

Enhancing stakeholder participation in national forest programmes

Tools for practitioners



THE NATIONAL
FOREST PROGRAMME
FACILITY



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Tools for practitioners

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Foreword

'Partnership' and 'Participation' are among the guiding principles for national forest programmes (nfps) that were agreed upon by all countries participating in the international forest dialogue that endorsed the nfp concept, as the drivers for forest policy development and implementation processes.

With increased decentralisation and the changing roles of public forest institutions, the need for facilitative skills among professionals and actors in the forestry sector is tremendous. Challenges still abound in ensuring effective participation of key stakeholders in decision-making, planning and implementation of national forest programmes.

FAO and the National Forest Programme Facility have developed a capacity building module on *Enhancing stakeholder participation in nfps*, to enable countries to gain the knowledge and skills for practical application of this important principle in their local contexts. This underlines FAO's firm commitment in supporting countries to apply the principle of participation in their nfps.

This publication is targeted at facilitators, national forest programme coordinators and focal persons and resource persons involved in national forest programme processes at central and sub-national levels. It harnesses lessons from on-going FAO support to countries in Africa and Asia on this subject, and from best practices in multi-stakeholder nfp processes and participatory methods from many countries around the world. The publication also draws from tools used in other related areas including collaborative conflict management and facilitation.

FAO hopes that the users of this publication will find these ready-to-use practical tools suitable and adaptable to their varied contexts, and that it will play a significant part in strengthening their skills and knowledge in applying the principle of participation for more effective national forest programmes. Through your feedback we hope to further improve this living document.



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Contents

Foreword	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Acronyms	vi
Key terms	vii
Overview	ix
WHY? RATIONALE FOR ENHANCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN NFPs	1
HOW? SKILLS TO ENHANCE STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN NFPs	5
Degrees of participation and the role of an nfp facilitator	5
Positions, interests and needs	6
Stakeholder analysis and power	7
Participation and key steps in the nfp process	11
Attitudes, behaviour and skills	15
Linking method to purpose and context	16
WHAT? METHODS FOR ENHANCING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN NFPs	19
Guidance on the sequencing of methods	19
THE TOOLBOX	23
Tool 1. Stakeholder analysis	23
Tool 2. Visioning	26
Tool 3. Time/trend line	27
Tool 4. Participatory mapping	28
Tool 5. Relationship mapping	29
Tool 6. Problem analysis	30
Tool 7. Solution analysis	32
Tool 8. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis	33
Tool 9. 3Rs ranking	35
Tool 10. Target scoring	36
Tool 11. H-diagrams	38
Tool 12. Poster presentations with post-its	40
Tool 13. Synthesis brainstorming on problems	42
Tool 14. Fishbowl debate	43
Tool 15. Synthesis brainstorming on strategies/solutions	46
Tool 16. Priority ranking	47
Tool 17. Priority auction	49
Tool 18. Developing a toolbox and action plan	50
Tool 19. Rotating panel presentation	52
Tool 20. Semi-structured interviews	54
References	57
ANNEX 1. CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS FOR PARTICIPATORY NFP SESSIONS	59

Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IIRR	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NFP	national forest programme
NGO	non-governmental organization
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Key terms

National forest programme (NFP) process: An nfp process is the wide range of approaches and activities involved in formulating, planning and implementing forest policy at the sub-national and national levels. An nfp process uses a holistic, iterative and multi-stakeholder approach to establish sustainable forest management that contributes to wider national development. It involves consultation and negotiation to develop and implement coordinated action. The nfp concept does not provide a recipe for every country's forest sector. Instead, the principles underlying nfps can guide forest sector development according to internationally agreed ways of achieving specific outputs and outcomes. The name, content and tactics of an nfp process differ from country to country.

Participation: Participation covers a broad spectrum of different degrees of involvement of people in decision-making or action. These degrees range from merely informing people about decisions and actions, to involving them as key decision-makers and actors.

Stakeholder: A stakeholder is any individual, social group or institution that is affected by or has influence in forestry. Stakeholders may or may not be formally organized.

NFP facilitator: NFP facilitators are the people who guide an nfp process, such as the members of a multi-stakeholder steering committee. Ideally, facilitators should be neutral, and should not favour specific stakeholders. They are not primarily involved in determining outcomes. Their role includes ensuring that all stakeholders are heard, which means providing more opportunities for the marginalized while containing dominant groups and individuals. Nfp facilitators design processes and methods for guiding stakeholders to the best possible outcomes for forests and people.

Overview

This publication explains the rationale for enhancing stakeholder participation in nfp processes, describes skills, and instructs on methods for enhancing stakeholder participation in nfps. Stakeholder Participation is practically demonstrated throughout the nfp phases of analysis; policy formulation and planning; implementation; and monitoring and evaluation (M&E)¹. None of these methods and tools are prescriptive but are subject to country-specific interpretation and adaptation.

Structure of the publication

The publication is divided into three main chapters:

- a) **Why?** explains the rationale for enhancing stakeholder participation in nfps;
- b) **How?** identifies the skills needed to do so, and introduces the toolbox of methods; and
- c) **What?** introduces the toolbox of methods and describes these methods and how to use them.

The reader is advised to read the first two chapters before moving on to the detailed methods and toolbox itself. The Annex provides a checklist of the materials needed in participatory nfp sessions.

Target Audience

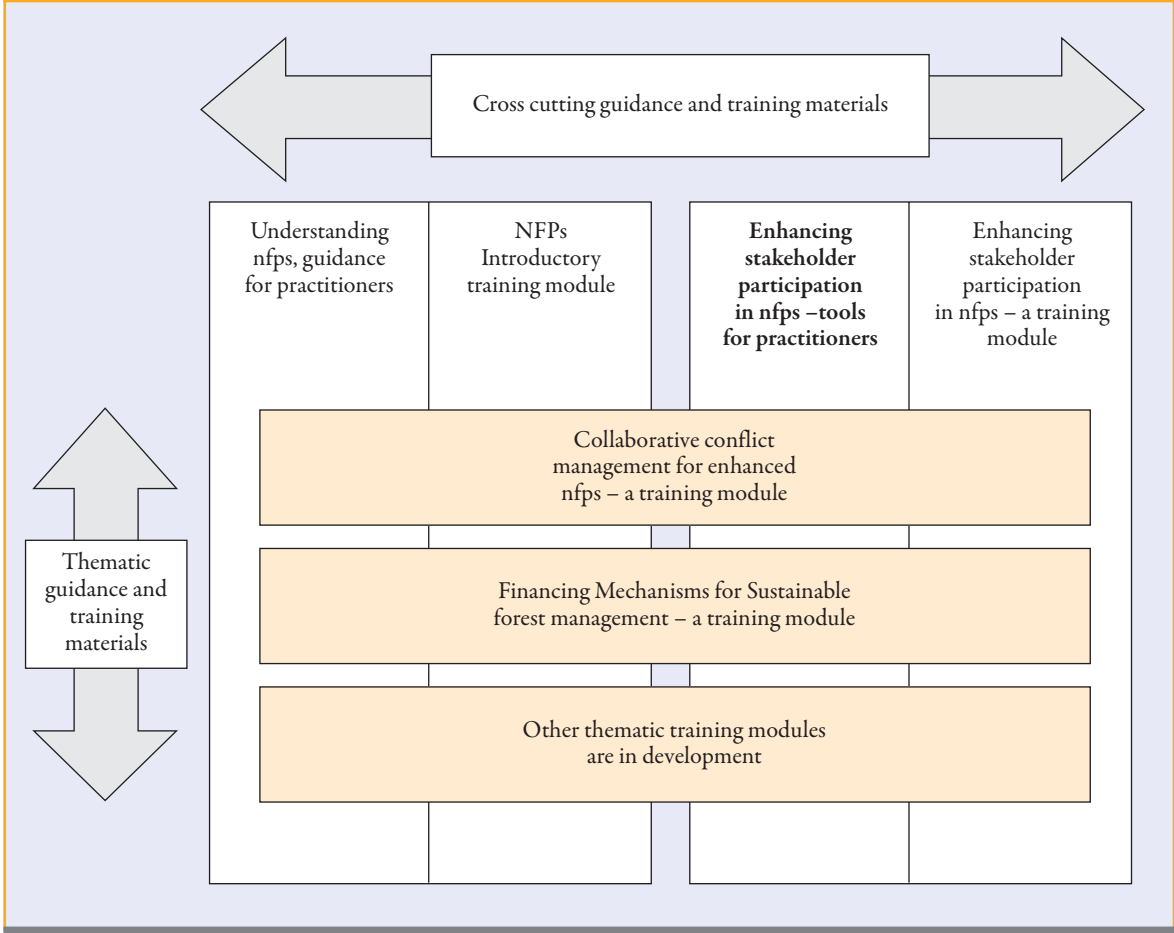
This guidance material is designed for use by nfp facilitators, multi-stakeholder steering committee members, actors in the nfp and others interested in increasing participation in the forest sector. Users do not need a technical forestry background. The toolbox is designed to be accessible to a wide range of readers with and without previous experience of participatory methods. For those with experience, this publication provides new ways of applying established participatory methods to purposes related to nfps.

Guidance and training materials to provide support in putting the principles of nfps in practice

In 2006, in the framework of its NFPs for All initiative, and building on these guidelines and a decade of experiences and lessons learned, FAO published *Understanding nfps, guidance for practitioners* (FAO, 2006), which set out the background and rationale for NFPs, their principles and key phases and elements. Since then, FAO has developed numerous practical guidance and training materials to help national coordinators, facilitators and participants put the principles of NFPs into practice.

¹ Generic process steps of a national forest programme as described in *Understanding nfps – guidance for practitioners* (FAO, 2006)

NFP'S FOR ALL – GUIDANCE AND TRAINING MATERIALS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN PUTTING THE PRINCIPLES OF NFPS IN PRACTICE



Why? Rationale for enhancing stakeholder participation in nfps

The growing trend for institutionalizing participatory forestry approaches is a response to the limitations of centralized and top-down forestry approaches (Figure 1). Forestry has many economic, social and environmental effects, which affect people in many different ways yet in comparison to agriculture it lags behind in devolution of rights, responsibilities and generally decision making has tended to be relatively exclusive. Over recent decades, participatory approaches to forestry have been evolving in many parts of the world, through increased local responsibility for forest resources, followed by improved local rights, increased bargaining power for local actors at the national level, and multi-stakeholder policy reform as more actors come to the negotiating table (Mayers, 2003). The participatory and multi-stakeholder aspects of NFPs have grown out of this evolution.

An nfp process is open-ended, country-driven and adaptive – there is no standard recipe for its contents or outcomes. However, countries participating in international forest dialogues, have endorsed a common set of guiding principles for nfps.

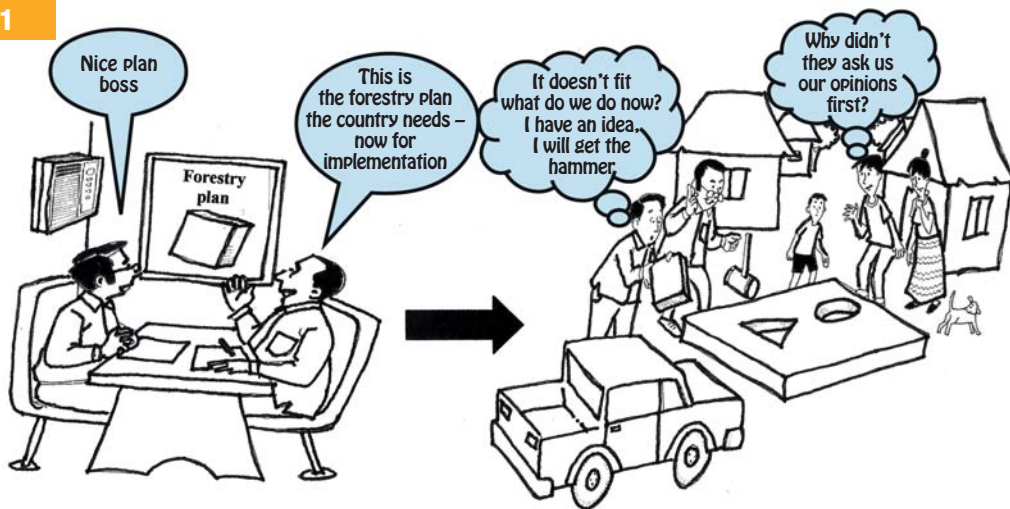
The three clusters of core nfp principles:

- ① National sovereignty, and country leadership of the process.**
- ② Consistency within and integration beyond the forest sector.**
- ③ Participation and partnership of all interested parties.**

The principles relevant to this toolbox specifically include:

- recognition and respect for the customary and traditional rights of indigenous people and local communities;
- secure land tenure arrangements;
- integration with countries' sustainable development strategies;
- a holistic and inter-sectoral approach to forest development and conservation;
- consistency with national, sub-national and local policies and strategies;
- decentralization and empowerment at the regional and local levels;
- an iterative process of learning cycles, rather than a rigid plan or policy document.

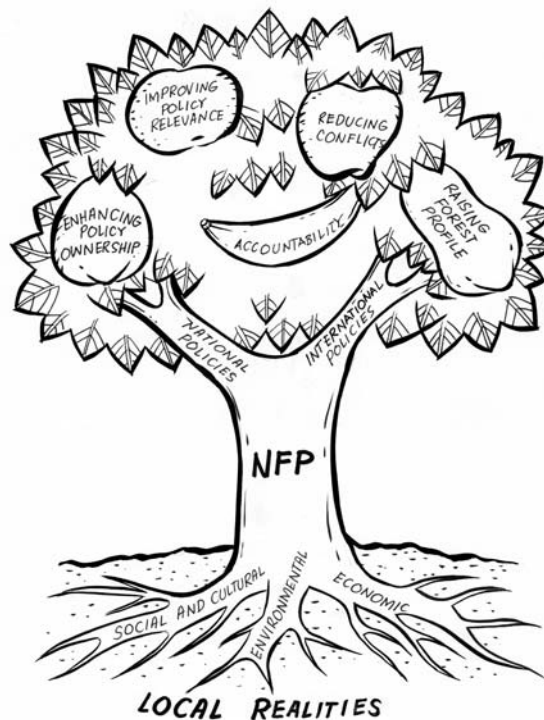
FIGURE 1



In the past forestry programming in most countries has been extensively centralized and blue print in decision making. Although forestry affected many people, those with influence over decision making tended to be very few. The opinions of local stakeholders were often ignored or belittled – and implementers often had difficulties when it came to trying to fit the rigid plans to complex and dynamic rural realities.

As the principles emphasize, participation is an inherent part of an nfp that creates opportunities and space for stakeholders to negotiate agendas, policies, programmes, roles and partnerships. An effective nfp is like a tree, rooted in local realities and with its branches in national and international policies. It acts as a link between different levels, joining sectors and stakeholders.

FIGURE 2

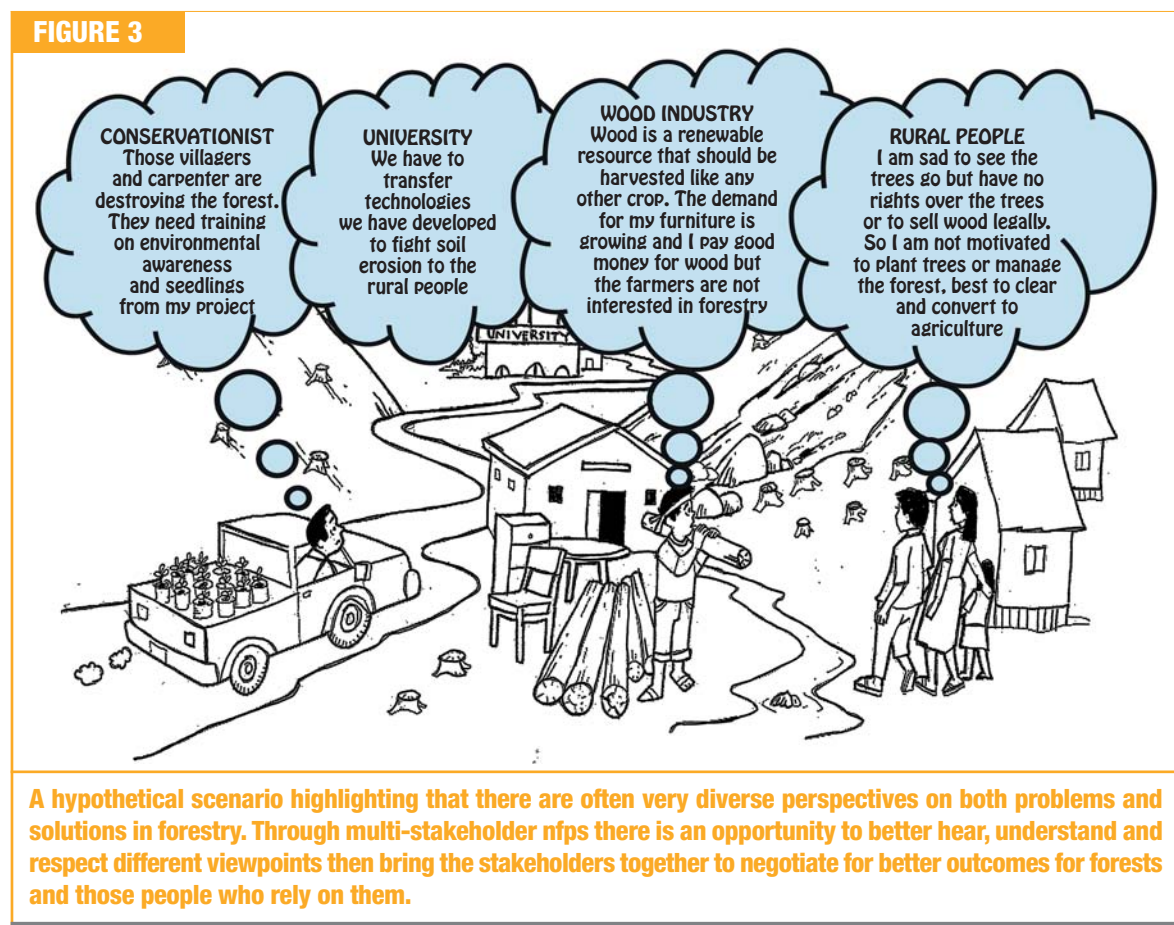


An effective nfp has its roots in local social, cultural, economic and environmental realities and its branches in national and international policies. Some nfp outcomes are portrayed here as fruits.

Among stakeholders, there are often competing perspectives and interests regarding forest resources, for example, local customary rights versus State-sanctioned rights, or competition for access among the users of different forest products. The increasing prevalence of participatory forestry approaches has brought this complex situation to the fore (Figure 3). As centralized forestry decision-making gives way to greater stakeholder involvement, new challenges have arisen: Which stakeholders should be involved in forestry decision-making? To what degree? And How?

Many forestry practitioners do not possess adequate communication and facilitation skills needed to answer these questions. This toolbox aims to help practitioners develop their skill base in facilitating nfp processes.

FIGURE 3



Although nfps are relatively new, the enhanced multi-stakeholder participation arising from their implementation has already brought benefits to forest sectors in many countries, as outlined in the following Box.

SOME BENEFITS OF ENHANCED STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL FOREST PROGRAMMES

- 1. More relevant, effective and coherent policy:** Considering the views and interests of all forestry stakeholders (including those in other affected sectors such as agriculture) helps develop rounded policies that take into account the effects of policies on various stakeholders and the inter-linkages with policies of other sectors. Fresh ideas and more relevant outcomes emerge when a wide range of perspectives are considered, particularly those of local forest users.
- 2. Enhanced ownership of forest policy:** Decisions and policies are legitimized by multi-stakeholder nfp processes, which give the previously marginalized a sense of ownership and encourage their support of outcomes. The institutions and individuals represented in an nfp process are more likely to implement the resulting policies. Participatory policy development may take longer than centralized decision-making, but it results in more effective and acceptable policies, making it a more cost-effective process in the long term.
- 3. Increased accountability:** When forestry decision-makers engage with more of the people affected by forestry they tend to become more accountable and are more aware of the consequences of their decisions. With more stakeholders involved in decision-making, accountability and responsibility are shared among a broader section of society. In the past, forestry departments could be blamed for all forest policy mistakes; now all the stakeholders involved in the process are responsible.
- 4. Reduced conflicts through improved relationships:** Relationships have been improved through increased understanding, trust and confidence among stakeholders. An nfp process provides opportunities for constructive confrontation and a communication platform for expressing grievances, dealing with them and avoiding the misunderstandings that can lead to conflict.
- 5. A raised profile and greater support for forestry:** An nfp helps create a more effective and accountable forest sector with more positive environmental, social and economic outcomes, and this helps increase the support and investments for forestry.

How? Skills to enhance stakeholder participation in nfps

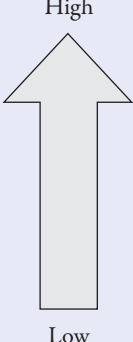
Degrees of participation and the role of an nfp facilitator

Participation describes a spectrum of degrees of people's engagement in decision making processes. At one end of the spectrum, people are simply informed about decisions already taken, while the other end involves engaging them in deliberation processes, debate and joint decision-making.

Deliberation: "In deliberation, parties to conflict, disagreement and decision-making propose solutions to their collective problems and offer reasons for them; they criticize one another's proposals and reasons, and they are open to be criticized by others" (Young, 2001).

The outcome of a stakeholder analysis (see section on Stakeholder analysis and power) helps determine which participatory strategy is suitable for which stakeholders. For some stakeholders, information and consultation may be adequate and efficient. However, for key stakeholders – those who are most influential in and/or affected by forestry decisions – the nfp facilitator should select communication methods that ensure their views are properly harnessed and they can effectively represent themselves in negotiations. This is at the higher end of the participation spectrum (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4



DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION	TYPICAL ROLE OF PARTICIPATORY FACILITATOR
Shared decision-making	Facilitates stakeholders' analysis and negotiation: e.g. using methods from this toolbox
Consulting	Extracts information: e.g. through questionnaires
Informing	Disseminates: e.g. through leaflets and presentations

The spectrum of 'participation'.

Positions, interests and needs

It can be difficult to identify and understand the different views of forestry stakeholders, as they occur at various levels or layers. Getting to these different layers can be like peeling an onion, and requires not only the appropriate skills and methods, but also time to build the stakeholders' trust.

The surface layer is the position, which is what the stakeholder group perceives as the ideal solution for meeting all its requirements. Sometimes, the initial position of one stakeholder group can impinge on the interests – or even the basic needs – of other forest stakeholders. For example, a forestry department staff member who states.

Position

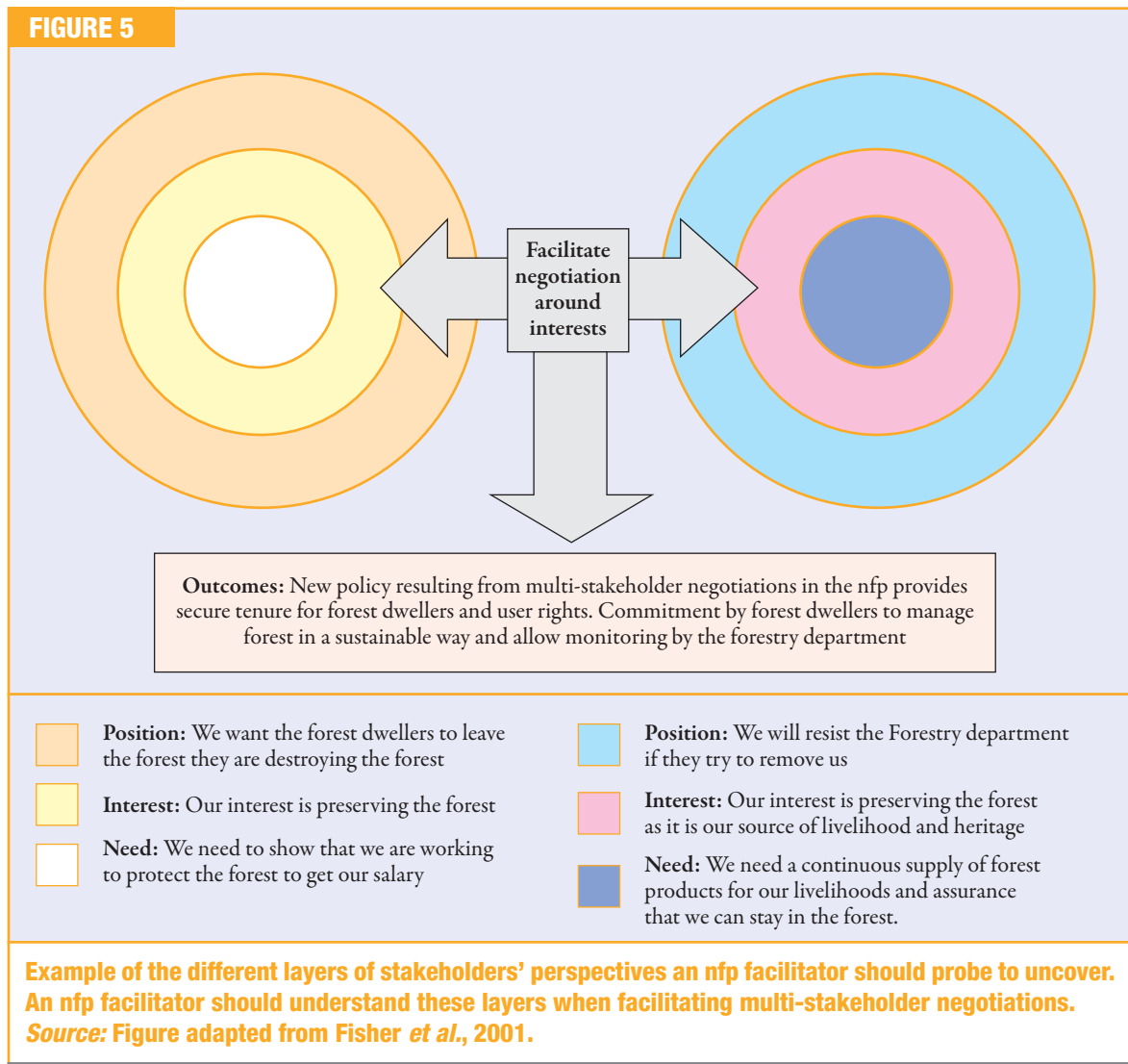
“I don't care that they have lived in the forest for hundreds of years; it is government forest, they are damaging it, and they must get out now”.

In response, the forest dwellers' position might be to threaten violence if the forestry department tries to evict them. Positions are usually not good starting points for fruitful negotiation.

The next layer of the onion – stakeholders' *interests* – often provides the most potential for negotiation; this is where different stakeholders can usually find some common ground. Interests are the underlying reasons for holding a position; for example, a forestry department's position of evicting forest dwellers may reflect its interest in protecting the forest. Forest dwellers may also have an interest in protecting the forest, as it is a key source for their livelihood and they had customary forest management practices before government control.

Next come needs, such as security, basic livelihood and shelter, which are usually non-negotiable. When the position of one stakeholder compromises the needs of another there will almost certainly be conflict. Multi-stakeholder nfp facilitators must understand the different layers of stakeholders' perspectives, and should develop skills and methods to facilitate fruitful negotiation based on stakeholders' interests. Encouraging stakeholders to drop hard and unrealistic positions and respect each others' needs are key skills of an nfp facilitator (Figure 5).

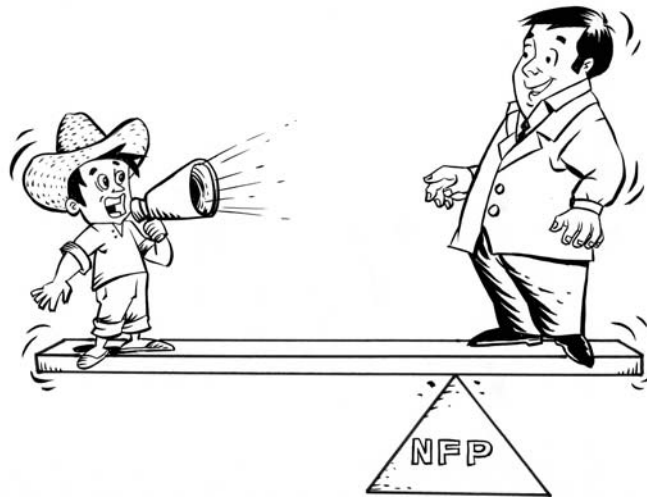
In the example mentioned above, a multi-stakeholder nfp process could help the forestry department to understand the forest dwellers' interests and needs, and the forest dwellers to understand the Forestry department's interests, allowing both to reach a compromise in which forest dwellers remain in the forest with rights to use forest products. In return, the forest dwellers might agree to manage the forest sustainably and carry out joint monitoring with the Forestry department. Positions have been abandoned, and the interests and needs of both stakeholder groups have been respected. Both parties may enter a formal or legal agreement to protect their respective interests, such as through a new policy and legal framework, which may in turn encourage more partnerships for forest management between forest dwellers and the Forestry department. This conflict management and relationship building aspect of nfps is dealt with in much more detail in the FAO training materials *Collaborative conflict management for enhanced nfps – a training module*.



Stakeholder analysis and power

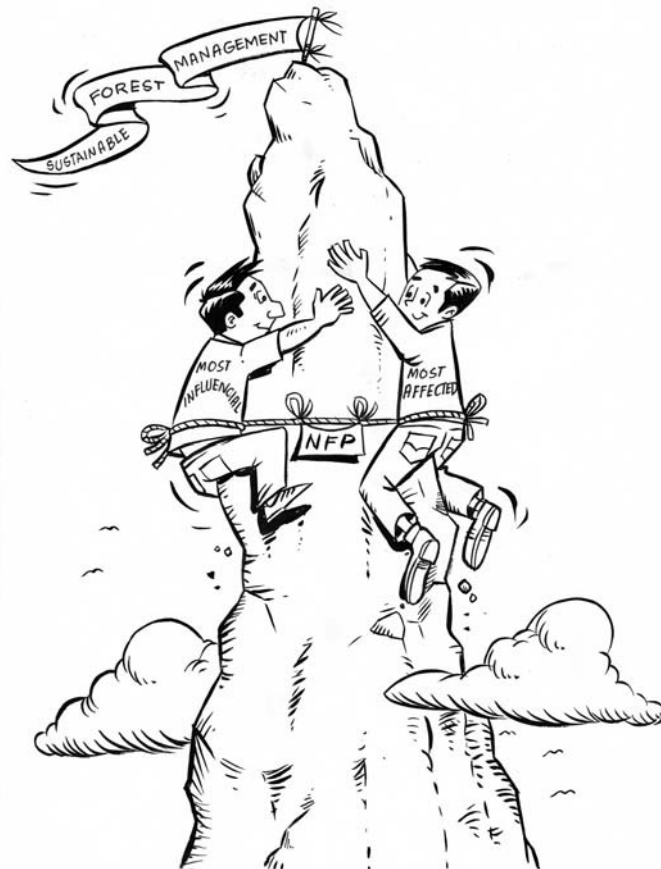
One of the most important aspects of multi-stakeholder nfp facilitation is understanding and dealing with the power dynamics among stakeholders. A major cause of conflict among forestry stakeholders is when one stakeholder group has power to make decisions that affect another group's interests or needs, while the affected group has no or little power to influence those decisions. In such cases, the nfp facilitator should engage both the powerful and the affected stakeholders in negotiations and create a level communication playing field (Fig.6) and enhance accountability and trust (Fig.7 and Fig.8).

FIGURE 6



Nfps attempt to create a level communication playing field between forestry stakeholders with different power levels – giving the less powerful but greatly affected stakeholders a strong voice.

FIGURE 7



Influential and affected stakeholders are linked together by a participatory nfp process increasing accountability.

FIGURE 8

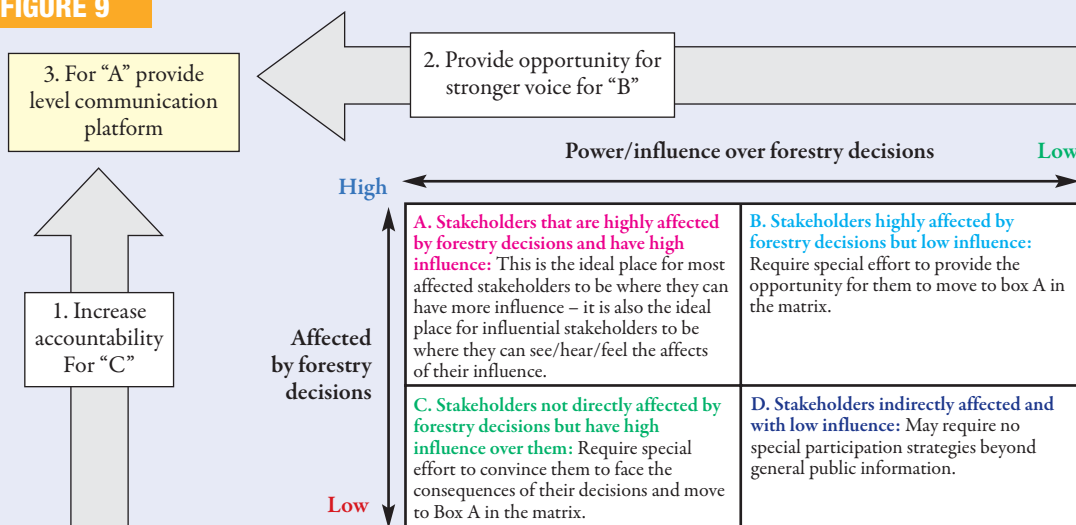


Participatory nfps ensure that decision makers feel the consequences of their decisions.

The essential first step in understanding the power dynamics among forestry stakeholders is to conduct a stakeholder analysis (Tool 1 in the toolbox). The stakeholder analysis matrix (Figure 9) is a useful framework for assessing how affected and how influential different stakeholders are. Once each stakeholder’s position in the matrix has been ascertained, appropriate strategies and methods can be developed for bringing stakeholders in part B towards part A, providing opportunities for them to be more influential (e.g. by bringing them face to face with influential decision makers), and stakeholders in part C towards part A, helping ensure they feel more accountable for/affected by forestry decisions (e.g. by bringing them face to face with forest affected stakeholders).

When influential and affected stakeholders are brought together in part A of the matrix communication strategies and methods should be developed to ensure that powerful stakeholders do not dominate negotiations and that weaker stakeholders have a sufficiently strong voice.

FIGURE 9

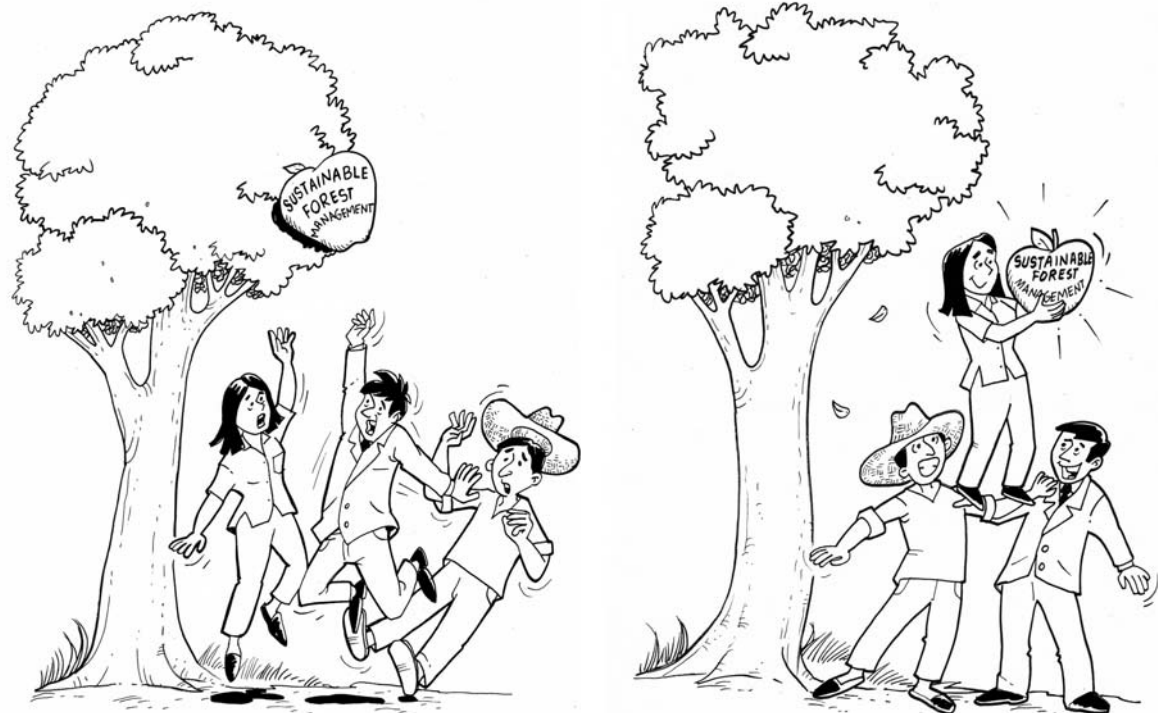


A framework for categorizing forestry stakeholders based on extent to which they are affected by forestry decisions and how much influence they have over those decisions.

Adapted from “Understanding national forest programmes – guidance for practitioners” (FAO,2006).

The matrix is a useful step in developing appropriate methods and deciding the degree and kind of participation that are suitable for each stakeholder group. The text boxes in Figure 9, labelled 1, 2 and 3 highlight key strategies that a multi-stakeholder NFP facilitator should promote. See Tool 1 in the toolbox stakeholder analysis for a step by step method of categorizing stakeholders in this matrix.

It is important to be aware of stakeholders' different levels of power when applying the methods in this toolbox. Many of the tools are designed to create a more level playing field, which generally pleases the less powerful stakeholders, but may provoke resistance from some of the powerful. Some powerful stakeholders fear participation as they believe they will lose power. It is important to emphasise the collective gain that participation can achieve. Thriving and sustainable forestry sectors that benefit all forest stakeholders are often only achieved through participation and partnership where stakeholders by working together can achieve more than they ever could by working apart (See Figure 10).

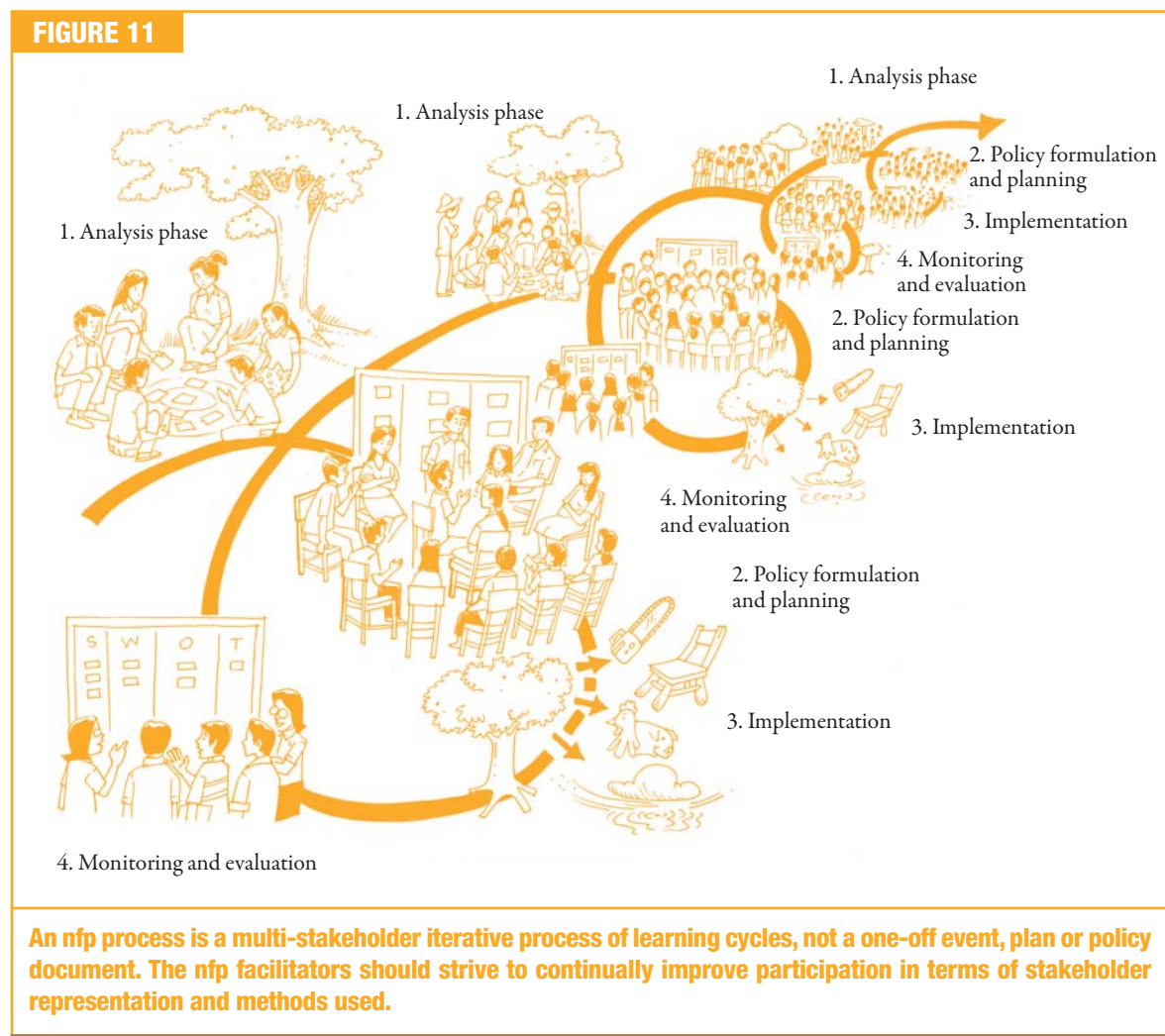
FIGURE 10

As opposed to working independently or at odds with each other, successful forestry sectors are built on partnerships among stakeholders.

Participation and key steps in the nfp process

Participation and rigid blueprint planning are incompatible. Stakeholder participation in nfps brings new ideas and directions that call for rapid and flexible responses.

Figure 11 demonstrates that the four phases of an nfp – analysis, policy formulation and planning, implementation, and M&E – are both iterative and participatory. The iterative nature of nfps allows the responsiveness that participation requires.



An nfp process is made up of a series of activities and methods. There are no hard and fast rules for the sequence of these, but the process should follow a logical order. For example, a good starting point is for the nfp facilitation team to conduct a preliminary stakeholder analysis (Tool 1) to identify which stakeholders should be engaged and to what degree, followed by facilitating the analysis with the different forestry stakeholder groups (Tools 1 to 11 and 19) to explore their perspectives.



Facilitating stakeholders' analysis of forestry issues. The cards in this problem analysis (Tool 6) were written/drawn and put in order by the forest villagers, while the facilitator provided only instructions on the purpose and procedure of the method.

The next step is for the facilitation team to bring together representatives of the different stakeholder groups to negotiate (Tools 12 to 19). It is essential that each representative agrees to represent the views of the majority of his/her stakeholder group, and not only her/his personal perspective.

The language used, seating arrangements and timing are important factors in levelling the playing field for multi-stakeholder meetings. Conventional seating arrangements with high tables etc. often inhibit participation, while circles of chairs with no tables encourage it. The multi-stakeholder negotiation can start with all present discussing and agreeing the process for the meeting. Attaching a visual representation of this process on to a wall or board can enhance clarity for all. Stakeholder groups with little experience of workshops and meetings may require some prior discussion of the process and an opportunity to adapt them to what they are comfortable with. Prior to multi-stakeholder meetings, dry runs – methods practice are often essential to build the confidence of stakeholders less used to workshops so that they can fully take part.

The following Box describes a multi-stakeholder nfp meeting held in the Philippines in April 2006 to review the national forestry strategy and plan a new one for the next ten years.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER NFP PROCESS: LISTENING, DEBATING AND COMPROMISING IN A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FOREST POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP IN THE PHILIPPINES

Prior to the workshop, the process and methods were discussed extensively with stakeholder representatives, especially villagers who were not used to workshops. Ownership, general consensus and clarity regarding the process were seen as essential. During the workshop, the programme was discussed, posted on the wall in the local language and illustrated by diagrams. Workshop rules were introduced, including time cards (See Annex 1) which were applied equally to all stakeholders.



Illustrated workshop programme
Source: IIRR



SWOT analysis
Source: IIRR

LISTENING

Each stakeholder group, including the villagers, had an equal opportunity to present its opinions and the justifications for these. No interruption was allowed; feedback was written on cards and pinned on boards, which the presenting group read afterwards. Each group was given time to digest the feedback, and villagers were assisted in deciphering acronyms and technical terms.

To synthesize all the main points, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis (Tool 8) was used to examine different policy themes (including tenure and resource use). Participants could write their contributions on cards, anonymously if they chose, with different colours for each stakeholder group. What some stakeholders saw as strengths, others saw as weaknesses.

DEBATING

Based on the SWOT analysis, which remained posted for reference, each stakeholder group prepared a position statement on what it saw as key policy barriers in the forest sector. Each group then presented and justified its positions during a “fishbowl” debate (Tool 14) – so called because of its shape, a ring of chairs (the “bowl”), with the “fish” in the middle. Time cards were used to ensure that all stakeholder groups had equal time to present, justify and argue their points without face-to-face confrontation. Each presenter had five to ten minutes to explain his/her point, and then stayed in the fishbowl while it was debated. Anyone who wanted to make a point could take a vacant chair in the centre, and speak for up to one minute before returning to the outer ring to free up the central chairs for others. Everyone was treated equally in the debate, director or villager.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER NFP PROCESS: LISTENING, DEBATING AND COMPROMISING IN A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FOREST POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP IN THE PHILIPPINES

After the debate, a secret ballot with different-coloured voting slips for each stakeholder group was held on the position statements, and the results displayed for discussion. This made it easy to identify the points where stakeholders were close to consensus, and those where stakeholders' views were so divergent that they could end only in agreement to disagree. Other suitable methods to determine level of consensus and divergence are priority and auction ranking methods in the Tool box (Tools 16 and 17)



Fishbowl debate. The results from the SWOT analysis of various policy components are displayed on the wall. Different coloured cards represent the views of different stakeholder groups.

Source: IIRR

COMPROMISING

In the final step, small multi-stakeholder groups worked towards compromise, and developed joint recommendations for tackling issues of divergence, along with relevant action plans and toolboxes (Tool 18). The outcomes of the meeting included agreement on some issues, compromise on others, and agreement to disagree on others, which stakeholders would reconsider during future cycles of negotiation in the nfp process.

Adapted excerpt from article by O'Hara, P and Pulhin, J in Unasylva No. 225 (FAO,2006).

PARTICIPATORY M&E – NOT AN ADD ON BUT AN INTEGRAL PART OF AN NFP

Monitoring refers to the regular collection of information related to nfp activities, which should include both quantitative (e.g. number of most affected stakeholders involved in key decisions) and qualitative information (e.g. changing relationships among stakeholders). Evaluation is the formal, periodic assessment/analysis of this information, to draw lessons about what works well and what does not. The results of an evaluation guide the planning of future activities. Nfps must include participatory M&E – where assessment methods ensure stakeholders' have an opportunity to assess performance, criticise and provide recommendations for improvement. Many of the methods in the toolbox in this document are ideal for participatory M&E – as described in the toolbox.

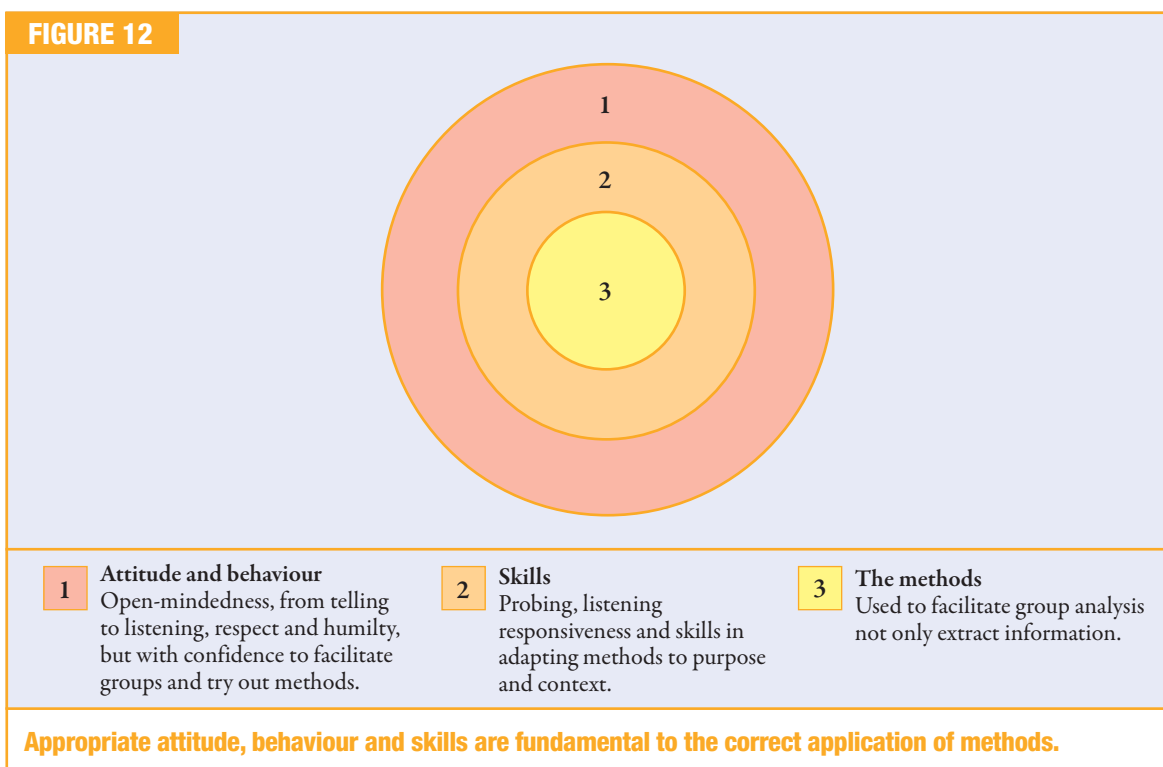
Attitudes, behaviour and skills

The nfp facilitators' skills, attitudes and behaviour are often more important than the methods themselves. Facilitators should be careful not to dominate, to listen carefully but they also need a degree of confidence and courage to steer the process forward. It is important that they are open-minded - free themselves from rigid preconceptions about the causes of the problem or apportioning blame. They should focus on applying the appropriate process and tools, and should not seek to influence the content and outcomes.

CASE STUDY: CHINA – FACILITATORS' ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOUR AND SKILLS

Changing the attitudes and behaviour of forestry staff is often the most difficult part of establishing sustainable participation in nfp processes. The behaviour and attitudes of local foresters determine their relationships with local people. Many fail to recognize the knowledge and skills of local villagers, and need to learn how to collaborate as learners rather than leaders. Existing relationships have led to a lack of trust in the forestry department among villagers, who sometimes do not believe the promises made by forestry authorities. Forestry staff should be patient, and allow villagers to express their problems and grievances, and should spend time gaining villagers' trust. Chinese smallholders are often very hard-working and kind-hearted. Outsiders can gain villagers' trust if they show the same good will and honesty.

Source: Adapted from Jinlong and Zhao, 2007.

FIGURE 12**CASE STUDY: CHINA – FACILITATORS' ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOUR AND SKILLS**

The field survey found that people are gaining skills as participatory facilitators, but there are still some problems: 1) failure to understand the interlinkages among methods and tools, with some facilitators trying new methods every time, while others stick to their favourites; and 2) difficulties with identifying the most suitable facilitators for forestry contexts, who possess sufficient background in forestry, and are able to present local people's views, rather than imposing their own.

Source: Adapted from Jinlong and Zhao, 2007.

Linking method to purpose and context

The methods described in this Toolbox are at the higher end of the participation spectrum – face to face methods. They can be and have been used with all forestry stakeholders, from Directors of public forestry institutions to smallholder farmers and villagers. They can also be used in formal meetings, workshops and conferences, as well as informally in offices, village halls, restaurants or under a tree in a village.

It is recommended that facilitators practise the methods with their colleagues before using them in real situations. This allows them to learn by doing and provides an opportunity for thinking through practicalities and identifying the necessary materials. Sessions can be stalled because simple materials (such as markers, cards or masking tape) were not provided in adequate quantities (see the Annex for a checklist of materials for implementing the tools). It is important to plan for every conceivable

eventuality. For example, fewer or more people than expected may turn up for a meeting, or the characteristics of the venue may limit the logistics possibilities – tables, boards or wall and floor space may be lacking. The more practice a facilitator has with the methods the more she/he will be able to cope with the unexpected.

It is important to explain the purpose of the tool, why it will be used, before describing how it will proceed. When explaining how to apply a tool, ensure that the procedure is clear and broken up into manageable steps. Illustrating the method helps make it understandable to participants, as does demonstrations and practice – dry runs before doing it for real.

The facilitator should take care that the method selected from the toolbox is suitable for the purpose and context (See Figure 13). For example if some participants are illiterate and are comfortable with drawing, – use drawings instead of writing or if there are some literate people ask them to write for their peers – explaining that it is important to try to write word for word. Context understanding also involves consideration of power and gender issues. For example, in some cultures it is best to separate men and women, so that women feel freer to take part in discussions. The presence of powerful people can also inhibit other participants; for example, villagers may be reluctant to express themselves freely in front of a local forestry official. It may help to assign someone to interview the local official separately, away from the main group.

Facilitators should also be careful not to raise unrealistic expectations among the participants. For example, if facilitators arrive in fancy cars or talk about big projects they are involved in, participants may adapt their responses and present positions based on the expectation of material support they hope to gain, rather than on their real opinions or deeper interests. Spending time before the methods sessions levelling expectations can help. Also simple tactics such as avoiding words such as ‘project’ or questions such as ‘what do you need?’ have also helped to avoid raised expectations.

FIGURE 13

Matching participatory method to purpose and context



Which method should be tried/adapted?



Purpose and context

IF THE KEY DOESN'T FIT THE LOCK – TRY ANOTHER KEY!

Matching methods to purpose and context is an essential skill for participatory nfp facilitators.

Getting appropriate stakeholder representation is an essential prerequisite to make the participatory sessions meaningful. If you have not identified all the most important (influential and affected) stakeholders (See Tool 1. Stakeholder Analysis for a method on how to do this), or identified a good representative sample from those stakeholder groups the outputs of the participatory sessions may lack validity and usefulness.

Getting appropriate stakeholder representation often depends on facilitators' persistence and ability to look beyond the path of least resistance. For example, local forestry officials may be keen to take nfp facilitators to meet selected villagers at a showcase project site, but such projects may affect only a tiny proportion of the rural population, so this group of villagers will not be representative of the majority. Also local officials may be unwilling to help arrange meetings with informal forest stakeholder groups – such as 'illegal' carpenters, timber dealers, charcoal and firewood sellers. On the other hand such groups may be very reluctant to meet local officials and nfp facilitators for fear of punishment. Great effort might be required to locate and build enough trust to facilitate analysis. Quite often the stakeholders most affected by forest policy are very hard to reach indeed. Forests in many parts of the world provide livelihoods for marginalized groups.

Spatial sampling methods and the categorization of stakeholders according to their forest use, socio-economic status, tenure and user rights, age, gender, etc. help ensure that the sample of people met is representative.

When appropriate stakeholders and stakeholder representatives are located there are various ways to ensure that miscommunications do not occur. Thinking carefully about language is very important, it is best to conduct sessions in a language the majority of the stakeholder group are confident in. If facilitators are not conversant in that language this may require partnering with trusted locals who can help the facilitators. Pre-preparing methods instructions and materials in the local language is also essential. For example if a policy is going to be reviewed the policy will have to be translated into the local language.

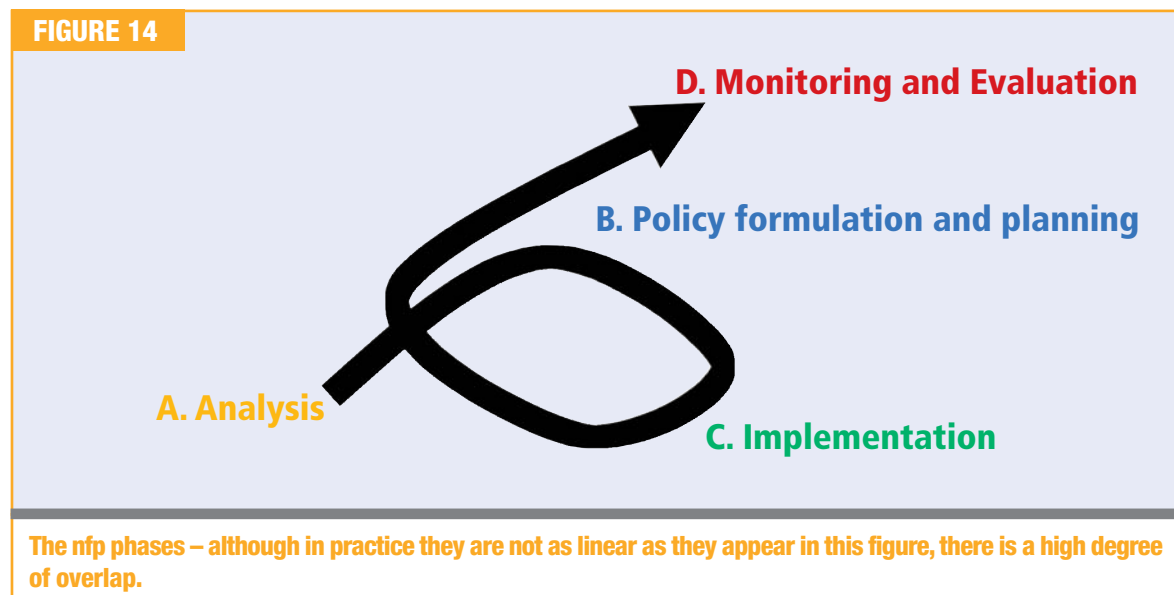
Facilitating group analysis can be very challenging, especially to avoid a minority dominating proceedings. In the toolbox many of the methods involve giving out cards for all present to write/draw on. This is a way to help maximise widespread participation.

A tactic to help ensure there is no misrepresentation is to ask volunteers to present the results of an exercise to the group. This helps ensure that the analysis is generated by the participants, provides opportunity for corrections and promotes a sense of ownership over the findings.

It is also recommended to use several complementary methods for the same purpose. This provides a range of different "lenses" for examining forestry issues and helps verify the results in a process known as "triangulation". Spending informal time eating or socializing together after a session also helps build understanding of the stakeholder group as well as providing opportunities for probing and verifying the outcomes of the previous sessions.

What? Methods for enhancing stakeholder participation in nfps

Guidance on the sequencing of methods



Although there are no hard and fast rules and none of them is exclusively for one purpose or one phase in the nfp process – the following table generalises which tools (from the 20 that follow in the Toolbox) are most suitable for which phase in the nfp – based on experience;

NFP PHASE	POTENTIALLY SUITABLE METHODS
A. Analysis	1. Stakeholder Analysis, 2. Visioning, 3. Time/Trend line, 4. Participatory mapping, 5. Relationship mapping, 6. Problem analysis, 7. Solution analysis, 8. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, 9. 3Rs Ranking, 12. Poster presentation with post-its. 13. Synthesis brainstorming on problems. 14. Fishbowl debate. 20. Semi-structured interviews.
B. Policy Formulation and Planning	14. Fishbowl debate, 15. Synthesis brainstorming on strategies/solutions, 16. Priority ranking, 17. Auction Ranking. 18. Developing a toolbox and action plan. 19. Rotating panel presentation. 20. Semi-structured interviews.
C. Implementation	Depends on what is specifically planned for the context – all of the tool box methods have been used in the implementation phase.
D. Monitoring and Evaluation	8. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, 10. Target scoring, 11. H-diagrams, 14. Fishbowl debate, 19. Rotating panel presentation, 20. Semi-structured interviews

The following table provides suggestions on nfp related purposes for methods however methods should always be tailored to the specific purpose and context. Facilitators should experiment and innovate. The tools are not presented in strict chronological order or as a linear flow. There is a lot of overlap among tools. Where there is a logic sequencing of tools – i.e. with one flowing well into another tool, this is described in detail in the methods descriptions.

TOOL/METHOD	PURPOSE (EXAMPLES)
1. Stakeholder analysis	An important starting point in the analysis phase. The nfp facilitation team need to carry out a preliminary stakeholder analysis before engaging with stakeholders. This enables identification of key stakeholders to engage and the degree of engagement. The exercise can then be repeated with all the key stakeholders to get their different perspectives.
2. Visioning	First conducted with each group of stakeholders separately, providing them with an opportunity to describe their perfect vision, e.g. for forest management or an nfp. Literate and non-literate stakeholders can take part, and the exercise tends to get beyond jargon to what people actually mean. When the stakeholders are brought together to present their individual visions, they learn about other stakeholders' aspirations, which helps build mutual understanding. This exercise also gives the nfp facilitators an idea of how diverse or similar the different stakeholders' perspectives are at a particular time. Stakeholders can redraw their visions at a later date to assess any changes in perception.
3. Time/trend line	Analyses the history of local forestry, and is a good ice-breaker and entry point for the nfp facilitators to learn about the background and evolution of forestry issues.
4. Participatory mapping	Particularly useful when there is a geographical element to consider, e.g. a boundary dispute or forest rights and/or resource access issues.
5. Relationship mapping	A quick and effective way of exploring perceptions about relationships among and within forestry stakeholder groups.
6. Problem analysis	A key analysis tool used to probe to the root causes of forestry problems and enabling analysis of the inter-linkages among causes and among effects.
7. Solution analysis	Identifies strategies for tackling the causes of problems identified in the problem analysis (Tool 6).
8. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis	Can be used in many ways as an excellent analysis framework, e.g. by examining past experiences of forest policy, identifying strengths and weaknesses and extrapolating these to the future to speculate about possible opportunities and threats regarding policy. It is also one of the best tools for M&E and iterative learning approaches, as it encourages learning from past strengths and weaknesses first, then looking ahead to future opportunities and threats.
9. 3Rs ranking	An adaptation of the '4Rs' method. This tool compares stakeholders' perceptions about who is responsible for forest management, who has rights and who receives the most revenues/benefits. Causes of perceived injustice in the forest sector can be revealed, when the 3Rs – responsibilities, rights and revenues –do not balance.
10. Target scoring	This is a quick evaluation method for large groups to assess how they feel about various options, strategies or criteria.
11. H-diagrams	This is a composite tool that mixes a kind of SWOT analysis (negative reasons, positive reasons and recommendations) with a scoring method. It is very effective in condensing a lot of information in group settings as a basis for further discussion and analysis. Can be a good assessment and evaluation method.
12. Poster presentations with post-its	A refreshing alternative to Power Point presentations or a good way to review policy documents in a participatory way. Noting questions and comments on post-its raises more issues and information than could be delivered verbally, and the session is constructed to allow time for presenters to digest comments and respond. This is particularly useful when participants need assistance in deciphering technical issues or acronyms. Having participants walking around the room tends to generate a pleasant atmosphere that helps them to mingle and relax.
13. Synthesis brainstorming on problems	A simple democratic and effective way that helps groups identify what are key problems.

TOOL/METHOD	PURPOSE (EXAMPLES)
14. Fishbowl debate	Ideal for multi-stakeholder meetings where there are contentious issues, grievances or conflicts. Provides representatives of each stakeholder group with equal opportunities to air and justify their views. It levels the communication playing field by containing dominant participants and providing opportunities for all to take part.
15. Synthesis brainstorming on strategies/solutions	Can follow Tools 13 and 14 – similar to Tool 13 – but used to identify solutions.
16. Priority ranking	Can be used in different ways, e.g. to rank the strategies developed in Tool 15. Simple method to identify collective priorities.
17. Priority auction	Can follow Tool 15. Can have similar purpose to priority ranking but can also be used with multi-stakeholder groups to encourage them to reach compromise or consensus on strategies in a tight time frame. Can be more energetic and fun than the priority ranking in Tool.16.
18. Developing a toolbox and action plan	This tool should also be used after stakeholders have agreed on priority strategies (i.e. after Tools 16 or 17), to identify clear steps and timeframe, responsibilities and methods for taking things forward. Also useful in planning the nfp facilitation team's work.
19. Rotating panel presentation	Makes presentations more participatory, promotes active listening among panellists and avoids elitist panels by rotating participants on a review panel.
20. Semi-structured interviews	Cross cutting method/skill that complements the application of many of the other methods in this toolbox. For example allows for probing questioning based on the visual output of some of the participatory exercises.

The toolbox

Tool 1. Stakeholder analysis

Purpose: An important starting point for the analysis phase. The nfp facilitation team should carry out a preliminary stakeholder analysis before engaging with stakeholders, to identify how influential and affected the different stakeholders are. Helps the development of appropriate strategies and methods for each stakeholder.

PROCEDURE (SEE FIGURE 15)

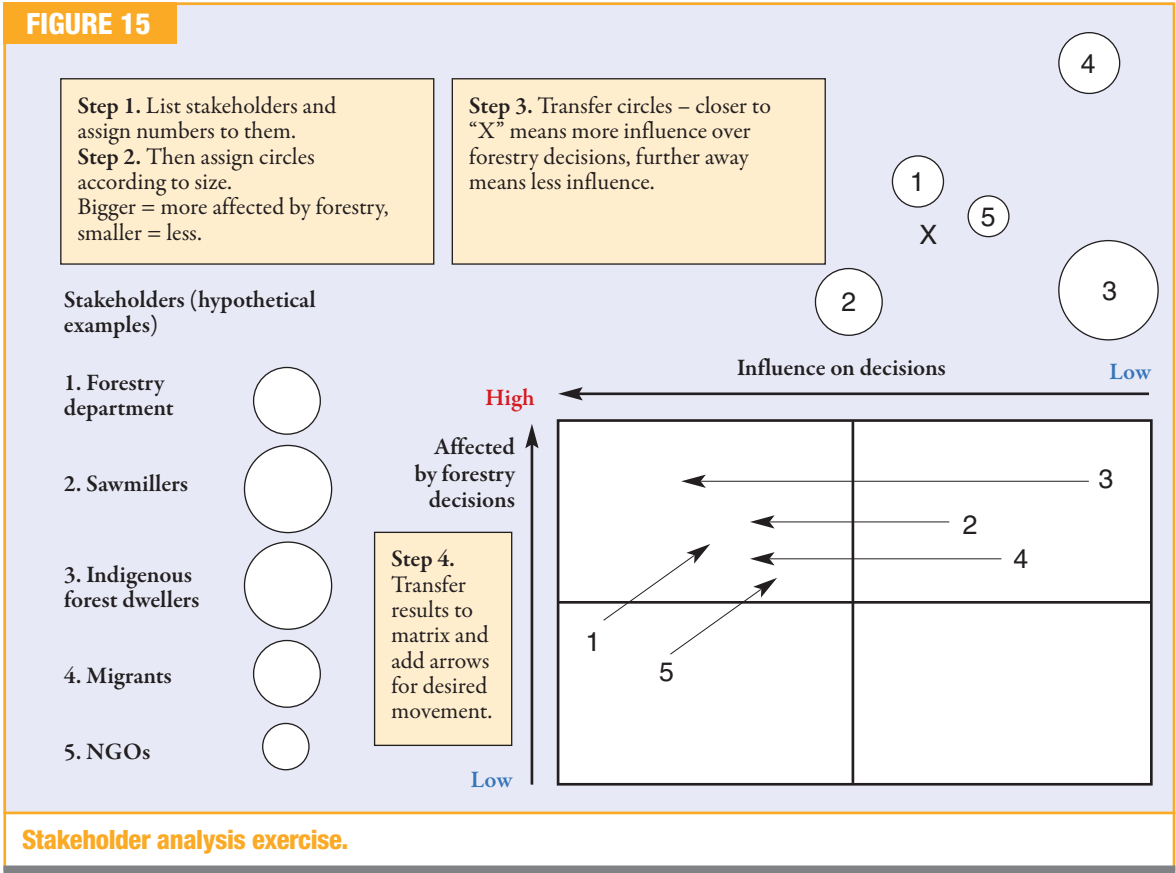
Step 1. Prepare a big sheet similar to the one in Figure 15 on a large sheet with. List the steps to be followed on this sheet, as in Figure 15. draw a matrix/grid with four quadrants on the bottom right hand quarter of the big sheet. Beside the 'x' and 'y' axis label the grid as seen on the figure. Place an 'X' above the grid.

Step 2. Ask the participants for the names of stakeholder groups that are affected by forestry decisions. They should number and list these along the left hand side of the big sheet with space in between for circles that will be added in the next step.

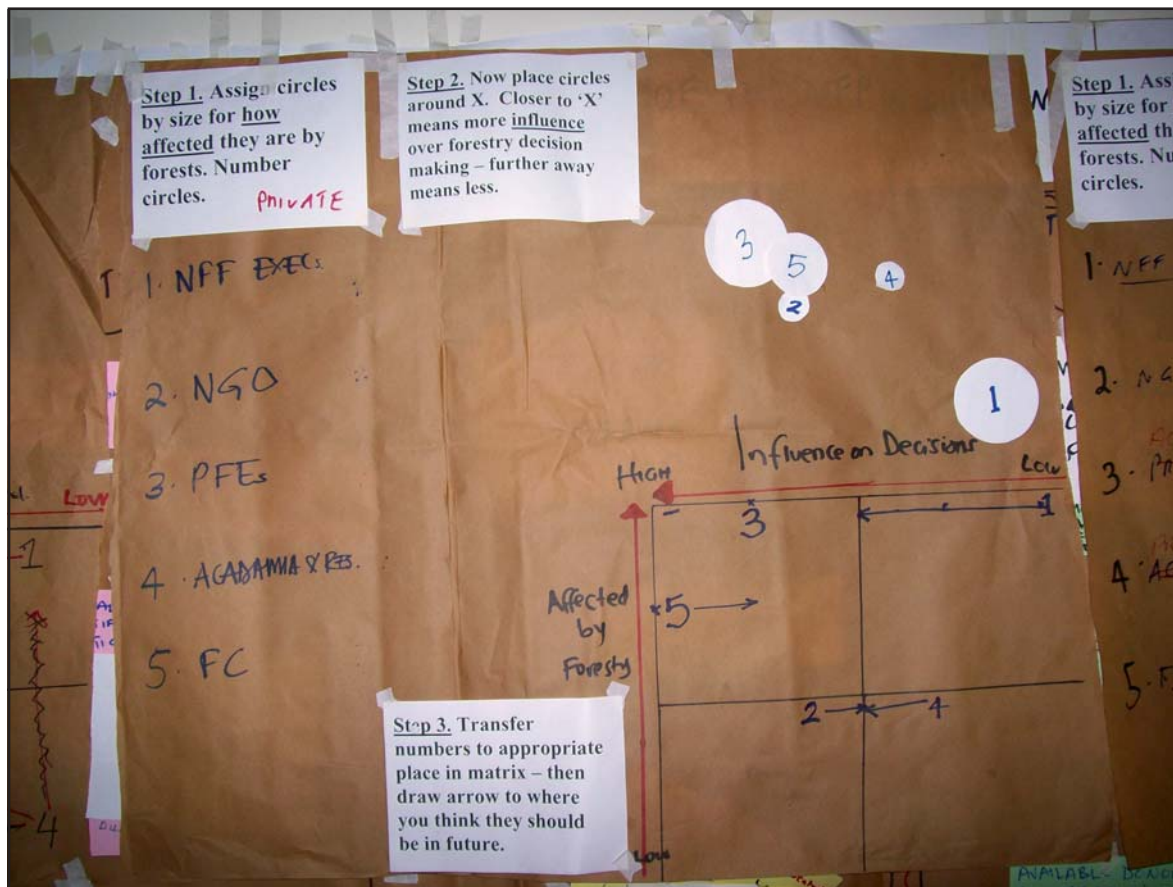
Step 3. Then ask the participants to assign a circle size according to how affected each stakeholder is. The bigger the circle, the more affected the stakeholder is by forestry decisions.

Step 4. Write the appropriate stakeholder's number on each circle and place the circles in the top right of the big sheet above the matrix. The X is the reference point for influence on forestry decision-making. The participants should then position each circle closer to or further from the X depending on the perceived influence of that stakeholder over forestry decisions.

Step 5. Position the stakeholders' numbers in the matrix according to their influence on decisions and how affected they are by forestry (lower right corner of Figure 15). The final step is to draw arrows to indicate where these stakeholders should be in terms of influence over decisions and how affected/accountable they should. Each arrow indicates where nfp strategies and methods may be needed to help balance affectedness and influence among forestry stakeholders.



The completed matrix can provide the basis for discussing how to develop strategies and what methods from the toolbox should be used to help.



Stakeholder analysis conducted by a private forest enterprises group in Ghana. Above the matrix the group placed stakeholder number 5 (the Ghana Forestry Commission) on top of the X to indicate very high influence. Notice that the group perceived the need for some stakeholders to be empowered (1 and 4), while others (5 and 2) should lessen their influence.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

Venn diagrams, such as the one used here, can be very confusing for participants, unless there is clear differentiation between the criteria: the size of the circle and the distance between it and the reference point. Venn diagrams should be created in steps (in this case, size first, then distance) rather than in one go that asks participants to consider two criteria at once.

Also the term ‘forestry decisions’ can be too broad, more specific terms such as ‘forest policy’ could help focus the analysis.

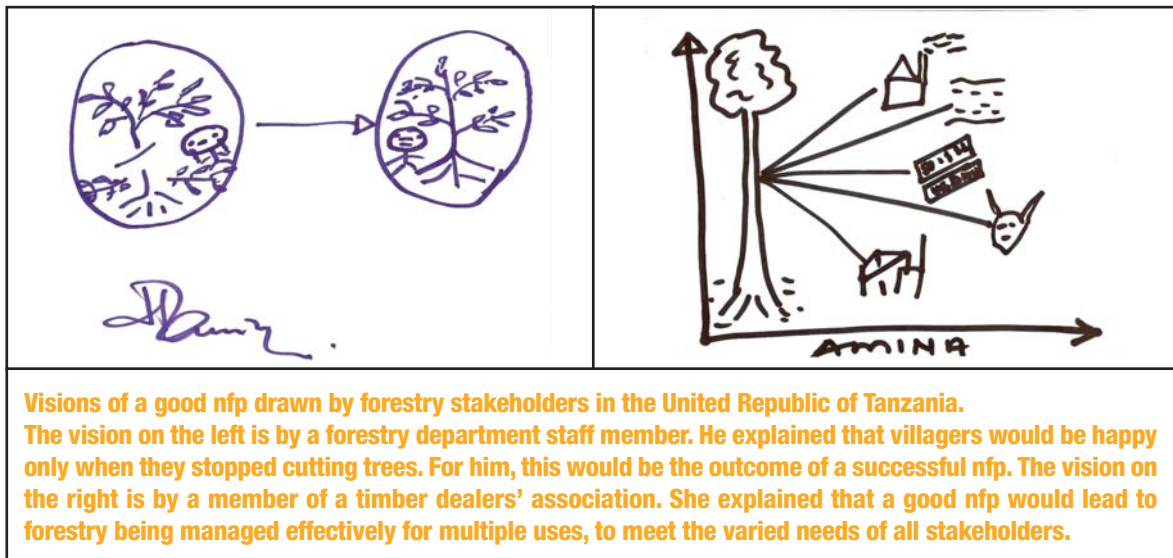
Although the nfp facilitators can carry out preliminary stakeholder analysis by themselves, the exercise should be repeated with separate stakeholder groups, which may have different perspectives. The nfp facilitation team should not rely on only its own viewpoint.

When their positions have been finalized, the circles can be stuck on to the matrix, which can be hung on the wall or board for presentation.

Cutting circles can take a lot of time. Easier to cut squares can be used, or local materials such as leaves of different sizes.

Tool 2. Visioning

Purpose: Provides a non-verbal/unwritten insight into aspirations. Gets beyond technical acronyms and jargon to show what people actually feel, and can be used with both literate and non-literate participants.



Visions of a good nfp drawn by forestry stakeholders in the United Republic of Tanzania. The vision on the left is by a forestry department staff member. He explained that villagers would be happy only when they stopped cutting trees. For him, this would be the outcome of a successful nfp. The vision on the right is by a member of a timber dealers' association. She explained that a good nfp would lead to forestry being managed effectively for multiple uses, to meet the varied needs of all stakeholders.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Give each participant a sheet of A4 paper and marker pens. Ask them to draw what they think would be the ideal scenario for whatever is being investigated, such as good forest management or a good nfp. Ask the participants to draw their own thoughts without words (or copying). Arrows however should be allowed. Set a time limit (such as ten minutes), and assure them that the artistic merit of their pictures will not be assessed.

Step 2. When everyone has finished their pictures, ask each participant (or a few volunteers) to explain his/her picture to the group. Explanations should be limited to about a minute (use time cards) and participants should be able to respond to any request for clarification (questions should be restricted to this). The facilitator should accept all visions as valid points of view. The only word allowed on the pictures is the name of the artist, which is useful for future reference.

Step 3. If a wall is available, the visions can be attached to it, grouped according to stakeholder group or the similarities that emerge. This helps identify commonalities and differences, which can be discussed.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE METHOD, AND COMMENTS

It is useful for the facilitator to draw his/her vision while the participants are drawing theirs. In many cultures drawing is regarded as an activity for schoolchildren rather than adults, so having the facilitator join in helps remove any sense of teacher/pupil.

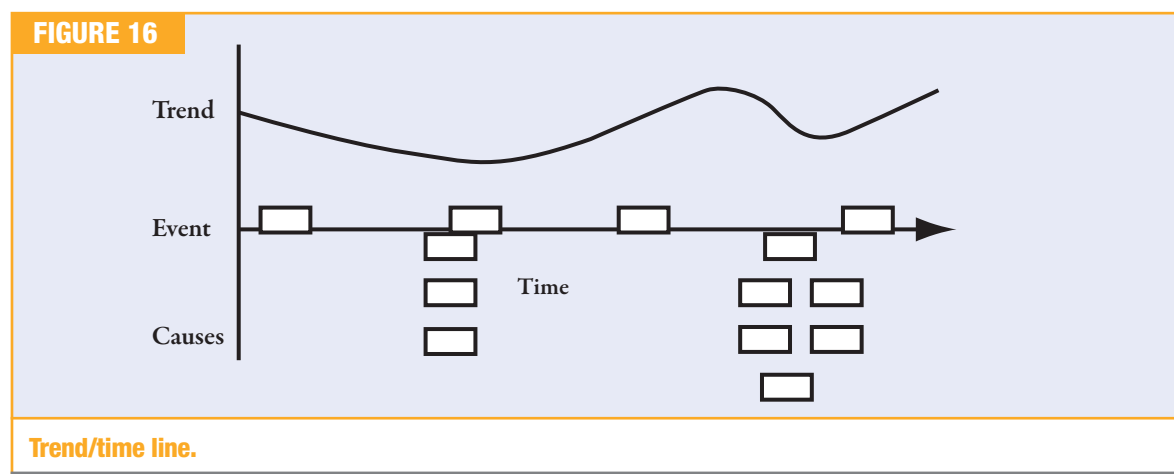
If used at the beginning of an nfp process cycle, this exercise can provide a good qualitative baseline, which can be revisited throughout the process by asking people whether they feel they are moving towards their visions, or asking them to redraw their visions and examining any differences from the original. This may indicate subtle shifts in positions resulting from taking part in the multi-stakeholder nfp process.

Tool 3. Time/trend line

Purpose: Analyses the history of forestry. Provides a good entry point for the nfp facilitators to learn about the background to, and evolution of forestry issues from the stakeholders' point of view. Examines trends and the reasons for them.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Attach a poster-size sheet of paper to the wall, with an X axis and a Y axis, as shown in Figure 16, and label the axes.



Step 2. Ask the participants for a well-known event that occurred a long time ago (preferably within living memory). Ask a participant to write/draw the event on a card and to position the card on the horizontal axis, if possible with a date, although this need not be exact. Then ask for other significant events, and position these in the appropriate order along the x axis to indicate roughly when they occurred.

Step 3. The next step is to select the trend to explore. For example, forest cover or motivation to invest in forest management. Ask the participants to nominate someone to draw the trend line (an elder may be the best choice). This person then draws the line while asking verification and advice from the others. The line should be drawn upwards when the trend rises, for example, when there is more motivation to invest in forest management, and downwards when the trend falls. If there are significant disagreements, different individuals can draw their own trend lines on the diagram, each labelled with the drawer's name and/or drawn in a different colour. General patterns may then emerge and an average trend line can be drawn.

Step 4. Where there is a dip or a peak in the trend line, ask the participants to write/draw the causes of this on cards or post-its and attach these below the central axis aligned to the dip or peak. The causes can then be discussed in more detail and form the basis for a subsequent tool, such as defining the problem to build the problem analysis (Tool 6) around.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

As only one person draws the trend line, it can be difficult to facilitate this exercise in a group setting where there are different ideas about trends. This tool is best used in reasonably small, relatively homogenous focus groups.

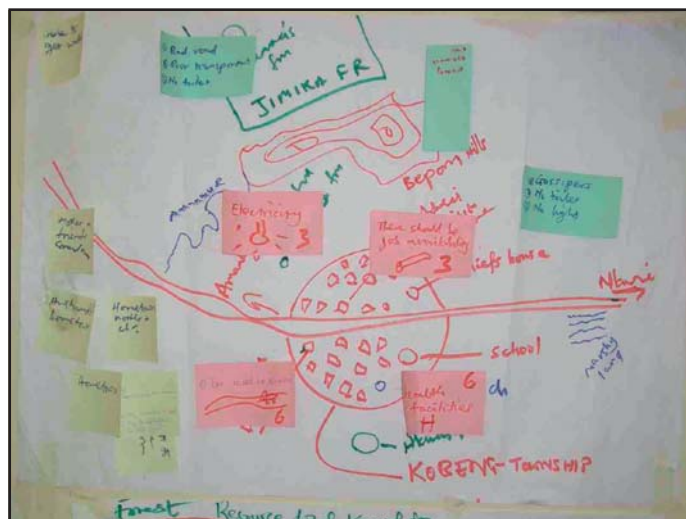
Tool 4. Participatory mapping

Purpose: When there is a geographical element to consider, for example a boundary dispute or forest rights and/or resource access issues, this method helps build understanding of the issue. A visual output, such as a map, can provide a good basis for subsequent discussion and analysis. As for the time/trend line (Tool 3), this is a good scoping method for use early on in interactions with a stakeholder group to 'scan' for issues.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Ask participants to draw (or improvise using local materials) a sketch map of the forest and surrounding area on a large sheet of paper. The map should show the main physical features such as hills, forest, roads, towns and rivers as a frame of reference.

Step 2. Then ask the participants to indicate such factors as where the most valuable products are in the forest, who has access to the forest, where these people come from, who has rights over the forest, and where the products that leave the forest go.



A participatory map is a good method to scope for issues.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

In the past, this method has sometimes been used in too much of an extractive way. Also stakeholders are sometimes suspicious of the facilitators' intentions if they probe too much about valuable products or who is using the forest.

Sometimes facilitators generate a lot of information and produce very comprehensive maps with detailed information that subsequently proves irrelevant to the analysis and discussions. Facilitators should ensure that all the aspects of the map are relevant to the purpose, and should not waste stakeholders' time by focussing on irrelevant detail or pushing for too much accuracy on the maps.

Tool 5. Relationship mapping

Purpose: A quick and effective way of exploring perceptions on relationships among and within forestry stakeholder groups. Very useful to illuminate grievances or conflicts that people may be uncomfortable to discuss verbally.

PROCEDURE

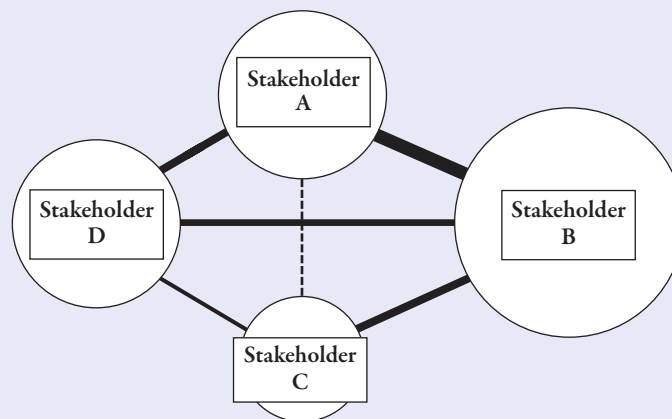
Step 1. Ask a participant to draw circles on a poster sheet and name them, each represents a different forest stakeholder they interact with, they should include their own stakeholder group. Local substitute materials can also be used – See Comments and tips that follow.

Step 2. Draw solid lines linking the stakeholders that have a positive relationship with each other. The thicker the line the more positive the relationship.

Step 3. Draw dashed/broken lines between the stakeholders that have a negative relationship with each other. In this case, the thicker the line the more negative the relationship.

Step 4. Use this output as a basis for discussion as to why the relationships are the way they are.

FIGURE 17



Relationship mapping.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

In this exercise materials can be improvised, for example by using leaves to represent the different stakeholders and branches and stones to map out the relationship links between them. Sticks can represent positive relationships, with thicker sticks for better relationships, and stones can be placed in dashed lines to show poor relationships – the larger the stones the worse the relationship.

It can be difficult to talk about relationships, especially if trust has not been built between the facilitators and the participants. This method provides participants with a way of expressing themselves non-verbally, thereby avoiding what could otherwise be an oversensitive discussion. However, participants can still be inhibited, so to help them relax the facilitator can leave the session and come back when the relationship map is complete. If this does not work, move on to another tool, and return to this one later, when understanding and trust are greater.

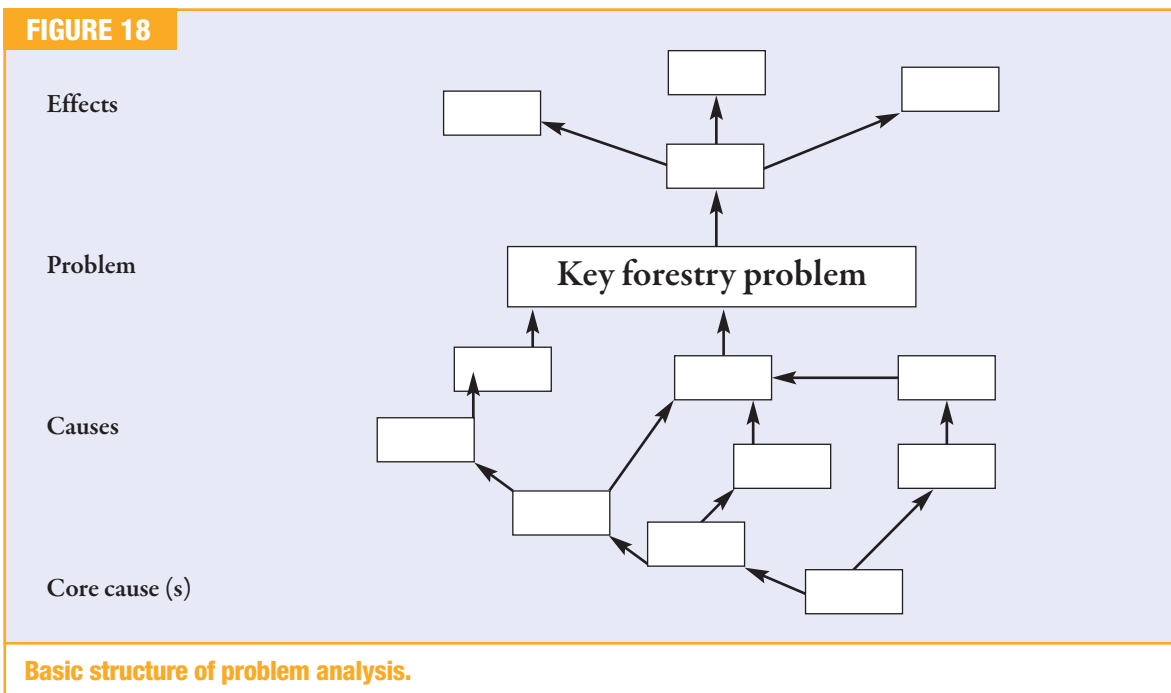
This method can produce very interesting multi-stakeholder interactions when separate stakeholder groups do the exercise separately and the results are compared in a multi-stakeholder session. However, this is a potentially explosive situation and requires the consent of all those involved. Whether or not to bring the different stakeholder groups together requires careful consideration; it may do more harm than good to existing relationships.

Tool 6. Problem analysis

Purpose: A key tool for probing the root causes of forestry problems and enabling analysis of the inter-linkages among causes and among effects. Excellent tool to use in the Analysis phase of an nfp.

PROCEDURE

FIGURE 18



Prior step: Before applying this method, it is often helpful to use other methods to identify the key problem, such as a time/trend Line (Tool 3), relationship mapping (Tool 5), participatory mapping (Tool 4) or synthesis brainstorming on problems (Tool 14) followed by identifying the priority problem through ranking methods (Tool 16 and 17). The problem should always be tentative to begin with; it is just a starting point for the analysis (see Comments and tips box)

Step 1. Find a suitable location. For large groups, it is probably best to develop the problem analysis on a wall, so that all participants can see. Ensure that there is enough space to attach the cards. Give out markers and cards to all the people present, including those who may be sitting at the back of the meeting. Cover the wall with large sheets of paper, so that the finished exercise can be kept and moved.

Step 2. In the centre of the paper, place a large card with the problem stated and/or visualized. Remind the participants that the initial problem is tentative, and may be revised during the analysis. Down the left side of the paper write “Effects” above the problem, “Causes” below it, and “Core causes” at the bottom (Figure 18).

Step 3. Ask each participant to draw/write an immediate cause of the problem on a card. In this initial round, each participant should contribute two causes (this number depends on what is workable with the size of the group present). Attach these cards to the paper, level with the Causes heading, with similar causes grouped together or overlapping.

Step 4. When the cards have been positioned, ask the participants to draw/write the causes of these causes on other cards (one cause per card) and group these on the paper. Follow this process until the group reaches what appear(s) to be the root cause(s) of the problem. The cards may have to be shuffled around as new causes emerge and participants debate which is a cause of which. This means that the cards should be attached with masking tape, which can be stuck, unstuck and re-stuck several times.

Step 5. Once the participants have generally agreed about the causes and the positions of the cards, attach the cards more firmly.

Step 6. Ask for volunteers to draw arrows between the cards, linking the causes and the core causes to the problem.

Step 7. The same process is then repeated for the effects, with participants writing on cards and identifying the effects of effects. The effects cards are then stuck firmly and volunteers draw arrows between them.

Step 8. Once the problem analysis is complete, ask for a volunteer or volunteers to recap, starting with the effects and working down through the problem to the causes and finally the core cause. This is to help verify the analysis came from all participants.

Step 9. As with other methods in this toolbox, the diagram generated in this exercise provides a focal point for discussion and debate, and/or a stepping stone to another method, such as solution analysis (Tool 7). If more than one core cause has emerged, the core cause cards can be removed from the chart and used in a ranking exercise (Tool 16 or 17), with participants ranking which is the most important.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

This tool is sometimes called a “problem tree” with the problem being the trunk, the causes the roots, and the effects the branches.

Many participants report that this is their favourite participatory tool, because it enables them to carry out their own analysis and present their own views, rather than providing information for analysis by someone else.

Participants can become overconcerned about defining the problem, which stalls the exercise before it has begun. To avoid this, emphasize that the problem is tentative and can be revised later. Or spend time identifying collectively agreed priority problems by using the method(s) described in ‘Prior step’.

Tool 7. Solution analysis

Purpose: Can be a useful follow-up to problem analysis (Tool 6) in identifying strategies for tackling the causes of problems.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. The problem analysis chart should be put on the wall and a volunteer asked to recap, starting from effects and working down through the problem to the causes and, finally, the core cause(s) of the problem.

Step 2. Ask the participants to write/draw on cards solutions or strategies for tackling any of the causes – one solution or strategy per card. Try to start as close to the core causes as possible. Place each strategy/solution card near to or over the cause card it relates to. Similar strategies/solutions should be grouped together.

Step 3. Once the solution cards have been positioned over the causes, start discussions about the impact of each solution on the cause cards above it, on the problem itself and on the effects. Ask the participants to write/draw the implications on cards and place these over or near the problem analysis cards.

Step 4. Ask a volunteer to review the solution analysis.

Step 5. This exercise is a useful precursor to other tools, for example, the solutions and strategies identified can be placed on a matrix in a ranking exercise (Tool 16) according to criteria such as the importance of each solution/strategy and its feasibility.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

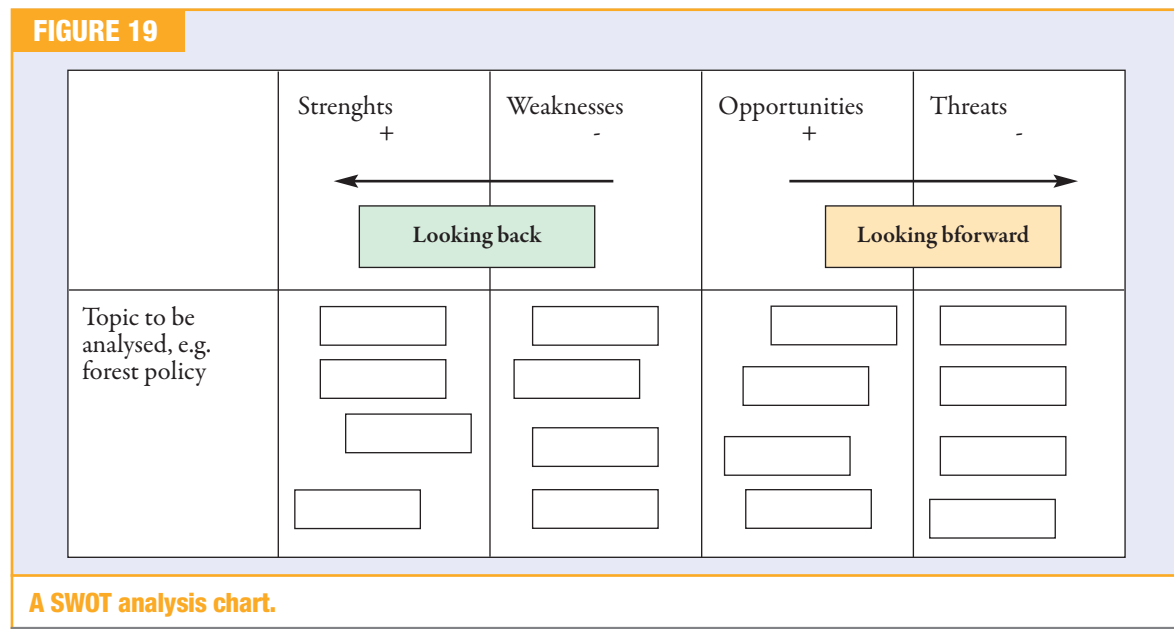
Many of the causes of forestry problems are outside the control, or even the sight, of participants. During the solution analysis, the complexity of the problem should be kept in mind, and rushed solutions should be avoided. It may be more appropriate to conduct this exercise later on in the nfp process than it appears in the toolbox. Leave any causes that cannot be solved, and revisit them later on in a subsequent nfp process cycle.

Tool 8. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis

Purpose: An excellent assessment framework ideal for both the Analysis and M&E phase of the nfp. For example, can be used to examine past experiences of forest policy, identifying strengths and weaknesses then extrapolating to the future to speculate about possible opportunities and threats regarding policy. Also widely used in M&E; for example, an nfp facilitation team can carry out SWOT analysis of its methods and approaches at the end of an nfp cycle, ask stakeholders who have been involved to conduct it.

PROCEDURE

FIGURE 19



Step 1. Prepare a matrix with four columns large enough for the maximum number of cards per column (step 2). Copy the wording and arrows in Figure 19. This helps avoid confusion, by visually differentiating between looking back and looking forward.

Step 2. Give each participant cards and markers. It is useful to limit the number of cards per person for each column, to ensure that the exercise is not dominated by some participants. As a rule of thumb, four cards per person per column is a good maximum number for a group of five people, and one or two cards per person per column for a group of 30. As with all other participatory methods using cards, ask the participants to write clearly and in large letters with only one idea per card, as cards will be grouped.

Step 3. Ask the participants to start by writing strengths before moving on to weaknesses. Then ask them to help group similar strengths and weaknesses in these first two columns. Ask a volunteer to summarize the main groups, and label them by using different coloured cards or A4 paper.

Step 4. Ask the participants to reflect on the cards/groupings in the strengths and weaknesses columns and think about future opportunities that may arise if strengths are built on and weaknesses tackled. Also there may be other future opportunities that are unrelated to past strengths and weaknesses. They should write these opportunities on cards, which are positioned in the opportunities column.

Step 5. Ask participants to think about possible future threats that may arise if weaknesses are not tackled or strengths not built on. Again in addition there may be threats identified that are not related to past strengths and weaknesses.

All the threats should be written on cards and placed in the threats columns. When the SWOT chart is complete, as with other methods, to help verify, a volunteer or volunteers should recap.

Step 6. As well as debate and discussion of its findings, a SWOT analysis can also lead into other steps in the nfp process, such as ranking and prioritizing the groups of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Tools 10 and 16 may be suitable for this).

COMMENTS AND TIPS

Participants in a SWOT analysis can become confused unless the differences between *strengths* and *opportunities* and between weaknesses and threats are clearly explained. To help avoid this confusion, it should be made clear that strengths and weaknesses refer to the past and the present, and opportunities and threats regard the future (as described in the tool's procedure). This way of using the SWOT may be different to how others have used it so important to discuss any such differences before the exercise begins to avoid misunderstandings. It also helps to conduct the SWOT analysis in clear steps, starting with strengths and weaknesses, before moving on to opportunities and threats.

Another effective way to avoid misunderstandings and simplify the method further is to replace both Opportunities and Threats columns with one 'Recommendations' column. The exercise then becomes a SWR analysis.

Tool 9. 3Rs ranking

Purpose: One of several ways of ranking, which can be used in various ways. Compares stakeholders’ different perceptions of who is responsible for forest management, who has rights and who receives the most revenues/benefits. Can uncover the causes of perceived injustice in the forest sector, when the 3Rs – responsibilities, rights and revenues – do not balance.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Prepare a matrix on a large sheet of paper and ask the participants to list all forest stakeholders including their stakeholder group on one side of the matrix (See figure 20). Along the top of the matrix list the 3Rs: rights, responsibilities and revenues.

Step 2. Give each participant an equal number of seeds, stones or some other kind of counter and ask them to distribute these in the boxes of the matrix according to the degree of responsibility, right or revenue that each stakeholder has. For example, if each participant receives 20 counters to distribute according to the revenues/benefits that each stakeholder derives from forestry, a participant who perceives that one stakeholder group gets about 25 percent of these benefits would place five of the 20 counters in the revenues box for that stakeholder.

Step 3. The completed matrix provides a basis for discussion. Ask the participants what they feel about the sharing of responsibilities, rights and revenues. Ask them to suggest the causes of any imbalances and to use the counters to demonstrate what they view as a desirable and just distribution among the stakeholders.

FIGURE 20

	Rights	Responsibilities	Revenues (benefits)
Stakeholder A			
Stakeholder B			
Stakeholder C			
Stakeholder D			
Stakeholder E			

The 3Rs ranking matrix



Villagers rank the rights, responsibilities and revenues of a range of forestry stakeholders. (IIRR)

COMMENTS AND TIPS

This is an adaptation of the ‘4Rs’ method. The 4th R was relationships, with experience the relationship mapping exercise has been found to be more suitable for relationship analysis so this 4th column has been dropped.

This method is not designed to measure exact amounts – for example, asking details about money is inappropriate in some cultures. Instead it aims to make proportional comparisons.

The word ‘revenue’ can make people think only about money, if the purpose of the exercise is to focus on broader forest benefits – replacing revenue with ‘benefits’ may be useful.

Tool 10. Target scoring

Purpose: A very quick and versatile evaluation method for large groups to assess how they feel about various options, strategies or criteria. For example, can be used to assess the degree of participation in various phases of an nfp (see photo) or the skills of and methods used by an nfp facilitation team.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. On a large sheet of paper draw a target (Figure 21) divided into zones (wedges) for appropriate criteria, such as the phases in an nfp cycle.

Step 2. Explain the target and the criteria. The centre of the target represents the highest score, and the outermost circle the lowest. The scoring refers to features that are appropriate to the specific purpose of the tool, for example, the degree of participation in the phases of an nfp.

Step 3. Explain that each participant should mark a cross in each wedge showing his/her score for that criterion. Emphasize that participants should not be influenced by the assessments of others.

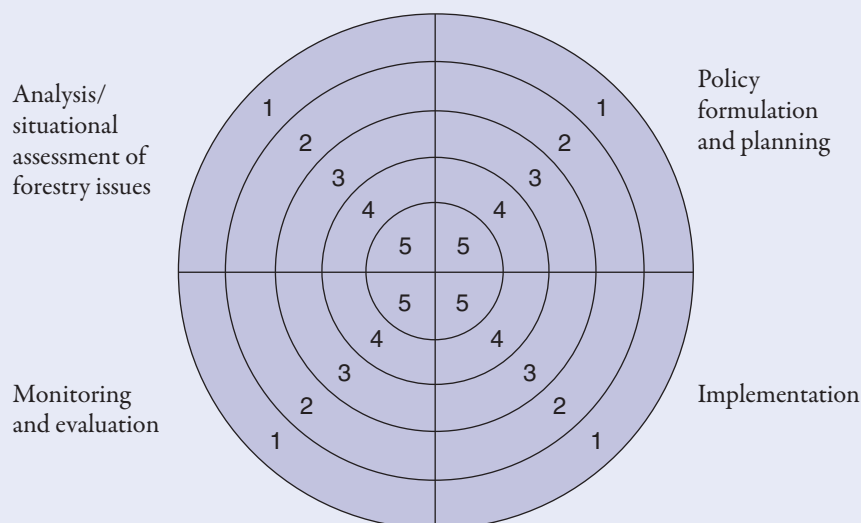
Step 4. Put the target out of sight of the group, so that each participant can mark her/his scores in private. It is best to have only one person at the target at a time, but this may not be possible with a large group.

Step 5. Provide participants with space to add comments by posting a chart with two columns near the target. One column is for justifications, where participants can give their reasons for awarding a score, and the other is for recommendations for the future. Participants should write each justification and recommendation on a card or post it and attach it to this chart (Table).

Step 6. Once complete, and depending on the context, the target can be presented to the group and the facilitator(s) for discussion.

FIGURE 21

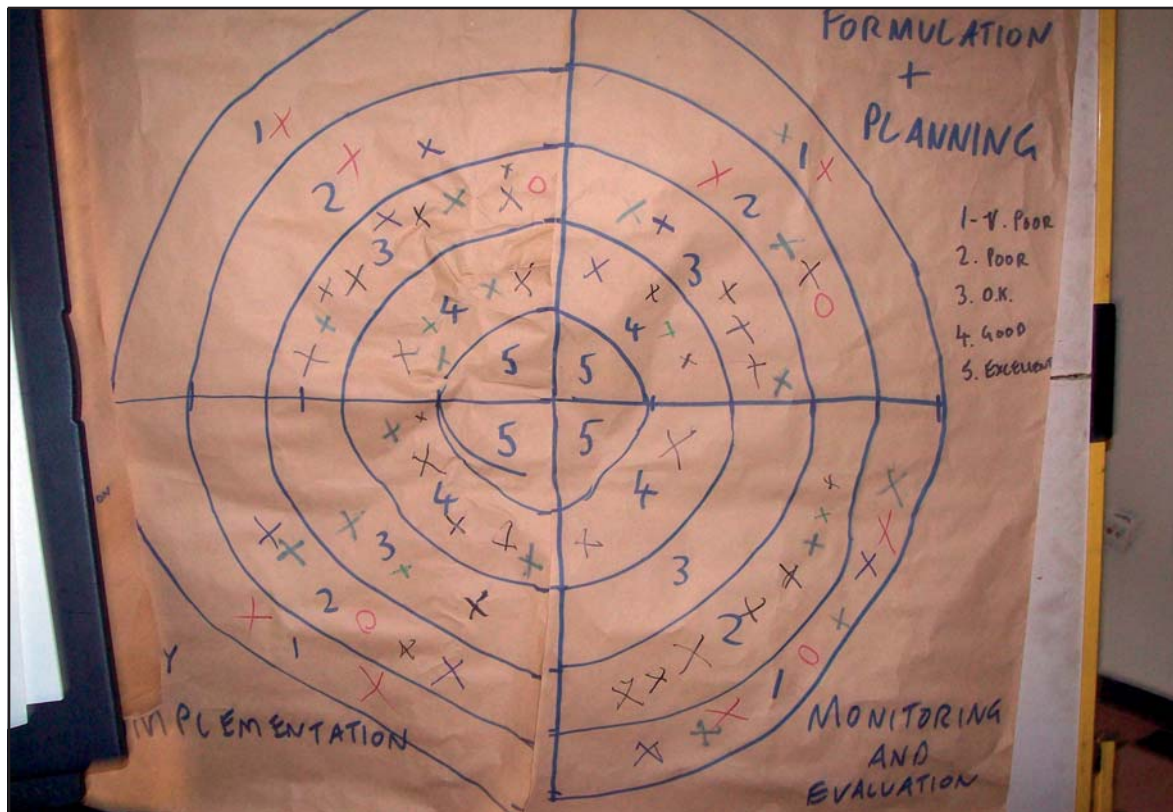
TARGET RANKING ASSESSMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS' PARTICIPATION IN THE PHASES OF AN NFP PROCESS



Target scoring method.

Table. Comments chart.

JUSTIFICATIONS (MAXIMUM OF 2 CARDS PER PERSON)	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE (MAXIMUM OF 2 CARDS PER PERSON)



Target scoring method for assessing participation in the various phases of an nfp in the United Republic of Tanzania. Different coloured 'X's and different symbols were used by different stakeholder groups.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

Different stakeholders can use different colours/symbols on the target, as in the photo. This gives an idea of the diversity of perspectives among stakeholders.

If this method is used to evaluate facilitators, the participants may feel more at ease if the facilitators leave the room.

A useful alternative to this method that has been very effective in freeing up participants even more to express their views is using a ballot box system with one box for each criterion. Scores are written on cards with justifications and recommendations and posted into the box.

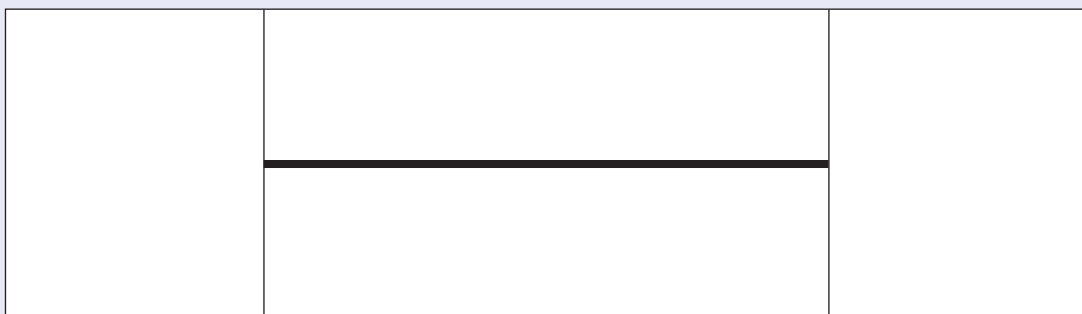
Tool 11. H-diagrams

Purpose: A hybrid method that combines attributes of SWOT analysis with those of ranking exercises, to cover both qualitative and quantitative assessment. Produces useful results in a short time. Often used in Analysis and M&E phase of the nfp. Like the previous Target scoring method can be used to assess the performance of the nfp facilitation team in terms of, for example, how participatory its meetings are. (This is the example used in the following.)

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Take a sheet of paper (A1 size if working with a group, A4 for working with an individual) and fold it in half along its length, then fold it in half along its width, and fold it in half again along its width. Now unfold the paper and mark a large H using the folds as a guide (Figure 22a). This is the framework for an H-diagram.

FIGURE 22A



H-diagram.

Step 2. In the top centre of the H write a single word or a simple question, such as How well has the nfp facilitation team conducted the nfp process? or How participatory have the meetings been?

Step 3. At the left end of the horizontal central line of the H write “0” (or “not well” or draw a sad face). At the right end write “10” (or “extremely well” or draw a smiling face).

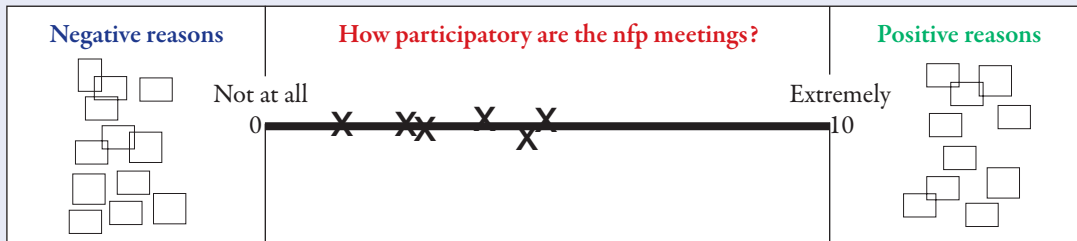
Step 4. Give each participant a marker and ask them to mark the evaluation/score they would award along the line between 0 and 10 (or between the words or faces).

Step 5. Start by giving each participant three post-its and ask them to write the negative reasons for not awarding the maximum score – one reason per post-it. If participants need more than three post-its, give them more. If they have only one negative reason, they do not need to use the other two post-its. Reasons can be given verbally in a group, but the use of post-its prevents the risk of a few people dominating the group.

Step 6. While the participants are noting their reasons, the facilitator can write “Negative reasons for the score” at the top of the left column of the H-diagram. Once everyone has recorded their reasons ask them to stick their post-its in this column.

Step 7. Repeat this procedure for participants’ positive reasons for not awarding a zero score. Head the right-hand column of the H-diagram with “Positive reasons for the score” and ask the participants to stick their positive post-its in this column.

FIGURE 22B



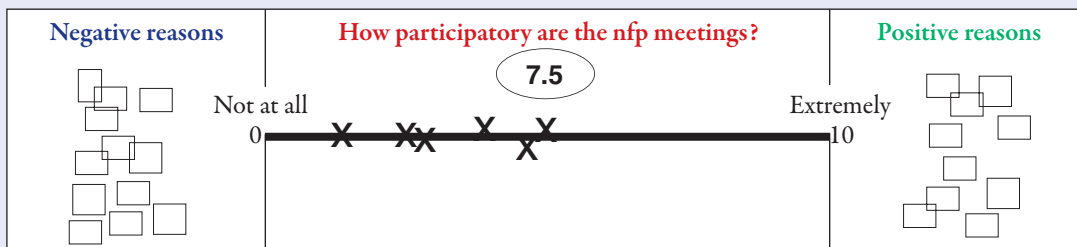
Completed H-diagram.

Step 8. Ask each participant to read out his/her negative and positive reasons without going into lengthy explanations. The rest of the group does not have to agree or disagree with any of the reasons recorded by individual participants. This is simply an opportunity for each participant to have her/his views heard and understood.

Step 9. After this, the group can develop a group score by discussing the various positive and negative reasons and awarding an overall score between 0 and 10. This score must not be a simple calculation of the average of all the initial scores. This is often a quick process because the group has understood the wide range of reasons behind the individual scores and participants can usually reach agreement on a group score.

Step 10. Mark the score in the top central section of the H-diagram.

FIGURE 22C



Completed H-diagram with overall score.

Step 11. Depending on the purpose of the exercise, ask the participants to suggest ways in which the score could be improved. This can be done verbally, with a volunteer recording everybody's ideas in the lower central part of the H-diagram, or by asking each participant to write his/her suggestions on post-its.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

This tool helps individuals and/or groups to record their own views and ideas in a non-threatening, open and structured way, which fosters individual expression as well as common understanding and consensus building. The logical sequence and tight framework that the H-diagram provides ensures that discussions are focused, specific, progressive and lead to action points.

The outputs of this method can easily be transferred to a report, using the same words or symbols participants used to record their views and ideas. This can be done by either copying or scanning the H-diagram.

Tool 12. Poster presentations with post-its

Purpose: A refreshing alternative to Power Point presentations. Poster presentations can be left on the wall (unlike Power Point) and viewed whenever needed. Noting questions and comments on post-its raises more information and issues than could be delivered verbally. The session allows time for presenters to digest comments and respond, and for participants to receive assistance in deciphering technical questions or acronyms. Having participants walking around the room tends to generate a pleasant atmosphere that helps them to mingle and relax. An excellent low-tech alternative for stakeholders who are not familiar or comfortable with Power Point.

Has been used successfully as an open and accessible way to review and revise policies (See Comments and tips).

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Ask the participants to prepare presentations on posters/flipcharts. They can do this by printing their presentations in large font and sticking them on to posters, or by writing bulleted points and/or drawing illustrations directly on to flipcharts.

Step 2. Provide presentation guidelines so that posters can be compared easily. The guidelines depend on the topic; for example, presentations on forest policy analysis can be based on SWOT analysis framework.

Step 3. It is a good idea to put posters up the day before the session, with as much space as possible between them.

Step 4. Each presenting group has ten to 15 minutes (see Box on timing) to summarize the highlights of their poster. During the presentation, and for five minutes afterwards, other participants write their questions or comments on post-its, which are stuck on to the poster on or near the concerned point. No verbal questions are allowed at this point.

Step 5. After each presentation, all the participants move on to the next poster and repeat the procedure with its presenting group.

Step 6. After all the presentations have been made, participants are given time to review the posters and add more comments, while presenters read and group similar post-its on their posters, thinking about how to respond to the questions/comments.

Step 7. Starting with the first poster presented, the group then moves from poster to poster, allowing five minutes for each presenter to respond to the post-it comments and questions.

Step 8. Once all the responses have been made, if some points still need to be clarified or there has been misunderstanding, a few minutes can be allocated to verbal questions and responses, but this should not be allowed to progress into a full-scale debate. There are better tools for debate, such as the fishbowl debate method (Tool 14).

TIMING FOR THE SESSION (DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF PRESENTATIONS)

Ten minutes for each poster presentation.

- Five minutes to write questions and comments and attach them to the poster.
- 15 minutes after all the poster presentations have been made, for additional comments and preparation of responses.
- Five minutes for each poster, to respond to post-it comments and questions.
- Five minutes for verbal clarification, if necessary.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

This timing for this session is complicated, so it is important to write it clearly on a poster and appoint a time-keeper to ensure it is respected.

Remind presenters not to read out everything on their posters and not to linger too long on background or introductions. The analysis – for example, strengths and weaknesses – is the most interesting and important part of the presentation.

Remind respondents to write clearly, ideally in capital letters and with only one question/comment per post-it. This enables the grouping of post-its.

Participants often find it hard to refrain from verbal questions, so the facilitator has to be quite insistent from the very beginning to enforce the rule of writing on post-its.

An adaptation has been successfully used to conduct policy reviews. To do this print relevant policies in large enough font to be seen from some distance. If the review is to be done with different stakeholder groups select policy articles of most relevance to them – do not overwhelm with irrelevant information. The resulting posters can be kept on the walls of a public building e.g. a village hall. Place written instructions for the exercise, post-its and pens near by. A meeting can then be called to discuss the comments.

Tool 13. Synthesis brainstorming on problems

Purpose: A simple but effective way of democratically capturing the collective views of a stakeholder group. Has many purposes. For example, as a preparatory step before a debate, allowing separate stakeholder groups to clarify their position statements before presenting them to the multi-stakeholder group.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Give an equal number of cards and a marker to each participant. Explain that this is a democratic exercise, so limit the number of cards distributed; for example, a group of ten can have ten cards each, a group of 40 one card each.

Step 2. Ask participants to write one clear idea/statement per card about the problem being brainstormed.

Step 3. Attach the cards to the wall or a large board. Ask for clarification if the contents of a card are not clear.

Step 4. Ask the participants to group similar cards together, and summarize the main groupings on A4 paper.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

Once the cards are grouped to identify areas where there is collective agreement on problems, ranking exercises (Tools 16 and 17) can be used to prioritise them.

Tool 14. Fishbowl debate

Purpose: Levels the communication playing field for a multi-stakeholder debate when there are power imbalances among the stakeholders taking part. Contains the dominant and provides opportunity for others to take part. Also provides an appropriate platform for expressing grievances and for constructive confrontation – it lets points be heard but avoids face to face arguments. Can act as a release valve in a tense meeting.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Divide the participants into their separate stakeholder groups.

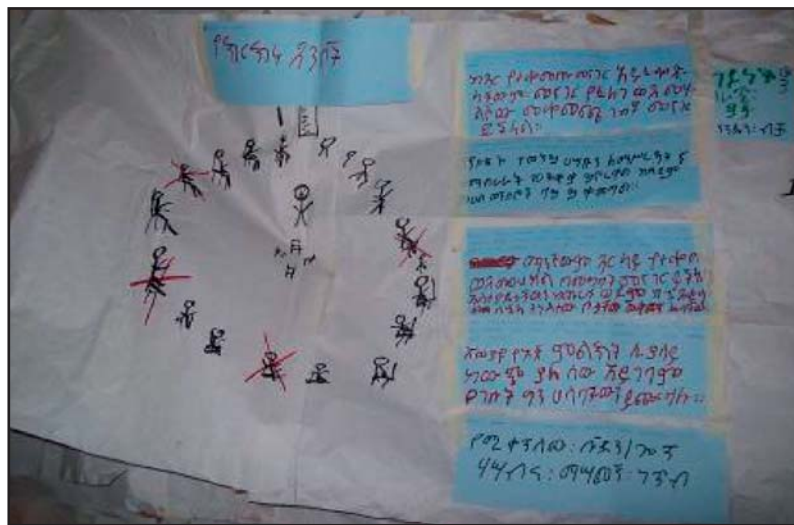
Step 2. Ask each group to develop two position statements (the number depends on the number of groups – ten position statements may take at least two hours to debate). These statements should contain a perceived problem with justification and recommendations to address that problem. These statements can be based on outputs from problem analysis (Tool 6), SWOT analysis (Tool 8) or synthesis brainstorming on problems and solutions (Tool 13 and 15). When developing their statements, the participants within each group should try to reach consensus or compromise. If this is not possible through discussion, a ranking exercise (Tool 16) can be conducted within the group. Provide sufficient time for this internal stakeholder group work.

Step 3. Each group then appoints a spokesperson(s), who works with the rest of the group to develop a justification for the position statement, citing evidence and experience in its support.



A multi-stakeholder fishbowl debate on forest policy in the Philippines. Before the debate, the separate stakeholder groups prepared their position statements in half-day meetings, using methods described in this toolbox. On the walls are the results of a SWOT analysis of various forest policy issues, with each stakeholder group using a different colour of cards. Areas of disagreement emerged, in the SWOT and these formed the basis of the fishbowl debate which was seen as an appropriate method to deal with contentious issues constructively.

Step 4. The seating arrangements for a fishbowl debate are very useful in levelling the communication playing field. Prepare the fishbowl by arranging chairs in a large ring (the bowl), with no tables in front of them (Photo). Ensure that there are enough chairs in this ring for all the participants, and avoid having extra chairs in the room, to encourage participants to sit in the ring. Place four or five chairs facing each other in the centre of the ring (where the “fish” will sit). Position a flipchart or board so that it is easily visible to all the participants when seated, and attach all the position/problem statements from the groups on to this board, labelling each statement with the stakeholder group that provided it. If available, a single microphone can be provided for the central chairs, to ensure that only one person speaks at a time. However, a microphone is not necessary for the exercise to be a success.



A simple illustration of a fishbowl debate on a flipchart, with summarized rules written on cards alongside it. This is a good way of making the rules clear to participants.

Step 5. Ask the participants to sit on the chairs of the outside ring. Explain how the fishbowl debate method works by using a visual diagram with clearly written instructions (see photo) and by having a demonstration and a practice ‘dry run’ by the facilitator to show how it works in practice. The main rule is that only those in the centre of the fishbowl – the “fish” – are allowed to speak. One chair in the centre is reserved for the justifier of a statement, and the others are for respondents.

Step 6. One by one, the stakeholder groups present their position statements, along with supporting materials (e.g. outputs from other exercises) if available. The spokesperson for the first group then justifies that group’s statement, can walk around addressing people on the outside ring if they so wish, before sitting on one of the central chairs for the remainder of the debate. The debate now begins, with participants who wish to respond to the justification moving from the outside ring to sit on any free chair in the centre. There can be as many respondents as there are chairs in the centre, and respondents make their comments in the order in which they arrived at the central chairs. The justifier can respond after each comment by a respondent as they so wish. It makes things clearer if each respondent states whether she/he agrees or disagrees with the position statement as soon as he/she arrives in the centre. The respondent must leave the central circle as soon as she/he has commented freeing up the chairs for others, or when time runs out (see timing Box). He/she then returns to the outer ring and waits until at least one other respondent has spoken and there is a free chair in the centre before they are allowed to make any return to the centre.

TIMING FOR THE SESSION (DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF STATEMENTS, THE TIME AVAILABLE AND THE PARTICIPANTS' INTEREST IN THE STATEMENTS)

- Ten minutes for the initial justification.
- One minute for each comment by a respondent.
- One minute for each justifier's response to a comment.
- In general, each statement is debated for about 15 to 30 minutes.

Step 7. Although the fishbowl debate can end after all the position statements have been debated, it can be useful to wrap up the session by reviewing all the statements one by one and asking who agrees and disagrees with each; this identifies the statements on which participants are closest to reaching consensus, and those where consensus is unlikely, which can be useful information for subsequent steps in the NFP process. The wrap-up can be done in various ways. One method is simply to ask participants to raise their hands to show their agreement or disagreement. Another method is to put labels with "Agree" and "Disagree" on opposite sides of the room and ask participants to stand under the label that represents their views as each position statement is reviewed. Participants who do not agree or disagree particularly strongly can stand at the appropriate point between the two labels. A more accurate way of doing this that has been successfully used at this point is by conducting a priority ranking exercise (Tool 16). To do this participants are divided into their stakeholder groups to do the ranking. Once all stakeholder ranks are placed on one matrix totals can reveal which statements there are most collective agreement on and which less.

The session can be closed by asking participants whether they changed their minds during the debate, and why, but the facilitator must be careful that this does not reignite the debate!

COMMENTS AND TIPS

This method's strength lies in ensuring that the debate is not dominated by one or a few individuals, and in developing a momentum that allows the facilitator to step back and not influence the outcomes. It provides participants with an understanding of different viewpoints, and can encourage empathy or even guilt on the part of decision-makers, as they are told the consequences of their decisions. In terms of the stakeholder analysis matrix (Figure 9), this method empowers those in square B and makes those in square C more accountable –effectively moving participants to Part 'A' in the grid.

However a weakness of the method is that not everybody is comfortable coming into the middle of the fishbowl and verbally justifying or responding. This is why it is important not to rely on only one method in a multi-stakeholder meeting; some participants may be more comfortable with card-based methods.

Time management and enforcing the rules are extremely important in a fishbowl debate, especially during the first 15 minutes or so, while the rules are established and understood. All participants – whether directors or villagers – must be treated equally, for example, regarding the timing of their comments. The facilitator must prepare time cards marked "2 minutes", "1 minute", "30 seconds" and "Stop!!", and instruction cards marked "Quiet on the outer ring, please" and "Move to the outer ring, please". These can be discreetly shown by the facilitator walking around the outside of the 'bowl' ring so as not to disturb or distract too much.

Several tools follow on well from the fishbowl debate, such as synthesis brainstorming on strategies/solutions (Tool 15) to address the problem statements raised in the fishbowl, followed by a priority ranking exercise (Tool 16) or a priority auction (Tool 17).

Tool 15. Synthesis brainstorming on strategies/solutions

Purpose: Similar to problem brainstorming a democratic way for groups to synthesize key solutions.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. If this tool is being used as a follow-up to another one, such as the fishbowl debate (Tool 14), problem analysis (Tool 6), SWOT analysis (Tool 8) or synthesis brainstorming on problems (Tool 13), the outputs of that exercise should be posted on the wall or a board, where they can be referred to. Alongside these, place another large sheet of paper or board for the outputs of this exercise.

Step 2. Strategies must be feasible, so criteria can be set, such as “within existing resource limitations”, or “within the next two years”. These criteria should be written clearly, so that participants keep them in mind.

Subsequent steps. Follow the steps in Tool 13, asking participants to write solutions rather than problems on their cards.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

A useful variation of this method when conducted in a multi-stakeholder group is to use different coloured cards for different stakeholder groups. This helps to identify the strategies where there is more multi-stakeholder agreement, and those where there is less.

Good follow-up tools for this exercise are priority ranking (Tool 16) and the priority auction (Tool 17).

Tool 16. Priority ranking

Purpose: A simple but effective method for prioritizing. An excellent aid to group decision-making.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. The priority ranking matrix (Figure 20) should be drawn on large sheets of paper and attached to the wall. When used with a multi-stakeholder group, the separate stakeholder groups are listed on one axis and the strategies on the other (Option 1). Option 2 shows another way of using the matrix, with strategies ranked according to categories, to create a decision matrix.

Step 2. Divide the participants into their separate stakeholder groups to discuss their strategies and rank them according to priority. For example, if there are three strategies, the one it thinks is the most important – the highest priority – should be assigned the number 3. The next 2, and the least important 1. The number of strategies determines the highest score possible. When Option 2 is used, a similar process is followed, with strategies prioritized for each of the different criteria.

Step 3. Once the matrix is complete, the total score for each strategy is calculated, to identify the strategy that is most generally acceptable to the overall group (the one with the highest score) and the one that is least generally acceptable (the one with the lowest score) – See Comments and tips box for more information.

FIGURE 20

Option 1

	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Stakeholder A			
Stakeholder B			
Stakeholder C			
Stakeholder D			
Stakeholder E			
Total			

Option 2

	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
General achievability			
Cost and inputs			
Advantages (pros) and opportunities			
Disadvantages (cons) and risks			
Total			

Priority ranking matrices.

Recommendation	Хөхорлон	Малчид	МУШААН	СУМ	БОА	Хяалт-Хийт
Нөхөрлөлийн гишүүдэд илүү хяналтын эрх олгох (A)	4	3	1	5	2	15 (III)
Хэрэгцээний модны үнэ өндөр байно (уямдруулах) (B)	1	1	4	1	4	11 (V)
Тогтвортой үр өсөнтийг алдварын өртөө нэвтрүүлж, зардал багасгах (C)	5	2	2	2	3	14 (IV)
Дийл эзэмтэй боллох (D)	2	5	5	3	1	16 (II)
Хуульчдын уялдаа хамтаралттай ажиллагааг сайжруулах (E)	3	4	3	4	5	19 (I)

The results of a priority ranking exercise. Forestry stakeholders are listed along the top, forest policy recommendations that had been earlier presented in the fishbowl debate are listed down the left hand side. There were 5 recommendations, so scoring ranged from 5 for the highest priority, to 1 for the lowest. On the very right the total scores are assigned Roman numerals to show overall rank.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

Stress that the higher the score, the greater the priority that strategy has: number 1 is the lowest priority, not the highest.

Large variances among stakeholders' preferences must be considered and discussed before any decisions are made on the outputs of this exercise.

Tool 17. Priority auction

Purpose: An energetic and fun way of carrying out a priority ranking. Can be used with multi-stakeholder groups to encourage them to negotiate to reach compromise or consensus on strategies – for example regarding outputs of Tools 14 and 15.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Write the items – such as forest policy recommendations from the outputs of for example Tools 14 and 15, on paper or cards, one item per card. Attach the cards to the wall or a board in clear sight of all the participants. During the auction, stakeholder groups will purchase items (the cards), which will be placed in the purchasing group’s flip chart (See Step 2).

Step 2. Divide the participants into groups (See Comments and tips for grouping suggestions) and have each group sit together, at some distance from the others. Place a flip chart on the wall beside each group.

Step 3. Introduce all the items/strategies to be auctioned. Make sure that all the participants have understood what each item is. Then explain how the auction works.

Step 4. Each group is awarded 100 credits to bid for what it sees as the most important priority actions. Write “100 credits” next to each stakeholder group’s name on the flipchart. The members of each group should discuss which strategies are priorities for them and think about how many credits they are prepared to spend on each strategy.

Step 5. Present the items one by one and ask for bids from the groups. Bidding must always start from 1 credit. Keep accepting bids until one group bids a price that is more than the others are prepared to pay. Write the amount that the purchasing group has paid on the item card and attach the card to the group’s flipchart. Subtract the number of credits spent from the group’s balance, so that participants know how much they have left to spend on other items.

Step 6. When all the items have been purchased, to wrap up the session, ask the stakeholder groups to explain why they purchased the items and why they spent those amounts on them.

Step 7. Remove the items from the group flip charts and place on one wall or board in order of the amount that was spent on them. This gives an indication of how the items were collectively ranked.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE METHOD, AND COMMENTS

If only two out of many groups bid for an item, the amount paid for that item reflects only the value given to it by those two groups, and not its collective prioritization. The facilitator should note how many groups bid for each item and how much they each bid, to identify variances among stakeholders’ priorities.

If this method is being used to determine important outcomes, such as for generating recommendations to feed into a forest policy, the collective prioritization should be verified by using an additional ranking method (such as Tool 16), to triangulate the results.

Groups should be formed accordingly to the purpose of the exercise. For example to assess differences in priorities between stakeholder groups, divide the group up into separate stakeholder groups to conduct the exercise. However if one purpose is to encourage better understanding and to try to move multi-stakeholder groups towards agreement, have multi-stakeholder groups.

The facilitator should play the role of an auctioneer, moving proceedings at some pace, counting down ‘3,2,1 sold!!’ and using a substitute hammer to bang on the table when the item is ‘sold’.

Tool 18. Developing a toolbox and action plan

Purpose: Helps participants to develop the practical steps, responsibilities and methods for taking strategies forward. Is also useful in encouraging consensus and compromise building when multi-stakeholder groups plan together. Can also be used at the beginning of an nfp cycle for an nfp facilitation team to plan their work.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. This exercise is based on groups discussing and agreeing how to fill two matrices – one for the toolbox and one for the action plan. The matrices (see examples following step 5) should be prepared on large sheets of paper and attached to the wall or large boards.

Step 2. The meeting can be divided into four or five groups, each of which is assigned specific purposes or strategies to plan for on separate matrices. Each planning group should include members from different stakeholder groups. One way of assigning planning groups is to attach a sheet to each matrix with space for only a fixed number of people to sign up, and letting participants select their own group/matrix. If their first choice is full, they have to sign up for another matrix/group. If the priority auction (Tool 17) was conducted in multi-stakeholder groups, those same groups can continue working together to develop a toolbox and action plan for the items they purchased at the auction.

Step 3. It is usually best for the groups to deal with the toolbox matrix first, before moving on to the action plan. Each group should appoint a person to fill in the matrix. Cards can also be used (see Comments and tips box). After the matrices have been completed, a rotating panel presentation (Tool 19) is a good way of generating a critical review of the outputs.

Step 4. The purpose in the matrices can be adapted from the outputs of other tools, such as the solutions/strategies from the solution analysis (Tool 7), the opportunities in the SWOT analysis (Tool 8), the synthesis brainstorming on strategies (Tool 15) and the outputs of the priority ranking exercise (Tool 16) and the priority auction (Tool 17).

Toolbox matrix

PURPOSE E.g. Strategy	WHAT method and HOW to use it	WHO will use the method	STRENGTHS of the method	LIMITATIONS/RISKS of the method
	Key steps and advice. E.g. methods for workshops			
	1. 2. 3.			

Action planning matrix

Purpose? E.g. The forestry strategy to be implemented	The goal The desired change/outcome	What activities? E.g. Workshops	Who is responsible for carrying out this activity	Outputs Expected measurable outputs of the activity	When Deadlines for reaching outputs	Resources What resources are needed/available?
		1.				
		2.				
		3.				
		4.				
		1.				
		2.				
		3.				
		4.				

COMMENTS AND TIPS

In a multi-stakeholder group, this tool should be used only after several other methods have enabled participants to understand each other and build mutually acceptable and feasible strategies, such as poster presentations with post-its (Tool 12) followed by fishbowl debate method (Tool 14) followed by priority ranking (Tool 16) Option 2.

Groups should not be too large. With one person filling in the matrix, small groups of five to 15 members can work well, if they are able to discuss and debate to reach compromise and accept the majority view when necessary. With larger groups, it may be best to use cards to gather some of the points, and group the cards accordingly.

If the action plans need to be detailed and in depth, it may be best to develop this process into a full logical framework or objective-oriented process planning.

Group composition is a major challenge in this exercise. In previous experiences, the rule was to have at least one representative from each stakeholder group voluntarily signing up for each planning group, otherwise the planning group could not go ahead. Some multi-stakeholder input can be generated through a rotating panel presentation (Tool 19) to review the plans.

Tool 19. Rotating panel presentation

Purpose: Avoids having elitist panels and non-participatory presentations in meetings/workshops, while encouraging participation, active listening and peer review.

PROCEDURE

Step 1. Position a screen or board (depending on whether presentations are to be on posters or via projector) in front of the audience. Tables and chairs should be arranged in a U shape, with additional chairs in front for the presenters and four tables and chairs lined up to one side of the U for the panellists, who must be able to see the presentation (Photo).

Step 2. On a large sheet of paper or a flipchart prepare a chart with the names of the presenting teams in the first column, followed by a column for each of the four criteria to be assessed. If scores are to be awarded, a fifth column can be added for the total scores (Comments and tips box). The chart should be displayed behind the panel, where everyone can see it. Each panellist assesses one criterion, which is written on a label displayed on his/her table. This reminds presenters about what they must cover in their presentations. The criteria selected depend on the purpose and context of the presentation. For example, suitable criteria for assessing plans to enhance participation in NFPs could be:

- A. Fit for purpose and context? Are the most appropriate methods included in the toolbox, and are they to be used in the most suitable ways for the context and purpose?
- B. Participatory? Will application of the toolbox and plan be sufficiently inclusive of all key stakeholders?
- C. Feasible and practical? Can the plan be implemented with the resources and time available?
- D. Roles and responsibilities? Are roles and responsibilities clear and suitably assigned?

TIMING FOR THE SESSION (DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF STATEMENTS, THE TIME AVAILABLE AND THE PARTICIPANTS' INTEREST IN THE STATEMENTS)

- Ten to 20 minutes for each presentation.
- Five to ten minutes for questions from participants, panellists or facilitators.
- One to three minutes for each panellist to comment on the criterion she/he has been assigned.
- The panellists have the final say, with no response from the presenters. After each presentation, the panel is changed and the next presenters called.

Step 3. A new panel is formed for each presentation. Panellists can volunteer or be appointed by the facilitator. The panel should always include a good mix of different stakeholder representatives.

Step 4. A note-taker should be appointed to summarize the comments from each panellist, using bullet points, paraphrasing and writing clearly. These notes are then attached to the chart behind the panel. This is a challenging job, so the note-taker needs to be skilled and familiar with the topic.



Presentation of an action plan and toolbox for enhancing stakeholder participation in the United Republic of Tanzania’s NFP. To the right is the panel made up of participants from different stakeholder groups, each of whom assesses the toolboxes and plans according to a specific criterion. Panellists make comments and award scores out of 10.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

The rotating panel is designed to engage participants in the presentations and to build understanding of and confidence in the plans through analysis of their contents. The knowledge that they are to be assessed by a panel often encourages presenters to make extra effort in their presentations.

It is important to encourage critical comments from the panellists, so promote a “cruel to be kind” approach.

After giving their comments, panellists can also award scores out of 10, which adds energy to the proceedings and makes groups try even harder in their presentations. The appropriateness of using scoring should be discussed with the participants; it may help to approach scoring light-heartedly, awarding a token prize to the winner.

Tool 20. Semi-structured interviews

Purpose: Guided questioning is a useful skill for an NFP facilitator to get the most of the other methods in this toolbox. It is placed here at the end of the toolbox because there is a tendency to overuse it.

PROCEDURE

When using a checklist for interviews, ensure that the questions are not closed (i.e. requiring only yes/no answers) or leading (i.e. based on assumptions about the answer), such as when an interviewer with no prior knowledge of the context asks a stakeholder “What interventions do you need to make your forest management more effective?”. This question assumes that current forest management practices are inefficient and with the use of the word ‘need’ also can provoke a “shopping list” response of the material inputs a respondent would like to gain.

The following are some beginnings for open-ended questions. “Why” questions are particularly relevant for participatory approaches, in illuminating respondents’ viewpoint and justifications and “stepping into their shoes”:

Why were....?
Why are...?
Why do...?
How do you feel..?
Explain how...?
Explain what...?
Explain who...?
In the past what was...?
In the future what will...?
What are the causes...?
What are the effects...?
What are the strengths...?
What are the limitations ...?
What are your suggestions for improvement...?

When conducting semi-structured interviews, it is important to make respondents as relaxed as possible. It is therefore helpful to start with small talk and not to rush into questions. As with all methods, explain the purpose of the semi-structured interview very carefully, and also what the information will be used for. Ask respondents whether they would like to remain anonymous and whether they are happy to have a note-taker present. It can be tedious for the respondents if the interviewer has to keep stopping to take notes. At the end of the interview the note-taker should read through the notes for verification by the respondents, changing them if necessary.

COMMENTS AND TIPS

Semi-structured interviews are often the most comfortable method for facilitators, but can also be the most extractive, least participatory and can most likely allow facilitators to bias the outcomes. If used on its own without another participatory method it is only suitable for small numbers of participants/respondents.

However without the skills to conduct semi-structured interviews and be responsive in questioning, to probe and verify, will mean that the application of the other methods in this tool box can be rather superficial.

Rigid questionnaires can promote bias because they often make assumptions about the issues being investigated. Questionnaires can be extractive and closed – they extract information rather than promoting the collective analysis that more open participatory methods enable. As questionnaires are often restricted to individual respondents, they do not allow easy verification of responses by a larger group.

In more informal open discussion, respondents take more control. However, open discussions can easily be dominated by a few articulate or powerful people, who may not represent the views of the majority. Without a structure and time limitations, discussions can go round in circles, lose focus and leave both facilitators and respondents unsatisfied with the outcome.

A semi-structured interview is based on a checklist of points that guides the discussion while remaining open enough to allow a natural flow. A checklist can be as simple as five to ten bullet points or questions reminding the interviewer about what to cover.

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Annex 1. Checklist of materials for participatory nfp sessions

The following list represents the ideal scenario, but improvisation is encouraged. Facilitators should work creatively with what is available, and not use a lack of materials as an excuse for not using an otherwise appropriate tool. For example, the fishbowl debate (Tool 14) can be conducted with no materials other than sufficient space, whereas for relationship mapping and some of the ranking type methods, readily available materials such as sticks, stones and leaves can be used.

However, whatever materials are being used, the facilitator should prepare them before the session. Many participatory nfp sessions have stopped because materials have been forgotten or the unexpected has not been adequately planned for. To check that all the materials are ready for the session, facilitators can run through a tool with their colleagues to see what they need before using the tool with stakeholders. It is advisable to bring extra supplies of materials to sessions. The following is a checklist of materials for roughly 3-5 participatory sessions – each with 2-3 methods with around 20 participants. However you should make your own checklist based on estimates of materials you will need and what your budget will allow.

- Flipcharts or large sheets of paper: at least 100 sheets. To avoid the hassle of have to stick flipcharts together to form larger sheets look for large roles of brown paper – sometimes available (approximately 1 metre in width and up to 50 or more metres long). Another alternative is plain wallpaper. If alternatives are found only 20 or so flip charts will be needed.
- Marker pens of different colours (suitable for flipcharts): 50 (some will run out).
- A4 paper: one pack (for visioning, etc. and for making cards if necessary).
- Coloured cards: approximately 600. If these are not available, they can be cut from A4 paper, with each sheet cut lengthwise producing two long cards– use a paper cutter if available.
- Post-its: six packs.
- Circles of card/paper cut in five different sizes ranging from 15 cm to 1 cm in diameter: 50 each size. For Venn diagrams/stakeholder analysis exercises.
- Masking tape: eight rolls (ideally up to about 2.5 cm wide). Clear Scotch/Cellotape should be avoided as it is more difficult to remove and re-stick than masking tape. Used to stick cards to posters or walls. Attach the ends of long strips of masking tape along the corner of a board or wall and use scissors to cut the tape into usable pieces of about 3 cm each when needed.
- Scotch/Cellotape: 5 rolls – best if wide brown coloured type. This is used to stick flip charts together to form bigger sheets so number will be determined by availability of alternatives to flip charts.

- Scissors: two pairs.
- Note pads for documenters.
- Time cards – large cards or sheets of A4 paper, preferably of different colours, with timing and other messages written on them. These are a discreet/non disruptive way of keeping time in participatory meetings, with such messages as “10 minutes”, “5 minutes”, “2 minutes”, “1 minute” and “STOP!”. For the fishbowl debate add cards such as “Quiet on the outer ring, please” and “Move to the outer ring please”. Setting rules on how long people can speak at the beginning of a session and handing over responsibility along with time cards to participants, can be an effective means of increasing participation and ownership of the sessions. By ensuring some people do not dominate and talk too much provides space for others to contribute.

A national forest programme process is a multi-stakeholder iterative process of learning cycles, not a one-off event, plan or policy document. Participation should be in every phase and the nfp facilitators should strive to improve participation in terms of stakeholder representation, methods used and as well as incorporating environmental, economic, social and cultural elements into forestry programming.

These tools for practitioners provide practical guidance to help put the nfp principles of participation and partnership into practice.

