

# Seasonal Calendar

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# Definitions

- A seasonal calendar is a visual method of **showing the distribution of seasonally varying phenomena** (such as economic activities, resources, production activities, problems, illness/disease, migration, and natural events/phenomena) over time.

# Definitions..... contd.

- A seasonal calendar is a participatory tool to explore seasonal changes (e.g. gender-specific workload, diseases, income, expenditure etc.)

# Objectives

- To learn about changes in livelihoods over the year and to show the seasonality of agricultural and non agricultural workload, food availability, human diseases, gender-specific income and expenditure, water, forage, credit and holidays



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# What can it be used for?

- Understanding seasonal differences during livelihoods analysis and vulnerability analysis.
- Illustrating dynamic dimensions of well-being, which are often poorly illustrated through conventional forms of poverty assessment.
- Identifying cause-and-effect relationships between seasonally varying phenomena.

# What can it be used for?

## Contd.

- Understanding the time of the year when different social groups are more or less vulnerable.
- Identifying some of the reducing, mitigating, and coping strategies people use to manage risk.
- Identifying periods when specific groups of people usually suffer particular hardship so that appropriate “safety nets” can be set in place or other remedial actions taken.

# Questions to guide discussion and analysis

1. What are the busiest months of the year
2. How does water availability for human consumption vary over the year?
3. How does livestock forage availability vary over the year?
4. When are most agricultural work carried out by women?
5. When are most agricultural work carried out



- 6. When is most non-agricultural work carried out by women?
- 7. When is most non-agricultural work carried out by men?
- 8. Which could be the most appropriate season for additional activities for men and women?
- 9. What time constraints do exist and for what

# How to facilitate:

- 1. Find a large open space for the group. The calendar can be drawn on the ground or on very big sheets of paper.
- 2. Ask the participants to draw a matrix, indicating each month along one axis by a symbol.

- 3. It usually easiest to start the calendar by asking about rainfall patterns. Choose a symbol for rain and put/draw it next to the column which participants will now use to illustrate the rainfall.
- Ask the group to put stones under each month of the calendar to represent relative amounts of rainfall (more stones meaning more rainfall).

- 4. Move to the next topic and ask people during which month the food is usually scarce. Discuss the reasons why it is scarce and make sure that the different kind of food donations that people receive are discussed and that this information is shown in the map.

- 5. Go on like this, meaning topic by topic. After finishing all the columns, your matrix should have covered all the topics:
  - (1) Rainfall
  - (2) water availability for human consumption
  - (3) livestock forage availability
  - (4) credit availability

- (5) non-agricultural work load for women
- (6) agricultural work load for women
- (7) agricultural work load for men
- (8) non-agricultural work load for women

- After the calendar is finished ask the group which linkages they see among the different topics of the calendar.
- Encourage the group to discuss what they see on the calendar.
- Make sure that your copy of the seasonal calendar - has a key explaining the different items and symbols used on the map.



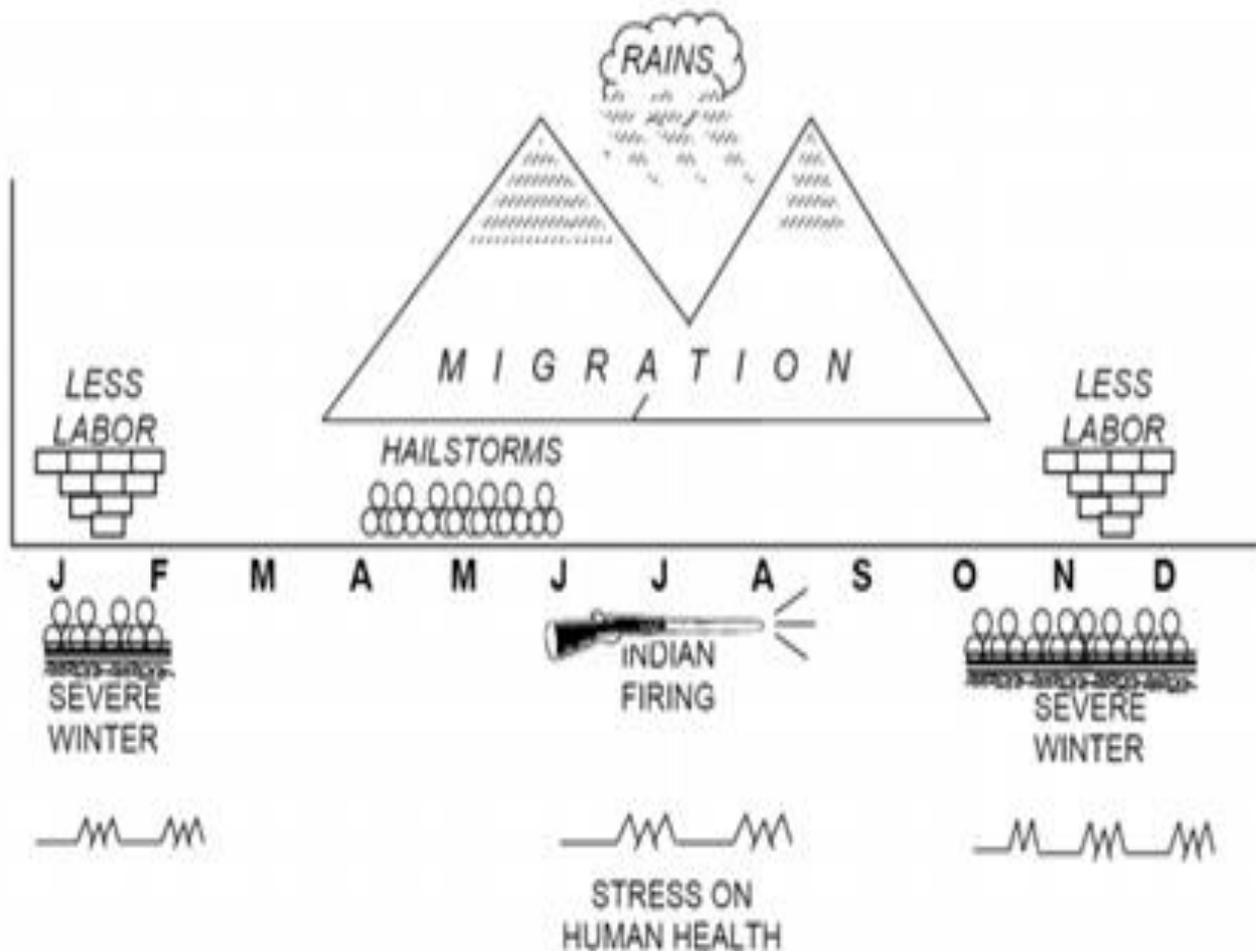
# Material needed:

- Documentation Sheet, this tool sheet, white paper for copying the seasonal calendar.
- 1) If drawing on the ground: soft ground, stones, sticks and other available material to produce symbols, or
- 2) if drawing on a paper: BIG sheet of paper, pencils, markers

# Skills Needed

- Good participatory facilitation and social analytical skills;
- A natural resource disciplinary background is useful.

Figure 1: An example of a seasonal calendar produced by male farmers in Kashmir (World Bank, 2005)



# Points to remember:

- Seasonal calendars should reflect local/indigenous concepts of time and seasonal categories.
- Symbols or drawings can be used to indicate the seasons and/or the events and changes that occur throughout the year. It is important that all participants understand what has been represented.
- Local participants should be encouraged to build as much of the diagram as possible without interruption and to suggest anything else that should be recorded.

# Limitations

- Care must be taken by the facilitator to acknowledge locally used calendars and ways of representing time.

# Questions?

## Thank you for your audience

