptive to change, w/sense of consequences, plan to deal with it</th>
<th>Cautiously hopeful</th>
<th>Nervous, ambivalent</th>
<th>Very unreceptive, negative, reactionary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Variations in/exceptions to this pattern here?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

What might be some consequences of this overall/average level of receptiveness to change and risk taking for the community/area and the people?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Does the level of general openness seem fairly **uniform** in the community/area, or fairly **variable/different** among subgroups or types of people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Uniform</th>
<th>So-so</th>
<th>Highly Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Insofar as there are variations, what are some of the types of people or circumstances that seem more:

- Receptive to change/development/risktaking
- Reactionary, conservative, resistant to change/development

6. Concerning main local *values and challenges/problems*, note whether it seems the following are (1) key values/norms in community/family life and/or (2) perceived *challenges/problems* in the community:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Value</th>
<th>Concern, Challenge/Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close family life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security, safety, health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cooperation, cohesion, Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environ., natural resource protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, knowledge, wisdom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morality, religion, propriety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local development, income/employment, public infrastructure improvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory democracy, status systems change, equality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy, independence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
flexibility, pragmatism

Material acquisition, wealth, status, influence/power

Others noted: _____________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

Comments re these values/concerns: _______________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________
**Appendix D**

**“Summary Rating Form for Interviews”**

*Sample Interview “Rating Forms” For Summary Interpretations*

Several similar interview summary “rating forms” have been developed. These include codes for rating both (1) the estimated quality of data based on how the interview went, and (2) what the information says in summary form about key variables of interest, like respondent’s openness, receptivity to change, etc. Their form is similar to the example above for observations of openness, but they do not give much attention to the “hypothesis worksheet” questions, or to variations within community or family.

(Note: Following questions suggested, narrative summary of responses and other observations should be written with keywords or emphasized terms underlined, and reviewed later--as soon as there is time, but by the end of that day-- with additional “ratings” made on this form.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID_____________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

___Informant, ___Sample Indiv./Family; est. Age____; Gender____; Occ.____________;

**Est. Local Status: (Respect, Influence, Power, Office)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Very</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Basis of Status Estimate:**

__________________________________________________

**In Interview(s) style, person was generally:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Friendly but</th>
<th>Guarded,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>Distant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Complete, | Brief, to the | Evasive, |
| Thorough | Point | Withholding |

| Knowledgeable, | Informed | Seemed Not Knowledgeable or Insightful |
| Insightful |             |                                     |

**Person in general seemed rather:**

| Modern, | So-so, | Conservative, |
| Progressive | Mixed | Traditional |
In interview *content*, indicate the extent to which (1) the person’s emphasis seemed to be on each of the following sets of *values/norms*, and (2) how much the person seemed *concerned about local problems* in each context?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close Family Life</th>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High Some Little No Mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty, Fairness,</td>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Corruption</td>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High Some Little No Mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security, Safety</td>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High Some Little No Mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Cooperation,</td>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion, Integration:</td>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High Some Little No Mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environ., Natural</td>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Protection:</td>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High Some Little No Mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Knowledge,</td>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Personal Value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High Some Little No Mention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morality, Religious Practice, Propriety:</td>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Field Guide: Stage 4: Focus Groups And/Or Group Interviews

**Local Development, Income/Employment, Public Infrastruct. Impr.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Status Syst. Change, Particip. Democ., Egalitarianism, etc.:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Autonomy, independence, Flexibility, Pragmatism:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Material Acquisits., Wealth, Status, Power:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Value:</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>No Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern/Problem:</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional and Summary Comments re: the person’s views of values, norms, priorities, and of the concerns and problems expressed:

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Your sense of the person’s comparative *emphasis on the wellbeing* of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Area (Public Emphasis/)Concern</th>
<th>Mix, Balance</th>
<th>Personal/Family (Private Emphasis, Conc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments?</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Estimate the person’s overall view of the *value of the community’s feeling*:

It is good/wise to be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open to Outsiders, Influence</th>
<th>Friendly but Cautions</th>
<th>Guarded, Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
It is good/wise to be:

| Receptive to Change, Development | Conservative, Traditional |

Any comments on why the person thought so in these regards (including historic precedents and events)?:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Your estimate of the person’s view of the present level of local cohesion or division:

| Very Cohesive, Coop., Pulling Together | Fair Competition, Minor Divisions, Independence | Divided, Fractional, Conflict, Not Integr. |

Your estimate of the person’s view of the present local authority structure:

| Egalitarian, Flat, Participatory, Dynamic | Achievement Levels with Significant Privileges | Clear Elites, Disadv. w/Family Status Aspects + Achievement | Great Ranking, Authority/Privil. Control, Ascript. |

In summary, major problems, limitations, challenges, constraints in area to cooperative, mutually beneficial development, including relations with outside interests, or being linked with greater system?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

In summary, major opportunities, advantages, strengths to be valued, used in improved management, development of local conditions, perhaps with outside assistance?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix E

Comparative Interview Interpretation Guide: Toward More Hypotheses

Date ____________________________  Team Member(s) ____________________________

To facilitate developing some hypotheses of similarities and differences within the community/area in regards summarized on the interview “rating forms,” we suggest after eight or so of those forms have been completed for informants and others who have done structured interviews, they should be reviewed in terms of the following questions, and notes be made about emerging hypotheses. These should be reconsidered several more times and revised or added to as input from more interviews is summarized on interview “rating forms.”

Looking down the topics on the interview rating forms one at a time, and comparing across persons interviewed, note what occurs to you as:

A. Some common themes that rather consistently come through in interview responses, suggesting only minor differences in patterns of views in the community/area, include (note which ones seem more emphasized, or priority ones).

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

B. Some differences that seem to be occurring in patterns of views for topics by such personal characteristics as (Note + for major differences, √ for some, leave blank for little/none):

(Personal Characteristics)

( Topics) Gender Status Age Occupation Education Others

Personal Openness in Interview [Note specific patterns of difference separately]

Personal Completeness in Interview

Personal Knowledge in Interview

Values/Norms and Concerns:

Family Life Value
### Security/Safety Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other differences in patterns among types of local people noteworthy in the context of opportunities/challenges for rapport building with outside groups/influences:

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Community/Public vs. Personal/Familial Emphasis

Value of Openness

Value of Receptivity to Change

Level of Community Cohesiveness

View of Community Authority Structure

Major Problems, Challenges

Major Opportunities, Advantages
Appendix F

Group Interviews: Interpretation and “Rating Forms”

Standard Focus Group procedures are more elaborate than less formal group interviews. Less formal group interviews are also easier to implement under rapid appraisal circumstances, e.g., group of 4-6 or so people who are representatives of somewhat different types/groups in area/community (e.g., rural + town, occupational differences, educational/leadership differences, age, etc.). Circumstances dictate the need for the session to be recorded and conducted by the translator, later to be translated by that person. Team members should observe and takes notes (knowing what topic is with the translator’s prompting), on the style of interaction among participants.

Sample Group Interview “Rating Form:”

1. Summarize significant content in response to questions raised, including main themes of agreement and some of the differences/variations of interpretation by question.

__________________________________________________________________________  ...
__________________________________________________________________________  ...

2. Assessment of interactional styles in group discussion:

Note patterns of (a) cooperation/and (b) disagreement/competition among participants. Specifically note evidences of self-interested assertion; emphasis on public/private benefits and responsibilities, negotiation processes, and leadership/d deference patterns.

__________________________________________________________________________  ...
__________________________________________________________________________  ...

3. In reflecting on the above, try to offer some hypotheses regarding some patterns in group processes leading to (a) success, agreement, etc. and (b) causing sensitivities, tensions, and challenges to their management.

A. Patterns leading to success: ________________________________________________  ....
__________________________________________________________________________  ....

B. Patterns causing sensitivities, tensions, challenges: ____________________________  ....
__________________________________________________________________________  ....
X. Appendix B: Tigrayan Water System

Taken in their entirety, the water systems constitute a singular, loosely configured system. That is, they are understood and managed as an interdependent array of resources. A combination of village elders, local administrative/baito council members, and designated water monitors (sometimes advised by church priests and deacons) determine what is happening during the current year, and what is likely to happen during the next year. However, they do not determine precise allocations for households nor closely regulate usage.

Mai Misham and Beleho are located about three kilometers apart. The former has about 250 residents, the latter about 350. People live in scattered homes and compounds in hilly terrain; there are no sharply defined village centers. The villages are part of a district which centers on the administrative capitol, a town called Edaga Arbi, where our researchers were based. While independent in certain ways, these villages function in reciprocal and linked fashion in certain other ways, primarily socio-economically. In both villages, water fetching and household water use are the responsibilities of women, aided by male and female children. Water is variously obtained at streams, pools associated with streams, hand-dug wells, explosive-dug wells, and artesian springs. An implicit protocol exists as to who goes to which source, for what purpose, during which season, and under what conditions of water availability/druress. Negotiations over redistribution of what is perceived as “a limited amount of water”, even when sources are flush are not the province of women, except when a woman is a baito member or local water administrator.

Virtually all adult villagers, men and women alike, are familiar with issues of water availability. This research found, for both villages, that water is perceived as the single biggest issue at present, but moreso for Mai Misham than Beleho. They are familiar with the locations of sources, water flow patterns, recharge times, seasonal variations, and norms associated with sharing and use. The latter are of particular interest: sharing and use rest on the complex interplay of tradition, current water availability, and government policy.

Tradition within Tigray mandates that water be accessed and used on a basis built on familial patterns of use and need, these in turn grounded in community cultural contexts. The parameters associated with water rights are recorded in documents maintained in the Water Resources Office in Edaga Arbi. Most of the specifics associated with water rights at the familial/household level are not recorded, but well known and well understood – oral agreements are essential.

Sharing is an important process, especially in times of water scarcity. Permission to use water is required in most (but not all) instances, and is easiest to obtain at the level of the extended family, next easiest at the level of the community (which is co-terminus with the village), and least easy at the level of a neighboring community. For household use, the appropriate amount is measured in jerrycans: One per day when water is scarce, two
when water is adequate. The notion of sharing is strong: “If you’re thirsty, you can come here and drink!”

Strategies of shifting and reallocation among sources are used. Dry season constraints exacerbate this. Local water administrators help with coordination, yet do not micro-manage the process. It appears that full-blown disputes over water are rare. Village-level meetings attended by disputants and mediators are held as needed. Indeed, meetings of various types seemingly take on a life of their own.

In addition to the obvious processes of access, use, and sharing, there are others intimately linked to water. The monitoring of pumps and wells involves the recruitment, training, placement/timing, and payment of individuals. Older children or adults can serve. High-use periods in early morning or late afternoon are the most common for monitoring; monitors rarely work at “off-hours.” Their pay is derived from fees levied by administrators against each family using the source. They are apparently so important that in one instance our project translators referred to them as “mayors,” not catching their own error.

The administering of water also is key. The central water office, located in Edaga Arbi, formally controls this function. General usage records are maintained, water rights are recorded, fees are collected, complaints are received, technicians are trained and sent out. At the baito level, a water administrator also is appointed. Local disputes are addressed, but “the government” – perceived to “sit” at the district level – is where the power lies. The searching for and developing of new underground sources of water is another process of importance. Much more amorphous and ill-defined, this rarely occurs in earnest. “We should have a new well” or “we must look for another source” apparently becomes a kind of mantra of last resort. The input of professionals is deemed essential when new resources are being contemplated. Lack of maintenance often is cited as a reason for pump breakdown or well malfunction, and thus is a corollary to developing new sources.
XI. Appendix C: Water in the Context of Cultural Terrain

The terrain is very tough. It is also dangerous. At least four children were reported to have fallen into wells or dry shafts and died in recent years. Hyenas occasionally attack the unwary. The rough terrain and narrow trails lead to falls and broken bones. Bandits are not a major concern, however. During the civil war, which ended in 1992, the central government initiated bombardments of the mesas where Mai Misham and Beleho are located.

Although not explicitly described by residents in this way, water sources are viewed as of primary, secondary, and tertiary importance. Within Beleho, a primary source is the pools and well at Mai Zigo; a secondary source is other wells located in two places near the village; and a tertiary source is neighboring streams (some being one hour’s walk distant). Although ranked in order of importance, if water is present, all sources are being used by residents during any one season. Yet even Mai Zigo, initiated in 1991 by professionals (including our colleague Tsegaye Hailu) and a “revered water source,” is perceived as imperfect. A lengthy dry season or drought will render it dry for two to five months at a time. In extreme circumstances, villagers will trek two to three hours to a neighboring district for water. That several pumps remain broken exacerbates the problem.

In recent decades expertise in the water sector occasionally has been provided by an NGO known as REST (Relief Society of Tigray) and, to a lesser extent, an NGO known as TDA (Tigray Development Association). The latter worked in conjunction with the Colorado-based WSCG (Water & Sanitation Consulting Group). REST personnel were in the area during 2008 and were interviewed for this project. Once new water projects have been identified and prioritized, funding is approached according to the following formula: 5% villagers, 10% government, 85% REST. Its donors include both Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian individuals and organizations. The NGO serves as funder, liaison/advisor, developer, and cajoler. It works in concert with the Edaga Arbi Water Resources Office and recruits locals for most of the basic labor. A new well with pump can cost as much as 30,000 birr (~$3000 US), when the costs of explosives, the jackhammer/generator unit, and labor are factored in. A hand-dug, stone-lined well may need to be as much as 6 meters deep. Not surprisingly, money is a constant struggle.
XII. Appendix D: Completed ICFs And Other Support Documents

This appendix presents some of the documents created or obtained for this effort.

First, the letter of introduction from the Embassy of Ethiopia is shown below. It was used in initial discussions with Ethiopian officials.
The following is a translation of the Ethiopian Embassy’s permission form into English. Note that this form was obtained after considerable correspondence and descriptions of the research to be undertaken. eCrossCulture’s Principal Investigator for this effort was in charge of providing descriptions of research to various embassy personnel.

Embassy of Ethiopia

Date Hidar 3/2001 AD (November 12, 2008)
Ref Wash\099\2001

To Whom It May Concern:

The following students at a university in the State of Colorado in North America

1. Name withheld
2. Name withheld

Will conduct a research study on water supply and sanitation in the area known as Edaga Arbi, south of Adowa in the State of Tigray for one month from Hidar 15 – Tahisas 15/2001 (November 24 – December 24, 2008). For this reason, we request that all necessary cooperation related to their mission be extended to them and we thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

(Embassy Stamp)

Fekadu Beyene
Consular Officer
Informed consent forms were created for several ethnographic settings: semi-structured and structured interviews; focus groups, and surveys. The total form consists of four pages; they are presented on the following pages. The three anthropologists on this effort collaborated on the overall English text and two former native Ethiopians translated the text into Tigrinya.
2. የትፋት ማትፈት

3. የወርፋ ማወቻ እንወቅ

4. የጤን ማጤንን ማን ወጭ
4

(please sign)

(please sign)

(please sign)
The English text below and on the following pages presents a back translation of the previous Tigrinya consent form. The translation was performed by former Ethiopians now resident in the United States with no prior knowledge of the original English text. Although the original English version consent form is not included herein, the Principal Investigator has attested to the closeness of the back translation with the original text. The back translation follows:

**Consent Agreement to Obtain Information in the Performance of “RAP” Research in Ethiopia**

Peter W. Van Arsdale, PhD, Principal Researcher
DU, Contractors
Denver University, Telephone No. 303-871-3281 (use access code for USA)
(This form is to be used by student researchers)

**Invitation**

I would like to invite you to participate in the study that we are conducting in Mai Misham and Beleho. You have been recommended to us by other residents of the area as a very knowledgeable person who can help us gather information on water supply and health in the study areas. I am a student at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies of Denver University. I am here as a representative of this University. The study is being conducted as collaboration between the University and the American company called “eCrossCulture”.

**Objective**

The overall objective of the study being carried out by “eCrossCulture” and Denver University is to test methodologies that the American military can use (during peace or conflict) to learn about a society under adverse conditions as in Iraq and Afghanistan. I am going to use various approaches with a focus on water supply and health in order to identify which methodology provides a better understanding of your culture. No American soldiers will come to Ethiopia to continue this study or to perform projects aimed at addressing water supply and health here. Our goal is to test ways on how quickly and correctly information can be gathered about your culture while at the same time maintaining respect for your culture and customs. This study will benefit military and civilian aid workers a lot.

**Time and Participation**

It will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes to respond to 10 questions. I will have the help of the translator. The questionnaire is “partially structured”, that is, the questions I ask and the responses I get could vary from person to person. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not like it, you can withdraw at any time. You can also skip questions you do not want to answer. You would be allowed to provide more extensive explanation to some issues.
Confidentiality

I will keep all the information that I gather confidential. That means that it will only be the staff of “eCrossCulture”, members of Denver University and me who will be allowed to review this unedited research data. No one else besides me will be privy to any personal information that you may share with me. I will number the files that I create. The key that correlates the file number to your name will be under my safe keeping. The file will be kept in a safe. “eCrossCulture” or Denver University will not include any name or identify source when they publish the results of this study. The conclusions of the research will focus only on which methodology is the more effective study tool to use. Name or personal information will not be included.

Benefits

Many students and faculty at Denver University and the staff of “eCrossCulture” care very much about Africa. Many also have great interest in contributing to the development of water resources. This study has its roots in the earlier study that Dr. Van Arsdale and others conducted on the nature of water supply in Maimisham and Beleho and in his interest to contribute to the welfare of the Ethiopian society through the efforts of “eCrossCulture” and its commitment to benefit the military. All water supply-related material in this study will be made public within two months.

Questions

Now, I will try to answer any questions you may have. You may also get in touch with Dr. Van Arsdale by calling the phone number shown at the top of this document, from Adowa via satellite phone or send email to pvanarsd@du.edu, with additional questions that you may have after your participation. At the same time, you may also express any complaints or objections you may have about the conduct of the interview to Dr. Susan Sadler, Chairwoman of the IRB at Denver University, using international code and country code for USA and the phone number 303-871-3454 (or email at ssadler@du.edu) or call Mrs. Sylk Sotto of IRB at phone number 303-871-4052 (or email at sylk.sotto-santiago@du.edu).

Participant’s Affirmation

I have read this explanation of the research study or it has been read to me. I have received satisfactory answers to my questions concerning the meaning of words or concepts I did not understand. I have agreed to participate in this study. I have been made to understand that I can pull out of this agreement at any moment. I have received a copy of this agreement.

___________________________     _________________
Signature         Date

____________________________
Signature of Village Official
(on behalf of participant)