

Chapter Three The Local Community Capacity Index (LCCI)

1.0. Objectives and Audience

The Local Community Capacity Index (LCCI) measures:

- Local community (as opposed to local NGO partner) capacity to identify the source of food security constraints and risks and to design and execute solutions to these constraints with local NGO partners; and
- CRS local NGO partner and CRS country program capacity to “backstop” these community capacity building initiatives and one another.

The primary audiences for LCCI template and indicators are:

- The local communities that benefit from CRS’s Title II projects,
- The local NGO partners through which CRS executes most of its Title II projects;¹ and
- The CRS country programs that manage the Title II programs via their relationships with the local NGO partners.

2.0. Background

CRS programs have always emphasized community capacity building. Indeed CRS’s strong emphasis on farmer training and building the core organizational capacity of communities within which the agency works has always been central to any of the agency’s development initiatives. In an attempt to develop a more standardized process for monitoring capacity-building, CRS developed a list of “sample indicators for capacity building” as part of the *CRS Program Manual* (CRS 1998: 163-171). This list identified 13 variables for measuring capacity and 89 indicators for assessing the capacity of community groups or community based organizations. Another four variables and 15 indicators for “awareness of conscientization in a community”² were also identified in this manual. Since 1999 a



Controlling crop pests through a farmer field school, Indonesia (G. Burpee)

¹ CRS is directly intervening with communities in Rwanda. In that country, the NGO partner index and the CRS program index would therefore be the same.

² These indicators offer a scale with which to measure community group awareness. The scale begins with the stage of “closed consciousness” where community groups tend to be naïve or dependent. Groups may then graduate to an awakening consciousness, go onto a reforming consciousness, and finally realize a liberating or transforming consciousness. The indicators at each of these stages identify changes that might be expected from awareness raising activities (CRS 1998: 167).

large number of these indicators have been incorporated into the Indicator Performance Tracking Tables (IPTT or PITT) of CRS's Title II food security initiatives.

CRS's commitment to developing better systems for monitoring capacity building was also reflected in the active participation of its staff in and financial support for the Food Aid Management (FAM) Consortium's working group on Local Capacity Building (LCB). An independent review of the Cooperating Sponsor participation in the FAM ranked CRS and CARE as the most active members of the LCB working group (Green 2003: Table 27).³ This working group produced a massive inventory of capacity indicators. The inventory was subdivided by level (complex regional development organizations, communities, and clients [individuals and households]) and by indicator type (Ferris-Morris 2002) (Table 3.1; Box 3.1).⁴

Box 3.1 Types of Indicators in the FAM Local Capacity Building (LCB) Working Group Inventory

- **Input Indicators:** To monitor critical resources and physical “inputs” into projects such as funding and physical infrastructure.
- **Process Indicators:** To monitor the critical capacity building “processes” such as training, dissemination of information, awareness-raising, gender inclusion, and community organization and mobilization.
- **Outcome Indicators:** To monitor the measurable impact of the capacity building strategies on specific behaviors and capacities such as awareness and utilization of services, behavior change, increased skills and service provision, improve resource management, and use of mechanisms for community self management.
- **Impact Indicators:** To monitor the broader impact of enhanced capacity building in terms of sustainable capacities that directly improve food security, such as increased self reliance vis-à-vis the Title II project or faster better organized emergency response and preparedness.

Source: Ferris-Harris 2002a.

It was originally anticipated that the Title II food security PVO Cooperating Sponsors would build on the FAM/LCB working group's inventory by developing a list of “core” capacity indicators that all Cooperating Sponsors could adapt to their specific programs/focus. Unfortunately, it was during the same time period that USAID made an informal declaration—which they later incorporated into the Title II guidance for new

³ Followed by ADRA in third place, ACDI VOCA in fourth and CNTP and SAVE in fifth.

⁴ Data was collected from CSR4s from 18 PVOs/NGOs holding 84 programs in FY2001. One region and 27 countries are represented. Two countries, Senegal and Indonesia, had no CSR4 data available. Hence the total number of CSR4s entered in the database was 76. All 3,058 indicators were entered, nearly twice that estimated, including additional indicators Africare and CRS sent on capacity building. Although the average number of indicators per Title II DAP (Development Assistance Program) was 40, some DAPs had as few as 15-20 indicators and some as many as 100. Of these indicators, 92 were SO level, 8 sub-goal or sub-SO level, 375 Intermediate Results, and 2,504 indicators. Seventy-nine of the 3,058 indicators had no indication of level (Ferris-Harris 2002 a). The final data base, report, and indicator lists were immediately posted on the Food AID Management website where they continue to be accessed and regularly downloaded based on FAM and FHI download records.

Development Assistance Programmes (DAPs)—that local capacity building could not be a Strategic Objective of a Title II project. In this context there was relatively little incentive for the Title II Cooperating Sponsors to continue to invest heavily in the LCB working group's activities.

The chief exception to this was the Title II Cooperating Sponsor Africare. By 2002, Africare was already heavily invested in developing its initial model for the Food Security Community Capacity Index (FSCCI), which was first developed under its Title II funded Institutional Support Grant (ISG) (FY93-98). Under the Title II funded Institutional Support Assistance grant (ISA) (FY98-03) Africare converted the FSCCI from a Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) tool into an index that could be used as an impact indicator. After an initial period during which Africare's Title II programs adapted the index to the specifics of their country, Africare developed a more harmonized approach that was standardized across all of its Title II projects. This model was identified as an example of best practice in every one of the FAM/LCB indicator lists and in the FANTA publication, *Local Capacity Building in Title II Food Security Projects: A Framework*" (Gervais 2003). At the end of the ISA, the Africare FSCCI was revised to include three new variables in order to better measure community capacity to manage general risk, the specific risks associated with HIV/AIDS, and external communication (Africare 2005).

The chief weakness of the FSCCI is that it does not measure the specific technical capacities that Title II projects needed to complement their core organizational development (Table 3.1). CRS's ICB proposal identified the FSCCI as one of the examples of best practice that they needed to consider in the design of their own capacity indicators and, in the early drafts of the proposal, it was envisioned that the two Cooperating Sponsors would collaborate on this component of their ICB grants (CRS 2003, IR-A, Output 1).

3.0. Structure: Local Community Capacity Index (LCCI)

The CRS Local Community Capacity Index builds on this pre-existing base of Title II funded expertise in measuring local capacity building by incorporating the core strengths of the Africare FSCCI and the FAM/LCB working group indicator inventory while attempting to mitigate some of their weaknesses and risks (Table 3.1). It does this by subdividing the index into core and technical categories (Table 3.2).

Table 3.1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of Different CRS and Title II-Funded Local Capacity Building Indicator Development Exercises

Local Capacity Building Models	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Risks
<p>CRS 1998 Program Manual List: List of 13 variables and 84 indicators for community groups and community-based organizations.</p>	<p>Useful guide to capacity indicators that CRS programs could include in participatory self-evaluation instruments and monitoring and evaluation systems.</p> <p>Many individual indicators have been incorporated into the design of current Title II projects.</p>	<p>Indicators focus on specific individual capacities.</p>	<p>CRS staff are familiar with the concept of capacity indicators.</p>	<p>No common framework for comparison of local capacity building between projects or between local communities, partners, and the Cooperating Sponsor.</p>
<p>FSCCI (Food Security Community Capacity Index): Most recent 2005 update has 10 variables with 32 indicators.</p>	<p>Solid variables and indicators for core capacity, developed with Title II support over eight years.</p> <p>Core list of indicators and suggested rankings reduces “the variability in how indicators are defined, measured, and reported.”⁵</p>	<p>Does not measure technical capacity.</p>	<p>Widely recognized by FAM working group on Local Capacity Building and FANTA as a role model.</p>	<p>If Cooperating Sponsors are held accountable and/or recognized only for increases in core capacity they may ignore technical capacity areas.</p>
<p>FAM/LCB Working Group Indicators: Exhaustive list of input, process, outcome, and impact indicators of local capacity based on an extensive review of Title II M&E systems by the FAM Local Capacity Building working group.</p>	<p>Solid variables and indicators for technical capacity developed with Title II support to FAM (Food Aid Management Consortium) Local Capacity Building working group.</p>	<p>Highly specific.</p>	<p>Useful indicator framework (input, process, outcome, impact).</p> <p>Useful list of indicators used by Title II projects.</p> <p>Many CRS Title II HQ staff participated in the FAM/LCB working group and are familiar with the list.</p>	<p>No common framework for comparison between projects, partners, and the Cooperating Sponsor.</p>

⁵ The USAID/FFP office identified this as one of the sub-objectives of its approach to “measuring impact and learning what works” (USAID/FFP 2003:30).

Table 3.2 CRS Local Community Capacity Index (LCCI) Categories, Variables, Indicators and Scores

Variable	Possible pts	Indicators
LCCI-Core Capacity Category	20	
1. Community organization	10	Growth in number of organizations & groups Meeting frequency Existence of a written or oral record of meetings Documentation of activities
2. Participation	10	Participation in decision-making Turnover in leadership % members present during meetings/assemblies Gender equity
3. Transparency Mgt.	10	Openness on how the business is carried out
4.. Individual Capacities	10	% of people that know how to read and write Presence of local expertise Application of learned technologies Capacity to manage conflict Timeliness of debt payment
5. Capacity to analyze	10	Capacity to use RRA and PRA techniques Capacity to analyze needs Ability to explain a situation Capacity to analyze situations, prioritize problems, and develop solutions
6. Capacity to take action	10	Quality/usefulness of design and implementation of evaluation action plans
7. Ability to analyze and manage risk and vulnerability	10	On-going assessment of risk and vulnerability Plans in place for coping with risk Diversification of activities Capacity to request and receive outside assistance Periodic reflection on how coping plans worked
8. Capacity to manage risks associated with HIV/AIDS	10	Knowledge level on HIV/AIDS HIV/AIDS behavior practices of the community Existence of community level services
9. Communication and exchanges with outsiders	10	Exchanges with outsiders Capacity to negotiate for external resources
LCCI-Technical Category	80	
SO1 (project specific)	5	Input
	5	Process
	5	Outcome
	5	Impact
SO2 (project specific)	5	Input
	5	Process
	5	Outcome
	5	Impact
SO3 (project specific)	5	Input
	5	Process
	5	Outcome
	5	Impact
SO4/cross cutting IR (project specific)	5	Input
	5	Process
	5	Outcome
	5	Impact

3.1. Categories, Variables, and Indicator/Rankings

3.1.1. *The Local Community Capacity Index—Core Capacity Category (LCCI-Core)*

The LCCI core capacity category measures the same ten capacity variables as the FSCCI (Table 3.2): community organization, participation, transparency of management, good internal functioning of the community or organization, capacity to analyze and plan, capacity to take action, ability to analyze and manage risk and vulnerability, capacity to manage risks associated with HIV/AIDS, communication and exchanges with outsiders, and individual capacity.

Each variable is assessed using one to four indicators. Each indicator is ranked 0-5 with a “0” being no capacity and “5” being very good. To facilitate cross-site comparisons, a system of generic rankings for the indicators is spelled out on a code sheet that is attached to the LCCI guidance (Volume I, chapter five, section 2.0). The first step of the LCCI process involves adjusting the ranking criteria to the local conditions of a specific project. To facilitate cross-site and cross-project comparisons, it is recommended that whenever possible the projects adjust the ranking criteria, but keep the basic indicator structure.

3.1.2. *The Local Community Capacity Index-Technical Capacity Categories (LCCI-Technical)*

The LCCI technical capacity category measures the technical capacities that are needed to execute the Title II project. There is one variable for each Strategic Objective on the project. Four variables are anticipated since most Title II projects have four Strategic Objectives. If a project only has three Strategic Objectives then the fourth variable could be used to measure the capacities that are needed for one of the cross-cutting Intermediate Results or IRs.

Each technical capacity variable is measured using four indicators. The LCCI technical guidance (chapter five) includes a list of indicators that the NGO partners and CRS can use to guide their discussions with the communities regarding which indicators to use. This technical indicator list breaks down indicators into four types:

- **Input indicators** that measure the critical inputs that communities need to build capacity,
- **Process Indicators** that measure the critical processes that communities need to build capacity,
- **Outcome Indicators** that measure the outcomes in terms of behavior change or technical level to which they need to aspire, and
- **Impact Indicators** that measure the anticipated impacts.

This initial list is based on the FAM/LCB working group’s list of capacity indicators. Over the next three year, CRS is proposing to amend this list and develop a more focused group of technical indicators for its Title II interventions.

Each Title II project is free to develop its own list of indicators for each of the four technical variables in the LCCI. These indicators can be exact replicas of some of the indicators in the guidance or ones they create themselves. Thus the technical indicators for one project will not be the same technical indicators for another project. It is important, however, that each project reach some initial consensus with a smaller group of community leaders about the 16 technical indicators that they are going to use to monitor their capacity for the four technical variables. The LCCI guidance outlines a suggested process for reaching this type of consensus.

3.2. Completing the Index

3.2.1. *The Local Community Capacity Index—Core Capacity*

LCCI Core Capacity Indicators (Community-level): Since the scores for the indicators in the LCCI core capacity category are pre-determined and “generic,” it is relatively easy to conduct the LCCI for the core capacity category. This exercise would usually be carried out as part of the annual update that most CRS Title II projects conduct with villages near the end of the Title II fiscal year.

LCCI Core Capacity Indicators (NGO partner and CRS country program level): Parallel to this process, the NGO partner and the CRS project coordination unit should choose four indicators that can be used to track their support of the local communities’ core capacity building efforts.

3.2.2. *The Local Community Capacity Index—Technical Capacity*

LCCI Technical Capacity Indicators (Community-Level): Since the scores for the indicators in the four LCCI technical variables are not pre-determined, they require an extra step. This step involves a participatory process in which the partner and CRS staff work with a smaller group of community leaders to develop the indicator lists. This exercise should produce a list of 16 community technical capacity indicators for the four major capacity components which can then be adapted by all the communities in the Title II project. A sample list of indicators that programs can use as models for the development of these indicators is attached to the LCCI guidance (Volume I, chapter five, section 2.2, first four columns).

3.2.3. *The Local Community Capacity Index—Local NGO Partner and CRS Support:* Parallel to this process, the local NGO partner/s and CRS country program need to select:

- 20 indicators that local communities can use to measure the NGO partner and CRS support of community capacity building (16 for technical capacity, four for each SO; and four for core capacity); and
- 20 indicators that local NGO partners can use to assess the support they receive from CRS.

A sample list of indicators that programs can use as models for the development of these indicators is attached to the LCCI guidance (Volume I, chapter five, section 2.2, last column).

3.3. Scores: Data Entry and Analysis

3.3.1. *The LCCI Community Scores—Core and Technical*

The initial community level responses should be noted on a large sheet of paper or black board in front of the entire group. They should then be recorded on a printed copy of the LCCI data entry form (Volume I, chapter five, section 3.0). One copy of the index should remain in the community archive. Another copy should go to the M&E specialist associated with the local NGO partner.

Once the M&E specialist receives these forms, the community rankings should be entered into the excel file data entry form that is attached to the LCCI guidance (Volume I, chapter five, section 3.0). This excel-based form is structured so that the “raw scores” for core and technical categories are added up automatically at the end of the file. These “raw scores” are then adjusted so that the maximum score for the core category is 20 points and 80 points for the technical category. A sample ranking for a community is described in Box 3.2.

3.3.2. *The LCCI NGO Partner and CRS Country Program Scores*

The partner and CRS country program scores are calculated in a similar way. The fact that there are only 20 indicators (four for core capacity and 16 for technical capacity), however, means that they do not need to be adjusted. As a result:

- The maximum “raw” score for the first four NGO partner and CRS country program indicators for support of community core capacity building is 20 points; and
- The maximum “raw” score for the NGO partner and CRS country program indicators for community technical capacity building is 80 points.

A sample ranking for an NGO partner and CRS score is described in Box 3.3.

4.0. **Reporting**

The average LCCI scores for new and established communities in the Title II project should be discussed during the annual partnership meetings that most CRS programs organize. The meetings should also discuss the local NGO partners and CRS country program “scores” for support to the local community capacity building. These scores should also be reported to the STA for capacity building through the regional CRS deputy regional director for program quality (DRD-PQ).

Box 3.2 Sample Ranking of a Community Using the LCCI

Case Study (following Excel sheet in Volume I, chapter five, section 3.1)

October 2005 Core Capacity Score: If the local community’s core capacity is rated a 3 average for all 32 indicators that measure the 10 capacity variables the raw score would be 96. Since each variable is weighted 10, the weighted score for all 32 indicators would be 60 out of 100 points. When this 60 point “raw score” is adjusted to 20 points (i.e., 1/5 of the LCCI’s value) the adjusted score is 12 points.

October 2005 Technical Capacity Score: If the community’s technical capacity is rated 3 average for all 16 indicators that the Title II project (working with a sample of community leaders) decides to use, the raw score would be 48 (16 x 3); the total score for both core and technical capacity would be 60.

October 2005 Total Score: The community’s combined score would be 12 (for core capacity) + 48 (for technical capacity) = **60** points total (see Volume I, chapter five, section 3.1 LCCI Community Capacity Data Entry Form).

Pre-Project Core Capacity Score: To appreciate the progress that has been made, some Title II projects might facilitate the communities’ examining where they were before the project. If the community had scored 1 on all the capacities ranked retroactively to “before” the project, the raw score on the LCCI core would be 20 out of 100 points. When this 20 point “raw” score is adjusted to 20 points (i.e. 1/5 of the LCCI’s value) the adjusted score is 4 out of 20 points.

Pre-Project Technical Capacity Score: If the community scored 1 on all the technical capacities ranked before the project, the “raw” score would be 16 points and the adjusted score 20.

Pre-Project Total Score. The community’s combined score before the project would then be 4 (for core capacity) + 16 (for technical capacity) = **20** LCCI Total (see Volume I, chapter five, section 3.1, LCCI Community Capacity Data Entry Form)

LOA Targets: If the community desires to be a 4 for every one of the indicators by the project end (i.e. LOA), the targets would be 16 (for core capacity) + 64 (for technical capacity) for a total local community capacity index score of **80** (see Volume I, chapter five, section 3.1 LCCI Community Capacity Data Entry Form)

Translation of the Case Study Data into an Impact Indicator that could be in an IPTT⁶

LCCI Capacity	Pre-Project (baseline)	October 2005 (hypothetical mid-term)	LOA (Life of Activity) (Target)
LCCI-Core (20 pts max)	4	12	16
LCCI-Technical (80 pts max)	16	48	64
LCCI Total (100pts max)	20 points	60 pts	80 pts
LCCI Target	n/a	50 pts	75 pts
LCCI % Achieved vs. Target		120%	106%

⁶ The number reported in an impact indicator would normally be the average calculated across all of the community scores. In this case the data on the community case study is used to illustrate how these averages could be used to calculate an impact indicator that would measure local core and technical capacity.

Box 3.3. Sample Ranking of a CRS Country Program’s Technical Support to Local Community Capacity Building over the Project Life Cycle Using the LCCI

Sample Ranking of the NGO Partner’s Support

The same Excel-file that contains the LCCI Community Capacity Data Entry Form (Volume I, chapter five, section 3.1) also contains the LCCI Partner Support for Community Capacity Data Entry Form (Volume I, chapter five, section 3.2) which is used to calculate the capacities of the NGO partners and CRS country programs. Since each variable has only four indicators there is no need to weight the indicators.

Core Capacity: In this hypothetical project CRS’s support for core capacity development during the first and second year was very strong. This is typical since there is very little staff turnover during the first year. They self-assess their capacity as a 4 in year one and a 5 in year two. The combined score is 16 for year one and 20 for year two. These ratings are discussed with the local partners and the communities during the annual partnership meetings. During year three the person in charge of community capacity building is promoted to serve as head of a new CRS project and the technical support that was anticipated for functional literacy and community leadership is disrupted for an entire year. A new person is hired in the fourth year, but makes limited field visits. Since the indicators that CRS developed to monitor this track field visits and percent of activities in the action plan that are executed, this gap in technical back up is reflected in the lower scores in years three and four (see table below).

Technical Capacity: Technical capacity for the project’s agriculture, and NRM components was very strong during years one and two. Since the project’s health component was not scheduled to start until the third year, no targets were set for CRS support for health. In contrast, the technical support for the project’s fourth component (safety nets) was very uneven during year one and two because of rapid turnover in the supervisor position for that component. Staff turnover in years three and four decreased the project’s support for agriculture and NRM and the health backup was less than was anticipated. The technical support for safety nets was strong. A full roster of CRS technical support positions was not re-established on this project until year five when the project was beginning to plan for a new phase. These staffing issues caused substantial delays in the development of the project plans for phase out during years four and five which had been discussed by not executed during years one and two.

Translation of the Case Study Data into an Indicator for Discussion with Community Groups, the Local NGO Partners, and CRS Administration

	Max Pts	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
Core Capacity	20	16	20	8	8	15
SO1: Agriculture	20	20	20	12	12	12
SO2: NRM	20	20	20	12	12	12
SO3: Health Nutrition	20	n/a	n/a	9	9	20
SO4: Safety Nets	20	8	8	16	20	20
Total (raw score)		64	68	57	61	79
Adjusted (% possible points)	10	80	68/80=8	57	61	79

For Title II projects that are able to incorporate the LCCI community scores into their Indicator Performance Tracking Table (see Table 1.2), this score should be discussed in the annual CSR2 (Cooperating Sponsor Results Report) that goes to USAID (usually in November). Although an impact indicator only has to be reported on at baseline, mid-term, and final, the project could choose to report this one annually. Even if the LCCI is reported annually, the official “targets” for local community capacity building should be set only for mid-term and LOA (not annually).

Some projects, however, may choose to monitor the indicator annually as part of the participatory rural assessment exercises that accompany their community action plans. Based on Africare’s extensive experience with using the Food Security Community Capacity Index (FSCCI) in its projects and CRS’s experience with the FSCCI as part of the Niger Consortium (Box 1.2), the team recommends the following. The LCCI total score should be incorporated into the basic M&E package and IPTT of every CRS Title II project (Table 1.2). If this procedure is integrated into the M&E system of a project, then it would probably not be necessary to incorporate the measure into either a baseline or final survey since the participatory rural assessment (PRA) exercise would provide the necessary data.⁷ The LCCI measures should be updated annually as part of each Title II project’s annual PRA exercises and partnership meetings.

5.0. Anticipated Impacts

The anticipated benefits of conducting an annual assessment using the LCCI are expected at several levels. In the short-term, the indicator should provide local partners and the CRS country programs that host Title II projects with a better mechanism for identifying: (a) their impact on local community capacity; and (b) tracking staff accountability for building these capacities over the project life cycle.

Given that the LCCI is a standardized tool, it can fairly quickly be incorporated into CRS’s regional and headquarters based M&E systems (Table 3.3).

⁷ Africare’s recent experience with incorporating the FSCCI into the baseline survey of a phase II Title II project showed big differences between the “original” and “new” project villages in terms of their understanding of the core organizational processes being measured. Specifically, the community leaders in the original villages understood what they were measuring and many of the “new” villages being added to the project during the second phase did not. These different levels of understanding tended to lower the quantitative rankings of the “original” project villages and raise the rankings of the “new” villages so that the “new villages” appeared to have greater core organizational development capacity than the “original” ones, which was not the case. The Burkina experience shows how the process of conducting the intensive PRAs during the first year puts both “original” (i.e., villages where the project has been active longer) and “new” villages on a more “even footing” as far as understanding of the project and the expectations for the community group’s organization and performance. One should anticipate, therefore, a certain amount of “renegotiation” of the baseline measures for the local community self-assessments of their core capacity during the first two years of any project.

5.1. Enhanced Prospects for Sustaining the Community Level Impacts of Title II Programming

Past experience with the FSCCI in Africare’s Title II projects and the CARE and CRS programs where it has been used has shown the utility of having a single, harmonized system for monitoring core community capacity. Especially important is its usefulness in keeping project staff focused on developing the core community capacities that projects need to sustain their achievements after project funding ends. In the absence of such a system, it is easy for project administrators to focus their attention exclusively on the capacities that they need to be successful with the project they are currently executing.

Table 3.3 Anticipated Impact of the LCCI on Different Title II/FFP Audiences

	Audience Whose Management Information Systems are Likely to Benefit						
	Local NGO Partners	CRS Country Program with Title II Project	CRS Regional Offices	CRS STA Capacity Building	CRS STA M&E	Other Title II Cooperating Sponsors	USAID/FFP 2003 Strategy
Title II Capacity Building Strategies							
Enhanced prospects for sustaining community level impacts of Title II programming	X	X					
Enhanced opportunity for the identification of best practice in community capacity building	X	X	X	X			X
Title II Management Information Systems							
Strengthens two way communication between communities and the CRS/Local NGO partner organizations	X	X	X	X			
Title II M&E Systems							
Creates and pilot tests an impact indicator that CRS (initially) and USAID/FFP (ultimately) can use to track local community capacity building					X	X	X

5.2. Enhanced Opportunities for Identification of Best Practice in Core and Technical Community Capacity

Having a common index for capacity assessment makes it easier to compare and contrast local capacity building strategies between CRS's NGO partner sites. It also makes it possible to identify communities that appear to have "stronger project management and implementation capacities than others" (CRS 2003, IRA, Output 1). Case studies of such "positive deviance" will advance understanding of the situations in which such exemplary capacity building occurs for both CRS and the Title II Food for Peace office (Ibid.; USAID FFP 2003: 30).



Feedback to evaluators regarding local partner and CRS support. Farmers presenting their perspective on community-based health and nutrition activities to an external evaluator of Title II food security project in Niger (D. McMillan 2002)

5.3. Strengthening Two-Way Communication between Communities and the CRS/Local NGO Partner Organizations

By helping local communities be more explicit about what types of capacity they feel they need from the local NGO partners, the LCCI helps clarify the different partners expectations. This in turn can clarify what types of support the local partners need from CRS to meet these expectations. It can also set up a mechanism for a periodic review of these expectations.

5.4. Progress toward Development of a Core Group of Local Capacity Indicators for Title II Cooperating Sponsors

No single model for monitoring local capacity building is perfect. CRS could certainly develop its own "index" based on some subset of the indicators in the 1998 *CRS Program Manual*. A different system for measuring core capacity, however, would reduce CRS's ability to compare its experience with the core capacity monitoring efforts that Africare has pilot tested in its own and other (CRS, CARE) programs. Since CRS and Africare combined have approximately 36 funded Title II development programs (about 1/3 of the total Title II portfolio), this would represent a significant missed opportunity for the USAID/FFP office.

The proposed index reinforces this ongoing initiative. At the same time it expands the core capacity index concept by using the same index model to:

- Monitor technical capacity building; and
- Foster better follow-up (and accountability) for backstopping local capacity building by local partners and Title II Cooperating Sponsors.