

FOCUS GROUP REPORT

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Drishtee

Introduction

The Focus Groups were part of the research and needs assessment phase, as a tool for the Community Needs Assessment (CNA), focused towards identifying the construction needs of the population, including sanitation, housing, agricultural storage areas, among others, using the knowledge and viewpoints of the villagers.

The focus group methodology was selected from the need to better understand the reality of the villages and why certain opinions were held. Being a group depth interview running on group dynamics, it takes advantage of the fact that people naturally interact and are influenced by others. This technic generates a wealth of detailed information and deep insight on how people think or feel about a particular topic – in their own words -, being an extremely useful tool to explore unknown fields, plan and design new projects.

Ultimately, the focus group methodology allowed us to understand how the female villagers saw their housing problems and needs and how they thought it should be addressed. It also enabled overcoming the obstacles imposed by the fact that most villagers are illiterate, which resulted in an impossibility to use other methods, such as questionnaires.

All data gathered during the Focus Groups was analyzed in light of the data collected in the Guided House Visits (and vice-versa).

Methodology

1. Participants' Selection and Demographic Profile

The Drishtee Team conducted the participants' selection for both Focus Groups with support from their contacts in the villages, following criteria based on the first observations and meetings. The selection was done by nomination of key individuals – women from the village, who were affected by the housing problems identified by Drishtee and, therefore, familiar with the topic.

The participants were separated into two different groups, according to their age, to avoid the possible bias: being Bihar a very conservative state, especially in rural areas, our main concern was that younger women would feel intimidated to share their opinions in front of older women, as those might break with tradition or go against more conservative views.

Group A	Group B
> 40 years old	< 40 years old
10 participants	10 participants
Income: ₹3000 - ₹4000	Income: ₹3000 - ₹4000
Both working women and housewives	Both working women and housewives
Available to participate in all sessions	Available to participate in all sessions
Communicative and familiar with housing situation	Communicative and familiar with housing situation

Table 1: Criteria for participants' nomination

The participants' demographic data was collected through a questionnaire (cf. Appendix A), filled out at the beginning of Focus Group #1. The Drishtee Team provided assistance since, as previously mentioned, most women were illiterate.

Although we realized during this stage that the participants of Focus Group #1 did not match all the criteria, we decided to continue the sessions based on the guarantee that the differences would not have a significant impact on the discussion.

	Age (\bar{x})	Marital Status		Occupation		Household Income	
GROUP A	44	Married	7	Housewife	5	INR 2000 - 3000	8
		Single	0	Field worker	7	INR 3000 - 4000	2
		Widowed	5	Student	0	INR 4000 - 5000	2
		No reply	0	No reply	0	No reply	2
GROUP B	19	Married	4	Housewife	3	INR 2000 - 3000	1
		Single	8	Field worker	0	INR 3000 - 4000	2
		Widowed	0	Student	8	INR 4000 - 5000	10
		No reply	1	No reply	2	No reply	0

Table 2: Focus Group #1 demographics summary ¹

Who lives in your house?		How many women? (\bar{x})	How many men? (\bar{x})	How many children? (\bar{x})	Who will live in your future house?		How many women? (\bar{x})	How many men? (\bar{x})	How many children? (\bar{x})
Nuclear family	8	2,6	1,9	2,4	Nuclear family	8	2,5	1,9	2,5
Joint family	15				Joint family	15			
No reply	2				No reply	2			

Table 3: Focus Group #1 current and future housing situation summary

¹ Group A had a total of 12 participants and Group B 13 participants.

Due to logistical constraints the participants from Focus Group #2 were not the same as in #1. However, no demographic data was gathered.

2. Focus Groups Structure

Two separate Focus Groups were conducted, preceded by briefings with the Drishtee Team in which the contents were explained and guidelines provided (cf. Appendix B). The first one (Focus Group #1) was divided into two similar sessions, one with each of the age groups. The initial location was Chanpura but due to weather constraints it was decided to move it to Satlakha. The session had a total of 25 participants (Group B – 12 participants; Group B – 13 participants).

The second (Focus Group #2) was conducted in Chanpura. The decision to return to the original location was based on the need of support from the villagers to promote the low-cost housing prototype. In our understanding, their involvement in the research process was a fundamental part of guaranteeing their acceptance and support of the prototype.

However, the number of women in Focus Group #2 did not meet the requirements for this session, mainly due to Chanpura women's unavailability to participate. Because of time and logistical constraints it was not possible to postpone the Focus Group and it was decided to move forward with the possible conditions. Since the number of participants was not enough to create two separate groups, the original structure was adjusted and only one session was conducted.

	Focus Group #1	Focus Group #2
Date	21 Aug	28 Aug
Location	Satlakha	Chanpura
Duration	≈ 60 minutes	≈ 60 minutes
Participants	23 women, divided into 2 groups (> 40 years old and < 40 years old)	8 women
Description	The theme was “WHO? WHAT? WHERE?” and the goal was to explore the conceptual framework associated with the houses and the village, to support the following sessions.	The theme was “THE FUTURE HOUSE” and the goal was to understand the preferences of the women regarding specific features of a house, as well as the importance of these features in the different spaces.
Remarks	The session was recorded with a camera and the content transcribed and translated from Hindi to English.	The session included a more objective approach to avoid loss of information due to the communication barriers identified in the previous session (both during the discussion and in the transcriptions)

Table 4: Focus Group Sessions description summary

3. Focus Group Development & Results

3.1. Focus Group #1

The focus was on what currently existed, without seeking to establish relationships between the various concepts. The goal was to explore the conceptual framework associated with the houses and the village, to support the following sessions.

Questions were designed to promote the sharing of spontaneous raw information and free-association (cf. Appendix C). The session was recorded, transcribed and translated.

Topic 1 – WHO?

a. Questions & Activities

The first topic was “WHO?” and the goal was to gather information about the participants’ characteristics, both regarding demographic items and housing situation (current and future). This topic consisted in filling out a questionnaire ², with assistance from the Drishtee team.

b. Results Analysis

[Covered in the 1. Participants’ Selection and Demographic Profile section]

Topic 2 – WHERE?

a. Questions & Activities

The second topic was “WHERE?” and the goal was to understand the spaces that exist in the participants’ houses. The facilitator requested the women to, individually and one at a time, list all the spaces in their houses. This was intended as a free-association and open discussion, even though in a semi-guided approach, to generate data that would allow us to understand what were the spaces in the houses, in the women’s own words.

However, during the sessions it assumed a strictly structured and guided format, which resulted in less detailed data (mainly in Group A) and lack of free-association (mainly in Group B).

b. Results Analysis

For a better understanding of the house structure and its spaces, it is relevant to note that the average household size is 7 and the average number of interior divisions ³ is 3.

In total, 9 spaces were mentioned by one or all the women:

1. Kitchen
2. Rooms
3. Rooftop

² Covered in the “Participants’ Selection and Demographic Profile” section

³ Excluding toilet and / or bathroom

4. Verandah (private)
5. Courtyard
6. Verandah or Out house (public)
7. Housing plot
8. Toilet
9. Bathroom

Topic 3 – WHAT?

a. Questions & Activities

The third topic was “WHAT?” and the goal was to understand the activities that characterize the daily life of the people of the village. The focus was not only on women’s activities, but men and children as well. The facilitator asked the participants to describe a normal day in the village life. This was intended as an open discussion topic.

b. Results Analysis

The participants mentioned several activities and, in general, most seemed to be common to all of them. As expected, the main differences were found between Groups.

GROUP A:

Household work
Food preparation and cooking
Cattle rearing
Children care and education
Agricultural work
Eating

GROUP B

Children care and education
Attending classes
Household work
Study
Casual chit-chat with significant others
Food preparation and cooking
Prepare tea
Brush and take baths
Talk with friends

Table 5: “WHAT?” activities summary

Topic 4 – Wrap-up Questions

a. Questions & Activities

The forth topic was a set of wrap-up questions, being the goal to understand the participants’ feelings and opinions regarding their current housing situation, as well as what would be an ideal situation. The facilitator asked three questions, being the first two present-oriented (“What do you like in your house?”; “What do you dislike in your house?”) and the last one more future-oriented (“What would you like to have in your house that you don’t currently have?”). This was intended as an open-discussion topic.

b. Results Analysis

The participants listed their likes, dislikes and wishes and, in general, most seemed to be common to all of them. As expected, the main differences were found between Groups.

Group A		
Like	Dislike	Would like to have
Spend time in the verandah (eating and socializing)	Very small windows (no ventilation)	Pucca house ⁵ Toilet (closed structure)
Using the hand fan when the weather is hot	Kaccha house ⁴	
Resting	Lack of electricity	
Group B		
Like	Dislike	Would like to have
Bedroom	Sitting kitchen	Pucca house
Kitchen	Asbestos roof (uncomfortable and hot)	Standing kitchen with closets
Open spaces	Lack of ventilation	Bathroom and toilet (closed structure with tiles, doors, running water, light, colored)
Watching TV	Water drops from the roof	
Spend time in the rooftop in the evening		

Table 6: “Like”, “Dislike”, “Would like to have” summary

NOTE

After analyzing the data gathered both during the Focus Group #1 and during the Guided House Visits, we were able to establish a connection between the activities and spaces, which allowed us to draft a broad definition of each space:

- 1. Kitchen** – Space for food preparation and cooking, being either a separate division of the house or part of the verandah.
- 2. Rooms** – Closed space (house division), mainly for sleeping but also for other activities (e.g., praying, eating, socializing, watching TV, among others).
- 3. Rooftop** – Accessible flat roof, usually used for drying clothes, socializing or resting.
- 4. Verandah (private⁶)** - Semi-interior verandah, mainly used by female and children. Used for eating, resting, studying, as well as socializing as a family or welcoming female visitors.

⁴ House made with mud and bamboo

⁵ House made with bricks and cement

⁶ Usually a covered exterior area, open to the courtyard (private space)

5. **Courtyard** – The outer space in front of the house and inside the fence / outer walls.
6. **Verandah or Out House (public ⁷)** - Exterior verandah or structure mainly used by male habitants for socializing. It can also be used to store cattle food or harvests.
7. **Housing plot** – Separate plot reserved for future constructions.
8. **Toilet** – Latrine, with a squat toilet and with or without running water. It can be either a closed room or an open space latrine.
9. **Bathroom** – Room for showering, with or without running water. It can be either a closed room or an open space area.

This information served as a starting point for Focus Group #2.

3.2. Focus Group #2

The session was oriented to a hypothetical optimal situation rather than their current one. The goal was to understand the preferences of the women regarding specific features of a house, as well as the importance of these features in the different spaces.

As mentioned before, due to some struggles with language barriers during the session and the transcription process, Focus Group #2 involved mainly objective activities (close-ended questions) and the discussion was reduced to a minimum to avoid information loss during the communication process (cf. Appendix D).

Activity 1 – PRIORITIES

a. Questions & Activities

The first activity was “PRIORITIES” and the goal was to understand the relative importance of a series of concepts to the different spaces of the house, identified in Focus Group #1 and during the guided observations.

Initially, the script included seven topics: “importance of spaces”, “size of spaces”, “privacy”, “natural light”, “ventilation”, “electricity” and “water supply”. However, since the participants seemed to be struggling with the activity and, at least at first, not very motivated to participate, we decided to remove the last three topics and focus on the most important ones.

A “spaces list” (cf. Appendix E) was provided for each topic and the participants were asked to fill out the list with numbers from 1 to 10, according to their opinion on the relative importance of the concept towards each space.

b. Results Analysis

The spaces ranked as most important were the “bedroom” and “kitchen”. These spaces were followed by the “toilet” and “bathroom”. Then the exterior spaces “verandah” and

⁷ Usually a covered exterior area, open to the public space. May be a verandah attached to the house or an autonomous structure outside the house.

“courtyard”, followed by the “rooftop”. In the end of the priorities were the “cattle shelter”, the “store room” and the “Dalan”.

IMPORTANCE OF SPACES		
RANK	SPACES	AVG SCORE
1	Bedroom	1,9
2	Kitchen	2,0
3	Toilet	3,5
4	Bathroom	4,8
5	Verandah	5,6
6	Courtyard	6,6
6	Rooftop	6,6
7	Cattle Shelter	7,0
8	Store Room	8,3
9	Verandah (public)	8,8

Table 7: Importance of spaces – “Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the most important space in the house and 10 the least important”

The spaces ranked as needing to be more spacious were the “bedroom”, followed by the “kitchen”, “verandah” and “courtyard” in equal positions. The “*dalan*” came next followed by the “rooftop” and “store room”. In 6th position were the “bathroom” and “cattle shelter” and in the end the “toilet”.

SIZE OF SPACES		
RANK	SPACES	AVG SCORE
1	Bedroom	2,1
2	Kitchen	4,4
2	Verandah (private)	4,4
2	Courtyard	4,4
3	Verandah (public)	5,0
4	Rooftop	5,1
5	Store Room	6,6
6	Bathroom	6,9
6	Cattle Shelter	6,9
7	Toilet	9,1

Table 8: Size of spaces – “Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that you think needs to be the biggest and 10 the smallest”

The results of the “privacy” topic should be analyzed with some caution, since the participants struggled to understand the concept. The “kitchen” and “bedroom” were listed as the spaces that require the most privacy, followed by the “bathroom” and “store room”. The “verandah”, “courtyard” and “rooftop” ranked in the 5th position, followed by “toilet” and “cattle shelter”. Finally, the “verandah (public)” was listed as the space requiring the least privacy.

PRIVACY		
RANK	SPACES	AVG SCORE
1	Kitchen	1,5
2	Bedroom	1,8
3	Bathroom	4,8
4	Store Room	5,9
5	Verandah (private)	6,3
5	Courtyard	6,3
5	Rooftop	6,3
6	Toilet	7,1
6	Cattle Shelter	7,1
7	Verandah (public)	7,9

Table 9: Privacy – “Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space requires more privacy and 10 the one that requires the least privacy”

The “kitchen” and “bedroom” are on top of the list, followed by the “toilet”, “verandah”, “bathroom” and “store room”. All exterior spaces were removed from the list, except the “verandah” as it may be considered a semi-interior space.

NATURAL LIGHT		
RANK	SPACES	AVG SCORE
1	Kitchen	1,1
2	Bedroom	1,9
3	Toilet	4,8
4	Verandah (private)	5,5
5	Bathroom	5,8
6	Store Room	6,4

Table 10: Privacy – “Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that requires natural light the most and 10 the one that requires it the least”

Activity 2 – THIS or THAT?

a. Questions & Activities

The second activity was “THIS or THAT?” and the goal was to understand the participants’ preferences regarding specific house features, in an objective approach. The participants were asked to choose between two options, each corresponding to a color; to vote each participant had to raise the card with the matching color.

To certify all the participants had understood the activity, the facilitator started with a few trial runs (e.g., “Where do you live? India or China?”).

b. Results Analysis

Most questions were easily answered by the participants. These results allowed us to clarify some doubts that had emerged from the previous Focus Group and observations and attain a clearer understanding of the villagers preferences, which is fundamental for the prototype design decision making process. The table below summarizes the results of the activity.

QUESTION	OPTION 1	NO. VOTES	OPTION 2	NO. VOTES
Q1. Do you prefer bigger rooms but smaller number of rooms OR smaller rooms but higher number of rooms	Bigger rooms but smaller number of rooms	3	Smaller rooms but higher number of rooms	5
Q2. Do you prefer a standing kitchen OR a sitting kitchen?	Standing kitchen	7	Sitting kitchen	1
Q3. Do you prefer a warm house in the winter OR a cool house in the summer?	Warm house in the winter	0	Cool house in the summer	8
Q4. Do you prefer a fence around your property OR no fence?	Big windows	0	Small windows	8
Q5. Do you prefer a fence with a gate OR a fence with no gate?	High windows	3	Lower windows	5
Q6. Do you prefer big windows OR small windows?	Toilet attached to the house	8	Toilet outside the house	0
Q7. Do you prefer high windows (that allow privacy) OR lower windows (that allow you to have a view)?	Bathroom attached to the house	8	Bathroom outside the house	0
Q8. Do you prefer a toilet attached to the house OR a toilet outside the house?	Fence around the property	8	No fence	0
Q9. Do you prefer a bathroom attached to the house OR a bathroom outside the house?	Fence with a gate	8	Fence without gate	0
Q10. Do you prefer a courtyard OR a rooftop?	Courtyard	0	Rooftop	8

Table 11: “THIS or THAT?” activity votes summary

Activity 3 – SUGGESTION BOX

a. Questions & Activities

The third and last activity was the “SUGGESTION BOX”, aiming at collecting a series of suggestions for the prototype that could go beyond what was asked in the Focus Groups (open-ended question).

b. Results Analysis

Only 5 participants had suggestions, which all others seemed to agree with:

1. High ceilings
2. Well lit toilet and bathroom
3. Kitchen and store room should be close to each other
4. Bedroom and kitchen should be nearby
5. Toilet and bathroom should be attached and kitchen should be good

Appendices

- A - Participant Profile Form (blank copy)
- B - Facilitator Guide
- C - Focus Group Discussion Guide #1
- D - Focus Group Discussion Guide #2
- E - “PRIORITIES” Activity Spaces List

APPENDIX A

Participant Profile Form (blank copy)

दिए गए सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प को चुनकर निम्नलिखित प्रश्नों का उत्तर दें।

1	उम्र	2	वैवाहिक स्थिति	3	व्यवसाय	4	घरेलू आमदनी
<input type="text"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> विवाहित <input type="checkbox"/> अविवाहित <input type="checkbox"/> विधवा अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> कृषि कार्य <input type="checkbox"/> गृहिणी अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ₹2000-₹3000 <input type="checkbox"/> ₹3000-₹4000 <input type="checkbox"/> ₹4000-₹5000 अन्य <input type="text"/>			

5	आपके घर में कौन-कौन रहता है?	6	कितनी औरतें	7	कितने पुरुष	8	कितने बच्चे
<input type="checkbox"/> एकल परिवार <input type="checkbox"/> संयुक्त परिवार अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

अगर भविष्य में आप नया घर बनवाते हैं।

9	वहाँ कौन रहेंगे?	10	कितनी औरतें	11	कितने पुरुष	12	कितने बच्चे
<input type="checkbox"/> एकल परिवार <input type="checkbox"/> संयुक्त परिवार अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

इस प्रश्नावली को पूरा करने के लिए आपने समय निकाला इसके लिए धन्यवाद।

दिए गए सबसे उपयुक्त विकल्प को चुनकर निम्नलिखित प्रश्नों का उत्तर दें।

1	उम्र	2	वैवाहिक स्थिति	3	व्यवसाय	4	घरेलू आमदनी
<input type="text"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> विवाहित <input type="checkbox"/> अविवाहित <input type="checkbox"/> विधवा अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> कृषि कार्य <input type="checkbox"/> गृहिणी अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ₹2000-₹3000 <input type="checkbox"/> ₹3000-₹4000 <input type="checkbox"/> ₹4000-₹5000 अन्य <input type="text"/>			

5	आपके घर में कौन-कौन रहता है?	6	कितनी औरतें	7	कितने पुरुष	8	कितने बच्चे
<input type="checkbox"/> एकल परिवार <input type="checkbox"/> संयुक्त परिवार अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

अगर भविष्य में आप नया घर बनवाते हैं।

9	वहाँ कौन रहेंगे?	10	कितनी औरतें	11	कितने पुरुष	12	कितने बच्चे
<input type="checkbox"/> एकल परिवार <input type="checkbox"/> संयुक्त परिवार अन्य <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

इस प्रश्नावली को पूरा करने के लिए आपने समय निकाला इसके लिए धन्यवाद।

APPENDIX B

Facilitator Guide

FOCUS GROUP FACILITATOR GUIDE

This guide aims at assisting you in conducting focus groups and should be considered as a toolkit to enhance your facilitation skills.

It contains three sections: (1) Facilitator Skills & Tips – brief introduction on this research project and guidelines on how to facilitate focus group, including the general focus group structure, tips on effective facilitation and questioning and how to handle difficult situations; (2) Focus Group Structure and Scripts – detailed description of the goals, structure and rundown of each focus group session; (3) Focus Group Materials – all materials needed to conduct the focus groups.

We hope that this toolkit is a useful resource for you, not only for this research project, but also for future participatory research efforts that you carry out in your projects.

Thank you for being a part of this important stage of the Chanpura Housing Project!

The purpose of focus groups is to collect information about the topic(s) of interest from the perspective of participants. The Facilitator must establish a connection with the participants that facilitates comfortable and open communication that will enable the willingness of participants to answer questions openly and honestly. This section of the guide was created to give you some tips and guidelines on how to effectively conduct a focus group.

I. FORMAT: Space, Participants and Structure

▾ Space

The focus group should be conducted in a comfortable space. Participants should be seated so they can see the moderator as well as each other and there should be enough space to perform any planned activities.

▾ Participants

Focus group participants should include five to ten people representative of the target group, who are willing to actively participate in the focus group discussion. Selection of participants should reflect a deliberate effort to include a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, while keeping in mind the principle of homogeneity (meaning participants should have something in common). Since some mixes of participants do not work well because of limited understanding of other lifestyles and situations – and to avoid inhibition and lack of honesty from some participants due to this –, we will be working with two different groups of women, divided per age group.

Participants are being invited to participate in focus groups because they are viewed as possessing important knowledge about particular experiences, needs, or perspectives that we hope to learn more about as a result of the needs assessment. Let participants know that you are there to learn from them so they will be aware of the respectful appreciation for their valuable contributions.

▾ Structure

STAGES	TIME	ACTION
Introduction	10 min	Welcome the participants and introduce everyone on the team
		Describe the focus group structure, main topic and goals and brief participants on the focus group guidelines
		Questions and clarification of information overview provided
		Ask participants to introduce themselves
Questions & Activities	TBD *	Lead the group through the topics starting with open-ended questions, and using more directed questions to clarify responses by group members
Conclusion	5 min	Ask participants if there is anything else they would like to add or discuss.
		Thank participants for taking part in the focus group and adjourn the session **

* The duration of this section will depend on the topics you need to discuss during the session.

** You may provide your contact information should participants have any further questions at a later time.

II. Facilitation Rules and Questioning Tips

↘ Facilitation Rules

These are some basic but essential focus group facilitation rules you should keep in mind to ensure the quality of the data collected:

↘ Show participants that you are listening to what they are saying. Signs that you are paying attention may include leaning forward slightly, looking directly at participants while they are speaking, or nodding at appropriate times. Good listening is key to conducting focus groups that will result in the collection of useful information. Being a good listener means being an “interested” listener. This is done by demonstrating that you are paying attention to what participants are sharing.

↘ You will also want to remain as neutral or impartial as possible, even if you have a strong opinion about something. Use phrases such as “Thank you. That is helpful.” Comments such as “I can’t believe it!” or “You really think that?!” are not appropriate remarks for a facilitator to make, because they infer your opinion and impose judgment on the participant, which will shut down discussion.

↘ Keep in mind that silence encourages elaboration by participants because it gives them a chance to think about what they want to say. More often than not, participants will fill the silence with more information. However, it is important to strike a balance between keeping the conversation moving and allowing participants adequate time to share and process what has been shared.

↘ Avoid making assumptions: clarifying questions and probes give the interview respondent clues as to how specific you would like their answers to be and asking them for clarification, details, and examples. The opinions of the respondent should not be assumed by the interviewer. To help ensure that you are not assuming, make small steps in your questioning with simple questions. This way you will get more detail and elaboration from the interview respondent and will keep you from making assumptions about what they have shared.

↘ Keep track of time. Time management is perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of conducting focus groups: that is why the focus group rundown has information regarding the duration of each section. It is important that the facilitator observes the duration set for each section and do a time check periodically to make sure that the time is being managed properly so that all the topics can be covered. If necessary, ask the note-taker support in time keeping.

↘ Questioning Tips

↘ Types of Questions to avoid - avoid questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no”. Try to also avoid asking “why?” (instead ask about characteristics or features of the topic), and asking leading questions. An example of a leading question is “Don’t you think...” This type of questioning may lead the participants to answer questions according to what you expect to hear, rather than how they really feel.

↘ General to Specific Questions - start your topic with broad questions, as they get participants thinking about the topic. You may find topics you had not thought about, but are important. For each topic, start with general, broad questions, then, move to more specific, narrow questions. Use open-ended questions as often as possible.

↘ Positive before Negative Questions - ask positive questions before negative questions. For example, start with, “What do you like best about your house?” After you hear the answers ask, “What do dislike most about your house?”

↘ Unaided before Aided Questions - don’t be too specific about what you need to know – let them tell you before you tell them. If you are exploring, you want respondents to tell you how they think about the world. Let respondents name categories, subjects, and dimensions before you do. After you ask unaided questions and exhaust responses, then you ask aided questions. Probes and clarifying questions can be used instead of aided questions, to help clarify what participants have said and to help get more detailed information on topics of interest. Examples of Probes: “Please tell me (more) about that...”, “Could you explain what you mean by...”, “Can you tell me something else about...”.

III. Managing Difficult Situations

⌵ What do I do if someone is dominating the conversation?

Focus groups, ideally, allow the collection of opinions and ideas of a variety of people. If someone is doing a lot of the talking, however, this may prevent others from contributing their thoughts, and limits the usefulness of the focus group. It is important to notice when this is happening and do what you can to try to make sure that other people have the opportunity to say things, even if they seem reluctant at first or insist that what is being said by others reflects what they would have said. It is important to have people say things in their own words as much as possible. If someone is dominating the conversation, you might want to respectfully acknowledge their contribution, and thank them, saying something like, “I really appreciate your comments” and then direct the conversation to other people by asking something like, “It’s very interesting to get a variety of perspectives, and I would like to hear from other people as well.”

⌵ What do I do if no one responds to a question?

This may happen due to a variety of reasons:

⌵ Did you ask a question that was difficult for the participants to understand? If you think this might be the case, you might try asking the question in a different way and rephrasing or rewording a question in an appropriate way that ensures that salient issues are explored and the research integrity of the group discussion is maintained.

⌵ Do you think you might have asked a sensitive question? (i.e., something that people are afraid to answer honestly because it might make other people angry) If you think this might be the problem, you might move to a different question or topic that is less sensitive, and try coming back to the topic later, or use probes, during a different line of questioning, that might get at aspects of the sensitive topic but more subtly.

⌵ Are people tired of talking about the topic and/or do they have no more to say about a topic? In this case, it may be important to simply state, “Is there anything else that you would like to share? *[pause]* If not, we can move on to our next question.” This communicates to participants that this is their opportunity to contribute any additional thoughts and allows you to move on to the next topic more naturally and politely. If you, as the facilitator, think you haven’t gotten all of the information you want on that topic, rather than trying to force things, just be aware that there may be an opportunity to elicit salient information in probing that occurs with respect to other questions.

In general, if participants are not participating, talk about easier topics, things that you think they may be more familiar with or comfortable talking about, or, perhaps, things that you know are particularly interesting to them. If no one responds to a question, another alternative is to be quiet for a moment and allow people time to think. Often, someone will speak up, either to answer the question or to ask a question that allows you to have a better understanding of the silence.

⌵ What do I do if the group begins to talk about topics that are not relevant to the research?

Sometimes the conversation will start to stray away from the topics of the focus group. When this happens, you might take advantage of a pause and say, “Thank you for that interesting idea. Perhaps we can discuss it in a separate session.” You do not want the duration of the focus group to extend beyond the amount of time you communicated to participants. You may want to mention this when discussion strays from the intended focus, and then refocus the discussion accordingly or use this as an opportunity to indicate that you want to be sure that you hear from others.

APPENDIX C

Focus Group Discussion Guide #1

RUNDOWN

Duration: 60 minutes

Theme: WHO? WHAT? WHERE?

Guidelines: WHAT EXISTS AT THE MOMENT? The goal is to explore the conceptual framework associated with the house and the village, which will support the following sessions. We will focus on **what currently exists**, without seeking to establish relationships between the various concepts. Questions should promote the sharing of spontaneous raw information and free-association. The moderator should avoid asking "why?", "how" or "yes / no" questions or ask for detailed answers.

Facilitator: *[facilitator name]*

Note-taker: *[note-taker name]*

Materials: Demographic Questionnaires (x 24)

Spaces List (x24)

Pens and markers

Notepad and pencil (for note-taker)

STAGES	TIME	ACTION
Introduction	10 min	Welcome the participants and introduce everyone on the team
		Describe the focus group structure, main topic and goals and brief participants on the focus group guidelines
		Questions and clarification of information overview provided
		Ask participants to introduce themselves
Questions & Activities	10 min	Topic: WHO? Description: The goal is to get information about the participants' characteristics (demographics) Format: Questionnaire
	10 min	Topic: WHERE? Description: The goal is to understand the spaces that exist in the village (general) and houses (specific) Format: Q&A
	10 min	Topic: WHAT? Description: The goal is to understand the activities that characterize the daily life of the people of the village. Focus not only on women activities, but men and children as well Format: Q&A
	15 min	Topic: Wrap-up questions Description: The goal is to understand the feelings / opinions regarding the present situation, as well as hints regarding what would be an ideal situation (future) Format: Q&A
Conclusion	5 min	Ask participants if there is anything else they would like to add or discuss.
		Thank participants for taking part in the focus group and adjourn the session

MODERATOR SCRIPT

STAGE I: Introduction (10 minutes)

Hello, my name is [facilitator name] and I'm working with Drishtee. With me are [names of the rest of the Team]. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group about the housing needs of the population of Chanpura. This focus group is part of a larger needs assessment process that Drishtee is conducting to learn about the housing needs in this segment of the community and how to best design a house prototype that will suit your needs and hopefully solve part of your current housing problems.

You were invited to participate as representatives of the women of Chanpura and we hope you can share with us your feelings, concerns and opinions on this subject. To ensure the collection of the necessary data, please observe the following guidelines during the focus group, which will last approximately 1 hour:

[If this is the group of younger women] You are representatives of the younger women who live in Chanpura and are within the group of people that will be investing in building a house in the near future. We would like to hear from you about your current housing situation, what you have, what you do and the existing spaces in your houses. We will also focus what are your likes, dislikes and wishes.

[If this is the group of older women] You are representatives of the older women who live in Chanpura and are within the group of people that will be investing in building a house in the near future. We would like to hear from you about your current housing situation, what you have, what you do and the existing spaces in your houses. We will also focus what are your likes, dislikes and wishes.

During this focus group I will be asking questions and facilitating the conversation about how can we improve your current living conditions by building an house that fits your needs. Please keep in mind that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to any of the questions I will be asking. My role will be to guide the conversation and hear the opinions of everyone in the room. You don't need to agree with others but you must listen respectfully as others share their views. I hope you will be comfortable speaking honestly and sharing your ideas with us and with each other.

Please note that this session will be recorded and [name] will be taking to ensure we adequately capture your ideas during the conversation, so please one person speaking at a time. The comments from the focus group will remain confidential and your name will not be attached to any comments you make. Do you have any questions so far?

- - - [Allow some time for participants to ask questions] - - -

Before we begin, I would like to start by asking each one of you to introduce yourself.

- - -

STAGE II: Questions & Activities (45 minutes)

📌 Topic: WHO (10 minutes)

I would like to start by asking you to answer a few questions from a questionnaire that will allow us to better understand who you are. [Insert name of the person – one or if possible two – who will be asking the question individually] will be going around and ask these questions to each of you.

[Allow some time for participants to answer the questions and collect Questionnaires from left to right]

Thank you for answering these questions. Let's continue.

📌 Topic: **WHERE?** (10 minutes)

Continuing, I would like to ask you to, individually and one at a time, list all the spaces / rooms / areas in your house.

Remark: cf. Materials: Spaces List – note-taker to fill out one list per participant
(collect Spaces Lists from left to right, following the same order as for the Questionnaires)

📌 Topic: **WHAT?** (10 minutes)

Now, I would like to ask you to describe a normal day in the village life.

Questions to promote discussion:
What do you usually do during the day?
What do you do in the village?
What do you do in your own house?
What do men do during the day?
What do children do during the day?

Key words: routine; daily activities; female; male; children

📌 Topic: **WRAP-UP QUESTIONS** (15 minutes)

Following our conversation about what is your housing reality, we would like to know a little bit more about what you like and dislike in your house and what you feel is missing and you'd like to have. So...

📌 What do you like about your house / in your house?

Questions to promote discussion:
Are there things you wouldn't change?
Are there things you couldn't live without?

📌 What do you dislike about your house / in your house?

Questions to promote discussion:
Are there things you would like to change?
Are there things you would like to remove?

📌 What would you like to have in your house, that you don't currently have?

Questions to promote discussion:
Is there anything missing? What would you add to your house?

- - -

STAGE III: Conclusion (5 minutes)

Before we finish, is there anything you would like to add or suggest?

- - - *[Allow some time for participants to add something or make suggestions]* - - -

This has been a very successful discussion and your opinions will be a valuable asset in the process of designing and building a prototype house that may suit the needs of this community.

Thank you for taking the time to share your perspective with us. We truly appreciate your participation!

- - -

APPENDIX D

Focus Group Discussion Guide #2

RUNDOWN

Duration: 90 minutes

Theme: THE FUTURE HOUSE

Guidelines: The goal is to understand the preferences of the women regarding specific features of a house, as well as the importance of these features in the different spaces. The session is oriented to a hypothetical / optimal situation rather than their present / current one.

Facilitator: [facilitator name]

Note-taker: [note-taker name]

Materials: Priority Lists (x 180)

Pink (x 100) and White (x 100) small cardboards

Pink (x10) and White (x10) large cardboards

Pens and markers

Notepad and pencil (for note-taker)

STAGES	TIME	ACTION
Introduction	5 min	Welcome the participants and introduce everyone on the team
		Describe the focus group structure, main topic and goals and brief participants on the focus group guidelines
		Questions and clarification of information overview provided
Questions & Activities	40 min	Topic: PRIORITIES Description: The goal is to understand the relative importance of a series of concepts to the different spaces of the house Format: Guided activity
		Topic: THIS or THAT? Description: The goal is to understand the participants' preferences regarding specific house features, in an objective approach Format: Guided activity
		Topic: SUGGESTION BOX Description: The goal is to collect a series of suggestions for the prototype that may go beyond what was asked in the Focus Group sessions Format: Guided activity
Conclusion	5 min	Ask participants if there is anything else they would like to add or discuss.
		Thank participants for taking part in the focus group and adjourn the session

MODERATOR SCRIPT

STAGE I: Introduction (5 minutes)

Hello, my name is [facilitator name] and I'm working with Drishtee. With me are [names of the rest of the Team]. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group about the housing needs of the population of Chanpura. As you know, this focus group is part of a larger needs assessment process that Drishtee is conducting to learn about the housing needs in this segment of the community and how to best design a house prototype that will suit your needs and hopefully solve part of your current housing problems.

I would like to remind you were invited to participate as representatives of the women of Chanpura and we hope you can share with us your feelings, concerns and opinions on this subject. To ensure the collection of the necessary data, please observe the following guidelines during the focus group, which will last approximately 1 hour:

[If this is the group of younger women] You are representatives of the younger women who live in Chanpura and are within the group of people that will be investing in building a house in the near future. In this session we will explore your preferences regarding some particular house features.

[If this is the group of older women] You are representatives of the older women who live in Chanpura and are within the group of people that will be investing in building a house in the near future. In this session we will explore your preferences regarding some particular house features.

Lets quickly remember the focus group rules. Please keep in mind that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to any of the questions I will be asking. My role will be to guide the conversation and hear the opinions of everyone in the room. You don't need to agree with others but you must listen respectfully as others share their views. I hope you will be comfortable speaking honestly and sharing your ideas with us and with each other.

Please note that this session will be recorded and [name] will be taking to ensure we adequately capture your ideas during the conversation, **so please one person speaking at a time**. The comments from the focus group will remain confidential and your name will not be attached to any comments you make. Do you have any questions so far?

- - - [Allow some time for participants to ask questions] - - -

STAGE II: Questions & Activities (80 minutes)

📌 Topic: **PRIORITIES** (40 minutes)

We will start with an activity that will allow us to understand the importance of some concepts from your perspective, in relation to each space of the house. For that we will ask you to think about the list of spaces in front of you, and organize them in order of importance / preference in relation to a few topics. We will be going through the topics one by one and we will be assisting you with the activity, so feel free to let us know if you need help or have doubts.

Let's start! The first topic is: **importance of the spaces**. What we would like you to do is to organize the spaces in order of importance. You will do this by writing a number from 1 to 10 in the small square in front of each space, being 1 the most important space in the house and 10 the least important. You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

The second topic is: **size of the spaces**. Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that you think needs to be the biggest and 10 the smallest. You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

The third topic is: **privacy**. Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space requires more privacy and 10 the one that requires the least privacy (being more public). You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

The fourth topic is: **natural light**. Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that requires natural light the most and 10 the one that requires it the least. You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

The fifth topic is: **ventilation**. Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that requires ventilation the most and 10 the one that requires it the least. You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

The sixth topic is: **electricity**. Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that requires electricity the most (electrical points) and 10 the one that requires it the least. You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

The seventh topic is: **water supply**. Please write a number from 1 to 10 in the small square beside each space, being 1 the space that requires water supply the most and 10 the one that requires it the least. You cannot give the same number to different spaces.

[Allow some time for participants to complete the activity]

Thank you for answering these questions. Did you have any difficulties in ordering the spaces in relation to the concepts? If so, which ones? Is there any space or concept that hasn't been mentioned, which you feel it is important to add to this activity? Would you like to comment or add anything to what has been discussed in this activity?

📌 Topic: **THIS or THAT?** (30 minutes)

Now, in this next activity we will ask you to choose between two options we will give you. We have given each of you two cards with two different colors. We will present you two options, one corresponding to one of the two colors. When asked, you will raise the color that corresponds to the option you would like to choose. Is this clear? Let's do a trial run to see if everybody understood:

The question is: do you live in India OR China? THIS pink paper represents INDIA and THAT white paper represents CHINA. Please raise the color that represents your answer.

More trial run questions:

Do you prefer rain or sun?

Do you live in a village or a city?

[Do as many trial runs as needed until everybody understands the activity]

Now that everybody understood the activity, let's start with the real questions.

1. Do you prefer **bigger rooms but smaller number of rooms** OR **smaller rooms but higher number of rooms**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents your answer.
2. Do you prefer a **standing kitchen** OR a **sitting kitchen**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents your answer.
3. Do you prefer a **warm house in the winter** OR a **cool house in the summer**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents your answer.
4. Do you prefer a **fence around your property** OR **no fence**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents your answer.

5. Do you prefer a **fence with a gate** OR a **fence with no gate**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents you answer.
6. Do you prefer **big windows** OR **small windows**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents you answer.
7. Do you prefer **high windows (that allow privacy)** OR lower windows **(that allow you to have a view)**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents you answer.
8. Do you prefer a **toilet attached to the house** OR a **toilet outside the house**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents you answer.
9. Do you prefer a **bathroom attached to the house** OR a **bathroom outside the house**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents you answer.
10. Do you prefer a **courtyard** OR a **rooftop**? THIS pink paper represents OPTION 1 and THAT white paper represents OPTION 2. Please raise the color that represents you answer.

Thank you for answering these questions. Did you have any difficulties making these decisions? If so, which ones? Would you like to comment or add anything to what has been discussed in this activity?

📌 Topic: **SUGGESTION BOX** (10 minutes)

Continuing, I would like to ask you to, individually and one at a time, give us a suggestion to design the low cost housing prototype. All suggestions will be considered so please try not to repeat suggestions given by other women.

STAGE III: Conclusion (5 minutes)

Before we finish, is there anything you would like to add or suggest?

--- [Allow some time for participants to add something or make suggestions] ---

This has been a very successful discussion and your opinions will be a valuable asset in the process of designing and building a prototype house that may suit the needs of this community.

Thank you for taking the time to share your perspective with us. We truly appreciate your participation!

APPENDIX E

“PRIORITIES” Activity Spaces List

importance
of the
spaces

रिक्त/खाली स्थानों का महत्व

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

privacy

गोपनीयता

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

size
of the
spaces

रिक्त/खाली स्थानों की आकार

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

natural light

प्राकृतिक रोशनी

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

water supply

पानी की आपूर्ति

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

ventilation

वायु-संचार

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)

electricity

बिजली

- ☐ सोने का कमरा
- ☐ रसोई
- ☐ बरान्डा (भीतरी बरान्डा)
- ☐ आंगन
- ☐ स्नानघर
- ☐ शौचालय
- ☐ छत
- ☐ भंडार कक्ष
- ☐ दालान
- ☐ मवेशी का घर (पशु आश्रय)