

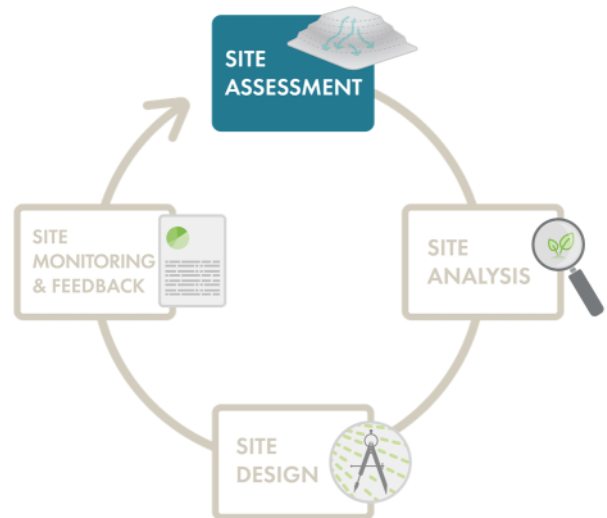
Tip Sheet

Step 1: Site Assessment

Aim: Engage the community and facilitate a process with farmers to gather information to inform a resilient design.

Key Takeaway: It is important to observe and recognize local resources, identify influences affecting the site, and understand current farm practices, the culture, history, and shocks and stresses that affect the farm site.

Summary of Step 1 in Practice: Use participatory activities to engage the farmers and wider community. Walk the site, collect additional information and map the available resources and external influences to initiate the design process.



1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Engage in participatory dialogue with farmers and the community to draw out knowledge about the farm system and community and identify what is important to them.

- Reduce barriers to engagement (meeting time, literacy levels and cultural sensitivities)
- Ensure community members understand the purpose of meeting and that there are no stipends. Transparency is key!
- Mobilize both women and men of various ages in the community; ensure youth are present
- Ensure local elders and leaders are informed and present
- Engage on the same level as community members. Do not speak down to individuals.
- Ask questions such as: What is the history of the land? What shocks and stresses cause the most problems? Where do they come from and what do they impact?



2. RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION AND INFLUENCE OBSERVATION: Observe, discuss, and participatory map all resources and influences.

- Conduct a participatory resource and influence walk with the farmer.
 - During the walk, facilitate a conversation about the farming system.
 - Note **resources** (natural, man-made, agricultural by-products) on the farm. Questions may include:
 - What crops or other plants are grown on the farm?
 - What animals are produced and who manages them?



RESILIENCE DESIGN IN SMALLHOLDER FARMING SYSTEMS

- Aside from the water resources on-site, what other sources of water exist in the community?
- Note **external influences** (natural and man-made). Questions may include:
 - What is the pattern of the sun and wind throughout the year?
 - What is the direction of the slope?
 - Are there any pests and diseases that affect the site?
- Create a resource and external influence (site) map with the farmer. Suggestions include:
 - Draw the boundary of the site and any permanent structures.
 - Mark the resources and external influences, and their relationships.
 - Indicate water flow, sun patterns, and wind direction on the map.



3. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

- Determine with the farmer what primary and secondary data could assist the farmer in improving his or her site design, such as:
 - Rainfall patterns, other climate maps and climate risk
 - Biological baseline (native fauna and flora, etc.)
 - Government requirements and subsidies
 - Economic and market information



4. FARMING SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

- Collect information about the farming system on production, income, soil health data and farm resilience
- Use the RD Measurement Toolkit Tools to create baseline information to monitor project and farm design impact
 - **Tools:** Farm Resilience Assessment, Farm Production Assessment, Soil Health Assessment