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A Strategy for Building Capacity to Adapt: Using a Capitals-Based Capacity Assessment Approach with Community Groups in Indus Delta, Pakistan

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International Union for Conservation of Nature – Pakistan

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Executive Summary

This report presents outcomes of the use of a community group capacity assessment tool modified from that developed in Australia by Mitchell and Allan (2018). The tool involves a self-assessment questionnaire that uses a capital-based approach to help groups identify their capacity strengths and needs. The discussion created during use of the tool and from subsequent presentation of analysed results is intended to support the groups develop strategies that can build on their strengths and address areas where they would like to make improvements. The process places emphasis on exploring aspects related to “social capital”, that is bonding, bridging and organisational attributes of the community groups, but are also supported by two other capital types, i.e. “human capital” and “physical and financial capital”.

The modification and application of the tool was undertaken in rural Pakistan as part of the Adapting to Salinity in the Southern Indus Basin (ASSIB) project (Mitchell et al., 2024), which started in March 2021. Our purpose was to check applicability of the strengths and needs assessment approach to the Pakistan rural community context and to see if it had any beneficial impacts for the collaborating community groups. While the ASSIB project collaborated with several “bright spot” communities across Pakistan (i.e. communities living in salinity-affected areas that had the ingredients and potential to take their own initiatives to adapt productively to their salinity), the only community with established community groups was the Tippun Dublo community near Keti Bandar in the Indus Delta. The ASSIB team thus worked through IUCN, the partner organisation that had established relationships with Tippun Dublo, to administer the tool with the community groups based there.

We faced challenges when modifying and applying the survey tool for the new context. Several online workshops were needed between the survey creators in Australia and the field team in Pakistan to customise the survey tool and decide on the best method for its administration. Our aim was to maintain essential aspects of the approach being that: (1) emphasising “social capital” roles is key to groups understanding their capacity; (2) groups will benefit most if they are allowed to “self-assess” their capacity strengths and needs through discussion with those who can understand and explain the questions in the tool; and (3) there is a prerogative on those creating an analysis of each group’s capacity assessment results to present them in a way that stimulates discussion by the groups for their future planning and action.

Eight community groups completed the survey in 2021. In general, the groups were found to have high levels of bonding, bridging and human capitals; moderate levels of organisational capital; and low levels of physical and financial capital.

Reports on the survey results were prepared in detailed and descriptive form for researchers and development practitioners, which then formed the basis for the visuals supplemented with brief text that were used to communicate the results for participating community groups. A report back process was run and completed in June 2022. Through this process, the participating groups were able to validate the results as presented to them, which they then used to plan efforts to build on their strengths and address their needs – or their perceived areas of deficiencies.

A subsequent informal assessment two years after these discussions took place revealed positive indications that the groups were able to make efforts that improved their bridging and organisational capitals. These indications have come from their increased interaction with large NGOs and government departments. It appears that a link can be demonstrated between strengths of the groups’ bonding and bridging social capital attributes and high levels of adaptive and resilience capabilities in such contexts. The groups have been mobilised to make conscious efforts to enhance these capitals, pursuing this as their survival and adaptation strategy. A systematic evaluation could be designed and implemented to offer further evidence to confirm these indications and level of progress.

The process used to apply the survey tool demonstrated feasibility, validity, reliability, effectiveness and usefulness of the approach. It was conducted with a small number of community groups. To find underlying trends and patterns in rural progression through this approach, we recommend its wider application across a broader range of locations and involving different types of community groups. Not only will the results be useful for the participating groups, but they will also generate a wealth of knowledge that could be beneficially used by a wider range of stakeholders.



Abbreviations

ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
ASSIB	Adapting to Salinity in the Southern Indus Basin
CABI	Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCB	Citizens Community Board
CET	Community Engagement Team
CIF	Community Investment Fund
CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
CO	Community Organisation
CRP	Community Resource Person
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific Industrial and Research Organisation
CSU	Charls Sturt University
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FOCUS	Focus Humanitarian Assistance
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HH	Household
ICBA	International Center for Biosaline Agriculture
IFAP	Indus For All Programme
IMI	Institutional Maturity Index
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LLCI	Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative
LSO	Local Support Organisation
LWR	Land and Water Resources
MI	Malteser International
MIP	Micro Investment Plan
MNSUAM	Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture, Multan
MUET	Mehran University of Engineering and Technology
NADP	Northern Areas Development Project
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRSP	National Rural Support Programme
PCRWR	Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources
PPRP	Peoples' Poverty Reduction Program
RSPN	Rural Support Programmes Network
SAAC	Syed Asad Ali Conservation Award
SAFWCO	Sindh Agricultural and Forestry Works Coordinating Organisation
SCCDP	Sindh Coastal Community Development Project
SERL	Stakeholders Engagement for Research and Learning
SOFT	Society of Facilitators and Trainers
SRSO	Sindh Rural Support Organisation
TRDP	Thardeep Rural Development Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VDP	Village Development Plan
VO	Village Organisation
VRM	Village Resources Map
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

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1 Introduction

This report presents the results of the use of a capacity assessment survey tool by rural community groups based in Pakistan. The groups are part of a coastal community in the Indus Delta, Tippun Dublo, which had been selected as a 'bright spot' community able to collaborate with a research team to explore strategies and adaptations for living more productively with the salinity conditions impacting their landscape. This collaboration was developed as part of an Australian-funded research-for-development project, known as Adapting to Salinity in the Southern Indus Basin (ASSIB). Of all the 'bright spot' communities who became collaborators with the ASSIB project, the Tippun Dublo community was the only with established community groups. The survey tool had been designed by Mitchell and Allan (2018) to support community-based natural resource management (NRM) groups identify their capacity strengths and needs, and to use the results to develop strategies for addressing identified capacity needs. The survey had been used in Australia over three occasions (Mitchell & Allan, 2018; 2019). This report presents an account of the first time the survey tool had been modified for use in a non-Australian context. Our report details the activity, which commenced in 2021. We explain how we modified the capacity assessment approach and put it into action. We also provide our reflections on the process, offering insights for the wider community involved in the ASSIB project and beyond, as well as for future endeavours in the field of community development.

2 Background

In 2016, Mitchell and Allan (2018) were commissioned by a regional government-funded NRM agency to develop a new process for assessing capacity strengths and needs of community-based NRM groups. The original need for such a capacity assessment process was inspired by discussions led by a network organisation representing such community groups in southern NSW, Australia. The process developed as a collaboration among the NRM agency, network organisation and the research team. It drew on the concept of the capitals, with a heavy focus on "social capital"; i.e., bonding, bridging and organisational attributes of the community groups, as well as two other capitals categorisations, i.e. "human capital" and "physical and financial capital". These five types of capitals were further broken down into 21 assessment categories, and conversion of the assessment categories into a set of questions for the survey tool (questionnaire). The entire process of questionnaire development and administration included piloting the questionnaire, revisions, sending out and receiving completed questionnaires, data compilation and analysis, report development and finally, but importantly, a process of reporting back to the collaborating community groups. The survey was administered during 2016-17 with Murray Region Community-Based Groups (Mitchell and Allan, 2018), and then again over two consecutive years in 2017 and 2018 with NSW-based members of the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative (LLCI) in Australia (Mitchell and Allan, 2019).

The ASSIB project started in Pakistan in March 2021 with an aim of developing and investigating adaptation options and strategies through co-inquiry with people living in and managing salinity affected areas (Mitchell et al., 2024). As part of the project's support to build community adaptive capacity, the team explored application of the Mitchell and Allan (2018) community strengths and needs assessment process. The purposes were to test the applicability of the process in a different country context (Pakistan), assess its reception, and then monitor outcomes. It was hoped that there would be benefits for the participating community groups in Pakistan, similar to those found from the earlier work in Australia. Eight existing Tippun Dublo community groups completed the survey during October-November 2021. One group involves membership from several villages in the area and has been operating for almost 20 years; the other groups are village-based – three for men and four for women. Five of these village-based groups were formed in 2018 or 2019 (including all the women's groups). More details about these groups are provided in the Study Area and Methods section below.

Reports on the survey results designed for use by researchers and development practitioners were finalised in March 2022. For the collaborating community groups, the reports were prepared in the form of visual charts supplemented by brief text in local Sindhi language. A report back to community groups process was then undertaken and completed in June 2022.

3 Overview of Approach Used

In response to a request from a network of community groups in the Murray region of NSW, Australia, Mitchell and Allan (2018) co-developed with the network organisation a means to evaluate the capacity of the network’s member groups. The team decided to build this approach using a “capitals” theoretical framing that rests on the concept of “social capital” (see, e.g., Putnam 1995), drawing inspiration from uptake of social capital by the “Landcare” movement that emerged in Australia during the 1980s (Sobels et al., 2001; Webb & Cary, 2005), and particularly from existing capacity assessment frameworks already used by the Murray LLS and NSW government to support Landcare groups, and similar theoretically derived capacity assessment frameworks (as detailed in Mitchell & Allan, 2016). From this review of the literature, they created the framework for the evaluation of the capacity shown in Table 1 below. Such frameworks assume the capacity of a rural community group rests on stocks of social, human, and physical and financial capitals. The social capital is further bifurcated into bonding social capital (the glue that binds – how cohesive the group is), bridging social capital (the oil that makes for smoother connections – how well the group connects with others), and the organisational capital (the nuts and bolts of social coordination – how well the group organises internally). Thus, the worth of the social capital in the overall scheme of the framework receives stronger focus along with the other two types of capitals, i.e. human capital and physical and financial capital. To enable the application of the approach, the capital types have been appended with five sets of 21 assessment categories (indicators). These more specific categories can further be translated into questions which groups themselves can reflect on and answer for their self-assessment.

Table 1: Framework of capitals behind the ASSIB approach (Source: Mitchell & Allan 2016 Murray community-based groups capacity assessment framework).

Capital type	Assessment categories
Human capital	1 Group skills and experience
	2 Group motivation
	3 Up-skilling
	4 Leadership
Bonding social capital	5 Group identity and shared history
	6 Shared values
	7 Respect, trust, and commitment
Bridging social capital	8 Community engagement
	9 Community catalyst
	10 Relationships with other groups
	11 Brokering with government and building external partnerships
	12 Representation and advocacy
	13 Fairness of decision making and knowledge availability
Organisational capital	14 Strategic planning
	15 Program management
	16 Accountability
	17 Critical reflection and flexibility
	18 Information management
	19 Organisational communications, systems, and procedures
Physical and financial capital	20 Finances, budgeting, and access to funding
	21 Assets and infrastructure

Accepting the fundamental premise of the capitals, four other essential characteristics of this approach are as follows:

1. By accepting that stocks of capitals are the dynamo of rural community group capacity, it logically entails that the capacity needs to be understood as relative to context and aspiration. Local biophysical and social conditions of a particular context, being some of the most powerful determinants, shape the accumulations of the capitals of the groups, and especially their social capital. In the quest to fulfill their aims the groups continuously strive to increase their capitals, and they are best placed to compare their available stocks of capitals with their aims. Our approach thus relies on groups self-assessing their capacity as the method of implementation.
2. Since the levels of a group's capacity is determined in relation to its goals by the group itself, monitoring the change in the level of the capacity over a period is meaningful only for that group. This relativity of different capacity levels with different groups prevents us from finding any merit in comparing capacities with the purpose of grading an assembly of the groups, since the level of a capacity of a group is irrelevant to another group. The capacity assessment predominantly reveals insights about the group to which it belongs.
3. While the specific arrangement of biophysical factors in a particular context affects the capitals and thus the capacity of a group, the level and change in level are determined by the objectives and aspirations of the group itself. An increase in the level of capacity would enable the group to fulfill its objectives. Such fulfillment would motivate the group to set even more ambitious targets. Against these fresh, more ambitious targets, the level of the capacity would not appear sufficient. This means if the level of group capacity of a group goes down over time, it may be a positive sign for the group because that may be due to the group having set higher goals for itself. Decrease in the level of the capacity can also result from the negative events, such as depletion of a natural resource, termination of a favourable policy by the government, or the death of the group's leader. In such a case, the level of capacity will go down if the group keeps holding on to its previous goals. It allows us to understand the change in the level of the capacity as a "spiral movement" which can go in either upward or downward direction over time.
4. Our approach culminates in a report-back phase. The purpose of the report-back is to support a collaborating group conduct an informed discussion among their membership and plan its own strategies to address the areas of weaknesses and build on the areas of strengths identified through the assessment process. This phase involves presenting the assessment results in a way that the groups can understand and giving them the opportunity to agree or suggest changes to the results. That is necessary to generate their ownership and subsequent use of the results by the groups themselves.

4 Study Area and Methods

4.1 ASSIB Bright Spots and Community Engagement Team

The ASSIB project worked with "bright spots", local-level communities exhibiting potential to take advantage of co-inquiry, nominated by local experts and selected against key criteria (Mitchell et al., 2024). From the beginning of the ASSIB project implementation (March 2021), those ASSIB team members who were more interested and involved in "community engagement" matters held online meetings to establish effective coordination, discuss issues arising at different sites and share experiences for the solutions. Later, this group became known as the Community Engagement Team (CET), a subset of the larger ASSIB team. The CET continued holding regular fortnightly online workshops through to March 2024. The proposal of applying the capacity assessment approach was floated by the Australian members in these meetings. At that time (August 2021), the ASSIB project was working at three sites. Those were (1) Jalalpur in Multan district, Punjab (2) Malwah in Shaheed Benazirabad district, Sindh, and (3) Tippun Dublo in Keti Bandar, Thatta district, Sindh. Community groups were found to exist at the Tippun Dublo site only, hence, this site was selected to trial the community group assessment. IUCN, an ASSIB project partner, had nominated that site and was the key partner responsible for the co-inquiry process with this community.

4.2 Description of Tippun Dublo Bright Spot

Tippun Dublo, in Keti Bandar sub-district of Thatta district of Sindh is a coastal community living at the centre of the Indus Delta. For the purposes of the ASSIB project, the area of Tippun Dublo was defined as spanning a rectangular stretch, which was then biophysically divided into three distinct zones (see Figure 1). These three zones are: (1) an area further inland where people depend mostly on agriculture (the area in Figure 1 enclosed with the green line); (2) a transitional strip where people depend on both agriculture and fishing (area enclosed with white line); (3) coastal creeks where people depend only on fishing (area enclosed with blue line). Livelihoods and socioeconomic well-being of the community are directly connected to the natural environment in all three zones. Availability of canal water and the health of the Ochito River directly influence the socioeconomic well-being of the agricultural and transitional zones (see Table 2). Freshwater flows of the Indus River and health of the mangrove forests directly influence the fishing communities.



Figure 1. Google Earth image showing Tippun Dublo in the Indus Delta outlined in red, with the three ASSIB zones of focus for collaboration outlined in green, white and blue (see Figure 2 for greater detail).

From the experience of the lead author, the main social challenges that this community is facing are lack of leaders who can advocate and own its interests; influx of migrants from Karachi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province resulting in immense pressure on and depletion of natural resources; and institutional deficiencies challenging the community to safeguard its lands and other natural resources. These deficiencies emerged due to the long-term historical upheavals which were beyond the control of the local population.

Table 2: Most powerful biophysical factors and their direct and approximate influence on the well-being of the Tippun Dublo bright spot community.

Most powerful biophysical factors	Trend/ behaviour of the factor	Agricultural zone directly influenced?	Transitional zone directly influenced?	Fishing zone directly influenced?
Availability of canal water	Decreasing, irregular and uncertain	100%	100%	50%
Health of Ochito River	Changing, uncertain	100%	100%	50%
Indus River flows	Decreasing	50%	50%	100%
Mangrove forests	Increasing	50%	100%	100%
Climate change induced disasters	Increasing, irregular and uncertain	100%	100%	100%

The Tippun Dublo community transcends beyond the ASSIB project area, taking up an area shown by the red line in Figure 1. Tippun Dublo as a whole is a wedge-shaped area that roughly matches up with the boundary of the Keti Bandar sub-district (تعلقو in Sindhi). While the area covers a diverse landscape, its boundary has been determined by social connections among the communities, economic interactions and ecological dynamics.

The area is increasingly prone to climate change induced natural disasters and the Tippun Dublo communities have demonstrated great resilience in facing increasing uncertainties and irregularities. This resilience and potential for self-driven adaptive action helped them meet the criteria the ASSIB project had created for a “bright spot” community (see Mitchell et al., 2024).

ASSIB’s engagement with the community and other stakeholders at the Tippun Dublo was arranged into four layers:

- 1. Core:** three villages, namely, Pir Allah Bux Shah Qalandari in the agricultural zone, Haji Moosa Katiar in the transitional zone, and Ayub Dublo in the fisheries zone (see yellow placemarks in Figure 2). ASSIB implemented action plans to investigate adaptation options in only these three villages. Many of the training and meetings were concentrated in these villages.
- 2. ASSIB Project Area:** There are dozens of other villages in the ASSIB project area (Figure 2) and two village-type small towns, Keti Bandar and Jooho. The ASSIB project originally engaged with 11 of these villages, including the three afore-mentioned core villages and with Keti Bandar town. The other eight settlements have been identified through the white placemarks on Figure 2. IUCN’s early aims were to bring all these 11 settlements under the core engagement. The additional villages were engaged through pre-SERL workshop surveys, their participation in Stakeholders Engagement for Research and Learning (SERL) workshops, Land & Water Capability Surveys, exposure trips to core villages and Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR)’s model sites, and membership including participation in the local level Stakeholder Forum. A subsequent decision was made to focus implementation of co-inquiry action plans with the three core villages only.



Figure 2. ASSIB’s Tippun Dublo bright spot project area with collaborating villages identified.

3. **Tippun Dublo Community:** As already described, much of the Tippun Dublo community extends beyond the ASSIB's project area. ASSIB engaged some progressive farmers and social activists from the villages outside of the project area through a Stakeholder Forum that was established to support co-inquiry engagements with relevant stakeholders. Stakeholder Forum members participated in the SERL workshops, trainings, exposure trips and dedicated Forum meetings.
4. **Thatta District:** Many of the members of the Stakeholder Forum were formally nominated by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and government departments at the district level. They participated in the SERL workshops that ASSIB organised at the Tippun Dublo site and participated in Stakeholder Forum meetings.

4.3 Tippun Dublo Community Groups

Initially, among the Pakistan-based CET members, only IUCN staff had first-hand experience of working with the community groups/ community organisations. Thus, IUCN was primarily tasked to identify, collaborate, and lead the activity at the site under a continuous counselling from the Australia-based experienced social scientists through the regular online deliberations. Other CET members (SOFT staff) were asked to participate as observers. IUCN saw this activity as a part of the ASSIB project, and accordingly identified and collaborated with the groups “purposefully” to synergise it with the ongoing 3-year project phase and “strategised” for the anticipated longer-term 10-year phase that the ASSIB project proposed to establish. To understand this, therefore, it is necessary to first understand the rolling-out of the ASSIB at the Tippun Dublo site (Section 4.2).

Given the layout of the Tippun Dublo bright spot site described above (Figure 2), when IUCN was asked by the ASSIB team to identify and prepare a list of community groups in the area, it consulted social activists, Community Resource Persons (CRPs)¹ and its own local volunteers. A list of 24 somewhat “distinguished” community groups within the project boundary was prepared, which included 22 Community Organisations and two Community-Based Organisations – see section below for details explaining the distinction. The total number of the groups existing in the project area could have been many dozens more. This account, thus, clarifies the method of identification which was guided by purposefulness and recognition than any sort of random sampling.

4.4 Characterising Community Groups in the Area

In Sindh development sector² discourse, as well as from informal and less formal³ sources of information, we find that the terms Community Organisations (COs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) are used interchangeably. However, reflecting on the lead author's decades-long engagement with these organisations we consider them to be distinct community group types because they differ from each other in respect of their origin, structure, scale, purpose, and functioning.

Both COs and CBOs are theoretically understood to be independent entities but practically they have an inherently symbiotic aspect which they acquire during their coming into being through the direct involvement of the external organising agencies. Thus, these groups presume collaboration with, and cooperation from, some external agency is a fundamental prerequisite for their own functioning. The external organising agencies are not free from accountability for this. The staff of the organising agencies intentionally instil this aspect of the dependency into the community groups during the formation phase and make every effort to sustain their influence over the groups because they want a “broad support base” on the ground, and the visibility within the broader development arena for their own agencies. Only a few community groups – typically CBOs and hardly ever COs – defy this built-in dependency and become independent entities, although that also depends on many other favourable factors which must be existing or emerge.

¹ CRPs are local persons who are mobilised by large NGOs/ institutions to support community groups in their documentation/ filing, correspondence, accounting etc. since due to the prevailing illiteracy in rural areas, the community groups need such support. CRPs are usually rewarded with an honorarium of Rs. 5000/ month for their services.

² By development sector we mean the sum of people, their organisations and work like COs, CBOs, all non-profit organisations which include NGOs, companies, societies, trusts, foundations, forums, networks, donor institutions, microfinance banks, Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank and the like. Corporations, for-profit companies, commercial banks, and other industries are not considered as the “development sector” within this fraternity.

³ Survey results, project progress reports, newspaper articles and online posts are examples of material considered less formal. Agreements, MoUs, registration certificates, bank papers and other documents of such nature are considered formal.

Table 3: Quick overview to differentiate COs from CBOs.

Aspects	Community Organisations (COs)	Community-Based Organisations (CBOs)
Science: Principles and purpose of coming into being	Social Organisation: Society is viewed holistically, a system that is organised of principles. Attempts to improve are made by changing the relationships among these principles to achieve a desired organisation of society.	Community Mobilisation: Local people are viewed as a resource which can be organised into such a form for mobilisation towards attaining an external cause which is somewhat separately identifiable from the community – such as: protection of a forest, wildlife, gender mainstreaming, right to vote, ban on under-age marriages.
Examples	Rural Support Programmes: National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO), Sindh Agricultural and Forestry Works Coordinating Organisation (SAFWCO), Thardeep Rural Development Programme (TRDP), Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), and other NGOs of this tribe.	International NGOs/ institutions: Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), ActionAid, WaterAid, IUCN, Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Concern Worldwide, Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS), Malteser International (MI) etc.
Responsible staff of the organising agency ⁴	Social Organisers	Community Mobilisers
Membership and representation	Limited within the same village or a neighbourhood. Representing lower and/ or marginalised sections of the society.	Can expand to many villages or over a larger area. Members from any section of the society.
Attitude	Humble, serious, and hardworking. Restraining and cautious.	Proud, overbearing, ambitious. Can be active and ferocious.
Growth and development	Theoretically, COs are meant, trained, and encouraged to become independent from their organisers. But practically the examples of such independence may be quite hard to find if not impossible. The genuine reasons behind this failure require a discussion which goes beyond the scope of this report.	Examples of CBOs which became independent of their organisers and/ or became some small/ medium NGOs can easily be found.
Linkages	They do not actively seek cooperation from government departments/ institutions/ NGOs but are always ready to work jointly when contacted.	They seek cooperation from external organisations and are slightly active.
Networking	COs are pre-designed to network into Village Organisations (VOs) and VOs into Local Support Organisations (LSOs). In these cases, a VO is dominating its constituent COs, and LSO is dominating its member VOs.	CBOs are not necessarily expected to join any pre-existing scheme of networks. They may, however, join any existing network of the organisations or form a new one but in any of such cases the influence of network(s) does not overshadow the CBO's existence.

⁴ Nowadays, this distinction is vanishing as people don't see things in detail. The term "social mobilisation" and resultantly "social mobilisers" are also common. This does not represent a distinct thread of thinking and practice but appears a mix of the two which are mentioned above. As we cast our sight over the development arena, we find the "social mobilisation" a smaller concept from the "social organisation" and larger from the "community mobilisation" comparing their scopes.

4.5 Selection and Overview of Community Group Capacity Survey Participants

Eight groups as listed in Table 4 completed the self-assessment in two stages. The first stage was designed to test the newly customised survey tool (questionnaire – see **Appendix 1** – an explanation of its development is explained in Section 4.7 below), during which four groups completed the self-assessment. Even this pilot turned out to be so good that the data and the results are included as part of this report. The initial four groups were selected for piloting the survey as they were the friendliest and easily accessible.

After a slight tweaking of the questionnaire, four additional groups completed the survey as part of the second stage. Thus, a total of eight groups completed the survey from the list of 24 identified groups. IUCN staff and its field volunteers selected these eight groups through the same principles under which previously 24 groups had been identified.

Table 4: Eight community groups who completed self-assessment.

Name of the community group	Village(s) where membership is derived from (see Figure 2)	Organised in year	Type
Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee	A. Dublo, Khaario, H. Dublo, Phirht, Others	2006	CBO
All Men CO Ali Muhammad Rano	Rano	2010	CO
All Men CO Qalandri	Qalandri	2013	CO
All Women CO Roshni	Qalandri	2018	CO
All Men CO Ahmad Samoo	Samoo	2018	CO
All Women CO Ahmad Samoo	Samoo	2018	CO
All Women CO Shahzaad	K. T. Bandar	2019	CO
All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho	Ghuggho	2019	CO

Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee, the first group listed in Table 4, is a CBO which the lead author organised as part of the [“Tackling Poverty in Pakistan’s Coastal Communities through Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Project”](#). We believe this project offered the community a turning point – changing the decreasing mangrove trend into an increasing trend. This CBO successfully pioneered and led the mangrove restoration at Keti Bandar in Indus Delta with great vigour and endured extreme adverse pressures, conflicts, and conspiracies. The president of this CBO [Mr. Ayub Dublo was nominated](#) for “Syed Asad Ali Conservation (SAAC) Award”. His father flew to Lahore and [received the award on his behalf in 2010](#). The CBO then started declining after 2013 due to persisting adverse local conditions and global changes in the field of conservation.

The second two groups listed are COs that are among 1,587 which the NRSP, as an implementing partner, organised and trained in 847 coastal villages through the overall guidance and supervision of the lead author under the [“Sindh Coastal Community Development Project \(SCCDP\)”](#). Works of these COs significantly contributed to improving the life conditions of marginalised coastal communities along the Sindh coast. After 2013, neither the Government of Sindh nor the NRSP could keep providing sufficient support to these COs, though they have been working modestly on their own and seeking cooperation from NGOs and institutions since then.

All the remaining five COs have been organised by the SRSO under the [“Peoples’ Poverty Reduction Program \(PPRP\)”](#). These differ slightly from the COs which NRSP organised earlier (see Table 5 below).

In Table 6 below, we review aspects related to the extent the groups can be considered representative.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

Approval from CSU’s Human Research Ethics Committee was obtained prior to initiating the collaborative meetings with the community groups. Project prepared a “Participant Information Sheet” (**Appendix 2**), that explained the ASSIB project, research activity in question, expectations from the groups, and addressed post research concerns. IUCN staff carried this sheet in-person to the groups they met. The sheet, in English, was supplied and explained in local language (Sindhi) to the groups as an invitation to collaborate with the project.

All the groups met, expressed their willingness (verbal commitment) to collaborate. All groups agreed that they would complete the questionnaire as a group exercise.

As a separate process explained in Section 6.3 below, each group also gave their consent to allow the results identifiable to each of the groups involved to be shared publicly (also see example in **Appendix 3**)

Table 5: Comparative overview of old and new COs.

Old COs organised by NRSP	New COs organised by SRSO
Co-COs (COs having both men and women members) were common, along with single gender COs.	All the COs are single gender COs. There is no Co-CO in the sight.
Having a bank account was mandatory.	It seems that these don't have bank accounts.
All had strategic plans.	It seems that these don't have strategic plans.
Organisational Management Training and Community-Based Infrastructure Management Trainings were necessarily received besides a large array of other relevant optional trainings.	No such training received by the COs which collaborated with ASSIB. (SRSO literature details many trainings for COs. Our recent discussion with SRSO staff suggests that the COs are provided with training depending on the needs and activities which are to be undertaken by the CO).
They used to be a registered social entity with the government to obtain a registration certificate.	Not registered and have no registration certificate from the government.

Table 6: Characterising representation among selected groups.

Representation aspect	Comments
Number/ sample size and area coverage.	These groups were recruited from within the ASSIB project area which is a small portion in the middle of the Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar area. These are similar types of groups found throughout the broader region. Thus, their spread being limited within the project area does not devalue the sample. On the other hand, they effectively cover the project area extent. Selecting eight out of 24 groups provides good representation.
Representing all community group types.	Presently, other community group types like self-germinating civil societies are not visible in the area. They used to exist but have been deactivated or are inactive. Some youth groups, like sport teams, are there but their spectrum of activity is limited. Network organisations like VOs and LSOs were not approached to participate as our focus was on locally organised groups in the area. COs and CBOs are acceptably leading community group types there. We feel that the selected number of COs sufficiently represents their own type but note that there is only one CBO represented among the groups surveyed.
Representing a range of socio-economic standing among the Tippun Dublo community.	The membership of all these eight groups is derived from the poor, suppressed and/ or marginalised sections of the Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar community. Thus, this sample of the groups does not represent the community as whole. However, it surely represents the lower stratum of the community. Some of the groups at their own village level represent the whole village of a poor caste. Other groups, if they belong to a powerful caste, would still represent the lower section within that powerful village.

4.7 Customising the Survey Tool (Questionnaire)

The 21 assessment categories which pertain to the five capitals in the framework had to be transformed into survey questions. For this, the team built on the previous questionnaire used earlier in Australia (Mitchell & Allan, 2018). Two steps to modify the previous questionnaire were conducted. First, before piloting the questionnaire, the CET held online workshops in which significant addition and deletion, splitting and amalgamation in the available stock of the questions took place. As a result, the number of assessment

categories covered by the questionnaire was reduced from 21 to 19. A question relating to the category “group identity and shared history” was not included in the original questionnaire but the category was retained in the framework as a prompt for groups to self-reflect on “as a key aspect of bonding social capital” (Mitchell & Allan, 2018, p. 12). The question in the Mitchell & Allan (2018) survey that related to the category “information management” was dropped when modified for the new context. This was because the question related to sharing information among group members which was deemed less relevant than existing “bridging capital” questions focusing on allowing people outside the group have access to the group’s knowledge and experience. The resulting questionnaire was trialled and found to be highly suited to the new Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar context. This success resulted from respect given to the inputs and opinions of the staff that had actual experience at the site. The questionnaire was only slightly revised post-pilot, with some questions rephrased.

While the questionnaire was translated into Urdu language, the methodology used for survey administration did not require use of the translation, as explained in Section 4.8 below.

The final questions used for the survey as they relate to the assessment categories are shown in Table 7. The questions are placed here as per their sequence in the questionnaire which is different from the order of assessment categories in the framework because arrangement of questions in a questionnaire requires consideration of practical dynamics of a group discussion (see **Appendix 1** for actual question order).

Of the 64 questions in the questionnaire, 25 are used to document background information about the group. The score of these questions is not calculated to determine the capacity level but these questions provide contextual information, which is helpful to understand the information of other questions related to capacity assessment. These 25 contextual questions are placed under a non-assessment category “group description” in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Design of ASSIB community group capacity survey tool.

Qn no.	Question	Form of response	Related assessment category	Category no. in framework
0	Is this survey being completed as a group exercise?	Y/ N	Group description	0
0	Name of community group.	Text	Group description	0
1	In which year was your group established?	Date	Group description	0
2	How would you best describe the type of community your group represents?	Tick a box options	Group description	0
3	How does your community group define who is part of it?	Tick a box options	Group description	0
4	How many people in your community group? (Men, Women, Youth)	Tick a box range	Group description	0
5	Which of the following best describes the membership trend of your group over the last 3 years? (Overall, Men, Women, Youth)	Tick a box options	Group description	0
Community group governance and administration				
6	Does your community group have a governing body with assigned roles (e.g. chair, secretary, treasurer)?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Leadership	4
7	How many organisational/ formal decision-making meetings did your group’s governing body hold over the last 12 months?	Tick a box range	Group description	0
8	Does this governing body develop an agreed agenda for such organisational/ formal decision-making meetings?	Always/ Sometimes/ Never/ Don't Know	Organisational communications, systems, and procedures	19

9	Has this governing body adopted a set of rules for how discussions and decisions are undertaken at its organisational/ formal decision-making meetings?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Organisational communications, systems, and procedures	19
10	Are formal documented minutes of the meetings taken and made available to all members of the community group?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Organisational communications, systems, and procedures	19
11	Our community governing body meets often enough to achieve what the group wants to do.	Likert (agreement)	Organisational communications, systems, and procedures	19
Community group resources and capacity				
12	How many organised community activities, including meetings, were held by your community group over the last 12 months?	Tick a box range	Group description	0
12Supp	Can you provide a bit of detail on these activities please?	Text	Group description	0
13	Can you now provide details on what your community group wants to do?	Text	Group description	0
14a	Thinking about what your community group wants to do, do you think your group has the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to do what it wants to do?	Likert (agreement)	Group skills and experience	1
14b	Our community group can easily fill positions of responsibility from among our members.	Likert (agreement)	Leadership	4
14c	Those who take on responsibilities in our community group are given clear instructions about what they are responsible for doing.	Likert (agreement)	Program management	15
14d	Those who take on responsibilities in our community group understand and accept their responsibilities.	Likert (agreement)	Respect, trust, and commitment	7
14e	People in our community group actively share knowledge and learn from each other about how to do things that address each other's needs.	Likert (agreement)	Up-skilling	3
14f	Our community group has a good understanding of ways to develop our group's capacity.	Likert (agreement)	Up-skilling	3
14g	Our community group knows where to get the knowledge, skills, and resources we need.	Likert (agreement)	Brokering with government and building external partnerships	11
15	During the past 12 months, did your community group have access to staff dedicated to supporting your community's planning and development employed by another government and/ or non-government organisation?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Program management	15
15Supp	If yes, can you provide a bit of detail please?	Text	Group description	0
16	Does your community group engage volunteers from outside your community group who support your community group's activities and development?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Group motivation	2
16Supp	If yes, can you provide a bit of detail please?	Text	Group description	0

17	In general, in the time your group has existed, how easy has it been for your group to access funds to support the activities you have undertaken?	Tick a box range	Finances, budgeting, and access to funding	20
18	Does your group pool financial and/ or other resources to contribute towards hire or purchase of assets that your group provides for its own coordinated communal use by all group members?	Often/ Occasionally/ Never/ Don't Know	Shared values	6
19	Does your group have a bank account?	Active/ Deactivated/ No/ Don't Know	Accountability	16
20	If your group does not have a bank account, please provide details on whether the group has funds and how they are managed?	Text	Group description	0
21	Over the time your group has existed, has your group ever tried to access funds or grants?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Group description	0
22	If your answer to Q21 is no, please provide details on why it has not tried to access funds or grants?	Text	Group description	0
23	If your answer to Q21 is yes, how easy has it been for your group to access funds or grants for the following items on behalf of its members?	Matrix Table	Finances, budgeting, and access to funding	20
23Supp	If you haven't tried accessing funds for any particular items listed above, please explain why?	Text	Group description	0
24	Over the time your group has existed, has your group ever tried to access loans?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Group description	0
25	If your answer to Q24 is no, please provide details on why it has not tried to access loans?	Text	Group description	0
26	If your answer to Q24 is yes, how easy has it been for your group to access loans for the following items on behalf of its members?	Matrix Table	Finances, budgeting, and access to funding	20
26Supp	If you haven't tried accessing loans for any particular items listed above, please explain why?	Text	Group description	0
27	Over the time your group has existed, has your group ever tried to access subsidies?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Group description	0
28	If your answer to Q27 is no, please provide details on why it has not tried to access subsidies?	Text	Group description	0
29	If your answer to Q27 is yes, how easy has it been for your group to access subsidies for the following items on behalf of its members?	Matrix Table	Finances, budgeting, and access to funding	20
29Supp	If you haven't tried accessing subsidies for any particular items listed above, please explain why?	Text	Group description	0
Relationships with others				
30	Has your community group established partnerships and/ or linkages with other communities, community groups and/ or organisations?	Y/ N	Relationships with other groups	10
31	If yes, please list the name(s) of any communities, community groups or other organisations your community group has established partnerships and linkages with.	Text	Group description	0

32a	Our group often shares information and ideas with other similar groups.	Likert (agreement)	Relationships with other groups	10
32b	Our group has a high level of engagement with our community.	Likert (agreement)	Community engagement	8
32c	Our group is satisfied by our community's level of participation in activities we undertake.	Likert (agreement)	Community engagement	8
32d	Our group influences people in our community beyond our members.	Likert (agreement)	Community catalyst	9
32e	Our community group makes it easy for people outside of the group to access our knowledge and expertise.	Likert (agreement)	Fairness of decision making and knowledge availability	13
32f	Our community group targets influential people at local, regional, provincial and/ or national levels.	Likert (agreement)	Representation and advocacy	12
Community group planning and activities				
33	Has your community group undertaken a planning exercise to establish its goals and objectives?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Shared values	6
34	Does your community group have a strategic plan?	Y current/ Y but not current/ N/ Don't Know	Strategic planning	14
35	If you answered yes to Q34, does your group regularly monitor performance against the strategic plan?	Y/ N/ Don't Know	Critical reflection and flexibility	17
36a	Our group has a shared view of its purpose/ reason for existing.	Likert (agreement)	Shared values	6
36b	People in our community group are usually highly motivated to achieve its goals.	Likert (agreement)	Group motivation	2
36c	Our community group checks that our strategic direction matches its goals and objectives.	Likert (agreement)	Strategic planning	14
36d	Our community group always takes action to address issues to improve its performance.	Likert (agreement)	Critical reflection and flexibility	17
36e	Our community group always seeks feedback from those local government authorities and/ or relevant government departments with responsibilities for our community on what they think of our activities.	Likert (agreement)	Accountability	16
36f	Our community group goes out of its way to ensure that all members are consulted when key decisions are made.	Likert (agreement)	Fairness of decision making and knowledge availability	13
36g	Our community group can make decisions even when there are strong differences of opinion.	Likert (agreement)	Respect, trust, and commitment	7
36h	A characteristic of our group is a high level of trust and respect between our members.	Likert (agreement)	Respect, trust, and commitment	7
36i	Our community group has adequate physical infrastructure and equipment to support the activities we undertake.	Likert (agreement)	Assets and infrastructure	21
36iSupp	Please provide a bit of detail on the physical infrastructure and equipment needed to support your group's activities.	Text	Group description	0

4.8 Questionnaire Administration

Survey administration in Australia involved multiple options: mail, email, online and face-to-face. For the Pakistan Tippun Dublo context, the only practicable approach was deemed to be face-to-face using facilitators. However, a basic aspect of the group self-assessment approach requires that the facilitators must not decide the group's response to a question. Every question had to be explained before the group, which group would then discuss among its members, agree on a response, and then, let the facilitator record their response to each question in the questionnaire. This approach raised two more issues. First, the Tippun Dublo area is considerably distant and isolated from mainstream society and thus functions with a considerable degree of independence. The community has its own patois, wealth of idioms and argots. The community groups, being the "organisations" set up by staffs of large NGOs/ institutions, hold a culture of jargons of which meanings may differ from group to group or one group-type to another group-type depending on the origin of influence under which a group might have come into being and existing. This issue required the facilitators to demonstrate the knowledge of language, culture of "organisations", spirit of communities and skills of a "community mobiliser" or a "social organiser". Thus, the facilitators were able to benefit from the lead author's involvement given his long familiarity with the area and the groups involved. Second, this facilitation role thus had a bearing on the quality of the information obtained from the groups. If different facilitators took disparate approaches among the different community groups, the possibility of uneven facilitation might influence the results across different groups. This situation suggested to depute only one facilitator to facilitate the questionnaire administration. The CET thus put this responsibility on the lead author of this report to take on the prime role as facilitator for questionnaire administration. Other CET staff from SOFT were recommended to contribute to the process as participating observers.

The lead author met each group face-to-face two weeks before the survey. The groups were provided with copies of the "Participant Information Sheet" (**Appendix 2**) and questionnaire (**Appendix 1**). Each document was explained thoroughly to the groups and their supporting CRPs. This served as a formal invitation to the survey. If the groups agreed to participate by meeting again to discuss their responses to the survey questions, they were asked to provide their consent. Through follow-up calls their will was secured and a date and time was determined with mutual consent for the survey.

Every group completed the questionnaire as a group discussion which involved eight to 12 members and office bearers. They also got support from their CRPs while IUCN got support from social activists and volunteers in coordinating the meetings, taking attendance sheets and photographs of the discussion sessions. Additionally, two to three facilitators from SOFT also attended all the discussions as observers. While the CET had initially speculated that each discussion might take 20 to 30 minutes, the discussions actually took one and a half hours on average for each group to complete the questionnaire. This is an impressive commitment from each group.

Translation of the questionnaire in Urdu, which CET arranged earlier, was not required to be used with this methodology. The discussion sessions involved the most demanding task of the entire research activity. That was to explain survey questions written in English, meeting the dialectal requirements of the rural Sindhi community and jargon of the "organisations" at one hand, and satisfying the understanding requirements of the SOFT observers on the other hand. All discussions with the eight groups were completed between October and November 2021. The completed questionnaires and attendance sheets were scanned and circulated among relevant CET members along with pictures of the events for further review and discussion.

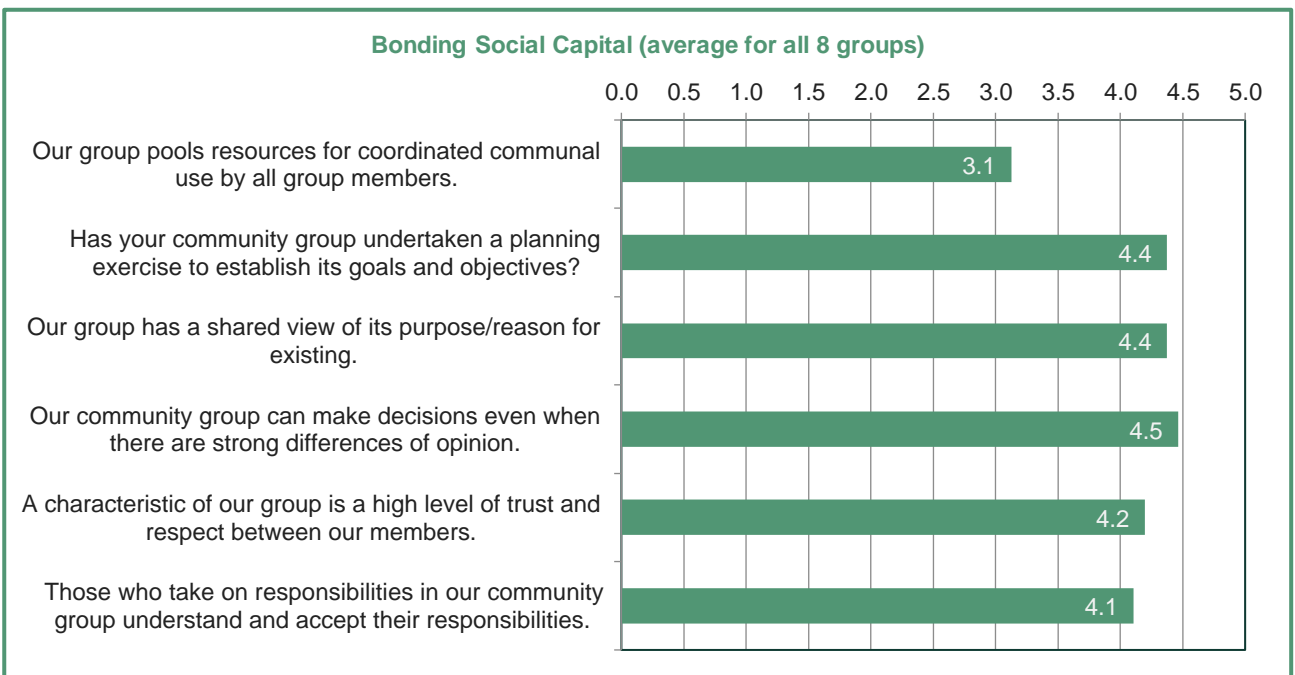
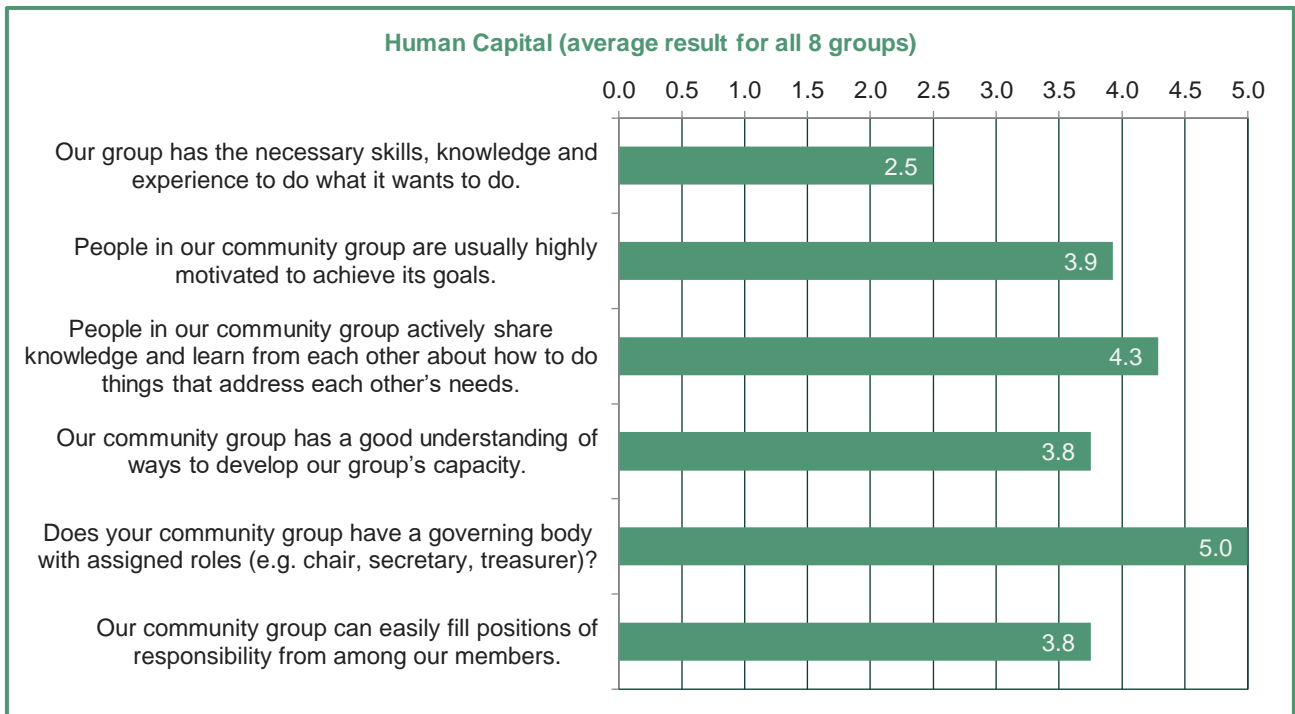
4.9 Analysis and Reporting

The team from Australia adopted the same approach to preparation of a set of snapshot reports as they had used in Australia (Mitchell & Allan, 2018; 2019). Standardised scores were created for all questions related to capacity assessment, which were then presented in a series of bar graphs (6 related to Human Capital; 6 to Bonding Social Capital; 10 to Bridging Social Capital; 9 to Organisational Capital and 2 to Physical and Financial Capital – see Results section below and **Appendix 4**). These results were then summarised for each type of capital using a spider web graph, and a series of explanatory notes were added to explain what the results and how they could be used. This style of reporting had worked well in the Australian context, but the process had to be adapted for the Pakistan context. The snapshot report was deemed useful for use by community mobilisers and CRPs, but the spider web graph was deemed a useful visual that could form the basis for feedback and discussion prompt with each of the community groups (see section 6 below, Figure 3).

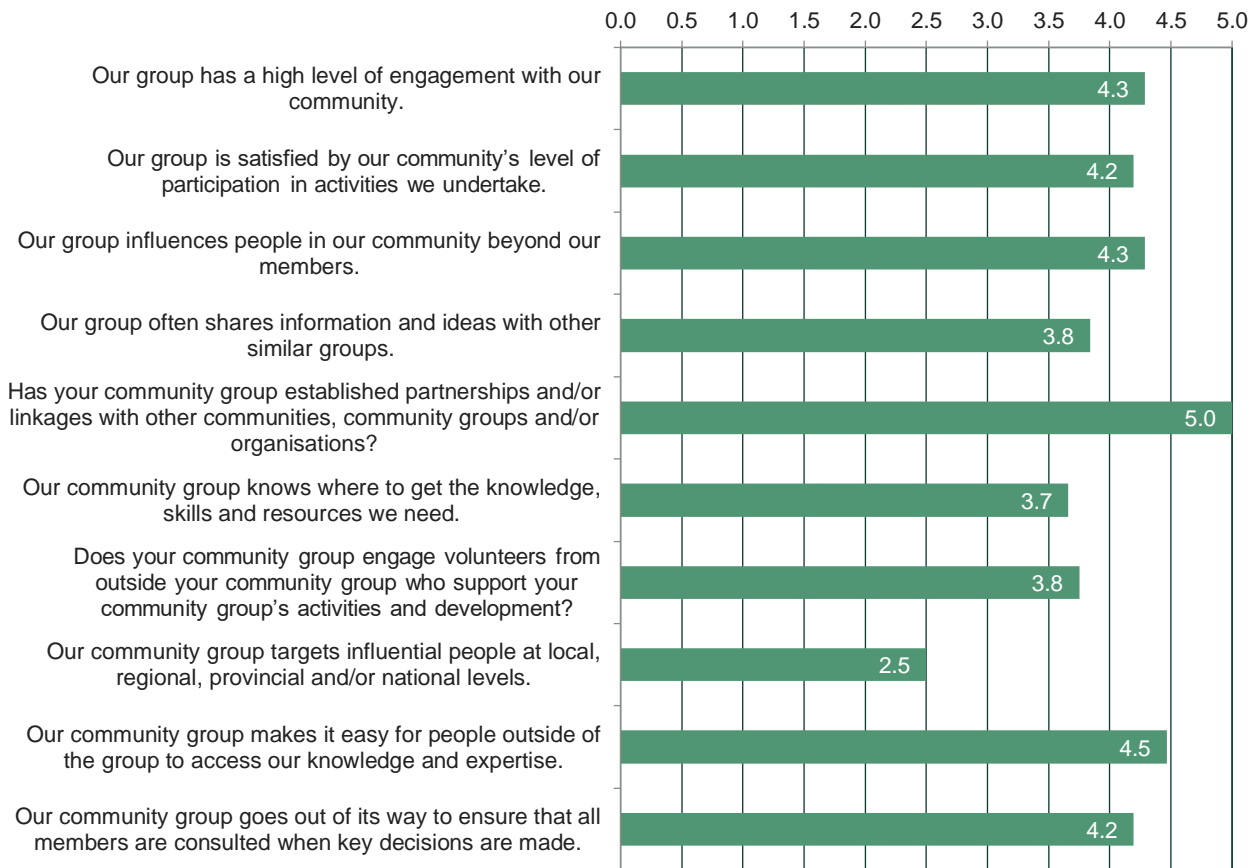
5 Results

We first present the composite results for all eight groups before presenting the results for each group separately. These results are based on the above-referred snapshot reports (see Appendix 4). The graphs are presented first followed by a summary of the text provided to explain the results. Each group has given their consent to allow their results to be shared as a research report.

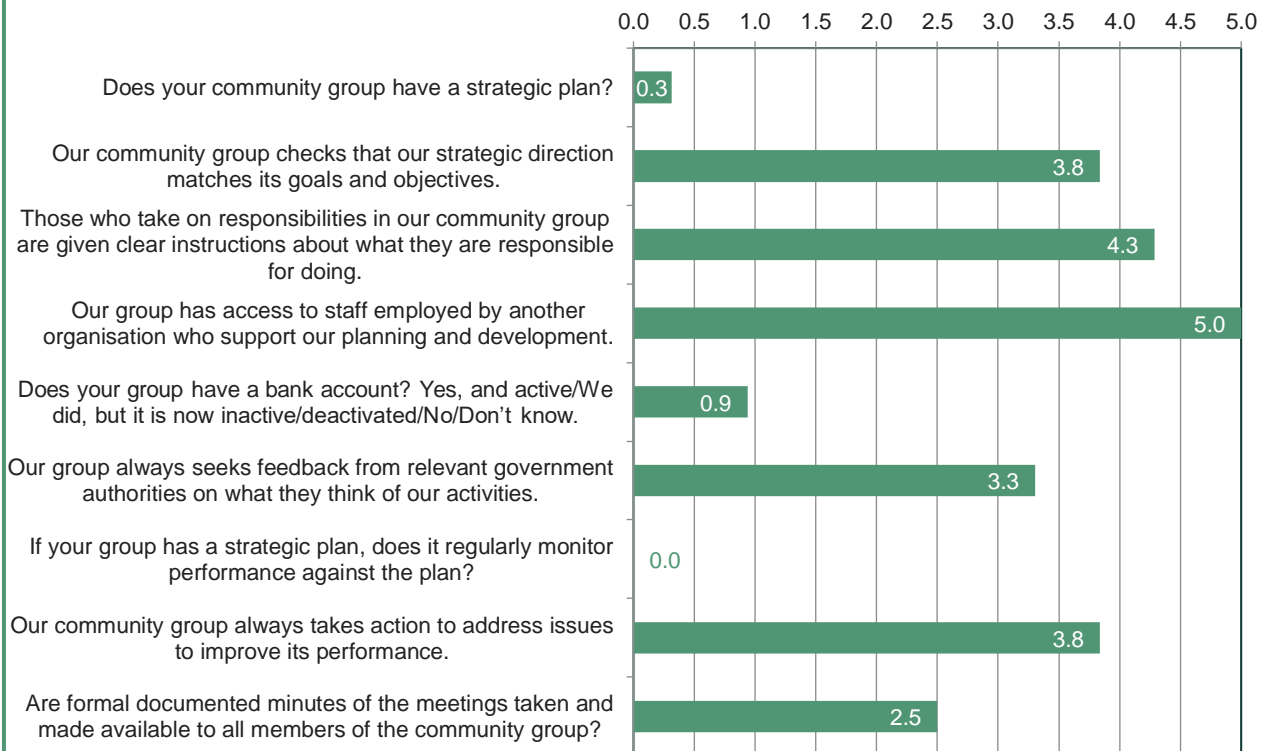
5.1 Composite Results for All Eight Groups



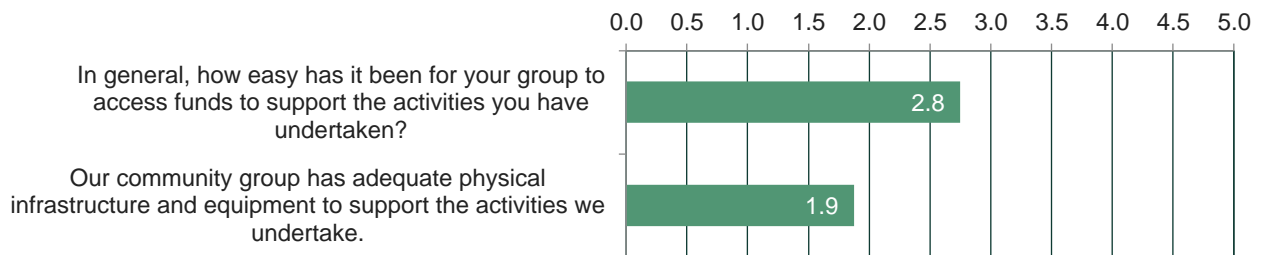
Bridging Social Capital (average for all 8 groups)



Organisational Capital (average for all 8 groups)

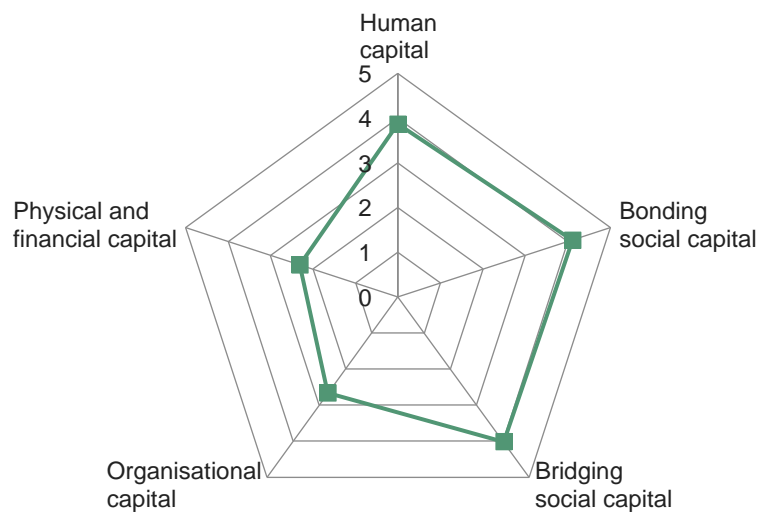


Physical and Financial Capital (average for all 8 groups)



Data from all eight Tippun Dublo groups indicated strengths in the areas of human and social capitals. Such results are similar to those found in surveys undertaken with rural community groups in Australia. In general, the Tippun Dublo groups felt confident about their successes in connecting with the community they represented and with other groups (bridging social capital), and that group members had a strong sense of shared values, as well as feelings of respect, trust and commitment for each other and the group (bonding social capital).

All 8 Tippun Dublo Groups (average overall)



While scores were on average lower for physical, financial, and organisational capitals, there were still some areas of strength.

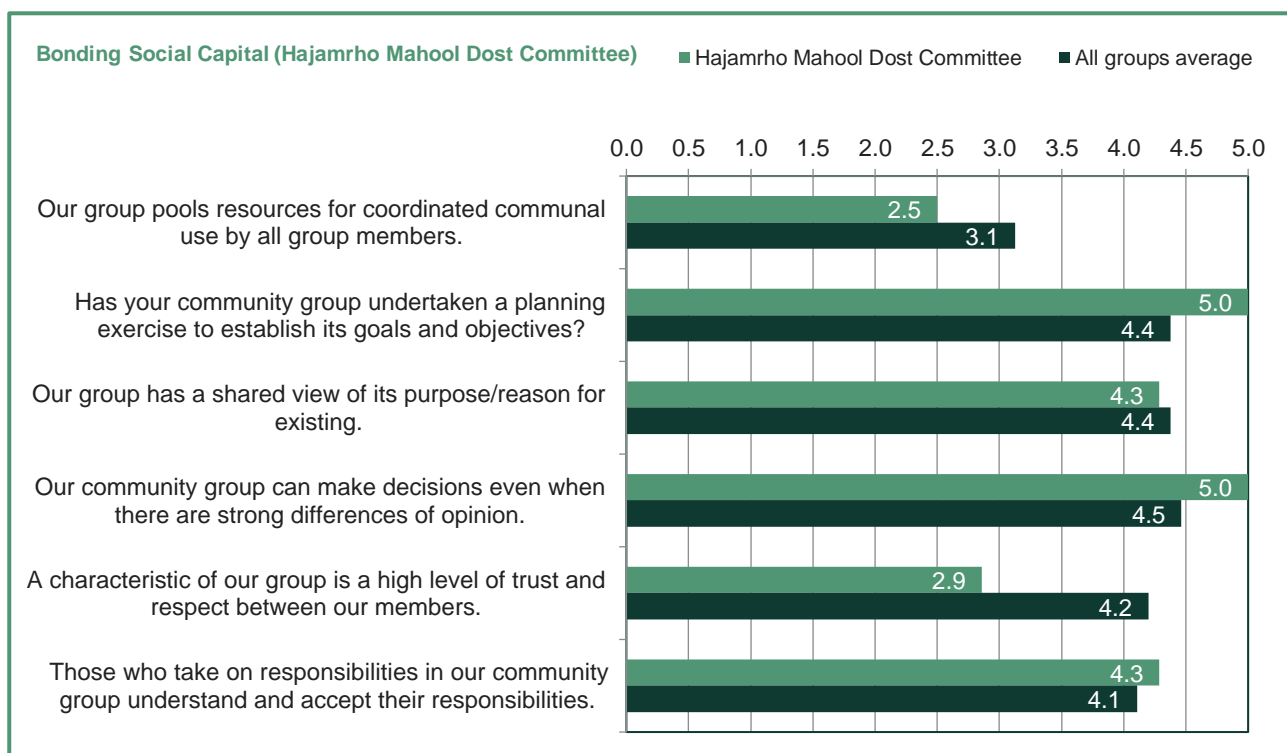
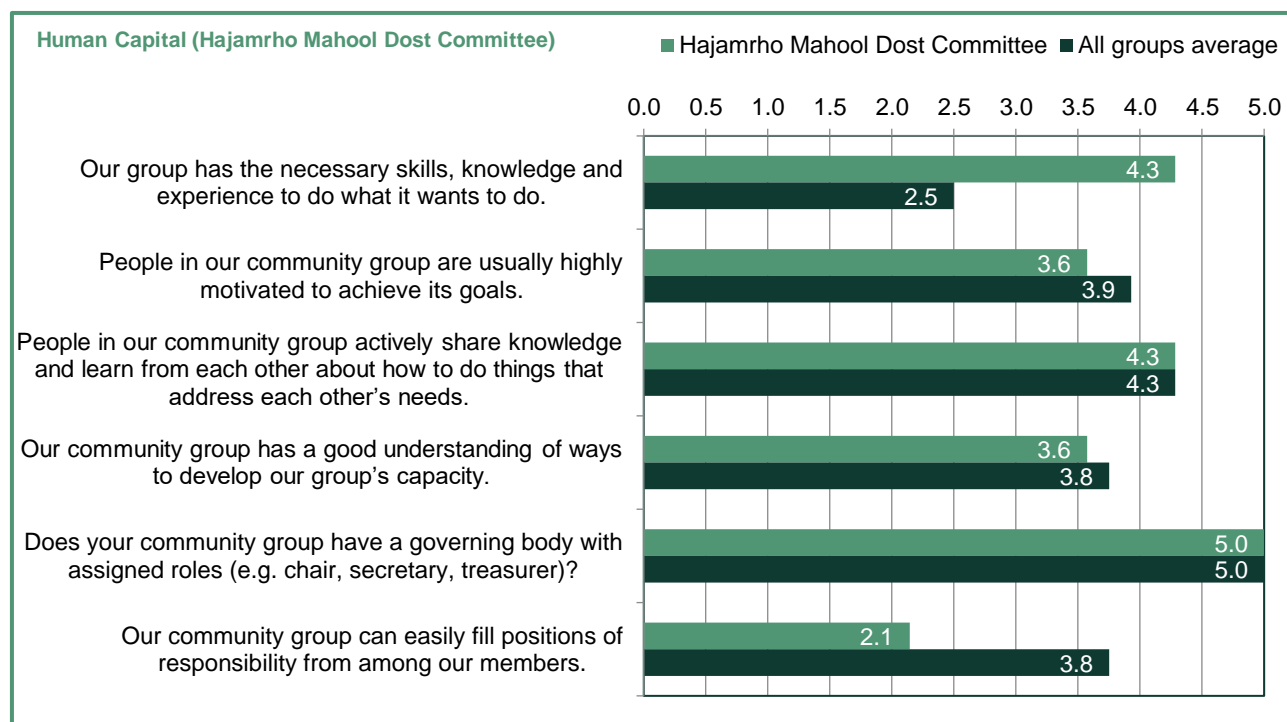
Even though no groups had a current strategic plan, almost all groups indicated they had taken action to address issues to improve performance and checked that the group's strategic direction matched its goals. Most groups indicated difficulty in accessing funds, and only two groups indicated that they had adequate infrastructure and equipment to support activities being undertaken.

The results also pointed out areas that might represent general capacity needs among groups. These particularly focused on organisational capital and physical and financial capital, the so-called 'nuts and bolts', such as strategic planning, project and information management, and access to funding. There was also a sense among most groups that they could have more skills, knowledge, and experience, and that their ability to target influential people was low.

The comparatively lower score for organisational capital was also in part due to groups responding that they did not have a strategic plan (score of 0), or that their plan is not up to date (score of 2.5), which also resulted in groups not being able to answer the question related to monitoring performance against the plan. Zero scores also affected the results for those groups who do not have a bank account, or that the bank account is no longer active (score of 2.5).

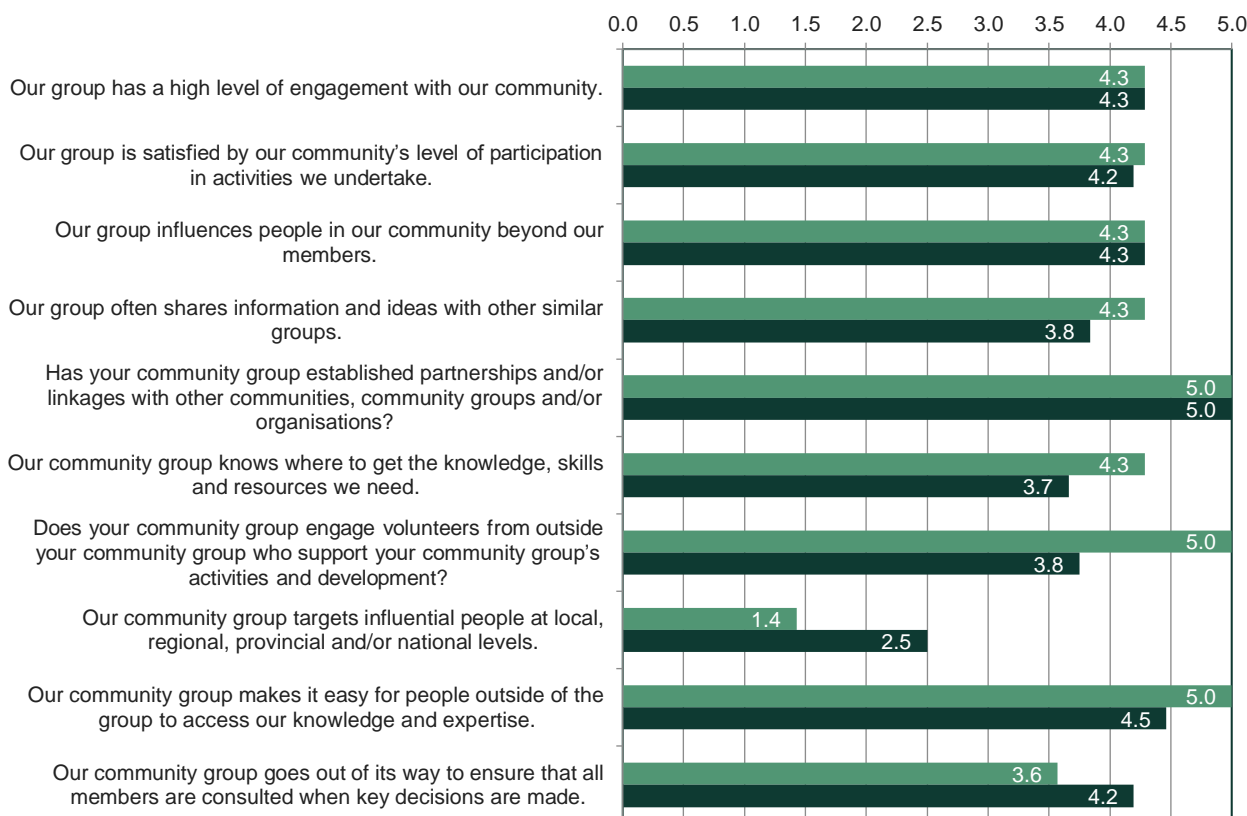
The scores used to create the spider graph (above) are taken from the questions detailed in the five graphs presented (above). Standardised scores are used so that all maximum scores are 5, including for yes/ no questions, where "yes" = 5, and "no" = 0.

5.2 Results for Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee



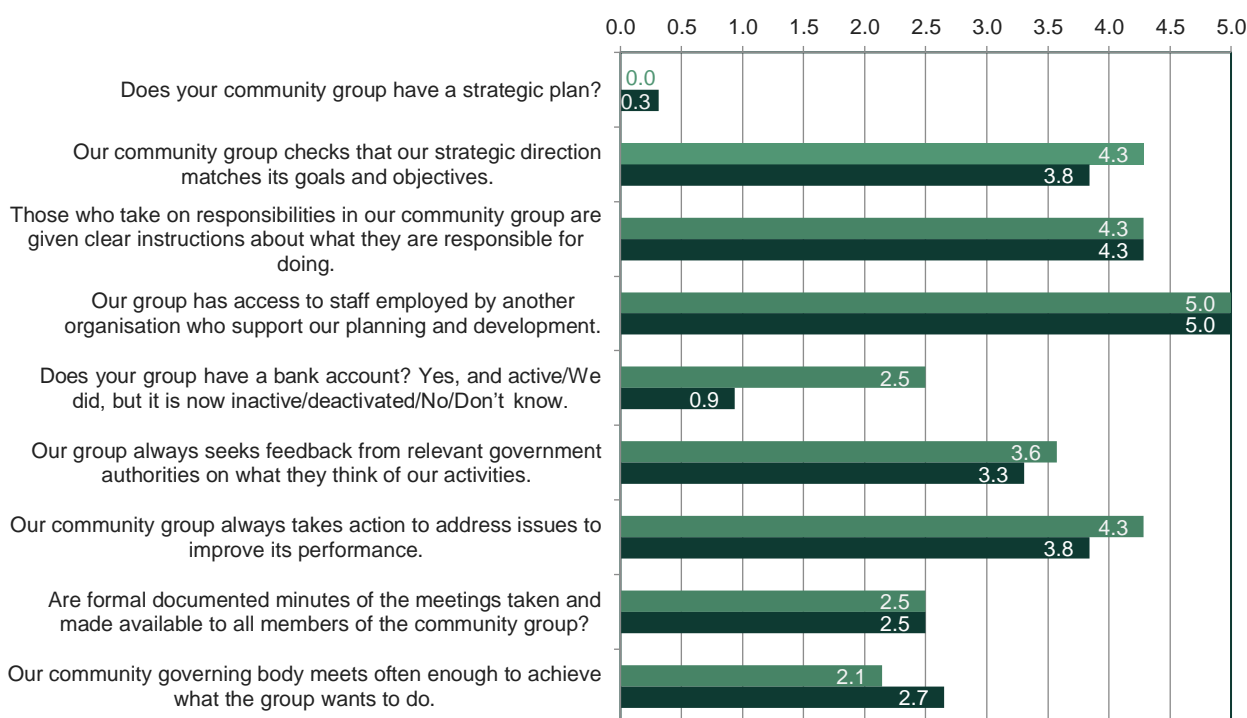
Bridging Social Capital (Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee)

■ Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee ■ All groups average

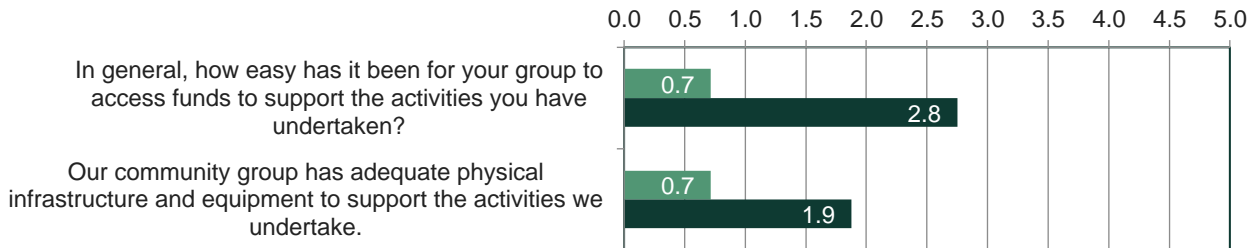


Organisational capital (Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee)

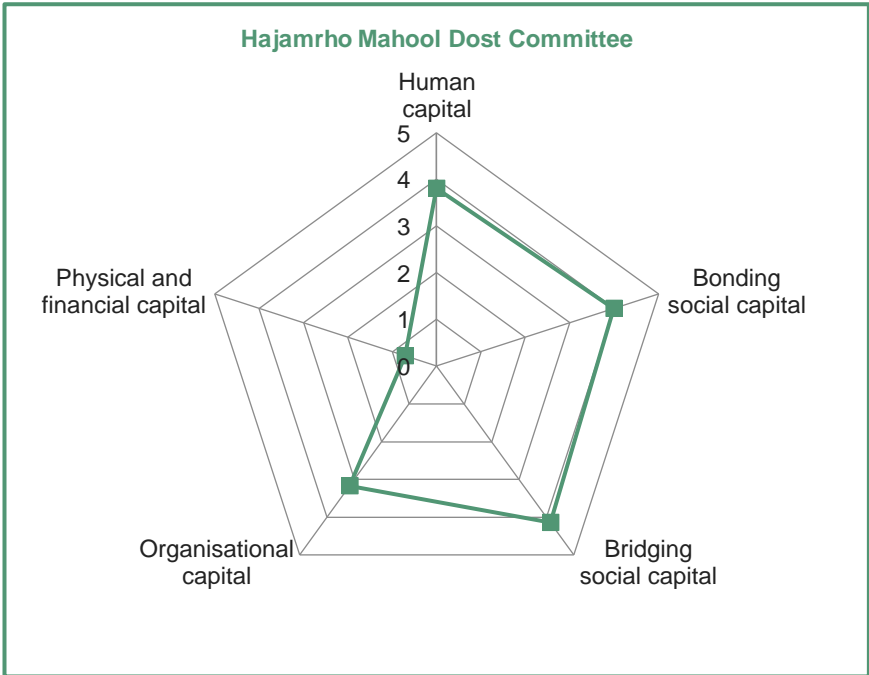
■ Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee ■ All groups average



Physical and financial capital (Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee) ■ Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee ■ All groups average



On November 30, 2021, the Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee felt confident enough in aspects related to human, social and organisational capitals than its physical and financial capitals. The group felt most confident about its successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups (bridging social capital), and that their team had a strong sense of shared values, respect, trust and commitment for each other (bonding social capital), as well as the necessary skills, experience, motivation and leadership to enable them to do what they want to do (human capital).

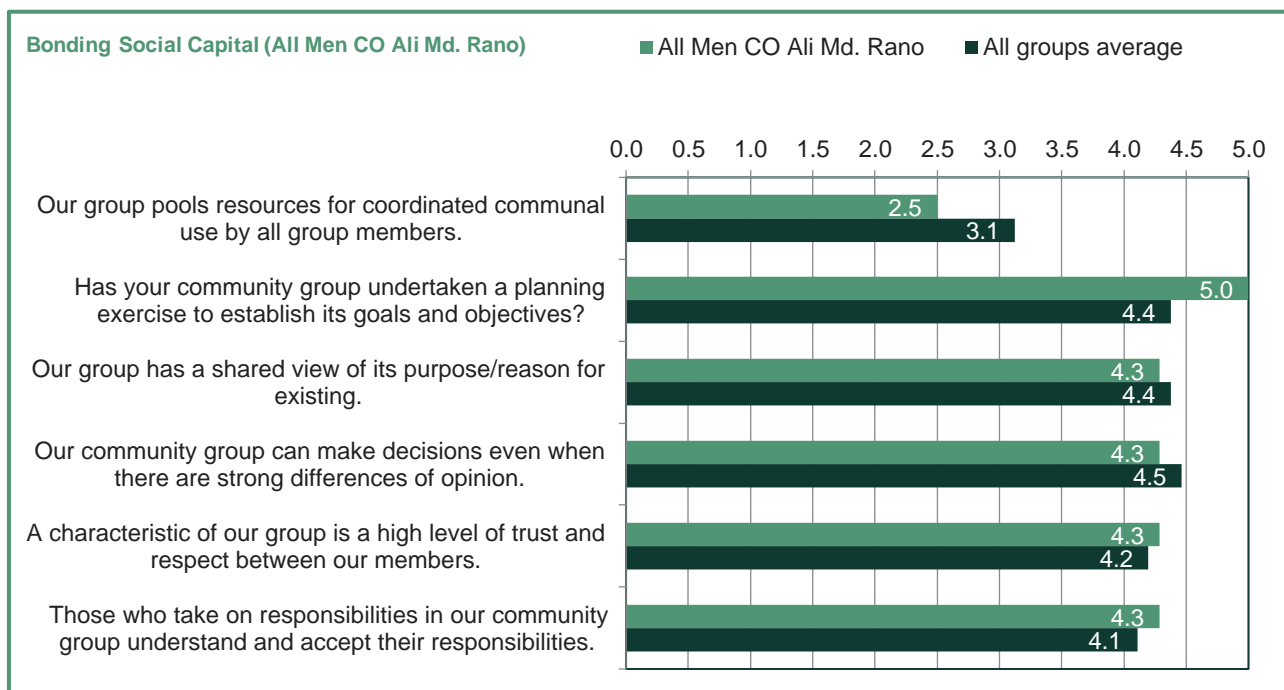
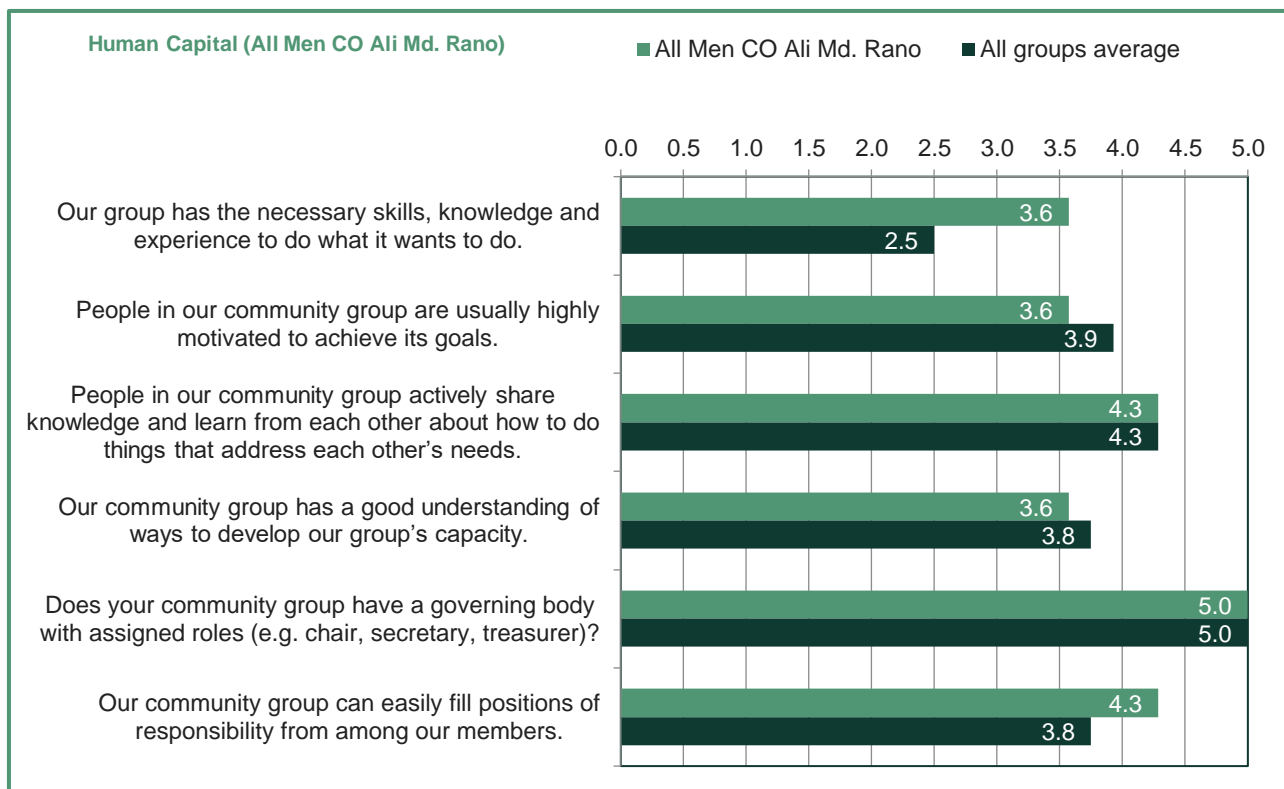


The group had not found it easy to access funds to support the activities it had been undertaking. It also believed it did not have adequate physical infrastructure and equipment to support its activities.

It had moderate success accessing funds for fixed assets and incentives. Also, the list of physical infrastructure and equipment the group identified it needed for the activities it aspired to undertake one day included small boats, livestock, fishing nets, ice boxes, fish farms, crab ponds, houses, office, furniture, disaster kits, tents, raised platforms, solar power units, water storage and purifying systems, and sewing machines. Currently undertaking activities included mangrove plantation and conservation, crab fattening ponds, and meetings.

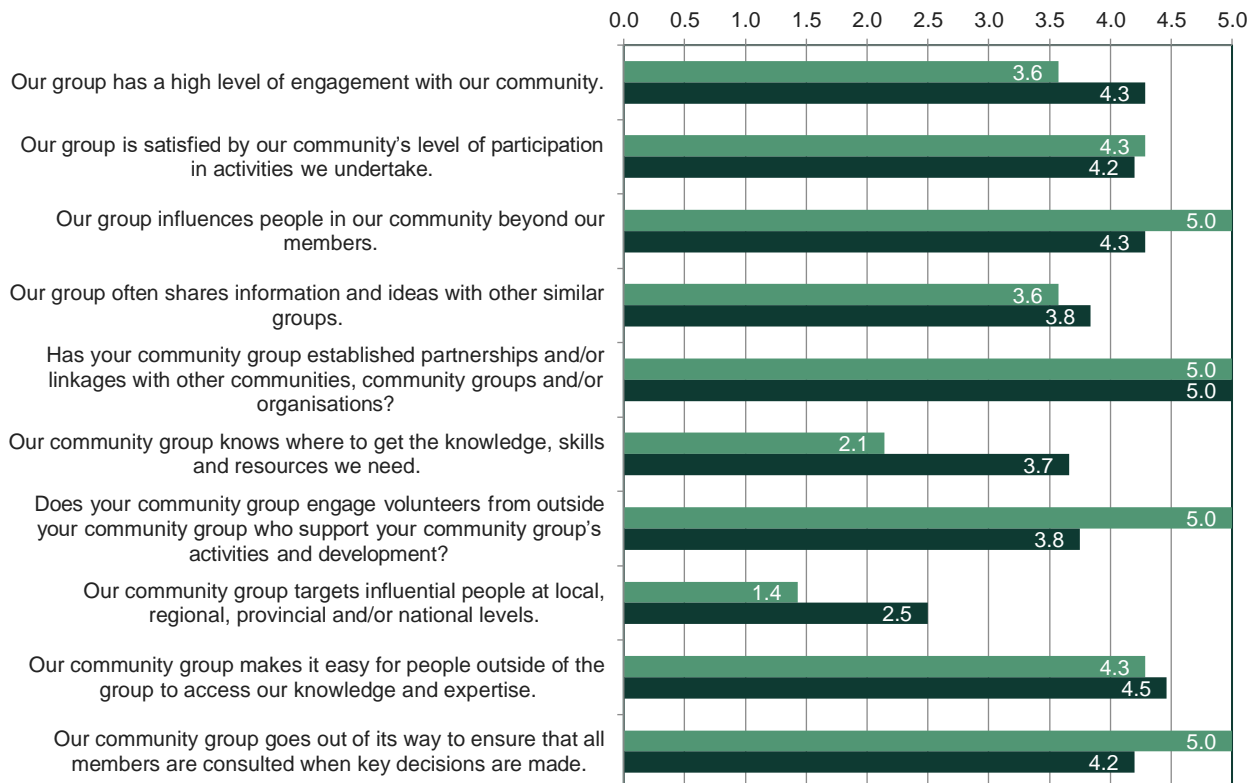
The group felt more positive about bridging and organisational capitals. This may reflect the group’s age and longevity – it has existed for about 20 years.

5.3 Results for All Men CO Ali Md. Rano



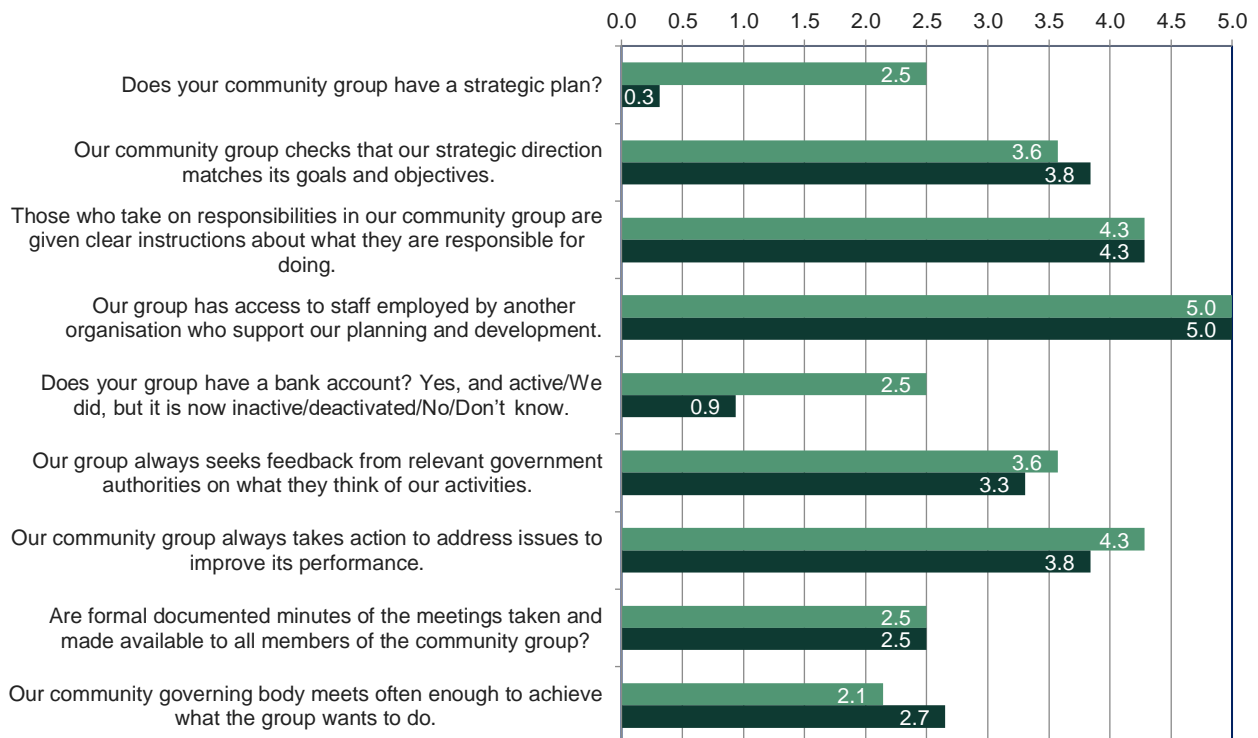
Bridging Social Capital (All Men CO Ali Md. Rano)

■ All Men CO Ali Md. Rano ■ All groups average



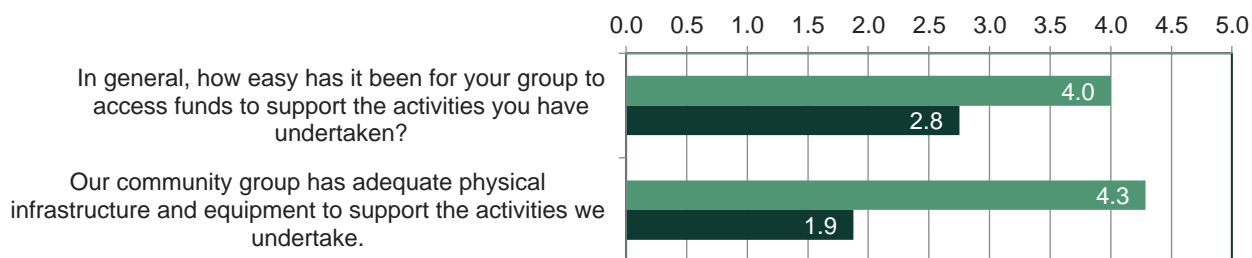
Organisational Capital (All Men CO Ali Md. Rano)

■ All Men CO Ali Md. Rano ■ All groups average

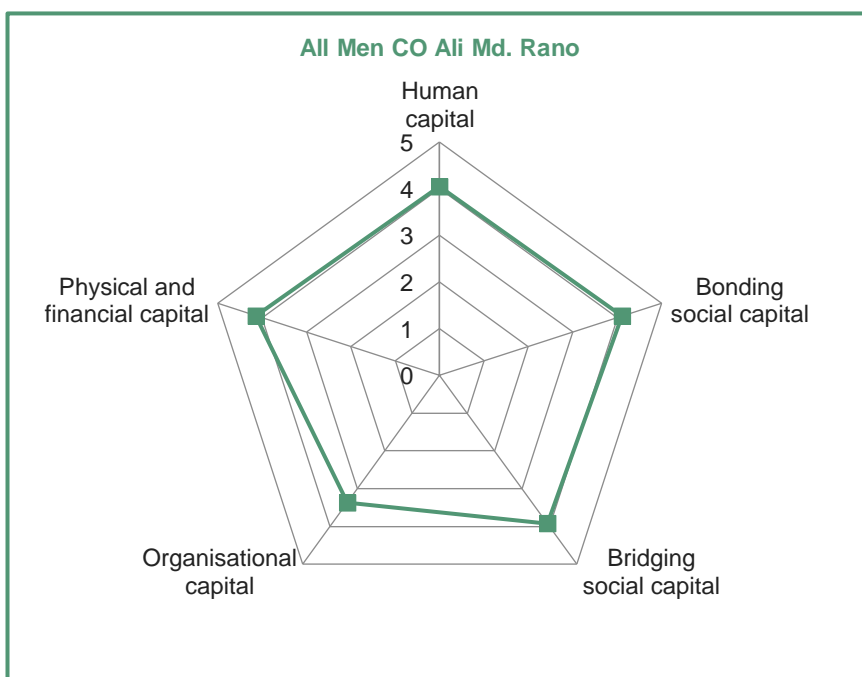


Physical and Financial Capital (All Men CO Ali Md. Rano)

■ All Men CO Ali Md. Rano ■ All groups average

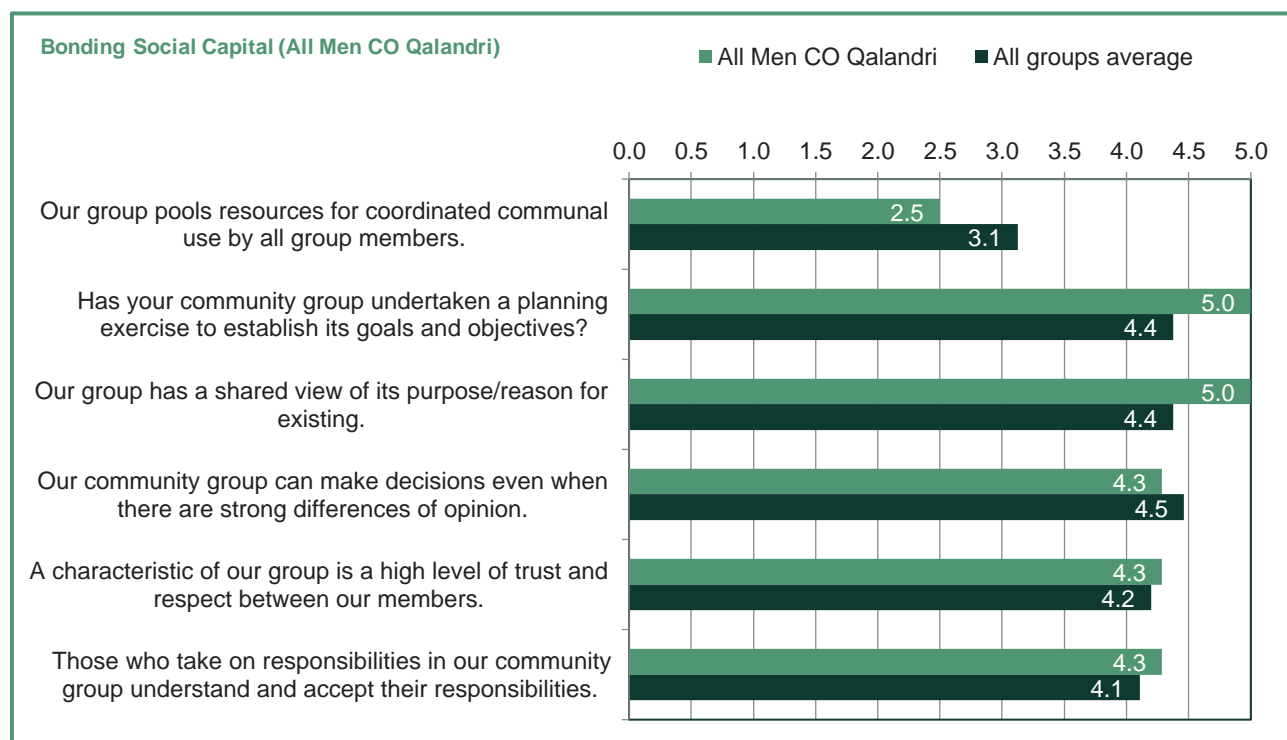
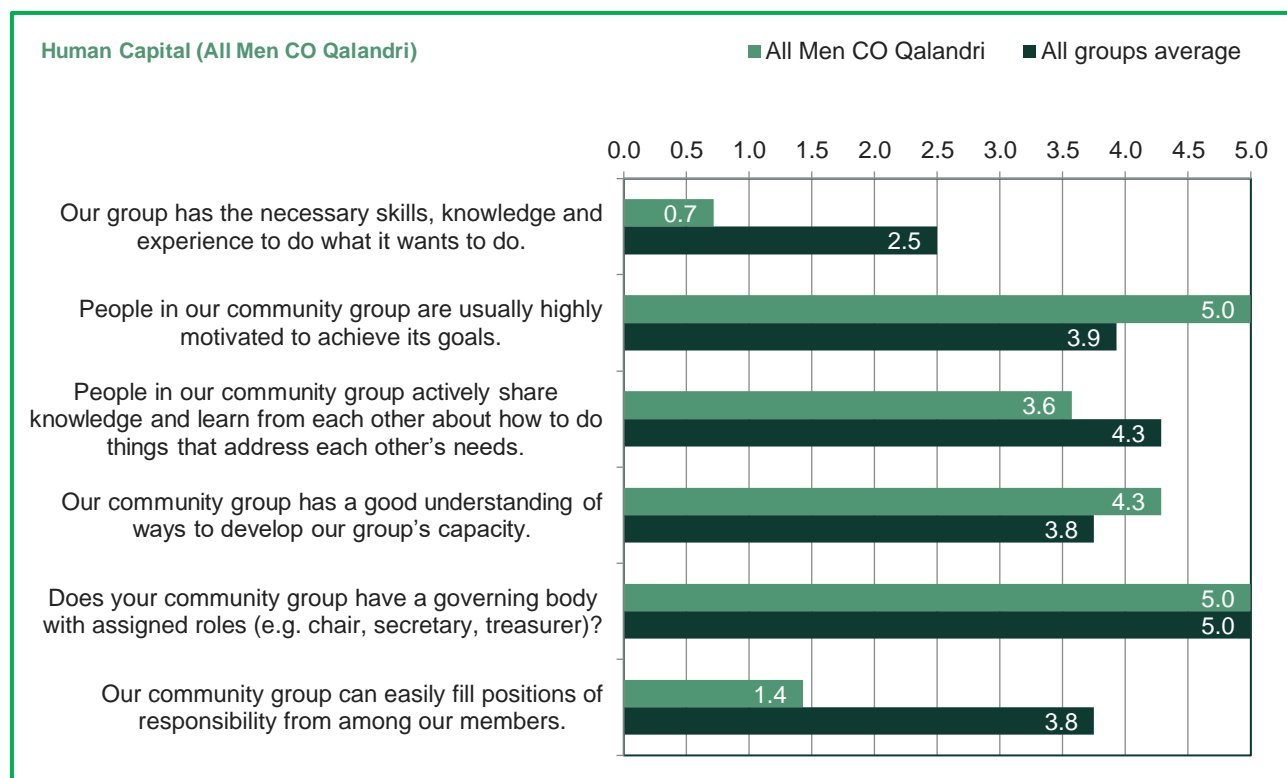


On October 24, 2021, the All Men CO Ali Md. Rano expressed its higher level of confidence in its capacity on aspects related to human, social, and physical and financial capitals than on organisational capital. It felt confident about its successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups (bridging social capital), and it also felt it had a strong sense of shared values, as well as feelings of respect, trust and commitment for each other and the group (bonding social capital). The group also had confidence in areas related to its human capital (i.e. that their team had skills, experience, motivation, and leadership).



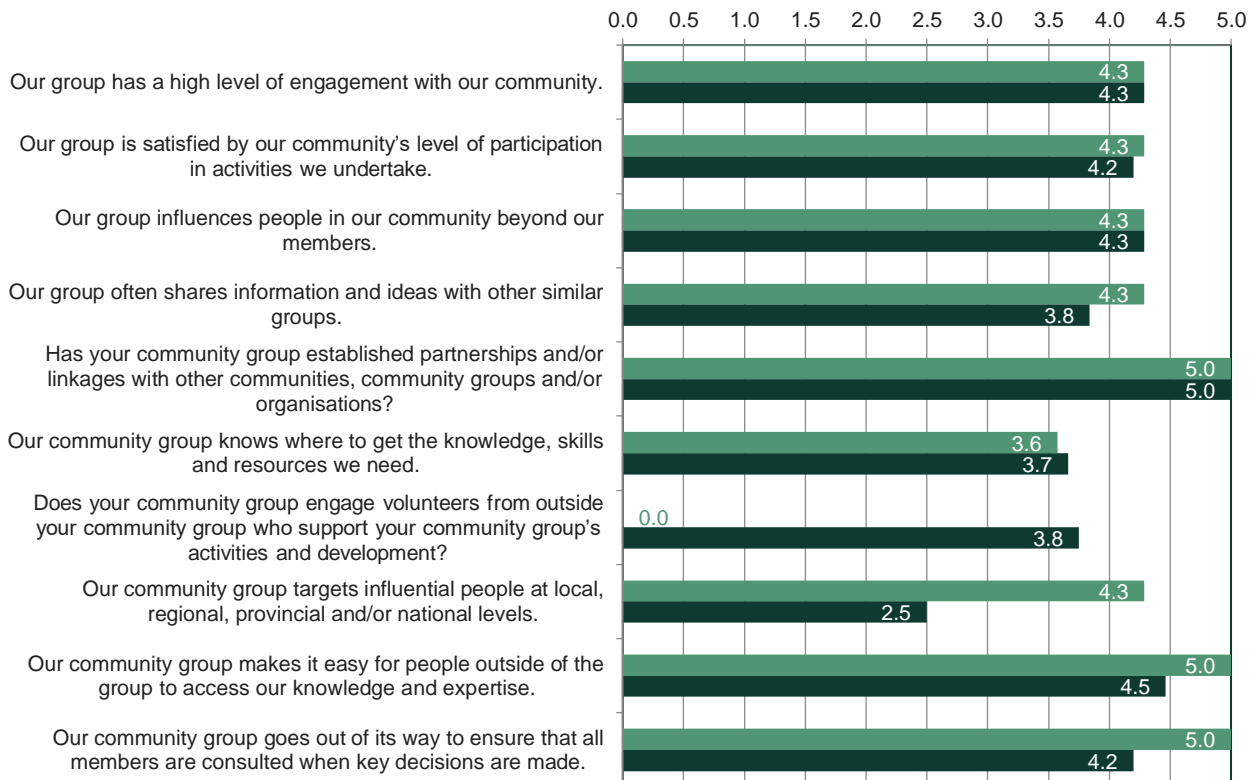
It reflected being low on the aspects of organisational capital due to the questions on whether the group had a strategic plan or bank account. In both cases, the group realised that it had both, but that the plan was not current and that the bank account was no longer active. They also felt low on questions related to knowing where to get knowledge, skills and resources, and how the group exercised its influence (bridging social capital) and how often its governing body met (organisational capital).

5.4 Results for All Men CO Qalandri



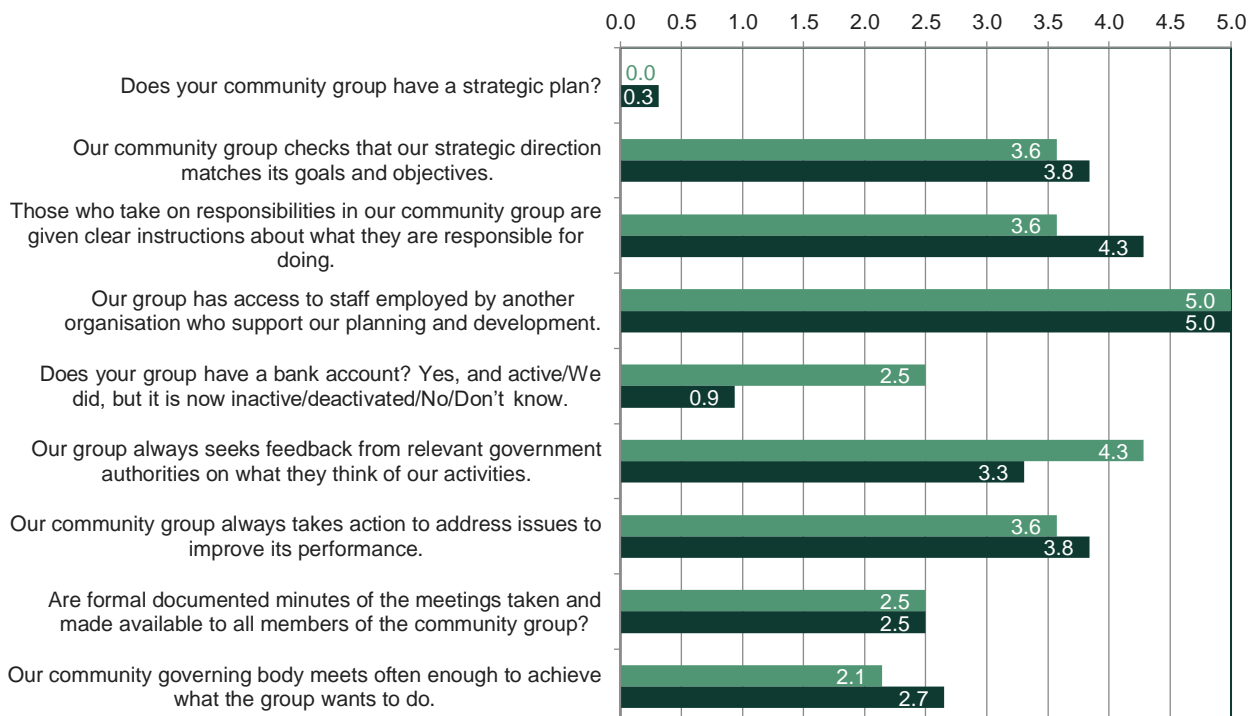
Bridging Social Capital (All Men CO Qalandri)

■ All Men CO Qalandri ■ All groups average



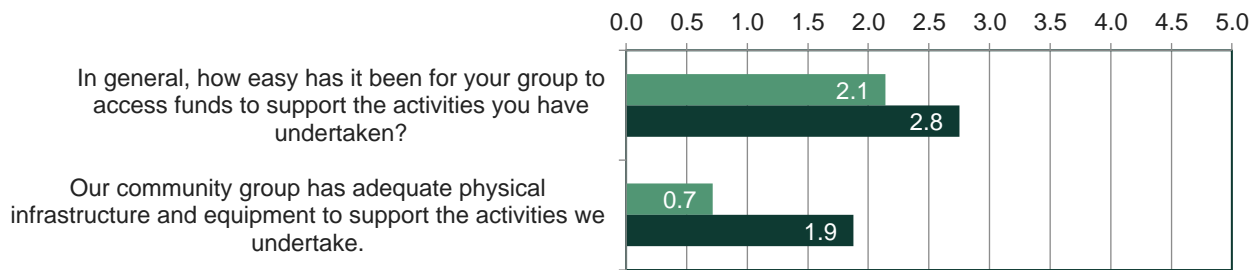
Organisational Capital (All Men CO Qalandri)

■ All Men CO Qalandri ■ All groups average



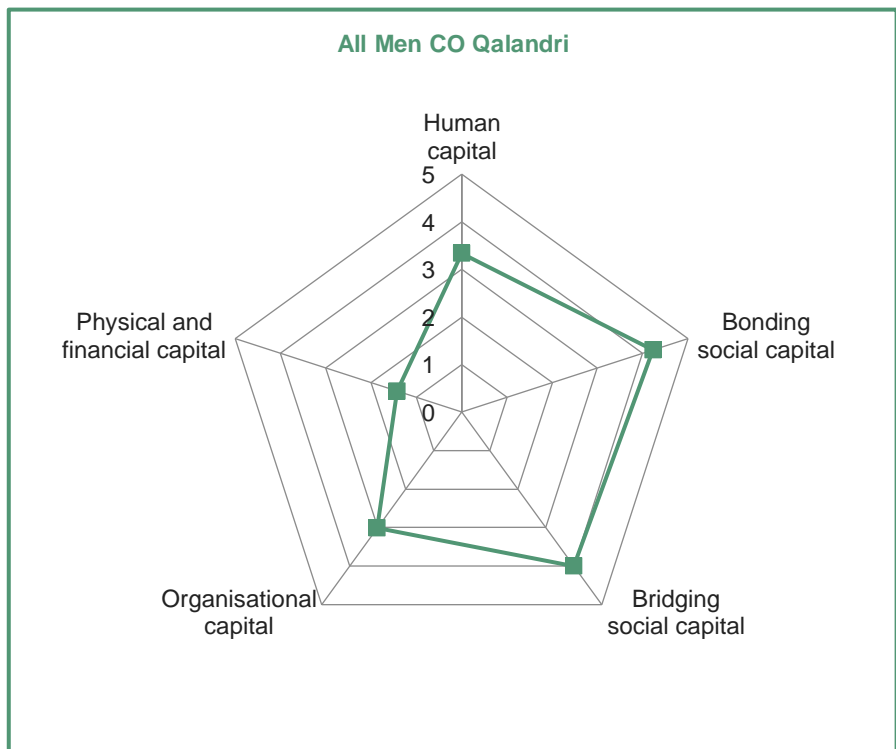
Physical and Financial Capital (All Men CO Qalandri)

■ All Men CO Qalandri ■ All groups average



On November 29, 2021, the All Men CO Qalandri expressed that it had a higher level of confidence in aspects related to human, social and organisational capitals than its physical and financial capital. The group felt most confident that their team had a strong sense of shared values, respect, trust and commitment for each other (bonding social capital), and their successes in connecting with the community they represented and with other groups (bridging social capital).

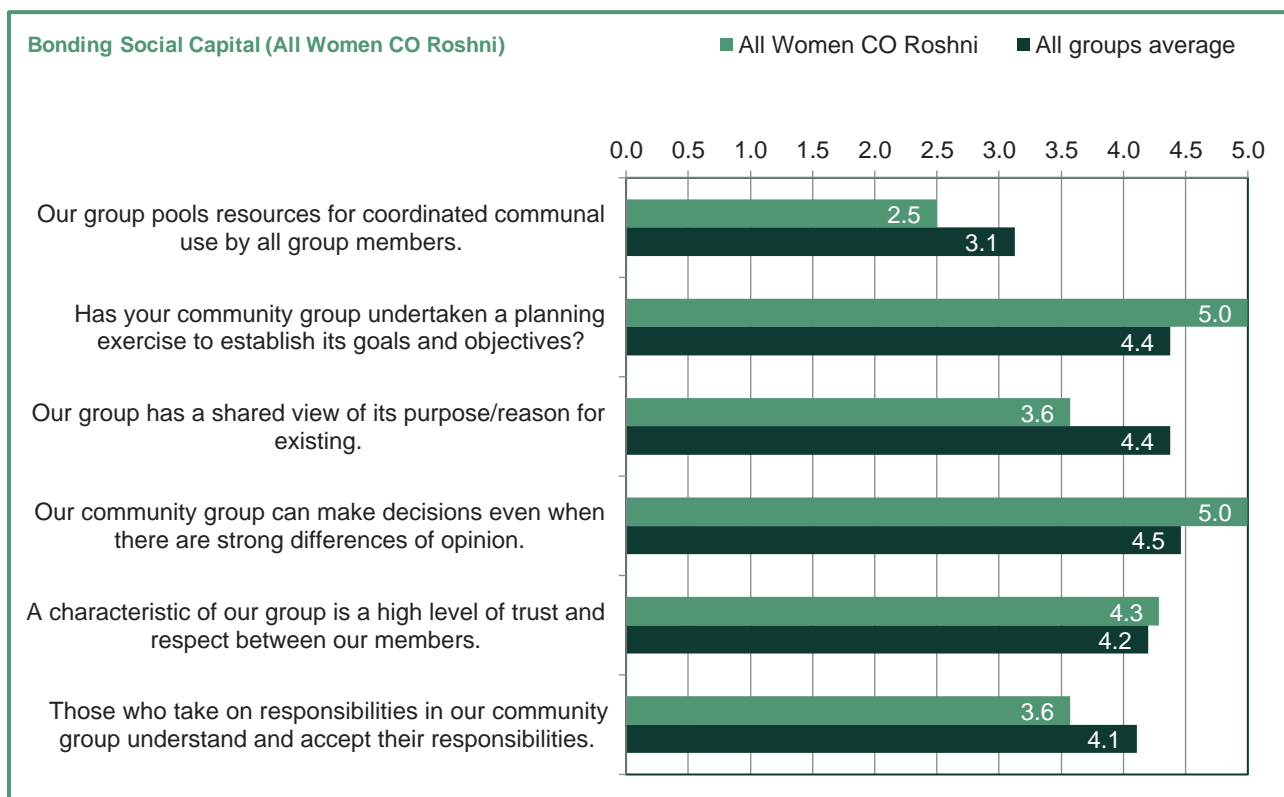
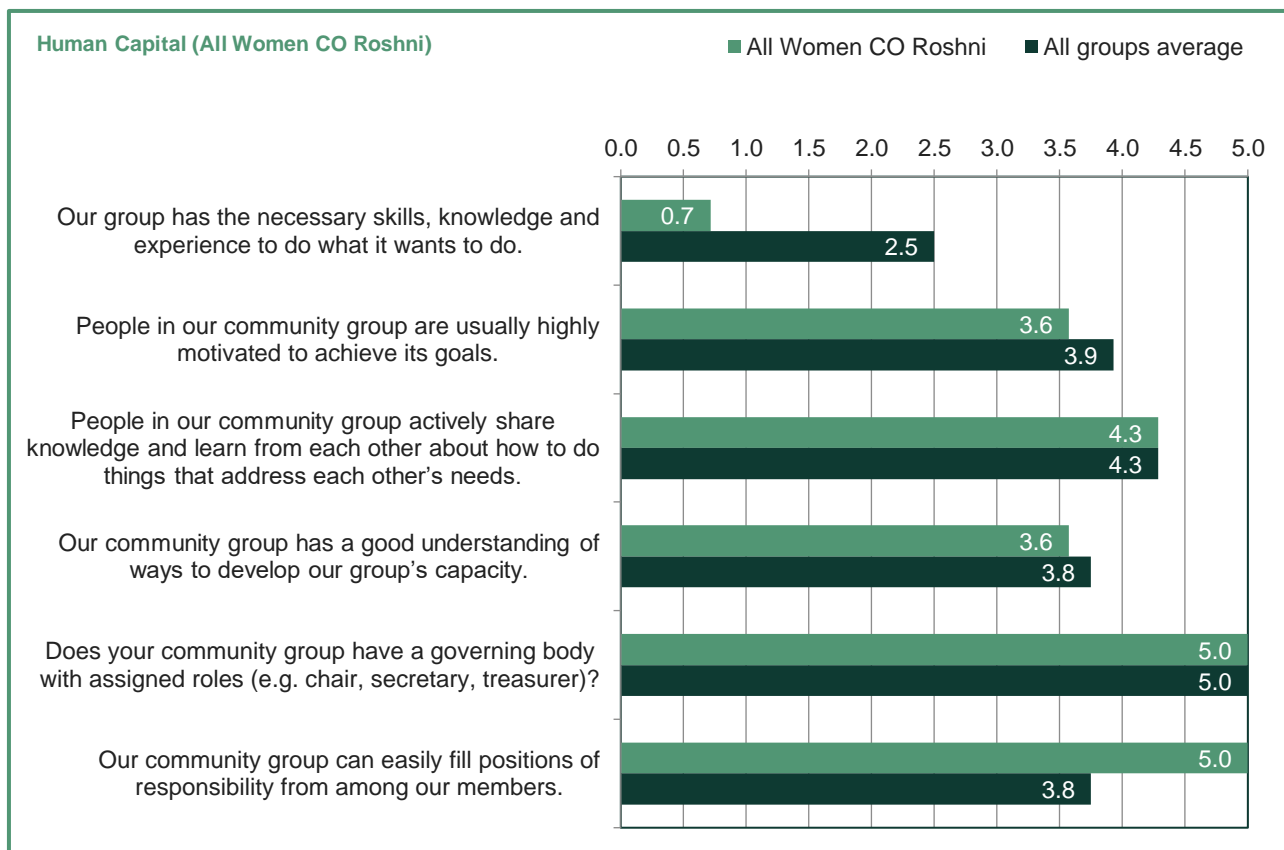
They felt low on aspects related to physical and financial capital, The group responded that it did not have adequate physical infrastructure and equipment to support its activities and experienced moderate difficulty accessing funds to support the activities it had undertaken.



The group had expressed frustration in not being able to secure funds for school resources for the village, and that their efforts to access loans had also been unsuccessful. Also, the list of physical infrastructure and equipment the group indicated it needed suggested the group might have reflected in terms of the activities it aspired to deliver, rather than the activities it had been delivering. This suggested the group might need to evaluate its aspirations, such as the establishment of a village school, or work collaboratively with other community groups and organisations to collectively realise such a dream.

Even though the group had revealed capacity strengths especially in the areas of human and social capitals, it is interesting to note where the group had expressed significant needs that the group could discuss how to address. Those were, the group did not believe it had the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to do what it wanted to do, and that it could not easily fill positions of responsibility from among its members. The other area where the group's reflections were significantly low related to the bridging social capital. The group had not engaged outside volunteers to support its activities and development.

5.5 Results for All Women CO Roshni



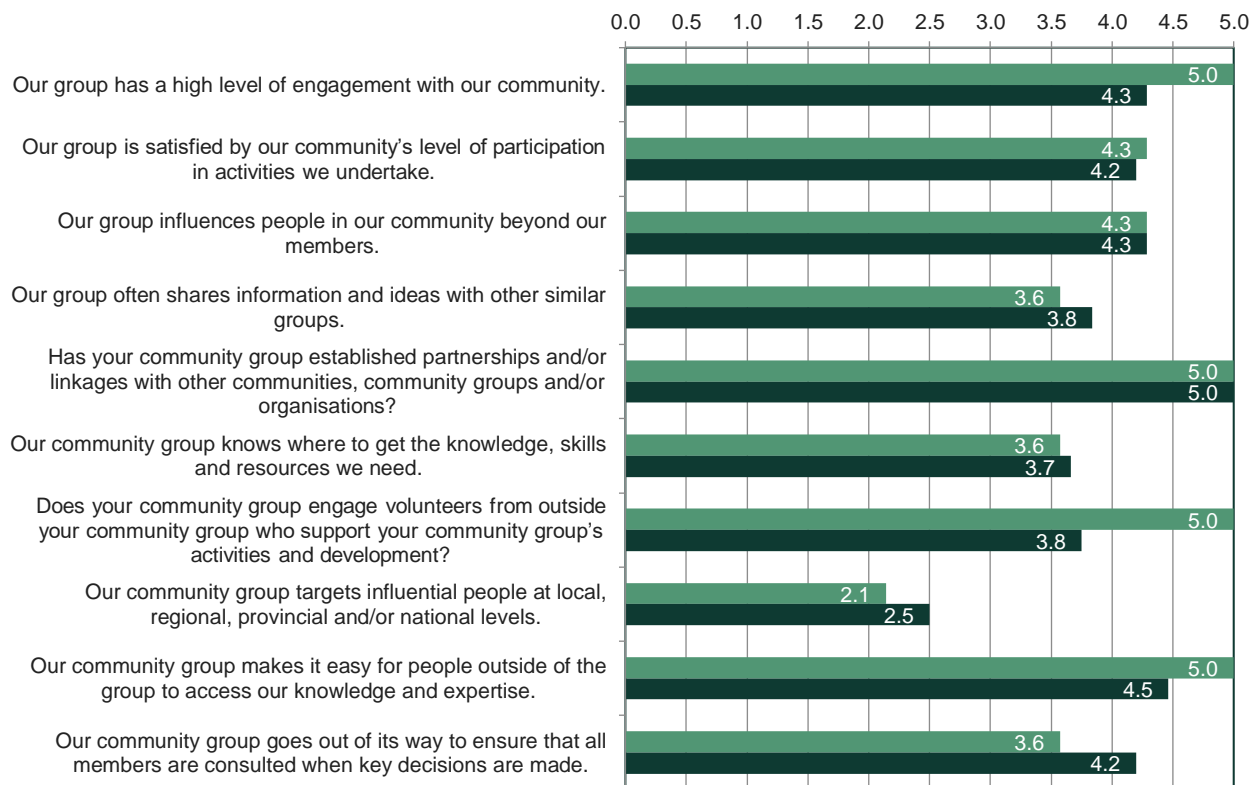
Organisational Capital (All Women CO Roshni)

■ All Women CO Roshni ■ All groups average



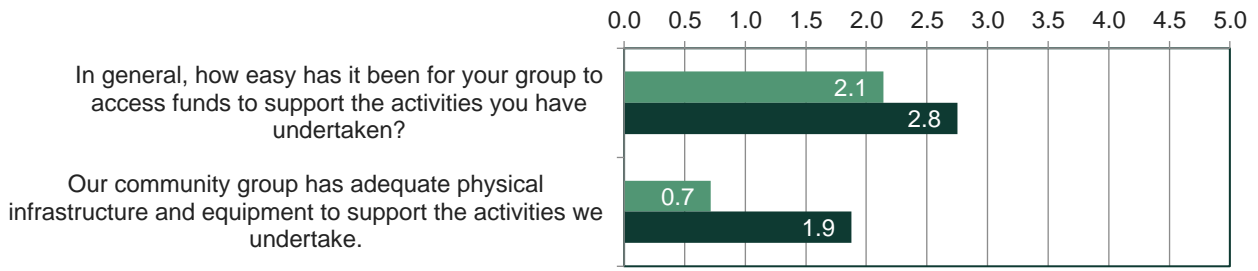
Bridging Social Capital (All Women CO Roshni)

■ All Women CO Roshni ■ All groups average



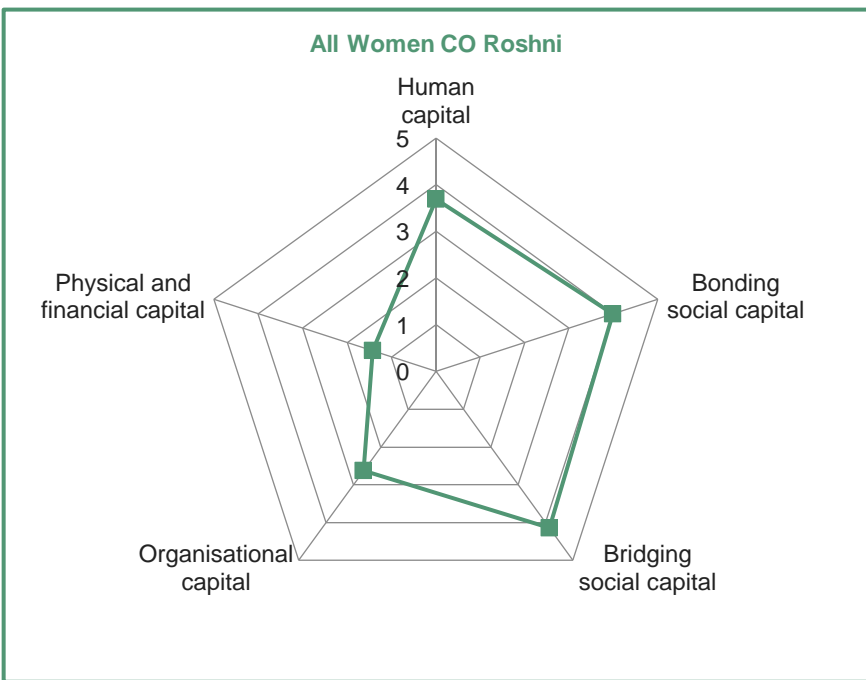
Physical and Financial Capital (All Women CO Roshni)

■ All Women CO Roshni ■ All groups average



On November 29, 2021, the All Women CO Roshni expressed it had a higher level of confidence in aspects related to human, social and organisational capitals than its physical and financial capital. The group felt most confident that their team had a strong sense of shared values, respect, trust, and commitment for each other (bonding social capital), and their successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups (bridging social capital).

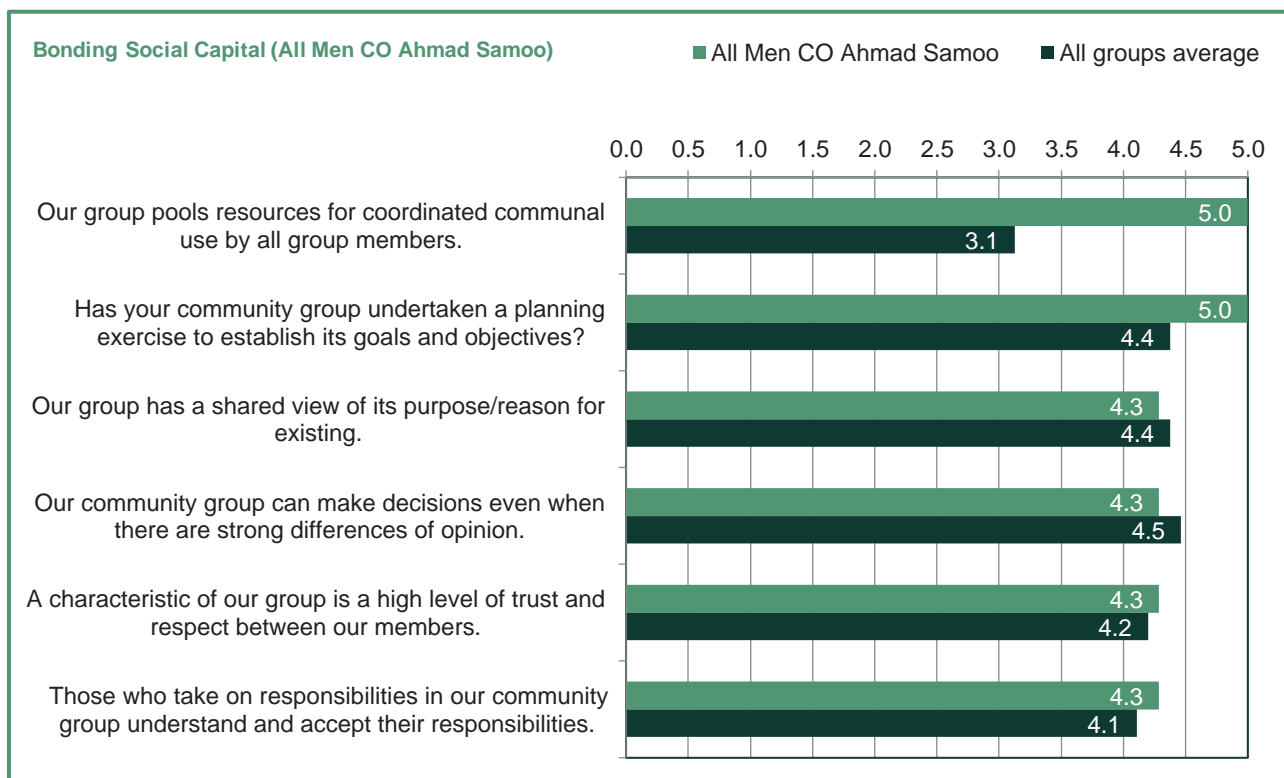
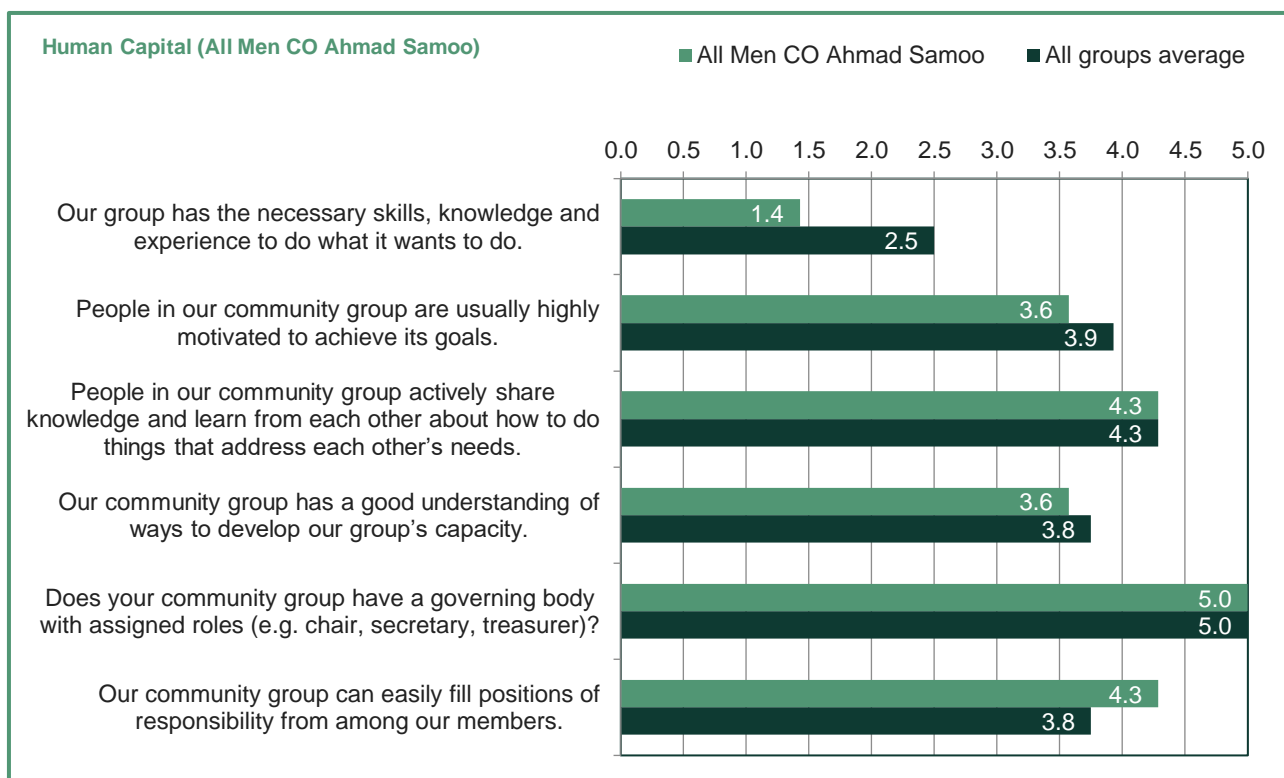
They felt much lower on stocks of physical and financial capital as best explained through the graphs above. The group responded that it did not have adequate physical infrastructure and equipment to support its activities and had experienced moderate difficulty



accessing funds to support the activities it had undertaken. The group expressed difficulty in accessing funds for events and remuneration, and that they feared making requests for loans, and were not aware of the options of accessing subsidies. Also, the list of physical infrastructure and equipment the group indicated it needed included agricultural equipment, livestock, small businesses, housing, office, and furniture. It suggested that the group might have had reflected on these assets in terms of the activities it aspired to deliver. The activities it was delivering included tree nursery, land preparation for wheat crop, village cleaning campaign salinity management and WASH trainings.

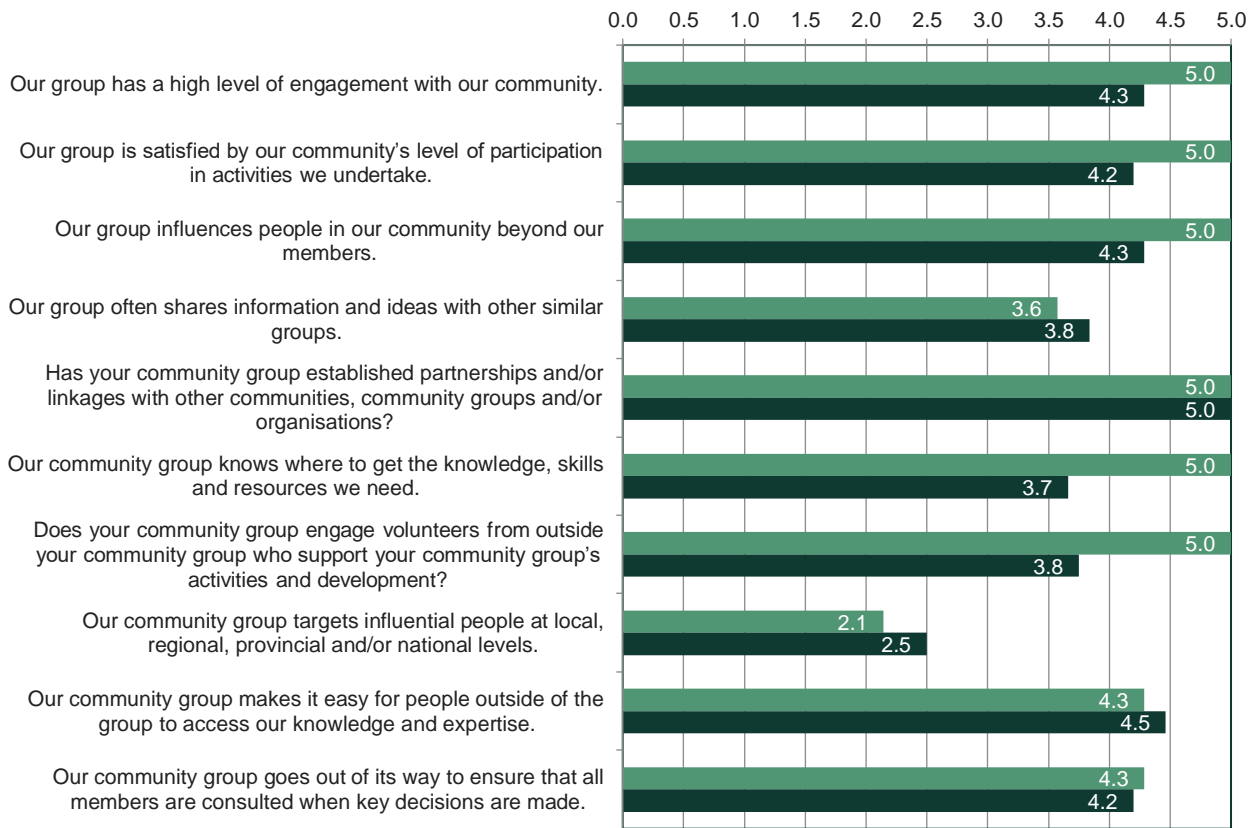
Even though the group revealed capacity strengths especially in the areas of human and social capitals, it is interesting to recognise where the group's responses significantly deviated from being confident. They identified areas of needs that the group could discuss how to address. One of these related to human capital: that the group did not believe it had the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to do what it wanted to do. The other related to the organisational capital, where the group responded that it had not always sought feedback from those relevant government authorities on what they think of its activities. The group had access to two CRPs offering support.

5.6 Results for All Men CO Ahmad Samoo



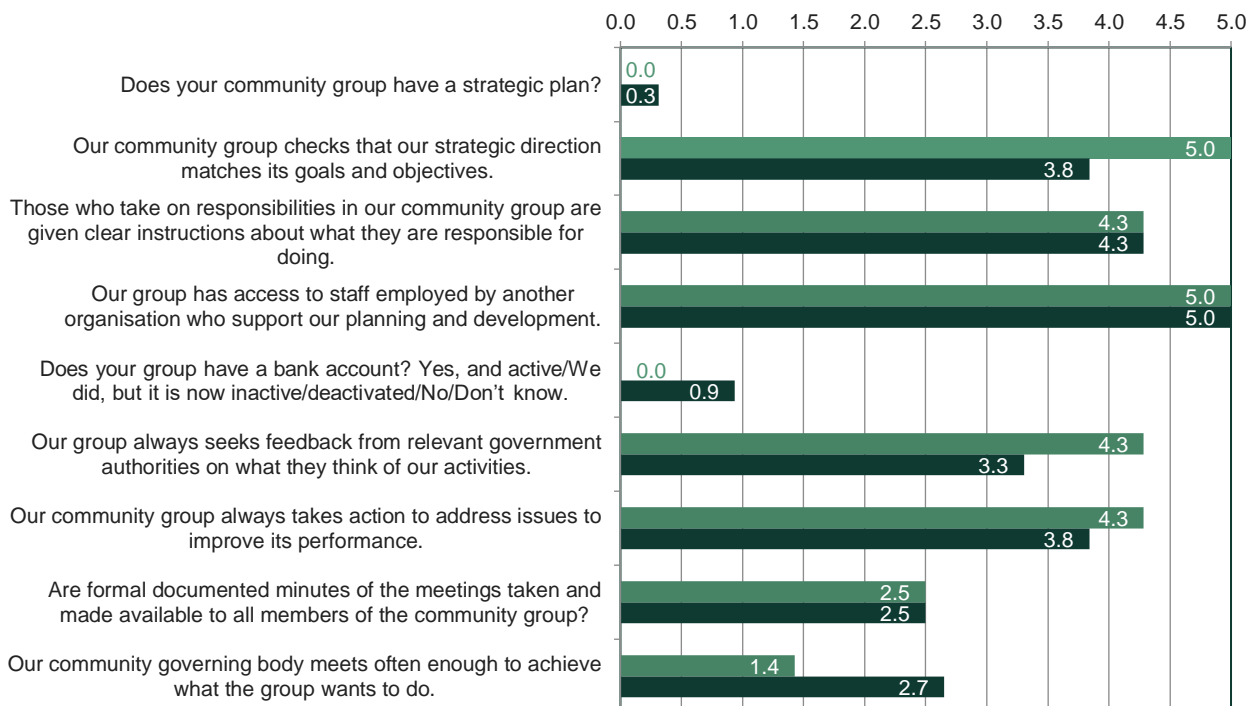
Bridging Social Capital (All Men CO Ahmad Samoo)

■ All Men CO Ahmad Samoo ■ All groups average



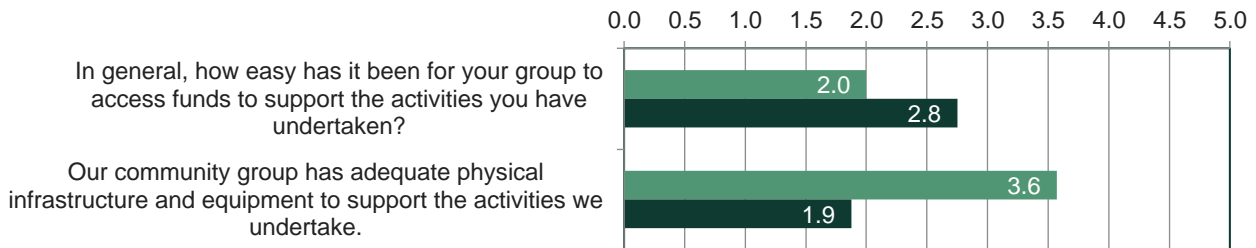
Organisational Capital (All Men CO Ahmad Samoo)

■ All Men CO Ahmad Samoo ■ All groups average

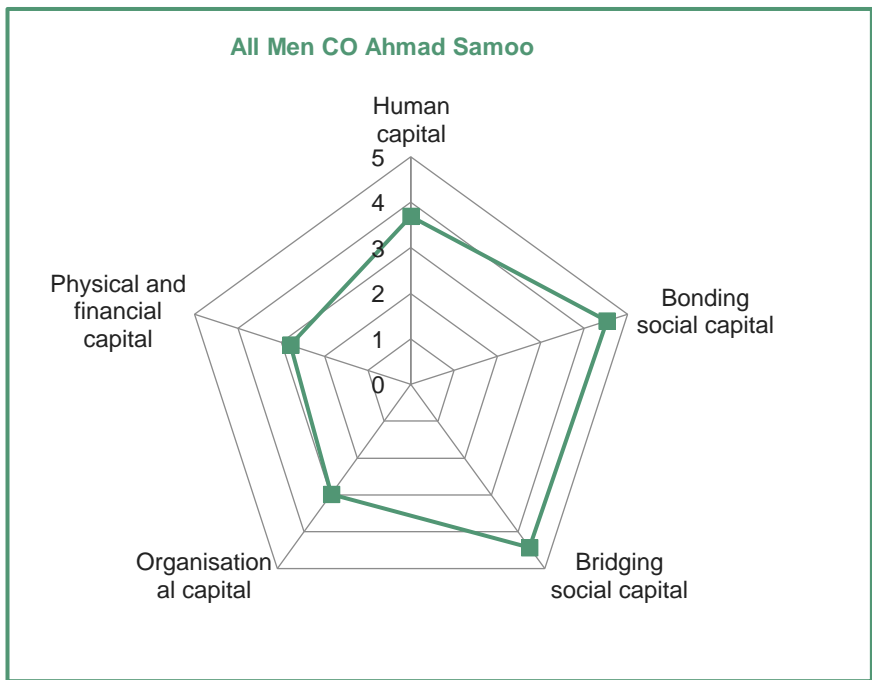


Physical and Financial Capital (All Men CO Ahmad Samoo)

■ All Men CO Ahmad Samoo ■ All groups average



On October 25, 2021, the All Men CO Ahmad Samoo clearly responded having high level of confidence in their capacity on aspects related to social capital which included its successes in connecting with the community they represented and with other groups (bridging social capital), and they also felt they had a strong sense of shared values, as well as feelings of respect, trust and commitment for each other and the group (bonding social capital). The group also had confidence in most areas related to its human capital (i.e. that their team had skills, experience, motivation and leadership). They felt insecure in two areas of physical and financial capital and organisational capital.

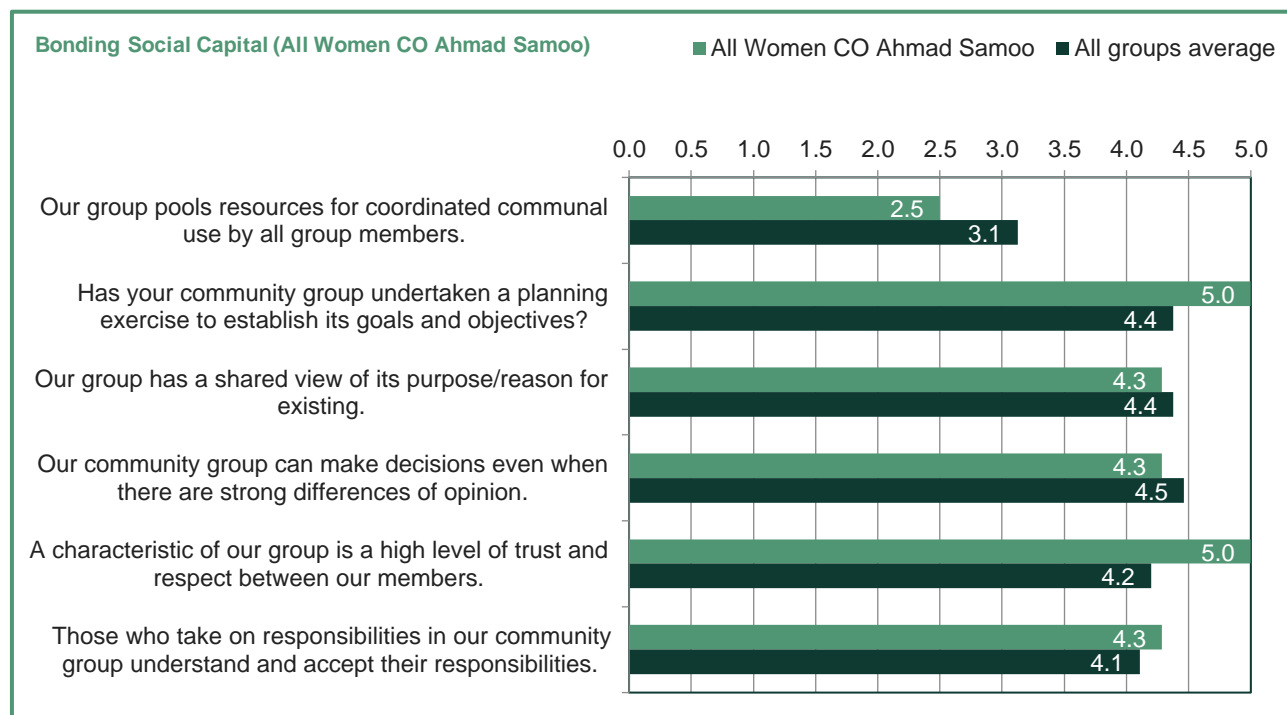
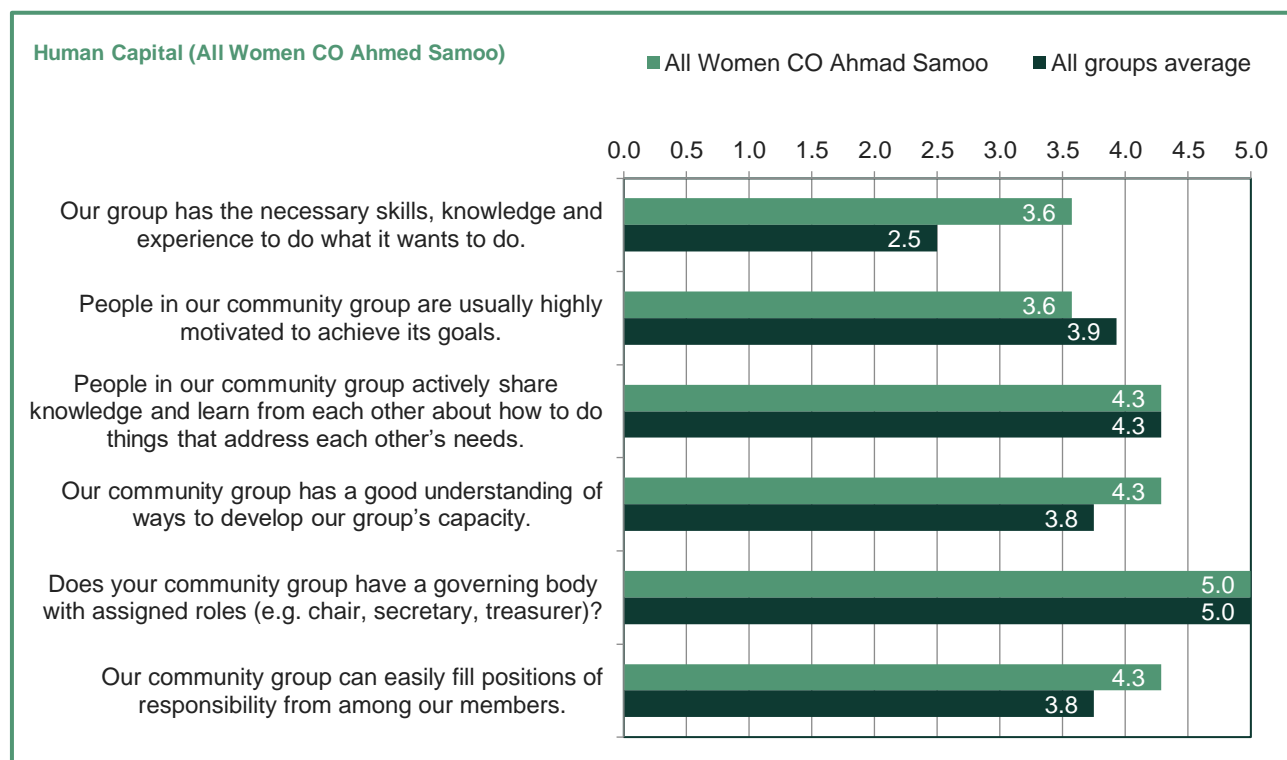


The group felt it did not have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to do what it wanted to do, thus, the group had to deliberate on the implications of this weakness, especially given its more positive feelings to other related aspects of human capital. One possibility could be that the group might be trying to do more than its available capacity allowed, suggesting that it was seeking to stretch its aspirations, which was a good thing.

The overall stock of organisational capital was seen impacted by the absence of a documented strategic plan and the bank account. The group indicated it had already undertaken a planning exercise to establish its goals and objectives. It checked that its strategic direction matched these goals and objectives and had taken actions to address issues to improve its performance, including by seeking feedback from relevant authorities.

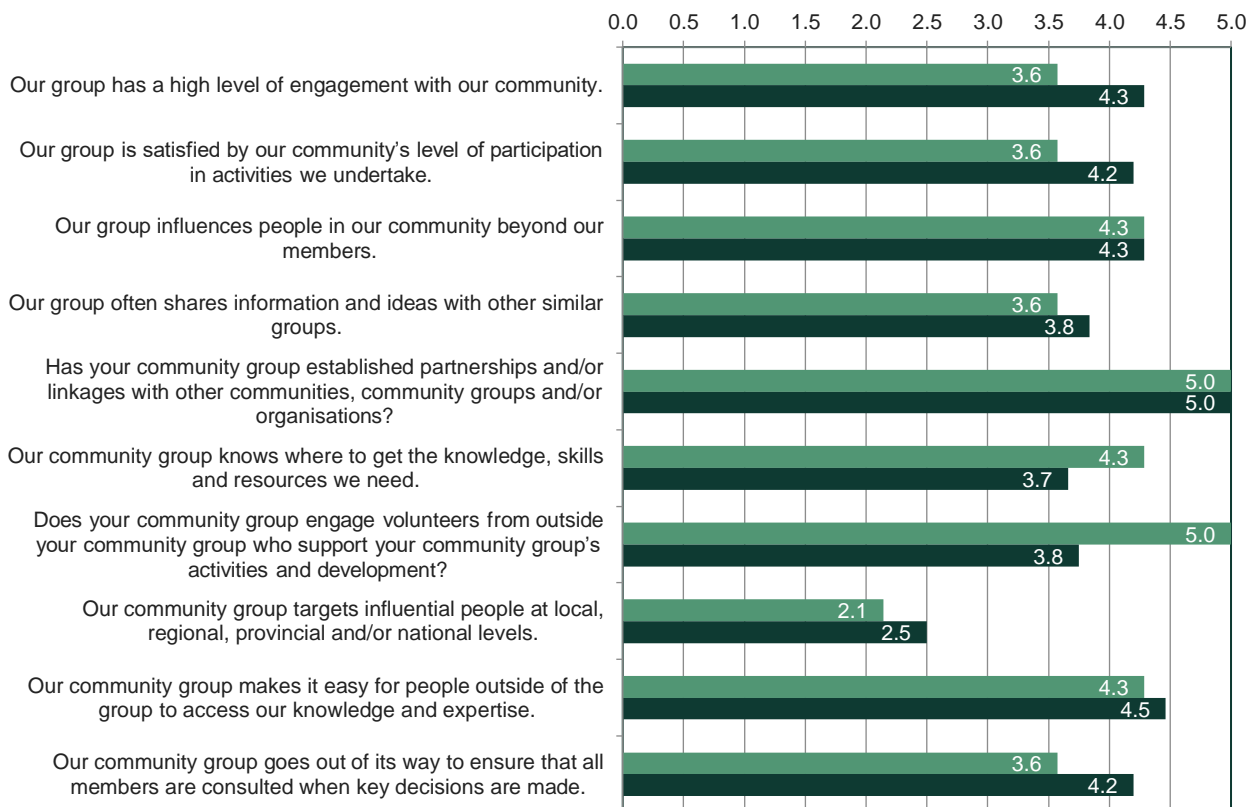
The group realised that it had sufficient physical infrastructure and equipment to support its activities but encountered some difficulties accessing funds for those activities – particularly for events, consumable assets, and remuneration.

5.7 Results for All Women CO Ahmad Samoo



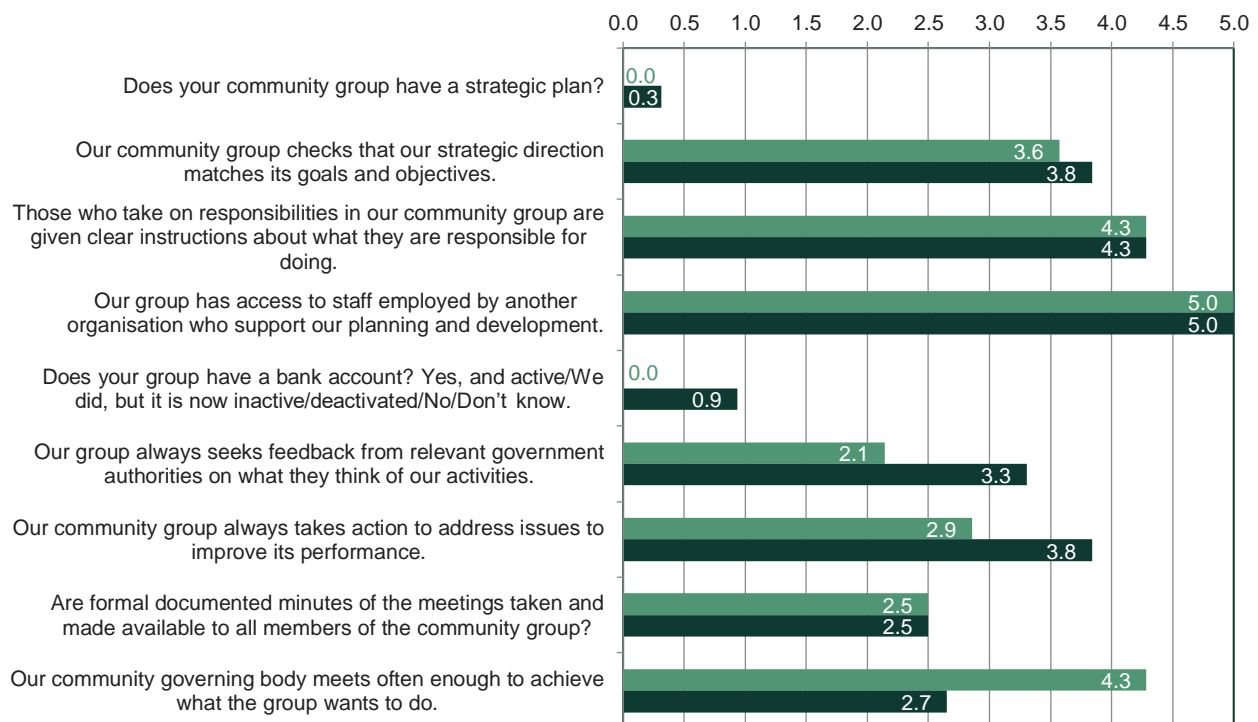
Bridging Social Capital (All Women CO Ahmad Samoo)

■ All Women CO Ahmad Samoo ■ All groups average



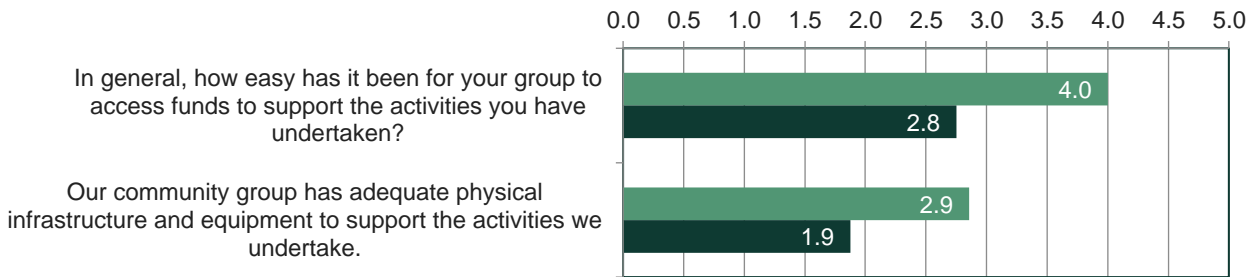
Organisational Capital (All Women CO Ahmad Samoo)

■ All Women CO Ahmad Samoo ■ All groups average



Physical and Financial Capital (All Women CO Ahmad Samoo)

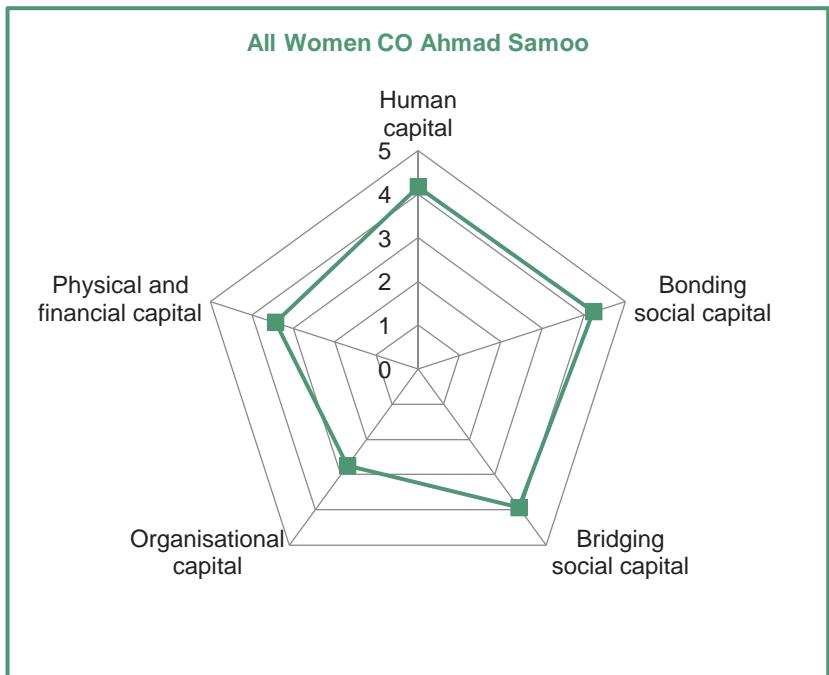
■ All Women CO Ahmad Samoo ■ All groups average



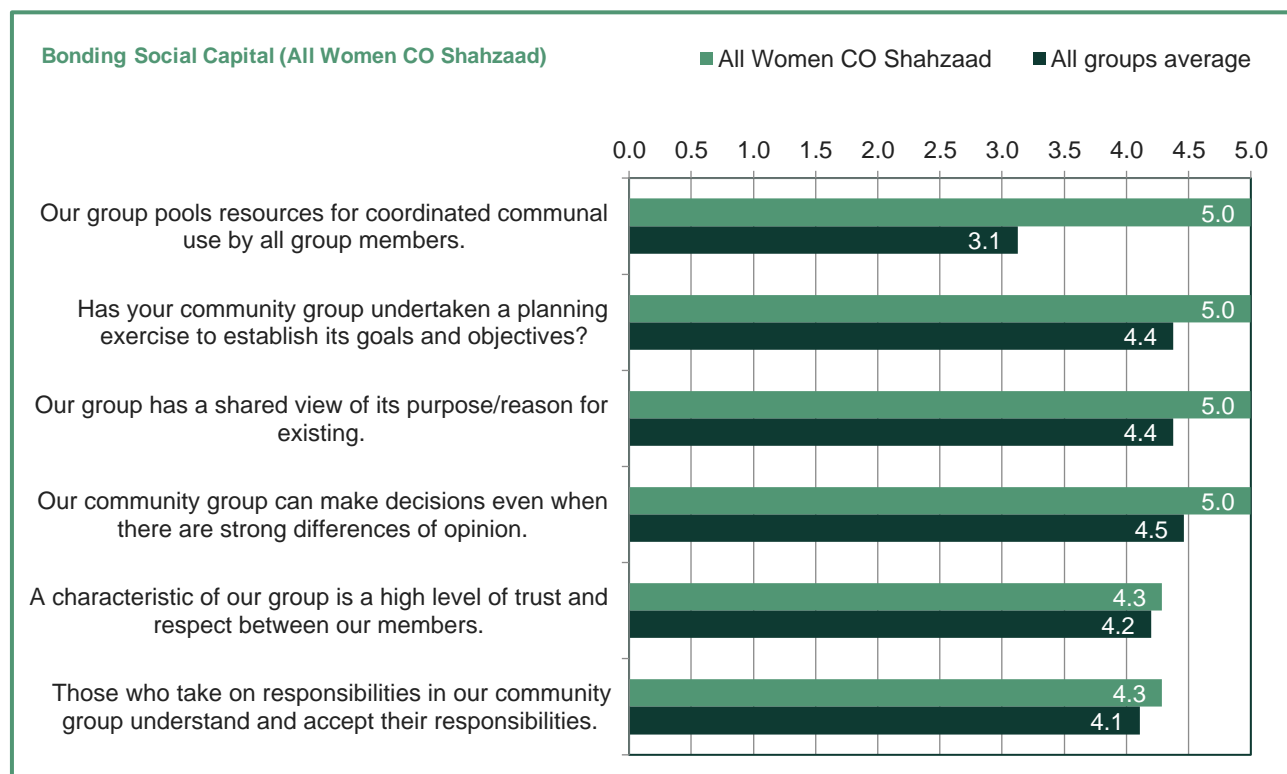
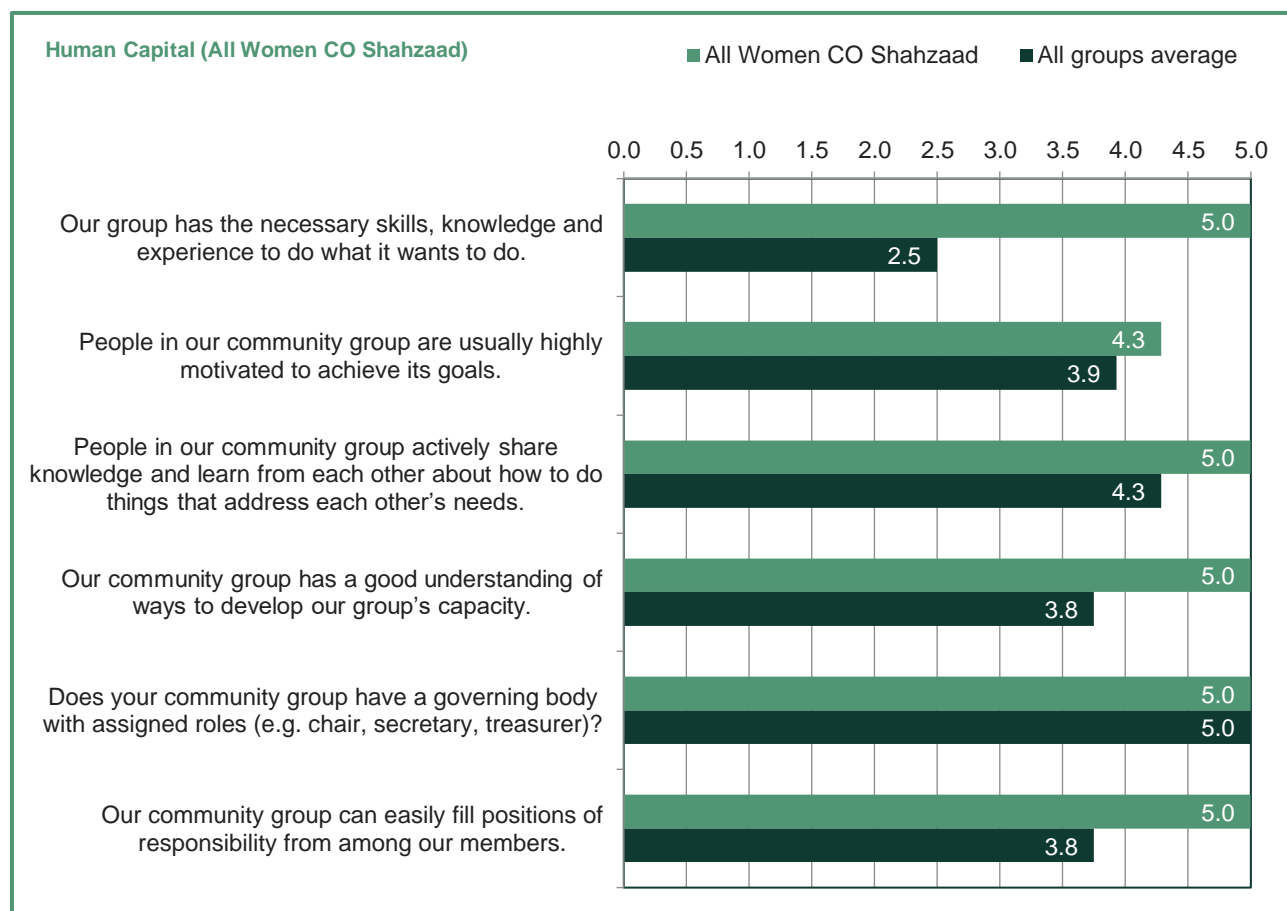
On October 24, 2021, the All Women CO Ahmad Samoo community group exhibited higher level of confidence in its capacity on aspects related to human and social capitals than on other aspects. The group felt confident about their group's successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups (bridging social capital), and they also felt they had a strong sense of shared values, as well as feelings of respect, trust and commitment for each other and the group (bonding social capital). The group also had confidence in areas related to its human capital (i.e. that their team had skills, experience, motivation and leadership).

Although the group recognised they did not have a documented strategic plan nor bank account, it was likely to

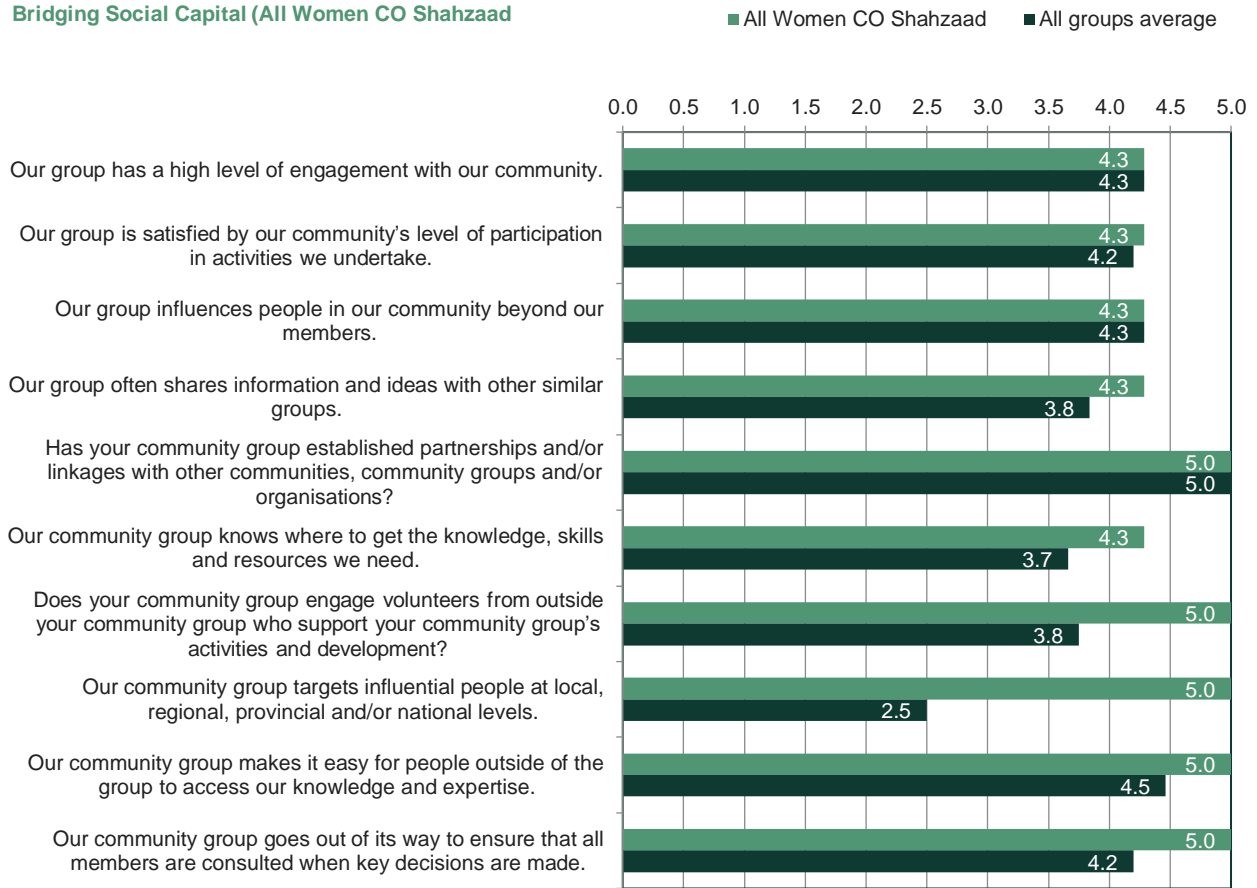
be incorrect to assume that these represent capacity needs for the group. They might not need to have either in place for the group to be able to achieve what they want to achieve, or even to achieve a higher level of aspirations. Indeed, the group indicated it had already undertaken a planning exercise to establish its goals and objectives and had been checking its strategic direction against these goals and objectives. However, it marked moderately on two other areas relating to how it monitored and had taken action to improve its performance. These could potentially be areas that the group might consider addressing. On physical and financial aspects, the group responded that it found it easy to access funds, which it had secured for assets, remuneration and skills development. Yet the group could consider trying to access funds for other items and via loans and subsidies. The group commented that they lacked knowledge about such opportunities and how to access them.



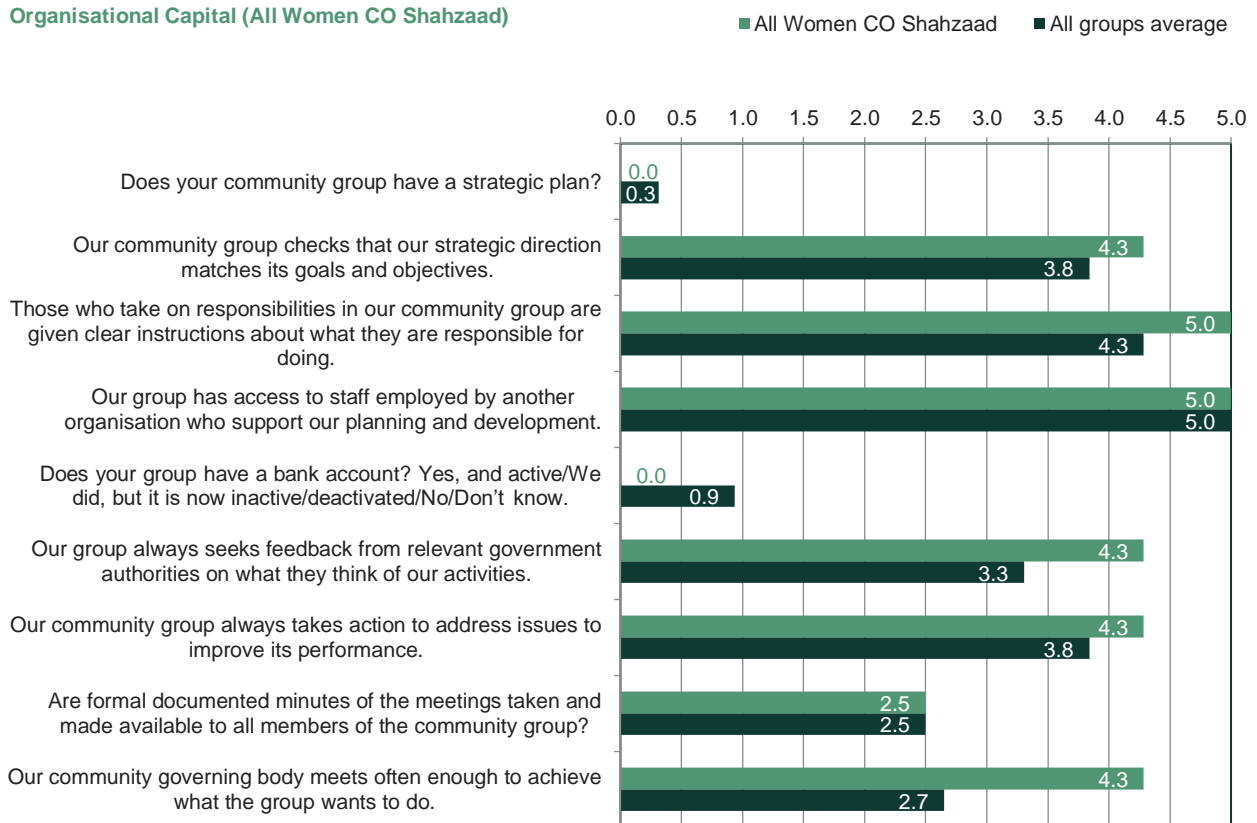
5.8 Results for All Women CO Shahzaad



Bridging Social Capital (All Women CO Shahzaad)

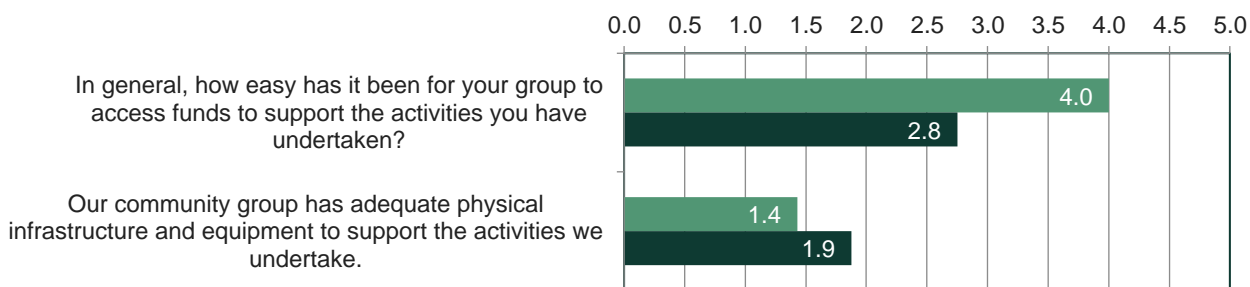


Organisational Capital (All Women CO Shahzaad)

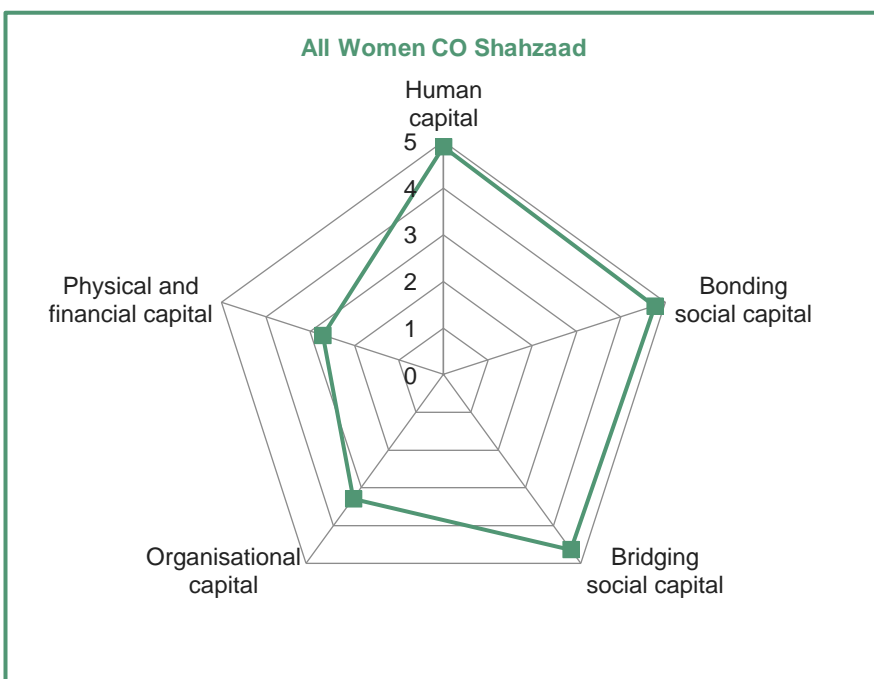


Physical and Financial Capital (All Women CO Shahzaad)

■ All Women CO Shahzaad ■ All groups average



On 24 October 24, 2021, All Women CO Shazaad responded clearly it had high level of confidence in their capacity on aspects related to human and social capitals. The group felt confident about their group’s successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups (bridging social capital), and they also felt they had a strong sense of shared values, as well as feelings of respect, trust and commitment for each other and the group (bonding social capital). They also felt confident that their team had the necessary skills, experience, motivation and leadership to enable them to do what they want to do. The group’s very high statements on these aspects suggested that it felt comfortable doing what it wanted to do and could start aspiring to do more and/ or to offer more support to other groups.

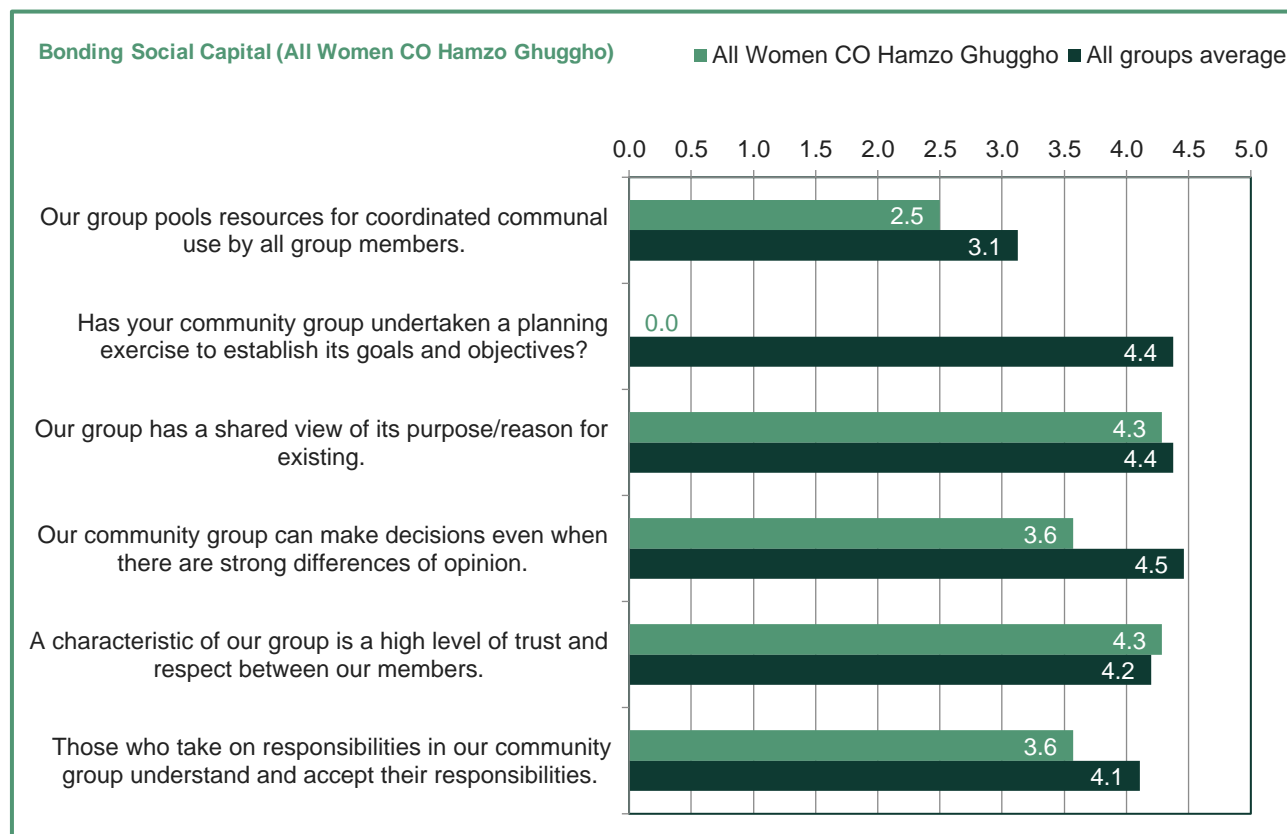
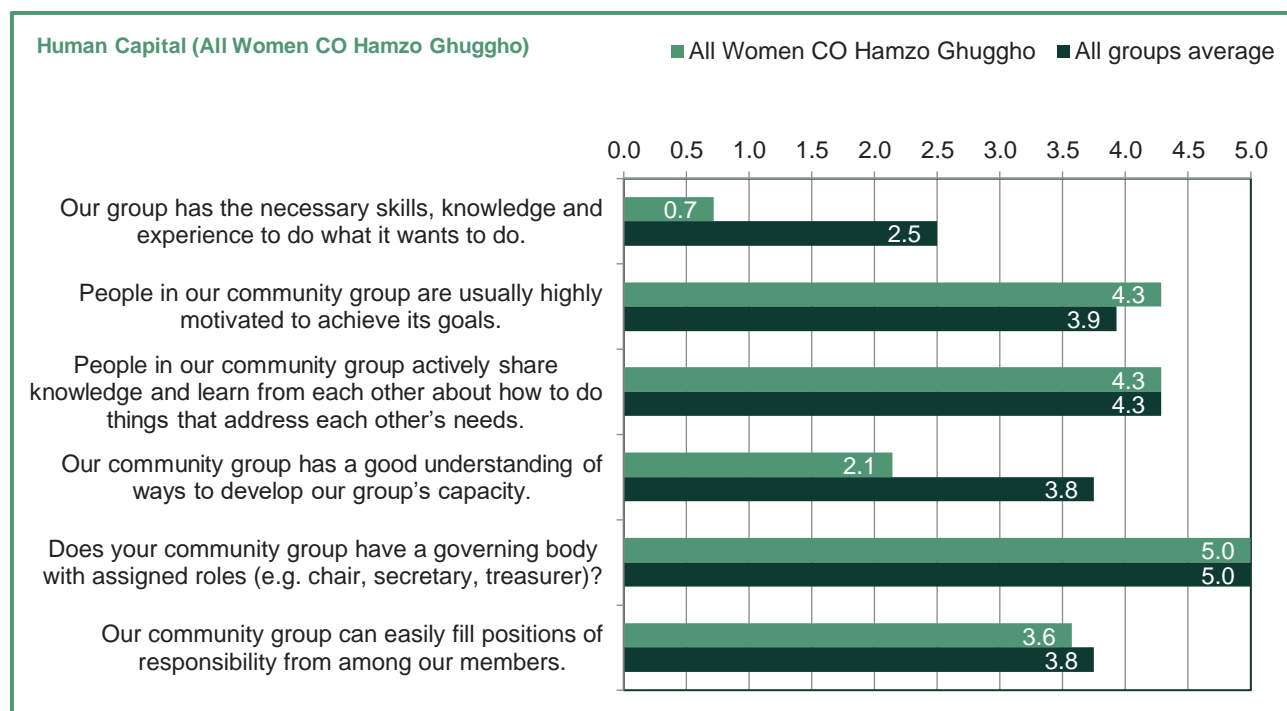


They felt low on physical and financial capital and organisational capital impacted by having no documented strategic plan nor bank account. It is likely to be incorrect to assume that these represent capacity needs for the group. They might not need to have either in place for the group to be able to achieve what they want to achieve, or even to achieve a higher level of aspirations. Indeed, the group indicated it has already undertaken a planning exercise to establish its goals and objectives, it had checked that its strategic direction matches these goals and objectives and agreed that it had taken action to address issues to improve its performance, including by seeking feedback from relevant authorities.

In particular, the group’s concern that it did not have sufficient physical infrastructure and equipment to support the activities it had been undertaking suggested an area that the group could address. Given that the group felt it could easily access funds for most elements (except for events and for incentives).

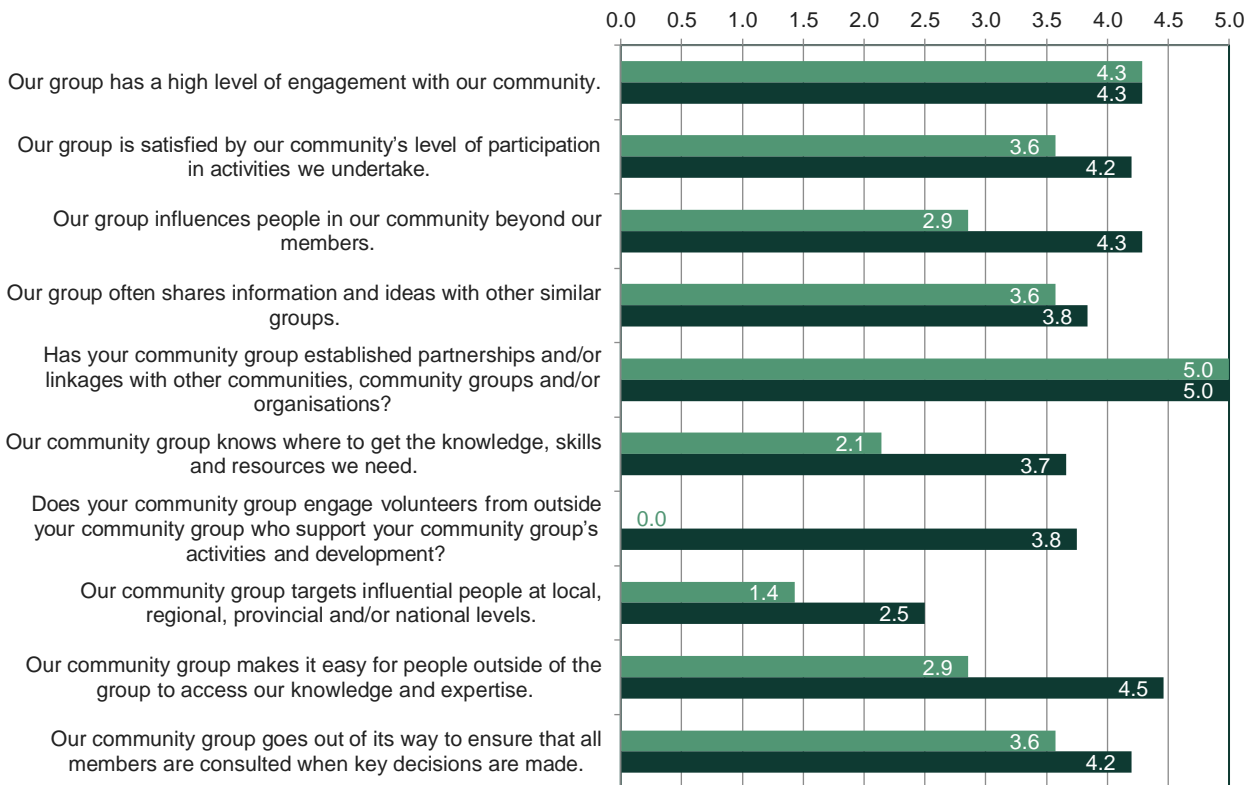
This might require discussion on what types of equipment the group felt needed, and then take action to source funds to address those needs, or through some other means, such as exploring loans or subsidies.

5.9 Results for All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho



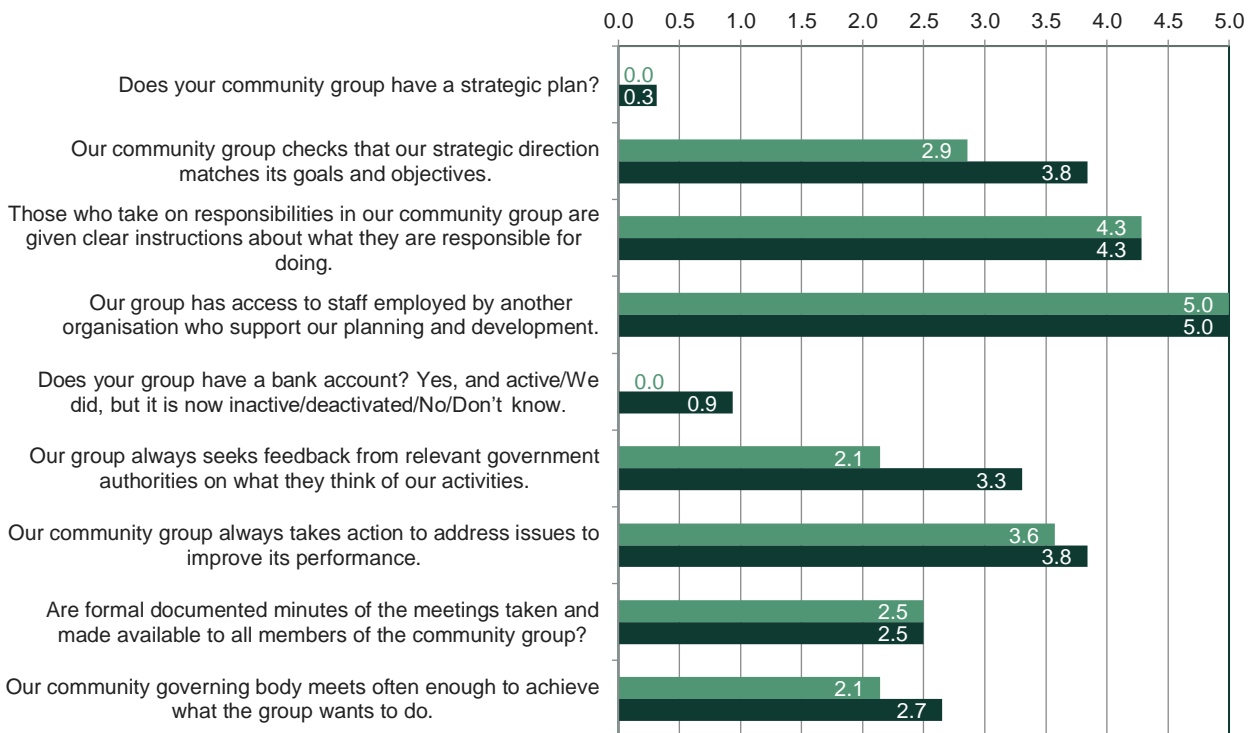
Bridging Social Capital (All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho)

■ All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho ■ All groups average



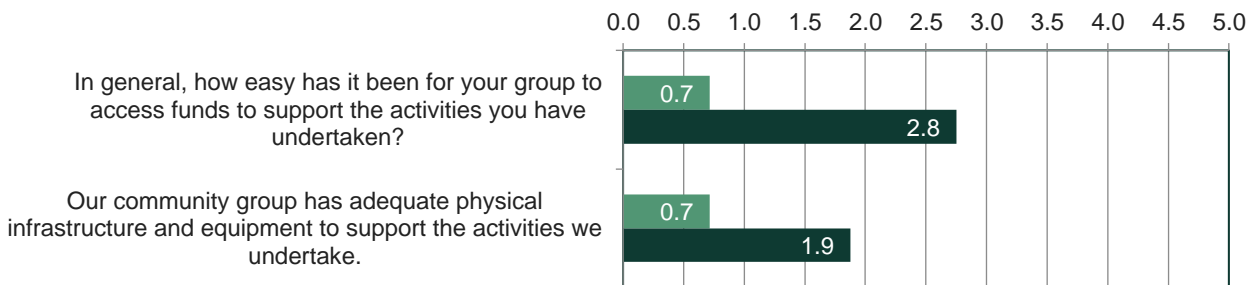
Organisational Capital (All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho)

■ All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho ■ All groups average



Physical and Financial Capital (All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho)

■ All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho ■ All groups average

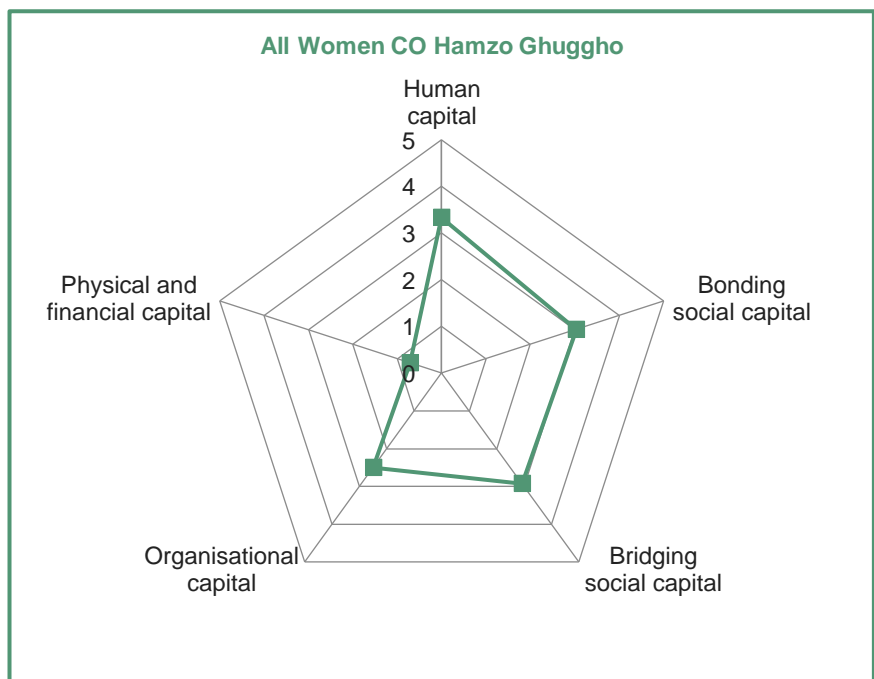


On November 30, 2021, the All Women CO Hamzo Ghuggho showed higher level of confidence in aspects related to human, social and organisational capitals than its physical and financial capital. The group felt more confident in areas related to its human capital (i.e. that their team had skills, experience, motivation and leadership) and its social capital (their group’s sense of shared values, respect, trust and commitment to each other as well as their successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups).

The much lower confidence level was conveyed on aspects related to physical and financial capital. The group responded that, in general, it had not found it easy to access funds to support the

activities it was undertaking. It also believed it did not have adequate physical infrastructure and equipment to support its activities. In contrast to the response mentioned above, the group also responded that it had found it easy to access funds across a range of items, though it had not tried accessing funds for events or incentives. Given the group has been able to access funds easily in the past, it is up to the group to decide how to target its funding applications so that it can better deliver on the activities it is undertaking.

The group had not undertaken a visioning exercise to establish its goals and objectives and had not engaged outside volunteers to support its activities and development. In addition, the group indicated that it did not have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to do what it wanted to do. Each of these responses suggested opportunities for the group to pursue with its support organisations. The group could consider approaching support organisations to help it undertake a vision exercise, and then to develop a plan or set of activities through which the group could build its skills, knowledge and experience through activities it might undertake to deliver on its vision.



6 Reporting Back to the Community Groups

6.1 Finalising the Results through Validation by the Community Groups

Providing opportunities for community groups to understand and offer feedback on the compiled and analysed assessment results is a fundamental feature of our approach. It is not only for the obvious purpose that the groups may, then, use these results for their planning and action. It is more than that. During the survey the responses of a group were recorded by a facilitator in the questionnaire, that information was compiled, analysed, and conclusions derived by a social scientist in Australia. For these results to be genuinely termed as the group's self-assessment necessitates that the process from recording the responses to deriving the conclusions needs to be explained in an understandable manner with the community group who must validate that process by agreeing or suggesting modifications to the results and conclusions. Only after obtaining such an agreement, which might require incorporation of the suggested modifications by the community group, can the results be said to be final and authentic. The added value is the resulting ownership of the group for the results and associated conclusions. To achieve this, sessions were held with leaders of all participating groups. All but one group agreed with the results and conclusions. One group held partially different opinions which were noted. Views were expressed suggesting that the results represented a more positive image of their group than they would have expected, with speculation these results may have been contrived to make the group feel good about themselves. Those expressing these concerns were assured that such contrivance was not the case. The results were an accurate representation of answers provided by the group.

These discussions also brought the following issues into light:

- What should be the design of the reports for each collaborating group so that they may be understandable and durable enough for the groups to retain, and be accessible to all members?
- Would the groups sufficiently use these reports and take actions on their own or would they require external help from NGOs and government departments?
- Should ASSIB share these reports with other stakeholders to influence development of productive linkages that the groups may benefit from?
- Does the ASSIB team have sufficient authorisation to disseminate the group-specific and individual group's identifiable information to other stakeholders?

These issues sparked a discussion within CET and led it to devise appropriate strategies detailed in the following sections.

6.2 Developing Useable Reports on Results for Participating Groups

The report for each collaborating group was developed after combing advice from community groups and the CET. The level of detail to be presented was meticulously determined, featuring an optimal blend of graph and text. The material was presented in a social setting where literacy levels ranged from 0% to 15%. To ensure durability and access by all group members, the material was presented as a standalone poster, which was laminated onto a 24-inch-wide by 30-inch-tall wooden frame. This made the poster easily visible to all during group discussions and could be displayed permanently at the group's meeting place, given the salty and sultry settings of their coastal villages.

Brief text to support the graph was prepared in Sindhi language. This presented the team with an interesting challenge, given the language needs explained above in Section 4.8.

The new paradigm of understanding the community group capacity also summoned unusual and seldom attended meanings of customary terms often used in the development sector, such as "capacity", "capital", "physical", "organisational", "accountability" and so on. For translating every single term the dictionaries of Sindhi language, uses and meanings of Sindhi words in academia, journalism, literature, published and unpublished folklore, and in political and civil society fraternities were exhaustively combed. While words were preferred which complied these fields, emphasis was given to words and meanings used in the daily life affairs of the community of Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar. The resulting text was integrated with each of the group-

specific pentagrams to form the group-specific poster reports. In Table 8 below, we give some exemplary words translated into Sindhi which vividly demonstrate our effort. The complete composition of the poster which was displayed on a wooden frame is shown as Figure 3 below (the composite one for all eight groups).

Table 8: A few terms that vividly demonstrate unusual translation.

English term used in our assessment approach	Usual dictionary translation in Sindhi	Word, we used to denote meaning in our approach	Used in describing the capital type
Capacity	گنجائش	سگهه	All
Capital	سرمایو	دولت	All
Bonding social (<i>capital</i>)	-----	سماجی هم خیالی	Bonding social capital
Respect	عزت	سهپ	Bonding social capital
Bridging social (<i>capital</i>)	-----	سماجی رابطہ کاری	Bridging social capital
Engagement	مصروفیت	گنڈاپو	Bridging social capital
(<i>Community</i>) catalyst	-----	سجاگی	Bridging social capital
Brokering (<i>with government etc.</i>)	دلالی	مالکی	Bridging social capital
Relationships, partnerships	رشتا، پائیواری	پهچ	Bridging social capital
Advocacy	وکالت	وکالت، پونیواری	Bridging social capital
Organisational (<i>capital</i>)	تنظیمی	تنظیم سازی جی	Organisational capital
Accountability	احتساب	پچاڻو	Organisational capital
Critical reflection	تنقیدی عکاسی	سوچ ۽ ویچار	Organisational capital
Organisational communication	-----	تنظیمی لکچرہ ۽ رکارڈ	Organisational capital
Systems, procedures	نظام، طریقہ	نظم و ضبط	Organisational capital
Physical (<i>capital</i>)	جسمانی	ظاہری	Physical and financial capital
Infrastructure	بنیادی ڈانچو	سہولتون	Physical and financial capital

6.3 Report Back Sessions with Community Groups and Their Responses

The posters on wooden frames that represented the group-specific results were handed over to each participant group. A consent letter (**see Appendix 3**) was also drafted and explained to the groups. Group leaders were requested to invite a maximum number of group members to the report back sessions. At least two or more sessions, formal and informal, were held with each group where results were deliberated on through group discussions. The group leaders themselves also practised the presenting and explaining the poster results of their own group after following and understanding the explanatory lead provided by this report's lead author. This method was adopted to make sure the groups understood the charts and could explain them to other stakeholders. The SOFT staff also attended a few sessions as observers.

All groups willingly signed the consent letter authorising ASSIB to share their actual and identifiable information/ results with the wider community of researchers and professionals. The posters were found to be nicely understandable and useable by the groups, which became obvious by their responses, ownership, noticeable excitement to use these results in the future, and their request to the ASSIB team to help them in these regards. Although the responses of the groups differed from one group to another in respect of their degree of understanding, willingness to use results for future planning and action, and nature of support requested from the ASSIB team, the concluding comments from two groups expressed at the final sessions are given below for the deliberation and reflection of researchers and professionals.

These comments were provided in Sindhi and have been paraphrased into English.

"We have experience of working with so many organisations, NGOs and programs, but none of them provided us with our own assessment. This assessment result is like a "white paper" or an X-Ray of our CO. Now we can see why we are not being strong. We can see at which points we have problems. Acting pinpointedly and fixing the problems at these points, our CO can get healthier and prosper. We will discuss this chart in our meetings and try to get maximum benefit from this resource".

Mr. Saleem Shah, President, All Men CO Qalandri

"You see we have strengths in some areas and great needs in others. I believe we can build our capacity only if we focus on all the five areas simultaneously whether they are needs or strengths. We must capitalise on the strengths to overcome the needs, but we must attend to the needs to become able to benefit from the strengths. And most of all we require cooperation from your (ASSIB) side to regain our past glory".

Mr. Ayub Dublo, President, Hajamrho Mahool Dost Committee

The first comment represents a reductionist, analytical thinking approach, while the second offers a more holistic systems thinking understanding; each is useful, but different. We contrasted ethnic, organisational, economic, social, and biophysical conditions of these two groups to find out any reasonable cause to be accounted for this difference in their mental approaches but failed. They are two community groups from the same community in the same situation with the same background but also belong to two different castes at different villages having different occupations and different levels of external exposure. Maybe this difference happened accidentally or perhaps humans can assume varied thinking approaches regardless of their similar past and present experiences.

Results Overview for “All 8 Tippun Dublo Groups”

”ٺٺڻ دبلو جي سمورين 8 تنظيمن“ جي سگهه جو جائزو

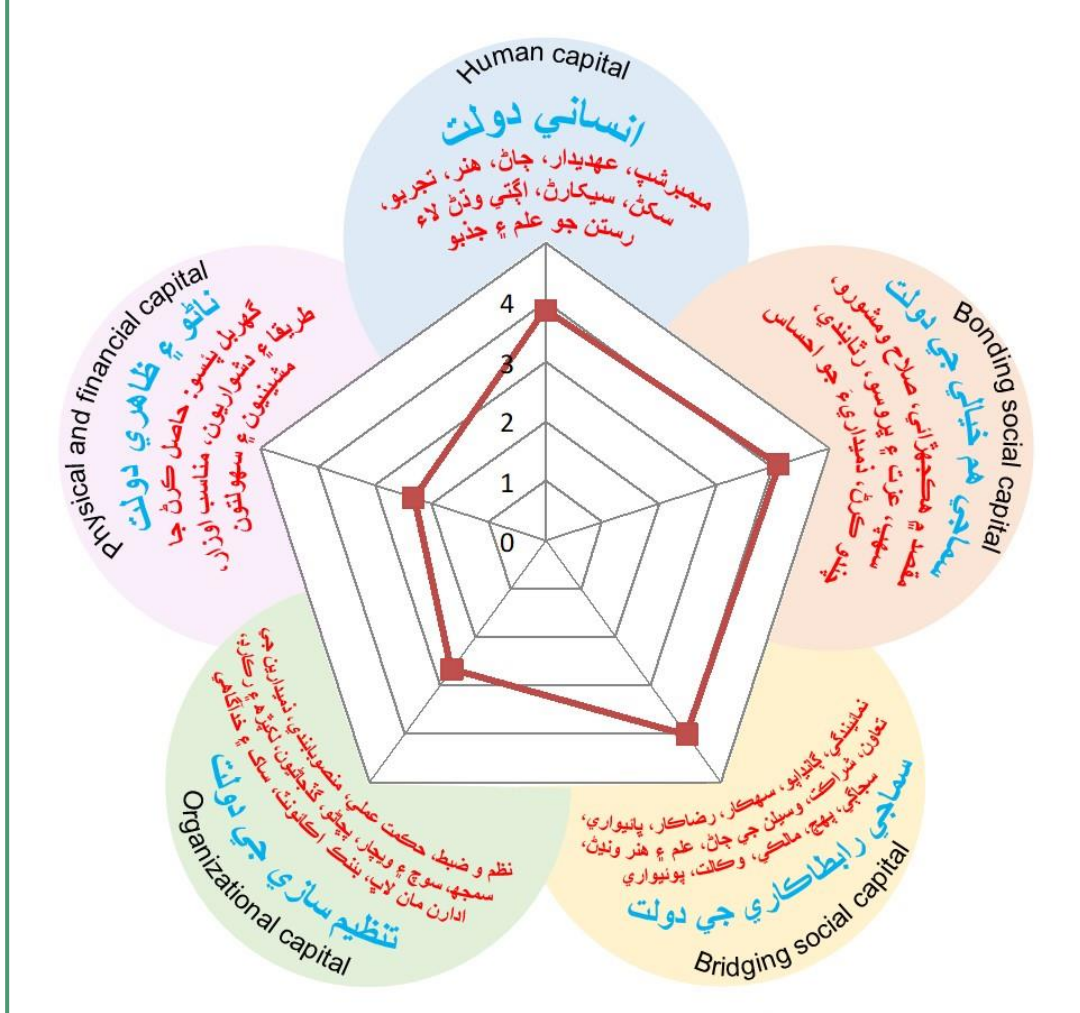


Figure 3. Community report back chart (this one showing composite results for all eight groups).

7 Overview of Other Capacity Building Approaches Used at Tippun Dublo

7.1 The SCCDP Approach

In 2013, with the purpose of measuring the performance and determining the extent of achievements of COs which the project had established and trained, an assessment was undertaken. The assessment was designed and led by the lead author of this report. The assessment parameters were assembled from project documents and other ADB literature. The approach was heavily influenced by the experience and orientation of the lead author of this report. These COs existed – and are existing – along the entire coastline of Sindh including Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar. Thus, this site, its community, COs, social activists, and the community development staff witnessed this exercise. A few hundred people who were involved in completing the assignment were influenced by this process that must have imprinted a lasting notion of evidence-based approach. Therefore, this episode can be taken as a noticeable event in the line of community group capacity assessment approaches undertaken at Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar. The assessment parameters copied from SCCDP documents are given below:

1. Awareness level of CO
 - 1.1. Percentage of members knowing their aims and objectives
 - 1.2. Percentage of members knowing the rules and regulations of their CO
2. Degree of self-reliance, self-initiative, and activism in CO
3. Do office bearers come through election or selection?
4. Membership of CO
 - 4.1. Total number of members
 - 4.2. Ratio of men and women
 - 4.3. Total number of households (HHs) represented
 - 4.4. Total population covered
 - 4.5. Percentage of members attending the meetings
5. CO record keeping
 - 5.1. Condition of project registers
 - 5.2. Condition of meeting minutes registers
 - 5.3. Condition of income and expenditure registers
 - 5.4. Condition of visitors' notes registers
 - 5.5. Condition of CO resolutions folder
6. Office and equipment of CO
7. Bank account of CO
8. Number of members of CO (days) who received trainings in
 - 8.1. Managerial trainings
 - 8.1.1. Community management skills training
 - 8.1.2. Community infrastructure management training
 - 8.1.3. Natural resources management training
 - 8.1.3.1. In agriculture
 - 8.1.3.2. In livestock
 - 8.1.3.3. In fisheries
 - 8.1.3.4. In aquaculture
 - 8.2. Vocational trainings
 - 8.2.1. Tailoring training
 - 8.2.2. Embroidery training
 - 8.2.3. Traditional birth attendant training
 - 8.2.4. Beautician training
 - 8.2.5. Mechanics training
 - 8.2.5.1. Mobile phone repairing
 - 8.2.5.2. Boat engine repairing
 - 8.2.5.3. Refrigerator repairing
 - 8.2.5.4. Tractor repairing

- 8.3. Masonry trainings
- 8.4. Computer training
 - 8.4.1. Hardware training
 - 8.4.2. Office automation training
- 8.5. Electrician training
- 8.6. Driving training
- 8.7. Activists' workshops
- 8.8. Exposure trips
9. Productive linkages established by CO
 - 9.1. With local government
 - 9.2. With forest department
 - 9.3. With wildlife department
 - 9.4. With fisheries department
 - 9.5. With livestock department
 - 9.6. With microcredit facilities
 - 9.7. With other NGOs
 - 9.8. Representation in VO
 - 9.9. Representation in LSO
 - 9.10. Has the CO been registered as Citizens Community Board (CCB)?
10. Number of Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs) obtained through CO
11. Number of voter lists entries through CO
12. Number of births registered through CO
13. Number of marriages registered through CO
14. Number of CO volunteers participated in the polio eradication campaigns
15. Infrastructure initiatives implemented by CO
 - 15.1. Were the projects endorsed by the community?
 - 15.2. Total share in the costs from community and members
 - 15.3. Total number of beneficiaries
 - 15.4. Degree of inclusiveness (addresses needs of women, children, elderly, and disabled)
 - 15.5. Are not duplications and overlapping
 - 15.6. Degree of being sustainable and environment friendly
 - 15.7. Degree of matching the locally available skills for operation and maintenance
 - 15.8. Is the required software (manuals/ guidelines) in place?
 - 15.9. Percentages of villagers who attended three meetings on the CO projects
 - 15.10. Percentages of villagers knowing the costs of CO projects
 - 15.11. Percentages of villagers who attended the project completion meetings
 - 15.12. Number of CO projects fully functional after one year of completion
 - 15.13. Number of CO projects fully functional after two years of their completion
16. Ownership level of CO for the implemented projects
17. Ability and skills level of CO in
 - 17.1. Assessing HH and community needs
 - 17.2. Resources mapping
 - 17.3. Participatory planning
 - 17.4. Income generating options
 - 17.5. Advocacy and lobbying
 - 17.6. Tackling rights-based issues
18. Village Resources Map (VRM) developed by CO
19. Village Development Plan (VDP) of CO
20. Micro Investment Plan (MIP) of CO
21. Total number and amount of loans availed through CO
22. Percentage of recovery of loans and of total amount
23. CO involvement in the Community Investment Fund (CIF)
24. Total amount of grants received by CO other than SCCDP
25. Total projects and their amount implemented by CO other than SCCDP
26. Total amount of CO savings
27. Sensitivity and involvement level of CO in environmental affairs
28. Sensitivity and involvement level of CO in NRM affairs
29. Sensitivity and disaster preparedness level of CO
30. Role of CO in the previous disaster response activities

31. Role of CO in conflict resolution
32. Role of CO as a safety net

The assessment also covered VOs and LSOs, but we have presented parameters above that pertain to COs only to be consistent with the scope of this report.

Although focus group discussions, community meetings, and case studies were undertaken in great numbers, the qualitative data collected was considered run-of-the-mill. The approach mostly used methods of collecting and verifying the COs' and implementing partners' accounts, records and progress reports and field inspections of tangible initiatives and observing resulting outcomes firsthand. The assessment graded COs based on their performance judged externally through the publicly verifiable and countable evidence of the contributions to poverty alleviation and economic goals and the extent they promoted the maxim of doing the greatest good for the greatest number.

7.2 The IFAP Approach

In 2009, the Indus For All Programme (IFAP) undertook an assessment of CBOs with whom it was working and supporting. Tippun Dublo, Keti Bandar was one of the four sites of the IFAP. Hence, the CBOs of the site were included. The IFAP assessment approach applied a modified Institutional Maturity Index (IMI) that had been developed earlier by the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) under the Northern Areas Development Project (NADP).

IFAP's purposes were (a) to establish the baseline of CBOs' development, determine the weak areas to be strengthened, which could then be used to gauge the impact at the end of the project; and (b) to ensure that the Programme establishes partnerships with viable CBOs.

The main changes in the original IMI included those that resulted from (a) replacing the "subject" community groups from COs to CBOs; (b) shifting from the context of the northern areas to Sindh; and (c) making it compatible with IFAP objectives. The IMI considered "Institutional Independence" as the ideal stage for a CBO to reach, which could be attained by maturing all four of its constituent dimensions given below:

- (1) Organisational Motivation
- (2) Organisational Capacity
- (3) Organisational Performance
- (4) External Environment

The external environment (4) was excluded from the practical application and rating scheme as it was deemed to be out of the control of a CBO. The other three dimensions were assessed using the 17 assessment prompts provided below:

1. Organisational motivation
 - 1.1. Objectives of CBO formation (Why was the CBO formed?)
 - 1.2. Selection of CBO office bearers (What process was followed for selection of office bearers?)
 - 1.3. Participatory approach adopted by CBO (What systems/ processes does the CBO have for decision making?)
2. Organisational capacity
 - 2.1. CBO leadership (How well can CBO leaders lead the CBO?)
 - 2.2. Management capacity (What organisational management capacity does the CBO have?)
 - 2.3. Conflict resolution (What systems does the CBO have in place to resolve conflicts)
 - 2.4. About IFAP objectives (What specific/ technical skills and information does the CBO have?)
 - 2.5. About NRM/ environment related issues (What specific/ technical skills and information does the CBO have?)
 - 2.6. About IFAP livelihood development and NRM plans (What specific/ technical skills and information does the CBO have?)
3. Organisational performance
 - 3.1. CBO meetings – last one year record (What is the frequency of CBO meetings and their trends?)
 - 3.2. Participation of members in meetings – last one year record (How well do members take interest in CBO meetings?)
 - 3.3. CBO records – last one year (How well is the CBO maintaining its records?)
 - 3.4. Fee/ saving structure – if any (How well is the CBO meeting its operational costs and is practising saving?)

- 3.5. Development Plan (How well is the CBO working on its development plan?)
- 3.6. CBO's participation in IFAP's Communication and Awareness activities
- 3.7. Self-initiatives through mobilisation of local resources (Has the CBO executed any self-initiated project/ activity?)
- 3.8. Partnerships and linkages – other than IFAP (Do the CBO have any linkages with government departments/ NGOs/ other agencies?)

The data was collected by holding meetings with the CBOs and assessing their records. The IFAP survey tool (questionnaire) also had sections to note the CBO members' satisfaction, comments, and suggestions, which was not included in the rating scheme. The assessors solely awarded scores as per their satisfaction against the 17 indicators and subsequently put the subject CBO into one of the following four categories:

- Category 1: - Inactive
- Category 2: - Institutional Infancy
- Category 3: - Institutional Development
- Category 4: - Institutional Independence

8 Comparative Overview of the Approaches

Table 9: Comparative overview of IFAP, SCCDP, and ASSIB approaches.

Subject	IFAP	SCCDP	ASSIB
Types of community groups involved	CBOs.	COs.	COs and CBO.
Assessors	IFAP staff.	SCCDP staff.	Members of COs and CBO.
Purpose of assessment	To determine weak areas to be supported by the IFAP.	To determine the extent of success against the goals of SCCDP.	To create a discussion within the membership about their own strengths and needs.
Perceived core competency of the community groups	Organisational maturity.	Organisational performance.	Organisational capacity.
Genesis and arrangement of the core competency	Externally standardised and generally applicable.	Predetermined mandated benchmarks generally imposed.	Emergent and relative, innately self-determined, uniquely applicable.
Method of measuring the core competency	Judgment by externals.	Inspection and tallying by monitors.	Dialogue based self-reflection.
Perceived relationship among the community groups and the environment	The environment is beyond the control of community groups. The community groups must conform to the biophysical aspects of the environment.	Social facets must be rearranged to become a conducive superstructure for harnessing the biophysical aspects of the environment, which are a resource for sustenance and satiation.	The environment is both a limiting and enabling continuum with which community groups interact to realise their distinctive aspirations. They shape each other, resulting in dynamic and unique human-environment nexuses.
Perceived formative nature of the community groups	Linear organisations: Structured, predictable, and sequentially progressing through the phases like inception, infancy, growth, maturity and so on.	Instrumental strategic assemblages: Purposeful groupings to align and synchronise energies to result in goal-oriented actions. Transitions and movements are seen as happening and in the directions to the opportunities as they arise, in the similar fashion of the “cooperative hunting”.	Dynamic organisms: Spontaneous, often recovering from setbacks, and adaptive structures which demonstrate irregular as well as recurring patterns of survival and movement. They are of a non-sequential nature, frequently exhibiting a pattern of growth and change, revisiting previous stages but at a different level.
Types of information collected and processed	Quantitative, objectively verifiable: Discursive or consecutive literal statements pertaining to the outwardly factual objectivity.	Quantitative, objectively verifiable: Discursive or consecutive literal statements pertaining to the outwardly factual objectivity.	Qualitative, quantified (sensory objectification): Non-discursive or imaginatively figurative expressions pertaining to inwardly subjective states. Quantitative, objectively verifiable: Discursive or consecutive literal statements pertaining to outward factual objectivity.

Validation of results	No.	No.	By community groups.
Reporting back to the community groups	Interaction among the assessors and the groups over the years, informally guided by the results.	Interaction among the monitors and the groups over the years, informally guided by the results.	Formal but limited “reporting back sessions” over a few hours.
Mode of knowledge obtained	Reductionistic, abstract generalisations: Factual statements, shallow and limited to certain defined features of the experienced world, lacking fullness due to the absence of the qualitative meaning.	Reductionistic, abstract generalisations: Factual statements, shallow and limited to certain defined features of the experienced world, lacking fullness due to the absence of the qualitative meaning.	Holistic, concrete descriptions: Complete awareness, deep and rich, contextually shaped (relational), grasping the individual entities with their total experiences rather than limited to only some aspects.
Impact on the community groups	Developed and demonstrated a passionate environmentalist drive.	Developed and demonstrated a pragmatic utilitarian drive.	Developed and demonstrated an intrinsic adaptive drive.

9 Discussion

On aggregate, the groups surveyed using the ASSIB capacity strengths and needs assessment approach were found to have high levels of bonding, bridging and human capitals; moderate level of organisational capital; and low levels of physical and financial capital. These results, aggregately and in this proportion, can be expected, with a great level of confidence, from the community groups existing in the developing agrarian contexts. This confidence points to the validity and the reliability of the assessment approach which is quite fresh and different in the region (Sindh, Pakistan).

Although, the results in this arrangement, on aggregate scale, can be expected for such groups, the exercise of assessment process is still of great value on the grounds that: (a) In a result card of a particular group, the “degree of difference among the levels of the five capitals” may be different from the other groups; and (b) similarly, the aggregate results of one context, region or society may differ in the respect of their “degree of difference among the levels of five capitals” from the other context, region, or society. Thus, such assessment results offer useful insights for the collaborating community groups, development staffs, intellectuals, funding organisations and even for policy makers.

Throughout the reporting back phase all groups had expressed their determination to use the results by planning their efforts to address their needs and build on their strengths. They also had been requesting ASSIB project until its completion in June 2024, to support them in getting the full benefit of the assessment results. They wanted ASSIB to enhance their skills and knowledge to build organisational capital through training, and to guide them in finding and connecting with supporting institutions and networks who could help them build their financial and physical capitals. Their requirement for some external agency to support and guide them to thrive and evolve is embedded in the context in which they exist, and the symbiotic nature of their very existence. All that showed positive “reception” of the assessment process.

For two years after survey administration and report back, ASSIB field staff have been working in the area and sought to note any changes that might emerge in the functioning of the collaborating community groups. There were positive indications that the groups had made efforts to improve their bridging and organisational capitals. These indications come from their increased interaction with large NGOs and government departments. During various occasions, staff from NRSP, SRSO, WWF, IUCN, and the Social Welfare Department informally reported an increased activism by the collaborating groups in comparison to other groups. The common point in all that feedback was that the collaborating groups had started self-asserting, insisting on their own agendas and asking for support to strengthen their physical and financial assets. To confirm this and to collect any evidence if there has really been any such progress that could be attributed to the ASSIB capacity assessment process and its subsequent report back phase, a systematic evaluation needs to be designed and implemented. Such an inquiry may include getting comparative feedback from NGOs and government staff about the participant groups compared with the groups that were not included in the assessment process. A

quick round of observations on their records, plans and financial conditions may reveal some insights. Interviews with their members and with the communities which the groups represent will be useful.

Another positive indication was noted through monitoring the performance of participating groups during the times of disasters that impacted the area. The groups had committed to build on and further enhance their strengths when they were made aware of this opportunity through the report back phase. They were shown how important bonding and bridging aspects of social capital are for them and how these play a role in the survival and adaptation of the groups and the communities that they represent. During the report back sessions, the recent histories of the specific groups and their related communities were discussed. It was brought into light and agreed by the groups that during the periods when they possessed strength in their bonding and bridging social capital, they were more resilient during disasters, and better able to use ecosystem services such as wild fisheries, fodder and timber, groundwater, and canal water. However, whenever their bonding and bridging social capital dwindled, their brokering ability for availing relief during disasters, social justice and security, and natural resources all diminished. It appeared to us that, in such contexts, the demonstration of a clear link between bonding and bridging social capital attributes and the adaptive and resilience capabilities had motivated the groups to consciously enhance their bonding and bridging social capital, pursuing that as a survival and adaptation strategy. For example, two specific cases can be noted based on our observations, and which could form the basis for further attribution verification. First, in 2022, heavy and prolonged rains and floods hit Pakistan. The disaster was declared as one of the costliest natural disasters of the world and the worst in Pakistan's history. The government announced a state of emergency on 25 August 2022. The inland side of the Tippun Dublo community was severely impacted. Observationally, the performance of participating groups in responding to the communities they represented was remarkably better than those of other community groups. Second, in June 2023, Cyclone Biparjoy caused complete displacement of the creek side communities at the Tippun Dublo. This disaster, however, offers a case to study the extraordinary performance of a collaborating community group which represents creek villages, and to check whether that was due to the reporting back sessions.

10 Conclusions

1. The ASSIB capitals-based community group capacity assessment approach is found to be valid, reliable and effective.
2. The approach generates knowledge that is useful for collaborating groups, professionals, intellectuals and planners.
3. The process to practise this approach can be customised – without altering its basic foundations – to suit any new context.
4. Genuine translation of the assessment categories and survey questions as well as results is necessary for effective reception and use of the approach and its results.
5. Words and statements can connote more than a single meaning, so it is important to use words carefully that work effectively with community and community groups to secure their confidence and cooperation. This holds for both verbal communication as well as for paralanguage.

The process demonstrated feasibility, validity, reliability, effectiveness and usefulness of the approach. It was conducted with a small number of community groups. To find underlying trends and patterns in the rural progression through this approach, we recommend its wider application across a broader range of sites and involving different types of community groups. Not only will the results be useful for participating groups but will also generate a wealth of knowledge to be used by a range of other stakeholders.

11 References

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Appendix 1. ASSIB Survey Tool (Questionnaire)

Adapting to Salinity in the Southern Indus Basin Community Groups Capacity Survey

Name of community group: _____

A note for those helping to administer this survey with relevant community groups:

A key purpose of this survey is to support community group understanding of their capacity strengths and needs. It is therefore preferable to arrange for an appropriate group of people who best represent the community group to participate in the survey process. **They should all be given an opportunity to collectively understand the questions being asked, and to discuss and agree upon their answers.** If you are able to arrange such a group discussion, please make a note of who was present in the discussion and take a photo with the group members' permission. It is also helpful to take notes of the process of discussion, especially where certain voices and/or opinions dominate at the expense of alternative voices and/or opinions. If such a group process is not followed, this is acceptable, but please take a note of the individual who completed the survey on behalf of the community group – i.e. their position within the group.

Is this survey being completed as a group exercise? (please circle) Yes No

Background information about your group

- In which year was your group established: _____
- How would you best describe the type of community your group represents?

We represent.... (please circle 1 or 2 the best descriptions)

A community of place (e.g. of a locality or area)	A community involved in a particular type of industry or produce (e.g. fish farming)	A community of identity (e.g. having a strong ethnic identity that separates the community from others)	A community of practice (e.g. High Efficiency Irrigation users)	A community sharing a particular interest (e.g. lobby group)	Other (please describe)
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- How does your community group define who is part of it?

We have defined membership, with fees	We have defined membership, without fees	Anyone who attends our meetings and/or joins our activities	Other (please explain)
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- How many people in your community group?

Men (over 30 years of age)

0	1-10	11-50	51-100	101-500	Over 500
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Women (over 30 years of age)

0	1-10	11-50	51-100	101-500	Over 500
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Youth (15-29 years of age)

0	1-10	11-50	51-100	101-500	Over 500
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Community group resources and capacity

12. How many organized community activities, including meetings, were held by your community group over the last 12 months?

0	1	2-4	5-7	8-11	12-20	More than 20
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Can you provide a bit of detail on these activities please?

13. Can you now provide details on what your community group wants to do

14. Please indicate how well the following statements apply to your group:

- b. Thinking about what your community group wants to do (as listed at Q 13), do you think your group has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience*** to do what it wants to do

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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*** experience here relates to the kind of "knowledge" people gain through practice; from doing things – it's not meant to refer to the length of time people have engaged in a particular practice.

- c. Our community group can easily fill positions of responsibility from among our members.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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- d. Those who take on responsibilities in our community group are given clear instructions about what they are responsible for doing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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- e. Those who take on responsibilities in our community group understand and accept their responsibilities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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- f. People in our community group actively share knowledge and learn from each other about how to do things that address each other's needs.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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- g. Our community group has a good understanding of ways to develop our group's capacity. (note: the idea of "developing our group's capacity" may need some explanation)

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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- h. Our community group knows where to get the knowledge, skills and resources we need.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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15. During the past 12 months, did your community group have access to staff dedicated to supporting your community's planning and development employed by another government and/or non-government organization?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, can you provide a bit of detail please?

16. Does your community group engage volunteers from outside your community group who support your community group's activities and development?

Yes No Don't know

If yes, can you provide a bit of detail please?

17. In general, in the time your group has existed, how easy has it been for your group to access funds to support the activities you have undertaken?

Very difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very easy	Haven't tried
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18. Does your group pool financial and/or other resources to contribute towards hire or purchase of assets that your group provides for its own coordinated communal use by all group members? (don't include contributions in donor-funded projects)

Yes, often Yes, occasionally No, never Don't know

19. Does your group have a bank account?

Yes, and active (go to Q21) We did, but it is now inactive/deactivated No Don't know

20. If your group does not have a bank account, please provide details on whether the group has funds and how they are managed:

21. Over the time your group has existed, has your group ever tried to access **funds or grants**?

Yes No Don't know

22. If your answer to Q21 is no, please provide details on why it has not tried to access funds or grants:

23. If your answer to Q21 is yes, how easy has it been for your group to access funds or grants for the following items on behalf of its members?

Items	Very difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very easy	Haven't tried
Durable/fixed assets						
Consumable/variable assets						
Incentives for farmers/ fishers						
Events						
Remuneration/ rewards for services provided, etc.						
Other items (please specify):						

If you haven't tried accessing funds for any particular items listed above, please explain why:

24. Over the time your group has existed, has your group ever tried to access **loans**?

Yes No Don't know

25. If your answer to Q24 is no, please provide details on why it has not tried to access loans:

.....

26. If your answer to Q24 is yes, how easy has it been for your group to access loans for the following items?

Items	Very difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very easy	Haven't tried
Durable/fixed assets						
Consumable/variable assets						
Other items (please specify):						

If haven't tried accessing loans for any particular items listed above, please explain why:

.....

27. Over the past 3 years, has your group ever tried to access **subsidies**?

Yes No Don't know

28. If your answer to Q27 is no, please provide details on why it has not tried to access subsidies:

.....

29. If your answer to Q27 is yes, how easy has it been for your group to access subsidies for the following items?

Items	Very difficult	Difficult	Moderate	Easy	Very easy	Haven't tried
Durable/fixed assets						
Consumable/variable assets						
Other items (please specify):						

If haven't tried accessing subsidies for any particular items listed above, please explain why:

.....

Relationships with others

30. Has your community group established partnerships and/or linkages with other communities, community groups and/or organizations?

Yes No

31. If yes, please list the name/s of any communities, community groups or other organizations your community group has established partnerships and linkages with:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

32. Please indicate how well the following statements apply to your community group:

a. Our group often shares information and ideas with other similar groups.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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b. Our group has a high level of engagement with our community. ****

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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**** "our community" includes all those that the group seeks to represent and engage; this may include group members, as well as non-group members that the group seeks to represent (this will depend on the type of group being assessed)

c. Our group is satisfied by our community's level of participation in activities we undertake.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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d. Our group influences people in our community beyond our members.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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e. Our community group makes it easy for people outside of the group to access our knowledge and expertise.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
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f. Our community group targets influential people at local, regional, provincial and/or national levels.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

Community group planning and activities

33. Has your community group undertaken a planning exercise to establish its goals and objectives?

Yes

No

Don't know

34. Does your community group have a strategic plan?

Yes, and the plan is current

Yes, but the plan is not current

No
(Please go to Q29)

Don't know
(Please go to Q29)

35. If you answered yes to Q34, does your group regularly monitor performance against the strategic plan?

Yes

No

Don't know

36. Please indicate how well the following statements apply to your group:

a. Our community group has a shared view of its purpose/reason for existing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

b. People in our community group are usually highly motivated to achieve its goals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

c. Our community group checks that our strategic direction matches its goals and objectives.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

d. Our community group always takes action to address issues to improve its performance.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

e. Our community group always seeks feedback from those local government authorities and/or relevant government departments with responsibilities for our community on what they think of our activities.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

f. Our community group goes out of its way to ensure that all members are consulted when key decisions are made.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

g. Our community group can make decisions even when there are strong differences of opinion.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

h. A characteristic of our group is a high level of trust and respect between our members.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

i. Our community group has adequate physical infrastructure and equipment to support the activities we undertake.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
-------------------	----------	-------------------	----------------------------	----------------	-------	----------------	------------

Please provide a bit of detail on the physical infrastructure and equipment needed to support your group's activities:

Appendix 2. Participant Information Sheet



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Adapting to Salinity in the Southern Indus Basin

Community Group Capacity Survey

Dr Michael Mitchell
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mimitchell@csu.edu.au
phone contact provided

Dr Catherine Allan
Charles Sturt University
callan@csu.edu.au
phone contact provided

Dr Bakhshal Lashari
MUET
bakhshall@yahoo.com
phone contact provided

You are invited to complete a questionnaire regarding your community group's organisational capacities and needs. You may complete this on behalf of your group, or you may include other members when responding to the survey.

Who is doing the research?

This research is being undertaken by researchers from Pakistan and Australia who are involved with a project called Adapting to Salinity in the South Indus Basin.

In addition to the researchers listed above, the project leadership team includes Dr Jehangir Punthakey, Dr Ed Barrett-Lennard, Dr Sandra Heaney-Mustafa, Dr Mobin Ahmad (all based in Australia) and Dr Irfan Baig, Dr Iftikhar Hussain and Mr Soomro Naveed Ali, based in Pakistan.

The project employs local facilitators through Pakistan's Society of Facilitators and Trainers, one or more of whom will assist you with completing this survey.

Why is the research being done?

This research is part of a project looking at ways people, especially farmers and their communities, in the southern Indus Basin are adapting to salinity in agricultural land.

The project is working with what we are calling "bright spot" communities, that is, with communities that already seeking ways to adapt to increased salinity and other negative pressures. We want to develop or support forums (spaces for discussion and knowledge sharing) in these general areas. These will be places where farmers, staff from relevant NGOs and government departments (e.g. agriculture and irrigation), and university staff and students, all of whom can share and test ideas with you for how your communities can adapt to salinity.

This is a project that wants to help build the community's ability to act, that is, its capacity. All community groups in the general bright spot area are invited to complete the survey to help us understand the range of support available so that we can work efficiently together.

The project is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

What is our group being invited to do?

Your group, along with other community groups in this area, is invited to complete a questionnaire that will take between 20 and 30 minutes of your time, with the assistance of a facilitator from the project. The person or group of persons who completes the questionnaire on behalf of the group should have a good understanding of the group's activities in the past three years. Consultation among the group is encouraged but completion by a single group member is also acceptable.

If you agree to complete the questionnaire, a facilitator from the project will contact you to arrange a suitable time and place for completion. This may include sending a paper questionnaire by mail if that is what you/ your group prefer. Either way, the facilitator will be available in person or by phone to answer questions about the questionnaire.

What will happen to the information from this questionnaire?

On return of the questionnaire, we will collate and analyse the information and provide a draft report for the project. We will also provide your group with a brief report that will include analysis of our measures of capacity of your group. We expect this to prove useful for you.

Are the questionnaires confidential?

The names of the community groups completing the questionnaire will be known and possibly shared in reports, and during discussions in the forums. You will not be asked for the names of any individual people from within your group in the questionnaire.

Does our group have to complete the questionnaire?

Whether to complete the questionnaire or not is entirely up to your group. There will be no adverse consequences for your group if you choose not to participate. Even if you agree to complete the questionnaire you can decide not to submit it, again with no adverse consequences.

Who do we contact if we want more information about the research?

Dr Bakhshal Lashari

Dr Michael Mitchell

Dr Catherine Allan

Who should we contact if we have concerns about the conduct of this study?

Charles Sturt University's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this project.

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

The Executive Officer

Human Research Ethics Committee

Tel: +61 2 6338 4628

Email: ethics@csu.edu.au

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix 3. Example of Consent Provided by a Community Group for their Data to be Shared

CONSENT

رضامندي

We, the undersigned members of the governing body of the community group:

All men Community Organization Qalandri

Hereby consent from the side of our group with the ASSIB project staff that they may share the actual and identifiable information about our group obtained through "Community Groups Capacity Survey" with the relevant external people for research, educational and non-profit purposes. The ASSIB project staff has fairly explained us the meaning of research, educational and non-profit usages.

اسين، هيٺ ٺنل ڳوٺاڻي تنظيم جا صحبيون ڪنڌرُ عهديدار:

ڳوٺاڻي مردن جي تنظيم قلندري

اسان جي تنظيم طرفان ASSIB پروجيڪٽ اسٽاف سان سهمت آهيون ته اهي اسان جي تنظيم بابت حقيقي ۽ سڃاڻپ جوڳي معلومات جيڪا "تنظيمي سگهه جي سروي" دوران حاصل ڪئي وئي، کي ٻاهرين واسطيدار ماڻهن ۾ تحقيقي، تعليمي ۽ غير واپاري مقصدن لاءِ وڃي سگهن ٿا. ASSIB پروجيڪٽ اسٽاف اسان کي تحقيقي، تعليمي ۽ غير واپاري استعمالن بابت مناسب سمجهائي ٿي آهي.



General Secretary or Manager

جنرل سيڪريٽري يا مئنيجر



President

صدر
سلطان شاه

Appendix 4. Snapshot Results Report for All Eight Groups Surveyed

On the next two pages, we present an example of the snapshot results report that had been prepared by the team in Australia following the same model as had been used by Mitchell & Allan (2018). While this style of reporting contained information and insights that community mobilisers and resource persons found useful, a different approach was used to provide feedback to community groups.

ASSIB Capacity Survey Snapshot Results: All 8 Tippun Dublo Groups Surveyed

This snapshot report provides summary results from all 8 Tippun Dublo groups who completed the ASSIB Community-Based Group Capacity Survey in October and November 2021.

- 5 groups were established less than 3 years ago. 1 group has existed for over 20 years.
- All groups have defined membership. 4 are women only, 3 are men only and 1 group is mixed. Most (6) have youth members (i.e. aged between 15 and 29 years of age).
- Most groups (6) hold activities (including meetings) at least once a month.

What is group capacity?

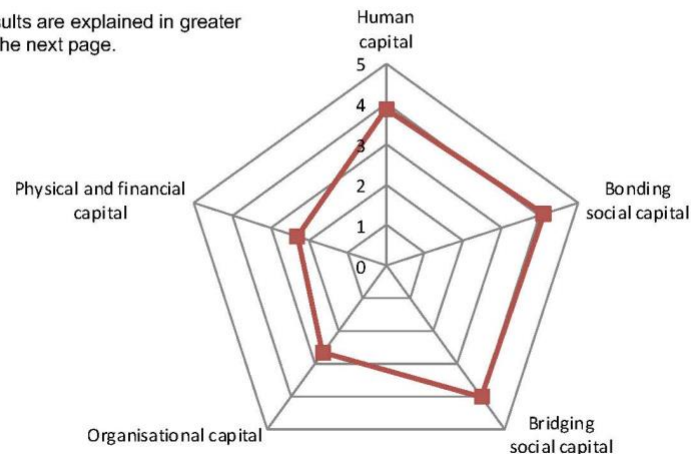
Capacity is the ability to act. Community group capacity is thus the ability of the group to take actions that help achieve what the group wants to do with their community. Every group has its strengths, and it is good to identify these strengths and build on them. Groups also have needs. Identifying these can help improve the group's capacity to achieve what it wants to do.

What does this spider web graph tell us?

What does this spider web graph tell us? Data from all 8 Tippun Dublo groups indicate strengths in the areas of human and social capital. Such results are similar to those found in surveys we have undertaken with rural community groups in Australia. In general, the Tippun Dublo groups felt confident about their successes in connecting with the community they represent and with other groups (bridging social capital), and that group members had a strong sense of shared values, as well as feelings of respect, trust and commitment for each other and the group (bonding social capital).

While scores were on average lower for physical, financial and organisational capital, there were still some areas of strength. Even though no groups had a current strategic plan, almost all groups indicated they take action to address issues to improve performance, and check that the group's strategic direction matches its goals. Most groups indicated difficulty in accessing funds, and only two groups indicated that had adequate infrastructure and equipment to support activities being undertaken.

These results are explained in greater detail on the next page.



What to do with these results

The information in this report is based on group self-assessment, guided by the responses each group provided to the questions in the questionnaire. We provide these results to help each group discuss its plans for the future. They represent the results at a moment in time, and so each group should ask themselves what the results tell them about their strengths and their needs. To help each group with this exercise, we suggest the following:

- Check that each group understands and is comfortable with the results as presented. If necessary, examine the individual responses to the questions that created the results. If there is any disagreement, use that to clarify what the group thinks are its capacity strengths and needs, and why.
- Examine the 'outliers' – those responses to specific questions where the group significantly differs from the average of all groups. Does the group think they are a good reflection of the group's strengths and/or needs? Do they matter?
- For any capacity needs the group identifies, do they as a group think these are needs that are important to be addressed? If so, what support should the group be looking for, and how?

For example, a group might have obtained a low score for organisational capital. On examining the graph detailing the questions related to organisational capital, the low score is seen to result from the responses to the two questions on strategic planning. The group decides having a documented strategic plan will enhance their existing strengths in monitoring, and asks a local NRSP officer to help document the group's existing vision, and then runs a workshop in how to make best use of that documentation for monitoring purposes, as well as to support the group's efforts to access funds.

Groups could use the five 'capitals' approach to help them think about their group's capacity needs in a systematic way. Below are some additional questions that may help to create a discussion with a group about their capacity.

Human capital relates to the people in your group.

Questions: Do we have sufficient membership to do what we want to do?
Do group members have the skills they need? If not, what skills are lacking?
Should training be undertaken to further develop these skills or knowledge?
Are our formal leadership arrangements sufficient for our group needs?

Bonding social capital relates to how cohesive your group is.

Questions: Do we share our goals and visions with each other enough?
If not, what processes might help us do that?
Do we have good ways to deal with differences of opinions within our group?

Bridging social capital relates to how your group connects with others.

Questions: Do our group aims and activities fit well with the broader community?
Do we get to share our knowledge with other groups, and hear from them?
Do we network enough to keep up with things?

Organisational capital relates to how your group organises internally.

Questions: Do we have a strategy for what we want to do in the next 1, 2, 5 years?
Are our members, including our leaders, clear about what they should be doing for the group? Do we have this written anywhere?
If someone came to a group meeting, would they think we looked organised?

Physical and financial capital relates to infrastructure.

Questions: Do we need more funds to achieve what we want to do?
Do we know where to go to find more money to support our activities?

ASSIB Capacity Survey Snapshot Results: All 8 Tippun Dublo Groups Surveyed

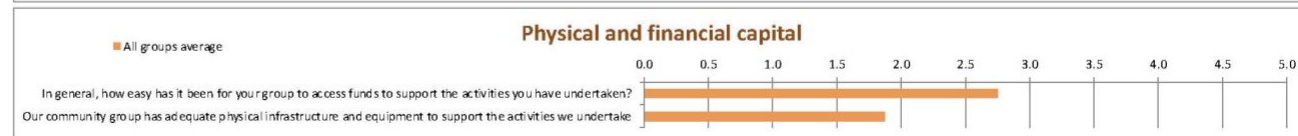
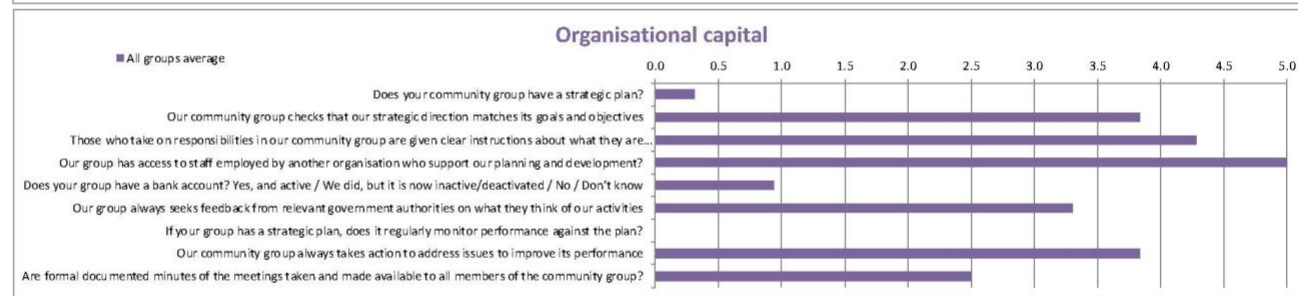
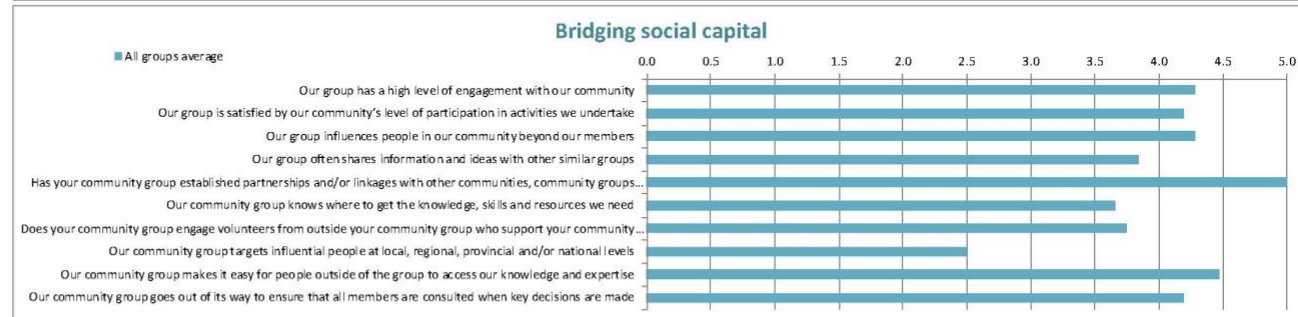
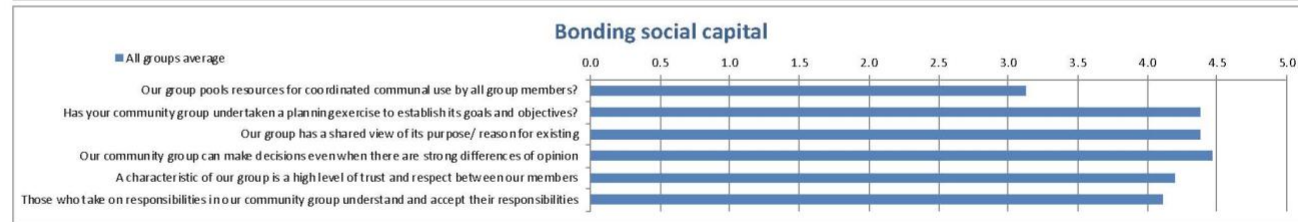
What the five graphs to the right show:

The scores used to create the spider graph are taken from the questions detailed in the five graphs presented to the right. Standardised scores are used so that all maximum scores are 5, including for yes/no questions, where 'yes' = 5, and 'no' = 0.

These results suggest that groups surveyed feel generally positive about their capacity levels. Highest scores were achieved across most aspects of human and social capital (both bridging and bonding), including some scores of 5, which is where all groups agreed to a yes/no type question.


The results also point to areas that may represent general capacity needs among groups. These particularly focus on organisational capital, and physical and financial capital, the so-called 'nuts and bolts', such as strategic planning, project and information management, and access to funding. There was also a sense among most groups that they could have more skills, knowledge and experience, and that their ability to target influential people was low.

The comparatively lower score for organisational capital is also in part due to groups responding that they do not have a strategic plan (score of 0), or that their plan is not up-to-date (score of 2.5), which also resulted in groups not being able to answer the question related to monitoring performance against the plan. Zero scores also affected the results for those groups who do not have a bank account, or that the bank account is no longer active (score of 2.5).





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