DEFINITIONS & METHODS

The territorial diagnostic approach

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www.diagnostic-territoire.org, 2016

This production is the result of work by local development and social action players.

It is intended to improve the way in which those working in the field carry out territorial diagnoses.
If you consult or use this document, please send us an email to **secretariat@apsn-prev.fr**

By letting us know how you have used it, and giving us your feedback, ideas and suggestions, you will be helping us to make improvements.

Happy reading!

This document was translated into English and adapted for the City Lab II RePIC's purposes by the ULiège Team. We based ourselves freely on the original French document.

This document comes with another booklet entitled "Tools", go see it!

Objectives and stages of a territorial analysis/diagnostic

WHAT IS A TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS?

"An inventory of the problems, strengths, weaknesses, expectations of the people, economic, environmental and social issues (...) in a given area. It provides explanations of past developments and assessments of future developments".

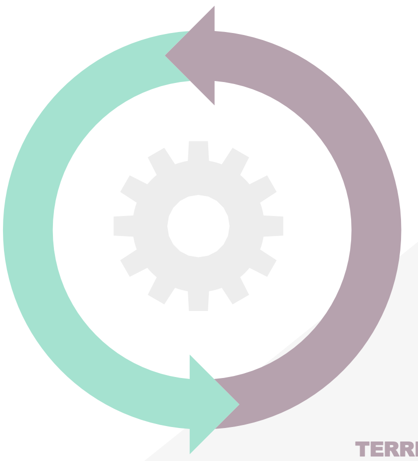
Interministerial Delegation for Spatial Planning and Regional Attractiveness (DATAR)

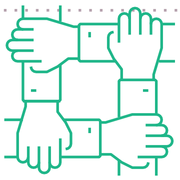
"The diagnostic is a participatory work process that highlights the strengths, weaknesses, potential and threats of a territory. It looks for gaps between the representations of the various stakeholders, highlights assets and expectations, and identifies the causes of malfunctions and, above all, identifies areas for improvement.

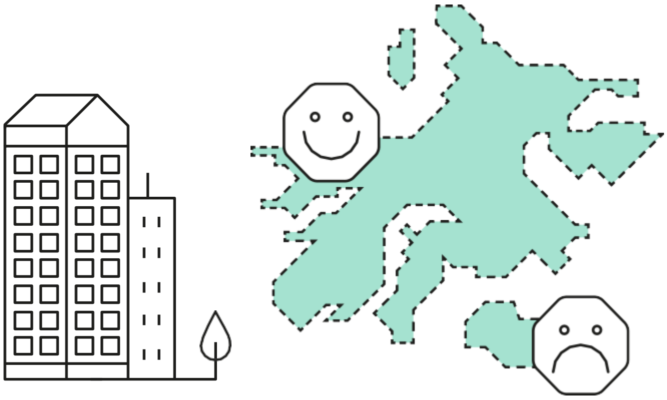
KEY POINTS:

— The territorial diagnostic is not an end in itself; it is a step in the project process. It has an operational purpose - there can be no diagnostic without a prognosis!

— The diagnostic relies on the participation of stakeholders (residents, partners, elected representatives, etc.), on the comparison of points of view and the search for common solutions. It therefore requires significant coordination!





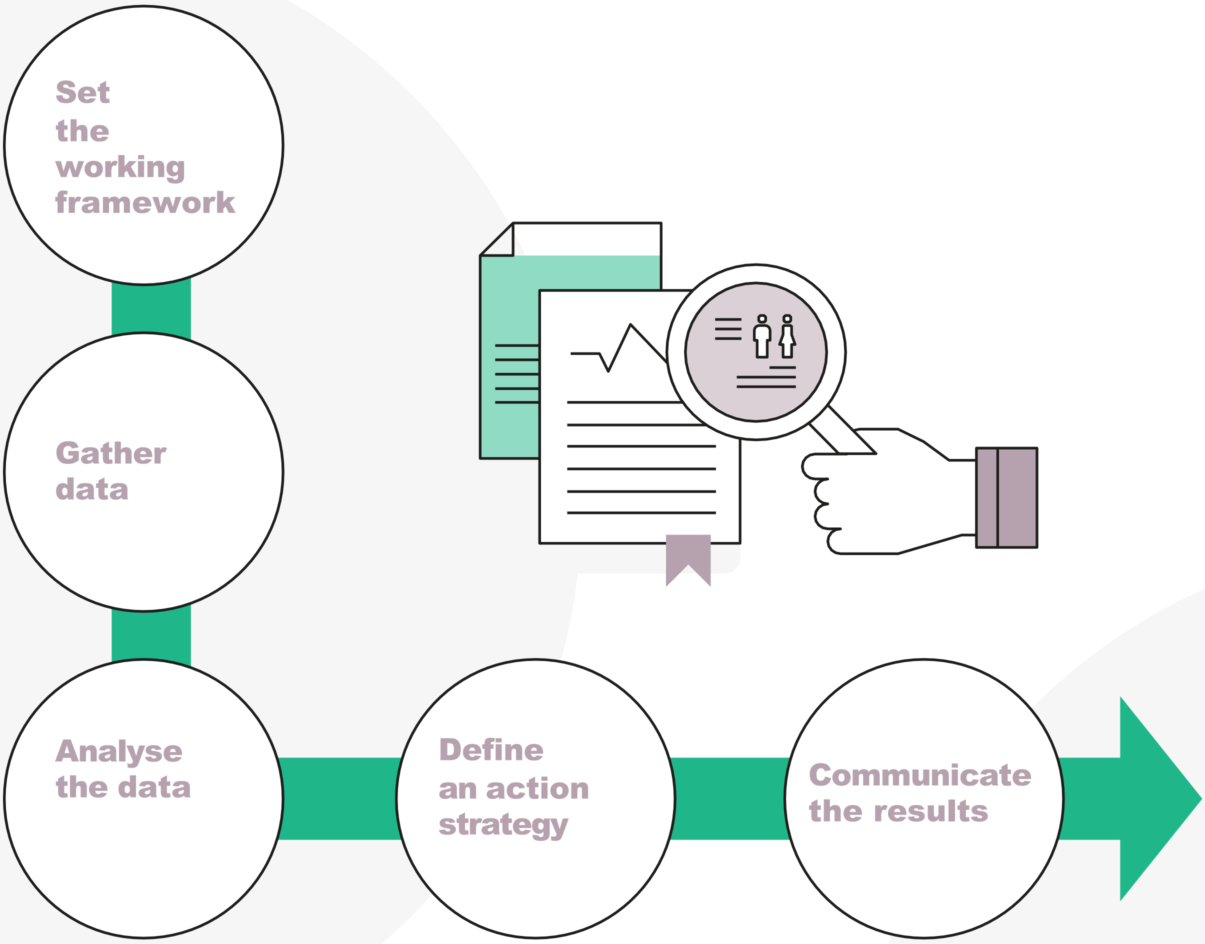


WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS?

A territorial analysis is used to :

— Get to know the area, its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities,
— Get to know the public, their expectations and needs,
— Inform decision-making and guide or redirect action,
— Establish a dialogue between stakeholders.

THE STAGES IN A TERRITORIAL DIAGNOSTIC.



STEP 1.
Setting the framework

To get off to a good start with any diagnostic, a few things are essential:

1. Deciphering the order
2. Define the scope
3. Stabilise the working framework

1) DECIPHERING THE ORDER.

➡ **WHO are you going to carry out this territorial analysis for?**
Who is initiating it? Who is the client? Is it an internal commission? External? A partner? A funder?

➡ **WHY are you going to carry out this territorial analysis?**
What is required? What is expected?
What failures/dissatisfactions, if any, led to the diagnostic being carried out? What is the context in which the assessment is being carried out? Are there any areas of tension and/or concern? What is the context ?

Tips and points to watch out for :

➡ Minimize the risk of the diagnosic being exploited by those working in the field, by the client or even by yourself

➡ The diagnostic should not be used to
- **— justify choices that have already been made**
- **— serve power grasbs,**
- **— settle scores,**
- **— avoid going on the field...**

2) DEFINING THE SCOPE OF THE DIAGNOSTIC.

- What are the geographical and administrative boundaries of the concerned territory?
  Example: community of municipalities, town (needs to be define correctly), district, etc.

- Who is the target population? Example: families, young people, etc.

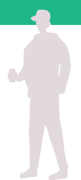
See table " Order & scope of the study" in “Tools”

- What is the subject/theme/main question? It can be very general or very specific
  Example: New city by 2050, improving housing affordability in a city or region, health, solidarity between residents, how can we develop the aeronautical industry in Toulouse by 2030 ? etc.
  - This step leads to the definition of a series of sub-questions/themes to explore in order to get around the main question and have an overview of the problem raised. A good way to identify these sub-questions is of course brainstorming, which can be carried out in a work team, but also during meetings with the different stakeholders during participation or steering meetings.

See “Identify the sub-questions to explore " in “Tools”

- What are the key stakeholders in the area? List all the stakeholders present and “active” in the area, as well as the actions and projects being carried out. Don't limit yourself to usual partners, be as exhaustive as possible (shops, artists, etc.).This list can be particularly useful for creating a diagram of local governance and for identifying key people to interview!

See table “Identify the key stakeholders in the area"



Tips and points of attention :

- Make choices, you can't do everything!
- Be realistic about the methods you use and the information you seek.

3) STABILISE THE WORKING FRAMEWORK.

Establishing the framework in writing is a prerequisite for a successful diagnostic.
It involves :

Determining everyone's place and role

What human resources will be allocated to this diagnostic?
How much time in your professional schedule will be allocated to this work?
What do you do when you've got other things to do?

See "Organising the work" table

Advice:

- Anticipate and set the weekly working time allocated to this work throughout the process.
- Choose full days or half-days that are stable from week to week to avoid losing track.

What is the framework for cooperation between the stakeholders?
Who are the project managers? Has a working group been set up? A steering committee? Who are the members (residents, partners, decision-makers, influencers, etc.)? What are the objectives and tasks of this group? How often does it meet?

See table "Organisation of the steering committee".

Advice :
Giving and taking into account the views of those who live or work in the area is a central issue in the diagnostic in order to :

— **Understan the region**
— **Involve stakeholders in a process of change**

- While a plurality of viewpoints is a necessity, it also presents risks of drift, such as conflict, deadlock, minimal consensus, etc.
- Choose your consultation and discussion methods and forums carefully!

Allocate material and financial resources.

The diagnostic process must be adapted to the human and financial resources available.

Examples:

— Data-processing software is highly recommended if you want to send out questionnaires.

— Attractive communication tailored to the various parties involved requires financial resources and/or in-house expertise.

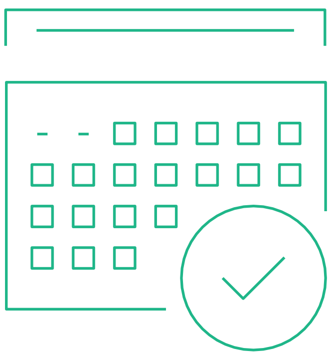
Set a timetable with clear milestones

Having stable timeframes - in other words, a timetable and a working method - will prevent you from getting lost in an interminable and indeterminate diagnostic. indeterminate diagnostic.

Determine :

— The actual start date
— The intermediate stages;
— The date on which the diagnostic will be delivered.

See "Timetable" table



STEP 2.
Collecting the data

You can collect two types of data:

Quantitative data :

— These are figures.
— They allow you to measure or assess a state of affairs or a trend.
— They are useful when you want to describe the who, what, where and when.

Qualitative data:

— They are based on observations of the area and/or the words of the people who live there or work there.
— They are used to describe facts or phenomena.
— They are useful when trying to explain how and why things happen.

The challenge of a territorial analysis is to ensure that quantitative and qualitative data are mutually enriching.

For example, we can get stakeholders to discuss the most significant quantitative data to appreciate the discrepancies between people's representations and statistical realities.

Data can be :

- **Already available and/or analysed:** They will be found primarily in documents from various institutions and governance stakeholders while meeting them or on the internet (mainly official statistical portal), in the press... You will have to identify them, collect them and organize them. Pay attention to their reliability!!

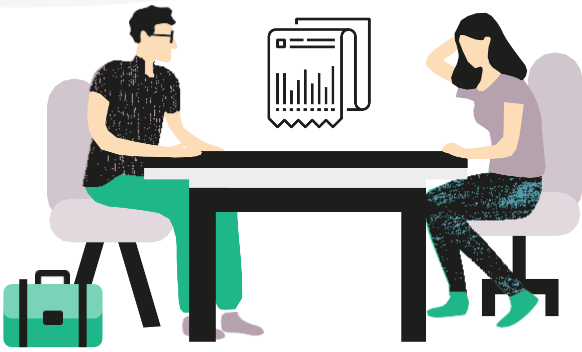
See table "Preparing the data collection"

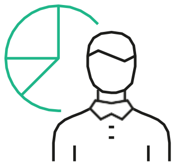
- **To be researched or constructed:** you will have to identify the sources and build appropriate data collection tools (interview grids, presentation formats, data tables, etc.). Another way to collect data is to go directly on the field. Those field research should be prepared, organized and serve a specific purpose, and preferably with methodologies planned in advance.

See "How to transect : a structured walk"

Points of attention :

- Sort the information as you go!
- Come back to your original question whenever you feel you're getting lost!
- Don't look for more information than you need!
- Remember to develop tools and techniques that are appropriate for the people you are targeting!





STEP 3.1.

Analysing the data.

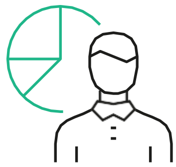
- Once your data is collected, you need to be able to analyse it!
- The main objective is to understand the territory and its challenges in order to identify strategic elements which will be useful for building a project and/or actions adapted to the territory

Here are a few methods :

- Build the organizational chart of local and supra-local governance as well as their respective jurisdiction/authority linked to your research question to understand the advantages of such governance, but also its weaknesses;
- Create maps and charts of the statistical data that you gathered ;
- Schematize the organisation of the territory based on you transects, yours walks, yours maps etc;

See "Summarising the data" in "Tools"

- Compare you findings and perceptions of the territory with what you actually saw on the field and discuss it with the stakeholders;
- ….



STEP 3.2.
Synthetize the analysis.

- By analysing the data, it is possible to identify strategic issues, challenges and priorities that will be useful in developing a project and/or actions tailored to the area.

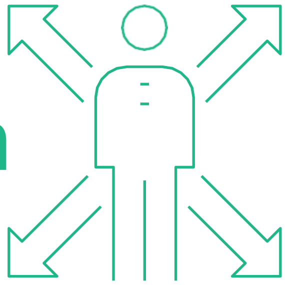
- These issues/priorities/challenges can be summarised/organised in the form of a **SWOT matrix** (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threat) **<u>for each sub-themed or question explored</u>** and identified in “Identify the sub-questions to explore”. This should be the result of your analyses of the collected data.

See "Synthetize the data and analysis ” in “Tools”

- The idea is then to cross **<u>ALL</u>** the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats together. You will then have a framework that will allow you to obtain relatively innovative or "out of the box" ideas, because a systematic crossing of the elements between them, even between different themes, can give rise to innovative ideas. This is an important step in the construction of what we call "a territorial project", which is the ultimate objective of producing a territorial diagnosis!

- This step can be more relevant if it is carried out collectively. Multiplying and comparing points of view enriches the analysis! This is particularly the case if it is combined with the next step "defining an action strategy"

STEP 4.
Defining an action strategy



➡ The projection work is based on the results of the diagnostic. At this stage we look for buy-in and synergies between stakeholders to produce a project in which everyone can play a part.

➡ This forward-looking approach is used to define an action strategy that includes :

— **Guidelines and priority objectives.**
Beware of objectives that are too general, out of reach, too ambitious or too numerous.

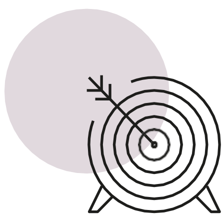
— **Actions that meet the objectives.**
Some already exist and can be maintained or strengthened, while others need to be devised and/or implemented.

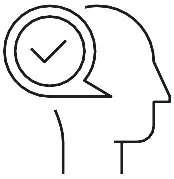
— **Resources to be mobilised.**
Defining who does what? when? and how?

— **Assessment methods and indicators.**
To adjust and readjust actions.

➡ You will probably not be able to provide answers to all the questions that have emerged from the diagnostic. Either because you don't have the resources to do so, or because it's not within your remit...
It is therefore essential to communicate your work to the relevant institutions and people...

See tables "Defining objectives and actions" & "Action scorecards".





STEP 5.
Communicating the results

➡ Throughout the process, you will need to communicate the progress of the work, adjust the approach, share questions or hypotheses, and build collectively.

See "Communication dashboard".

➡ At the end of the process, the presentation of the work to a wider audience is a crucial stage. It gives you the opportunity to :

— Enable the stakeholders to take ownership of the diagnostic.
— Stimulate debate and discussion.
— Initiate change management and new actions.

➡ Communicating the results of the diagnostic to the people you have mobilised or interviewed is part of the "ethics" of the diagnostic. Everyone has the right to know what is done with what they have said.

There are many forms and methods of reporting, and they need to be adapted to the people you are talking to. A diagnostic does not necessarily take the form of an 80-page written report! You can use billboards, videos, animated presentations, booklets, maps, etc.

➡ Each time you decide to communicate, identify :

— Who your audience is.
— What you want to say and in what order.
— How and in what form you want to say it.
— The financial, material and human resources available.