

Plan Vivo: Socio-Economic Manual

Integrating livelihood and participatory approaches into the design, development and monitoring of Plan Vivo projects

Updated August 2016



Plan Vivo

Improving livelihoods, restoring ecosystems

People and livelihoods

Ethical climate services

Ecosystems

Watersheds

PES

Native species

Biodiversity

Adaptation

Poverty Reduction

Community Rights

Participation

Transparency

Habitats

Social Assessment Guidance Manual

**Integrating livelihood and participatory approaches
into the design, development and monitoring of Plan
Vivo projects**

Version 1.0

Date: August 2016

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Acknowledgements

Development of the Plan Vivo Standard is driven by the needs and priorities of its stakeholders, and acknowledges the input of all Plan Vivo projects coordinators, developers, and supporters of Plan Vivo projects in driving the development of the standard.

Using this manual

This manual is a guide for developing a Plan Vivo project. It is designed as an accompaniment to the Plan Vivo Standard and should be read with the Standard if the project is seeking Plan Vivo registration. Please Note: From time to time, the Plan Vivo Foundation may update this manual. Please make sure you are using the latest version.

If you are interested in developing a Plan Vivo project or think your existing activities could be eligible for registration, please contact the Plan Vivo Foundation.

The Plan Vivo Standard and supporting materials can be accessed via the website (www.planvivo.org), or by contacting the Plan Vivo Foundation:

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Glossary

FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
IP	Indigenous People
PDD	Project Design Document
PES	Payment for Ecological Services
PIN	Project Idea Note
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What Is This Guidance Manual For?

The Plan Vivo standard is designed “to ensure that Plan Vivo projects benefit livelihoods, enhance ecosystems and protect biodiversity” (Plan Vivo Standard, 2013: 2). This manual is for people involved in designing and developing a Plan Vivo project and looking for guidance on how to ensure that the project will benefit peoples’ livelihoods a way that can be measured and understood by project participants themselves as well as by external actors such as the Plan Vivo Foundation and purchasers of Plan Vivo certificates.

In this manual we use social assessment as a broad term covering all aspects of livelihoods and socio-economic development that need to be considered during the preparation and implementation of a Plan Vivo project. We introduce methods, tools and approaches that can be used during project development to bring social assessment activities into the necessary development steps for a Plan Vivo project, including assembling the Project Idea Note (PIN), writing the Project Design Document (PDD), project implementation and project monitoring and reporting. This guidance manual has six sections:

- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 2: Using social assessment during the Plan Vivo process
- Section 3: Skills and competencies for social assessment
- Section 4: Monitoring and indicators for social assessment
- Section 5: Participatory tools for social assessment
- Section 6: Recommended reading & references

This introductory section explains the Plan Vivo principles and requirements regarding livelihoods and livelihood benefits, describes some of the possible links between ecosystem management and livelihoods in Plan Vivo projects, and introduces livelihood thinking in relation to other approaches.

1.2 Plan Vivo Principles and Requirements for Social Assessment

Plan Vivo projects aim not only to generate ecosystem services, but also to improve the livelihoods of those people who are dependent on or use those ecosystems. For example, the 2013 Standard describes eligible land management activities as:

“...any improved land management activities that can generate demonstrable ecosystem service benefits, improve the livelihoods of participants and maintain or enhance biodiversity”

(Plan Vivo Standard, 2013, page 2).

More broadly, the 2013 Standard requires that Plan Vivo projects also monitor these improvements so that they can:

“...demonstrate good project design, good governance, improvement of rural livelihoods, and delivery of ecosystem services on an on-going basis”

(Plan Vivo Standard, 2013, page 3).

Eight key principles guide the development of Plan Vivo projects towards the improvement of land management and related livelihood benefits. Most of these principles have associated requirements (described in the 2013 Plan Vivo Standard) that require some type of social assessment to be carried out. Table 1 shows the 8 principles and gives examples of associated requirements for social assessment. There are a direct links with livelihoods in principles 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8. During the early stages of project development it is important to have a good understanding of the customary and formal land tenure system, to understand peoples' principle livelihood activities and strategies and to identify how these factors are related to ecosystem management. This is necessary to identify which individuals, social groups and institutions to work with (Principle 1) during project design and implementation.

As the project develops, a more thorough understanding of the links between ecosystem management measures, land use plans, and peoples' livelihoods is required to ensure the project activities support peoples' livelihood activities. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that projects do not have negative impacts such as limiting access to resources or introducing labour-intensive management plans with no consideration of how to overcome these (Principles 2 & 4). During the design phase, the project will develop an improved understanding of local institutions and stakeholders, and identify the different social groups and institutions within the villages or project area (Principle 3).

In order to assess the potential livelihood benefits of the project it is important to have conducted a livelihood and socio-economic baseline using locally appropriate indicators. This will generate an understanding of trends in peoples' livelihoods and living conditions, consensus on peoples' livelihood and development priorities, and a realistic monitoring protocol (Principle 7). Lastly, Principle 8 refers to the need to understand the costs of introduced management measures and project activities, due to reduced access or increased labour

costs, and to ensure that the project activities result in benefits to peoples' livelihood systems that overcome any costs, and with potential to improve livelihoods (Table 1).

Table 1: Plan Vivo Standard Principles (2013) and their relationships to livelihoods	
Plan Vivo Principle	Examples of requirements for social assessment and the livelihoods approach
1. Projects directly engage and benefit smallholders and community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires the identification of individuals and groups who can be involved in the project through understanding the land tenure, livelihoods and land use context
2. Projects generate ecosystem service benefits and maintain or enhance biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves understanding the relationship between ecosystems and peoples' livelihood activities and strategies The planned ecosystem management produces benefits for people's livelihoods as well as other environmental services The possible impacts of ecosystem management on different user groups, particularly marginal or vulnerable groups is understood and prevented
3. Projects are managed with transparency and accountability, engagement of relevant stakeholders, and in compliance with the law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant stakeholders, policies and law have been identified Smallholders/communities have information to make informed land use and livelihood decisions
4. Projects demonstrate community ownership - communities participate meaningfully through the design and implementation of plan vivos (land management plans) that address local needs and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community heterogeneity is understood and marginal and vulnerable groups identified Flexibility is incorporated into projects in response to livelihoods outcomes generated - especially for marginalised groups Local people are involved in making land management plans, and these plans do not undermine people's food security Local institutions are identified, and issues of participation and governance understood
5. Projects generate real and additional ecosystem service benefits that are demonstrated with credible quantification and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific link to livelihoods
6. Projects manage risks effectively throughout their design and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific link to livelihoods
7. Projects demonstrate positive livelihood and socioeconomic impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locally appropriate indicators of livelihoods, well-being or food security agreed Baseline socioeconomic/livelihood information collected With and without project scenarios generated Monitoring protocol in place that can demonstrate and understand change

<p>8. Projects share benefits equitably and transact ecosystem service benefits through clear PES agreements with performance-based incentives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough understanding of costs and benefits of project activities to different participating groups • Link made between payments or support and individuals/groups implementing plans or burdening costs • No social groups are marginalised as a result of PES agreements • Projects are designed and implemented in accordance with the principles of free prior and informed consent (FPIC) especially where indigenous peoples are involved (Plan Vivo requirement)
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1.3 Ecosystem Management and Livelihoods in Plan Vivo Projects

• The Plan Vivo approach to Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES)

The Plan Vivo system and standard was designed in the mid-1990s for smallholders and rural communities who are dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, to allow them to access emerging markets for climate services and particularly for CO₂ sequestration. The design of the standard took into account the fact that while local people are often best placed to manage their ecosystems, this occurs in the face of changing weather patterns, demographic change, and other socio-economic transformations. In contexts with high levels of rural poverty local people are often unable to make even slight changes to their natural resource use in order to increase the sustainability of land management. The short to medium-term costs of ecosystem management, among other factors, acts as a barrier to change. In this way results-based payment, such as PES, was seen within the Plan Vivo system as a way to overcome these barriers, and to incentivise longer-term ecosystem management.



Photo 1: Meeting with Hadzabe community members, Yaeda Valley, Tanzania

A diversity of Plan Vivo projects has emerged since the mid-1990s. Project activities fall into the categories of ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation, prevention of ecosystem conversion or ecosystem degradation, and improved land use management. Some projects aim to address the causes of forest or mangrove degradation and deforestation working with entire villages. Others incentivise afforestation and agroforestry working with interested individual smallholders. This means that the design of each project is quite different, and the people, land tenure

systems and livelihood concerns are unique not only to that particular context, but also to the

type of project. This diversity of interventions makes guidance on the integration of livelihood concerns challenging, and will require the use of different types of participatory tools and processes (Section 5). It also makes monitoring challenging, as the types of impacts, the people affected, the most appropriate way of measuring change and even the end-users of the information depend very much on the project type, approach and the local context (Section 4).

- **Importance of participatory process and the livelihood approach**

Adopting participatory techniques and a livelihoods approach for socio-economic assessment are central to the development of Plan Vivo projects under the Plan Vivo Standard.

Firstly, and most importantly, the owners of the *plan vivos* should be the ones who design and implement their activities, and set their livelihood and ecosystem management objectives. This requires their active participation.

Secondly, in order to design appropriate project activities, particularly for forest conservation, the relationships between livelihoods, forest degradation and ecosystem services need to be well understood. Rural communities are heterogeneous, and so it is important for project developers to understand who uses which resources, and how.

Thirdly, Plan Vivo projects must take into account the diversity of people and social groups in heterogeneous rural villages and communities. This includes ensuring that project design takes into account social relations, gender relations, characteristics of vulnerable people and households, and local decision-making processes. For example, men and women often play very different roles in the household, have different livelihood needs, and practice different roles in livelihoods activities. In projects working with Indigenous Peoples (IPs), it is essential to understand their rights and roles in community decision-making, to ensure they participate in the process, and that the principles of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) are followed at all times. Projects that don't take into account the social context may reinforce, reproduce or even introduce new inequities that can further marginalise vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, and may even displace people's economic or cultural activities. Basing a Plan Vivo project on existing land management plans that were developed in the absence of FPIC or without the implementation of a full participatory process, can be challenging and obscure previous inequities in division of space/resources, and decision-making. Adopting FPIC principles, and using the participatory tools identified in Section 5, improves the chances of projects avoiding these issues.

Fourthly, while PES can provide short to medium-term support to overcome barriers to improving land management, the land use intervention has to become productive to those people in order for people to continue investing in management over the long-term. This means that the *plan vivo* has to have value for local people beyond any form of payment or incentive introduced by the project. An understanding of potentially productive tree species or land management techniques and how these can meet people's livelihood objectives and needs, whether for cash incomes, food or cultural benefits is critical in project design. To ensure value

for people beyond PES, many projects also introduce ‘supporting activities’¹ designed to improve people’s livelihoods, their ability to adapt to climate change, and for better social organisation and resilience. These can include income-generating activities, savings groups, improving access to markets for local products, or establishment and support for resource management groups, all of which require strong local participation in their design.



Photo 2: Community Meeting of Trees of Hope participants, Malawi

Fifthly, participants should enter into PES agreements according to the principles of FPIC (Requirement 8.3). This means information on the potential benefits and costs, risks and challenges of new activities and the PES mechanism are available in locally appropriate formats (Laughlin, 2013). This applies to the preparation of *plan vivos* and PES agreements, where people have to have understood the potential benefits, payment or support schedules, activity indicators and any associated benefit-sharing agreements, in addition to their responsibilities and any consequences from choosing to discontinue or deviate from agreed activities.

In 2015 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a set of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs)² to drive forward the international development agenda, supported by UN agencies and all other international development partners. Plan Vivo projects are expected to contribute to a wider set of outcomes (including many of these SDGs) for poor, rural people beyond simply climate services as measured by reductions in CO₂ emissions or CO₂ sequestration. These are sometimes called co-benefits and to meet the requirements of the Plan Vivo standard, projects have to demonstrate the provision of climate services as well as positive socio-economic impacts of different kinds. This is a characteristic and unique feature of the Plan Vivo Standard and establishing a robust socio-economic monitoring protocol (Section 4).

¹ Activities additional to those land or forest use activities that bring about the desired change in climate services. In some projects these activities are supported from sale of Plan Vivo certificates while in others they may be framed as climate adaptation activities and may be supported externally.

² <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals>

Box 1: Summary of reasons why adopting participatory techniques and processes and a livelihoods approach is important for Plan Vivo projects

1. Participants in Plan Vivo projects should be the ones that design the activities and set their own livelihood and ecosystem management objectives
2. Understanding the links between livelihoods and land-use and natural resources is a pre-requisite to designing effective project activities
3. Understanding the diversity of individuals and user groups in heterogeneous rural communities is essential for designing relevant activities that don't reinforce inequitable power relations or undermine vulnerable people's livelihoods.
4. Plan Vivo projects have to have long term benefits for local people that extend beyond any payments or incentives introduced by the project
5. Participants should enter into PES agreements according to the principles of FPIC
6. Plan Vivo projects are required to demonstrate socio-economic impacts in addition to the provision of climate services
7. Monitoring project socio-economic impacts is essential for modifying/improving project activities through adaptive management

1.4 Approaches to Livelihoods Assessment During the Plan Vivo Process

No single approach that can respond to all the different socio-economic components of a Plan Vivo project. In this guidance manual we make reference to best practice guidelines, such as for FPIC (UN-REDD, 2013) and we have included some recommended reading in Section 6. Throughout the process we encourage the use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques rather than more formal survey tools and methodologies. Section 5 gives some examples of these techniques and shows how they have been employed successfully in Plan Vivo-certified projects.

We draw the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) e.g. Schreckenberg et al (2010), as a framework that was developed to guide learning and understanding of rural livelihoods and the underlying causes of poverty (Box 2). However, we also encourage the use of other frameworks that can help project developers to better understand peoples' livelihoods including rights-based approaches (Conway et al. 2002) and well-being approaches³ (Fisher et al. 2014) both of which are increasingly being used to guide environment-livelihoods interventions. Other potentially useful approaches to well-being assessment include the Happy Planet Index (NEF, 2012); Well-being in Developing Countries (MacGregor 2007) (Box 3), and Domains of Life framework (Agarwala et al. 2014). Although the SLA is not directly linked to well-being

³ The concept of well-being is rooted in the Human Development Index (HDI) which combined different development measures including health, education and material living standards (UNDP 1990).

approaches its principle components have been integrated into some of these well-being frameworks.

More recently the concept of resilience⁴ has become more important in livelihoods thinking. This is a consequence of an improved understanding of peoples' vulnerabilities to climate change and also to natural and man-made disasters. Participatory techniques are increasingly being applied to understanding peoples' climate vulnerabilities, and developing their adaptation strategies, and in some cases the activities in Plan Vivo projects can contribute to climate adaptation (see Regmi et al. 2010).

Box 2: Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

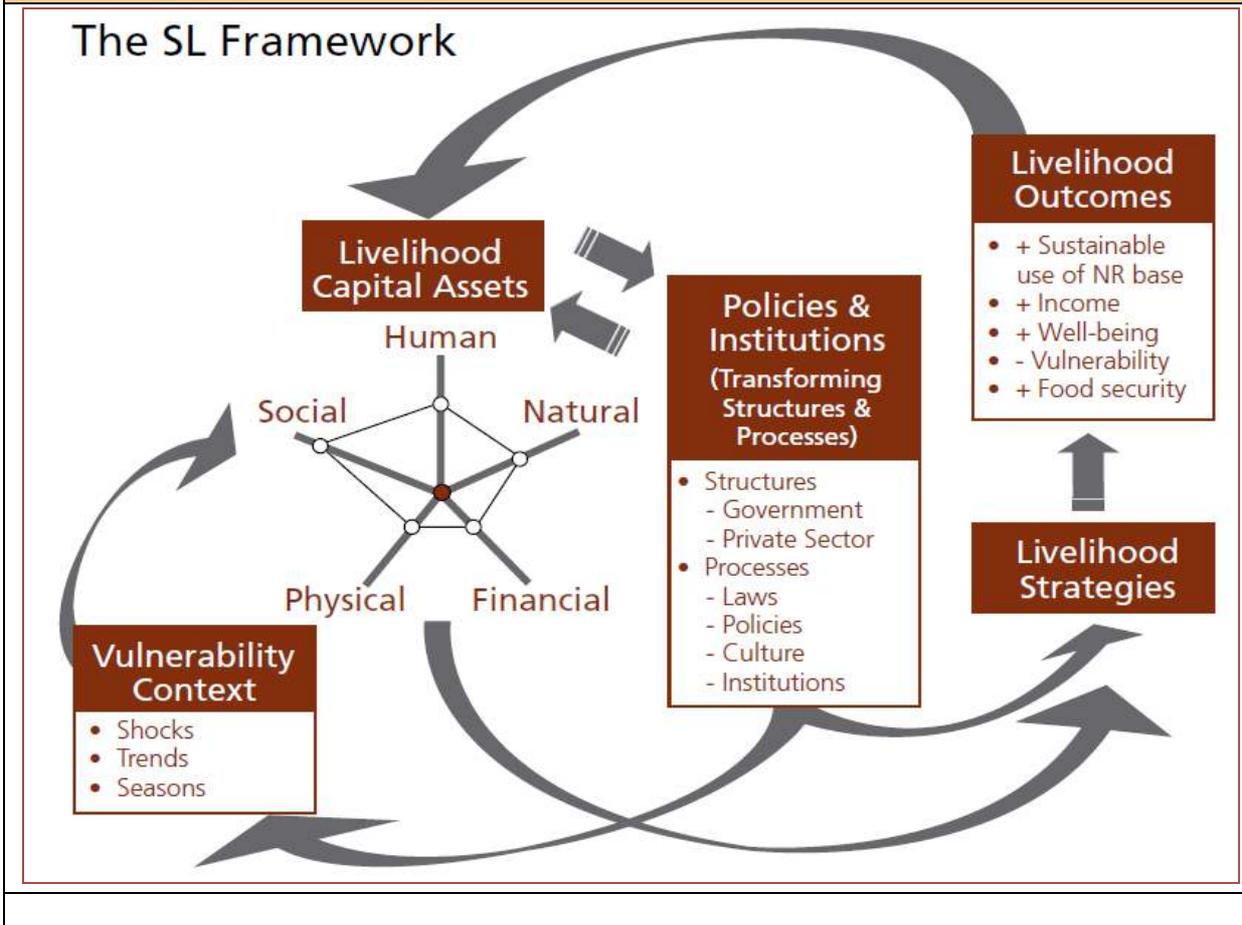
The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach originated in the early 1990s as a response to the limited focus on poverty as measured solely by food security or income. It aimed to understand how a living is obtained through recognising people's agency, capabilities and underlying assets, and it recognised the multi-dimensional nature of poverty (Ellis, 2000). The SLA helped practitioners and communities to better understand the root causes of poverty, analyse the livelihoods of the poor, and assess efforts of Poverty Reduction Strategies (Chambers and Conway 1991; Ellis 1998; Ashley and Carney 1999). Chambers and Conway (1992) define a livelihood as:

“A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base”

The livelihoods framework (Figure 1) is intended as a guide. It is designed for the practical performance of qualitative participatory appraisal at a local-level in order to investigate existing livelihood strategies. The basic components of the framework are that people operate in a context of vulnerability, and people own or access certain assets (Human, Natural, Financial, Social and Physical). These assets gain their meaning and value through prevailing social, institutional and political organisation. Only through access to assets and means, mediated by their vulnerability context and structures and processes (also referred to as the 'enabling environment') can people achieve their livelihood outcomes – be it income, well-being, food security, reduce vulnerability or sustainable use of natural resources. Since the early 2000's the SLA and framework have been criticised for their limited emphasis on power and rights, the overly local scale of analysis, and the simplification of peoples' lives into a series of capitals hence other frameworks have evolved.

⁴ The ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organisation, and the capacity to adapt to stress and change (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2007)

Figure 1: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (Schreckenberg et al 2010)



Box 3: Well-being in Developing Countries Framework (source McGregor 2007)

The Well-being in Developing Countries framework incorporates assessments of both subjective well-being and objective material and human conditions (Agarwala et al. 2014). Human wellbeing is conceived as arising from a combination of (1) what a person has, (2) what one can do with what one has, (3) how one thinks about what one has and can do. This involves an interplay of:

- The resources that a person is able to command What they are able to achieve with those resources and what needs and goals they are able to meet
- The meaning that they give to the goals they achieve and the processes in which they engage

1.5 Conclusions

There are a number of reasons why participatory techniques and processes for social assessment are central to the development of a Plan Vivo project. This guide provides some pointers as to how and when appropriate social and livelihoods assessment techniques can be applied during project development in order to meet the requirements of the Plan Vivo Standard (Section 2), what types of skills would be required within the project coordinating

team (Section 3), some ideas for monitoring (Section 4) and some examples of tools that could be employed (Section 5). In such a short guide it is impossible to include all the explanations and specifics required by a project developer, and so we very much recommend reviewing the further reading and reference section (Section 6).



2: USING SOCIAL ASSESSMENT DURING THE PLAN VIVO PROCESS

Socio-economic and livelihoods assessment is required at various different stages during the Plan Vivo process. A full description of the Plan Vivo Process is included in the [Plan Vivo Procedures Manual](#) which identifies the 6 main stages (Table 2). Some kind of social assessment will be required at all these stages although this will vary considerably depending on the actual stage and the type of project.

Meeting the requirements of the Plan Vivo Standard regarding social assessment at all stages of the process need not be an arduous task nor should it be costly. The suggested tools for each stage are always participatory and involve good communication with local people – particularly those people who will be benefitting from the project. By implementing the suggested tools you will be able to develop a better project – one that has a good sense of ownership and commitment from local people and one that will be able to deliver real livelihoods impacts for them. Formal (non-participatory) social surveys are not required for any stage of the Plan Vivo process and only a minimum amount of information needs to be gathered at any stage. Bear in mind that although participatory tools may not be costly to implement, they can often be time consuming since they should be used in a way which allows participants (local people) to be fully engaged and they require good quality facilitation skills (Section 3).

Table 2: Stages in the Plan Vivo Process		
Stage	Deliverable	Summary of stage
Stage 1:	Project Idea Note (PIN)	Initial development of the project concept
Stage 2:	Project Design	Development of the Project Design Document (PDD) and associated Technical Specifications
Stage 3:	Validation	Desk-based review and field visit by independent expert with good local knowledge

Stage 4:	Registration	Under the Plan Vivo Standard
Stage 5:	Annual Reporting	Preparation of a report by the project requesting issuance of Plan Vivo certificates
Stage 6:	Verification	By a third-party at least every 5 years, looking at administration/governance, carbon and/or ES benefits, and livelihoods benefits.

Socio-economic and livelihoods assessment should be used during each of the 6 stages in the Plan Vivo process to complete the required deliverables (outputs) of the stage. Table 2 describes these 6 stages and shows the main deliverable (output) of the stage concerning social assessment. You should also refer to the [Plan Vivo Guidance Manual](#) for further details of each Stage in the Plan Vivo process. The final column of the table suggests a number of tools that can be used at that stage to generate the information needed or other requirement in order to comply with the Plan Vivo standard. The tools themselves are described more fully in Section 5. Note that some tools can be used at more than one stage, and that some tools should be used repeatedly for project monitoring.

Project developers need to be familiar with the tools required and must have the necessary communications skills to deliver them effectively during preparation of the project (see section 3 of this document). Similarly, project validators (at Stage 3) and verifiers (at Stage 6) also need to have skills and experience in applying participatory tools to ensure that social assessment requirements are met and this requirement should be reflected in their terms of reference.

Table 3: Social Assessment in the Plan Vivo Process

Stage	Deliverable	Purpose of social assessment at this stage	Responsibility for social assessment	Suggested tools
1. Project Idea Note	Project Idea Note (PIN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the socio-economic and livelihoods context of people in the project area • To identify project target groups • To create initial awareness about the project amongst local people 	Responsibility lies with the Project Coordinator (usually an established project, NGO or other agency) working with any existing local groups/institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder analysis • Participatory well-being assessment • Seasonal calendar • Time-line • Community meeting/group discussion • Local institution mapping
2. Project Design	Project Design Document (PDD) incorporating technical specifications for each individual intervention and with a series of <i>plan vivos</i> (land use plans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To involve local people in project design and in land use planning • To ensure that the project will 'do no harm' especially to vulnerable and socially disadvantaged groups/households and to ensure no impact on food security • To develop with and without project scenarios • To identify socio-economic/livelihoods indicators for the project monitoring plan • To generate baseline socio-economic information • To establish functioning and well- 	<p>Responsibility and facilitation lies with the Project Coordinator often with the support of experts in social development/participatory processes.</p> <p>As far as possible, information is generated from community based institutions and local people themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder analysis • Participatory well-being assessment • Seasonal calendar • Participatory resource mapping • Forest Product Assessment • Semi-structured interviews • Participatory climate vulnerability assessment/mapping

		<p>governed local institutions for managing the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build capacity and awareness of local institutions and individuals 		
3. Validation	Validation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To check that there is good local understanding, awareness and commitment to the project amongst local people To verify the socio-economic and local livelihoods context for the project and the target groups To assess whether the local institutions for the project are equitable and well-governed and will be able to deliver livelihoods benefits for poorer people 	Independent validator contracted by the Project Coordinator after approval from Plan Vivo TAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community meeting/group discussion Semi-structured interviews with target groups Public hearing/public auditing
4. Registration	Entry into 3 rd -party Project Register (Markit Registry) and Project Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/a - no specific socio-economic livelihoods assessment requirement at this stage 	n/a	n/a

	Certificate			
5. Annual Reporting	Project Annual Report and if approved and requested, Plan Vivo Certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor socio-economic and livelihoods indicators • To generate understanding of the project's overall socio-economic and livelihoods impact • To disseminate information about the project to Plan Vivo Foundation, intermediaries and all other stakeholders 	Project Coordinator working closely with local community-based institutions, local leaders and technicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community meeting/group discussion • Semi-structured interviews with target groups • Participatory well-being assessment • Public hearing/public auditing
6. Verification	Verification Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine socio-economic and livelihoods impacts of the project on target groups • To verify whether the socio-economic impacts claimed by the project have been met • To provide a feedback mechanism for continuous improvement and formally document challenges addressed • To ensure that the project complies with the socio-economic and livelihoods requirements of the Plan Vivo Standard. 	Independent Validation and Verification Body (VVB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory well-being assessment • Participatory resource mapping • Forest product assessment • Community meeting/group discussion • Semi-structured interviews with target groups • Public hearing/public auditing



3. SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES FOR SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

To use the tools shown Table 3, effectively to generate information and the analysis needed to meet the Plan Vivo Standard at different stages of a project requires certain skill areas and competencies (Table 4). Project developers (or the project coordinator) need to ensure that these are available amongst their teams and provide mechanisms for a skills transfer over time. Similarly, validators and verifiers will also need to have an understanding and some experience of social assessment techniques in order to gather socio-economic and livelihoods information needed for their own validation/verification reports. These requirements should be reflected in their terms of reference and considered in the selection process.

Table 4: Skills and competencies for social assessment

Skill area	Why these are required
Understanding of social processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify any vulnerable, marginal or socially excluded groups in the project area To understand how local groups function
Familiarity with local socio-economic conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be able to interpret socio-economic information To be able to make suggestions regarding project design and implementation that will have positive livelihoods impacts
Experience of working in a participatory way with rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be able to communicate informally with local people To be able to deliver the participatory tools effectively
Communication skills (especially the ability to communicate with less educated and illiterate communities) and local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be able to generate a participatory and informal atmosphere To be able to encourage participants to become involved actively

language skills	
Group facilitation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be able to conduct and facilitate a group meeting or participatory exercise to achieve the intended outcome
Gender and diversity awareness and skills (social inclusion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be able to identify ways of involving socially excluded groups in the Plan Vivo process• To generate disaggregated information about the impact of the project on different socio-economic or social groups• To be able to effectively involve women in the Plan Vivo process and to be sensitive to gender specific socio-economic or livelihoods issues



4. MONITORING AND INDICATORS FOR SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Having in place an effective monitoring system is a key requirement for meeting the Plan Vivo Standard. This includes monitoring of socio-economic and livelihoods impacts of the project on the target groups.

The PIN will initially identify these target groups, who must then be involved in further project development through a participatory process. A baseline socio-economic assessment must be carried out within one year of project validation (Requirement 7.4). This should be based on locally relevant and cost effective indicators (Requirement 7.4.1) which can distinguish the impacts on different groups of participants (Requirement 7.4.2) such as men/women, poorer/wealthier or on different ethnic groups. Inevitably, projects will be expected to use participatory tools to do this. This assessment will provide information and analysis about the status and situation of the target groups. Further details then need to be included project's monitoring plan in the PDD clarifying what socio-economic impacts the project will have and identifying the indicators and methods that will be used to monitor them (livelihoods indicators). The project-monitoring plan needs to be set up to gather this information regularly and report against these indicators in the project's annual report submitted to Plan Vivo.

Both the baseline socio-economic assessment and identification of socio-economic or livelihoods indicators should be done using some of the participatory tools described in the next section including:

- Stakeholder analysis
- Participatory well-being assessment
- Participatory land use planning
- Time line/historical transect
- Participatory climate vulnerability assessment

Note that formal questionnaire surveys or questionnaires⁵ are not required for any of these tools and can normally be avoided in Plan Vivo Projects as they are expensive, time consuming and usually do not sufficiently involve local people as active participants.

Stakeholder analysis, participatory well-being assessment and participatory climate vulnerability assessment are useful tools for the baseline social assessment required for all Plan Vivo Projects. They will give a good picture of the baseline socio-economic status of target groups. When using these tools make sure that information produced is disaggregated, as far as possible, so that you can distinguish between different social groups e.g. men/women, poorer/wealthier, etc. When selecting appropriate socio-economic indicators for the project it is essential that this is done in a participatory way so that local people agree with the indicators chosen and are committed to assessing them (usually annually) using one or more of the participatory tools.



Photo 3: Community Meeting in Kagera, Tanzania

Projects are required to include only a few key socio-economic or livelihoods indicators in their monitoring plan (4 or 5 per project are usually sufficient). However, careful selection of indicators is critical otherwise project impacts may not show up as a result of monitoring and reporting or alternatively, negative impacts may not be shown. **Box 4** provides some guidance on the type and nature of socio-economic or livelihoods indicators that should be selected. The

selected indicators must be meaningful to local people and must be easily measured on a regular basis. They should represent

aspects of local people's livelihoods that will show change as a result of the project or focus on livelihoods changes of target groups (such as women, poorer households, disadvantaged groups etc.). The internationally agreed SDGs⁶ be useful in the identification or selection of indicators to show co-benefits resulting from the project.

Having identified the livelihoods indicators and made an initial assessment of them during the baseline, the chosen indicators will then need to be monitored regularly (preferably annually). For example it may be necessary to conduct an annual well-being assessment focusing on the selected indicators to see to what extent there have been any changes since the baseline. This can usually be done during a short exercise (1-2 hours) conducted during a village meeting or at another time when people are gathered together (small groups are often more effective for this). If climate vulnerability indicators are selected then a participatory vulnerability analysis should also be conducted annually – again a short exercise conducted during a village meeting

⁵ This covers questionnaires completed by all or a statistically determined sample, of participating households and analysed using statistical tools and methodologies. In such questionnaire surveys local people are normally only involved as passive participants and providers of information.

⁶ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals>

or other smaller gathering will be sufficient to generate the information needed for the annual report.

All socio-economic indicators in the project-monitoring plan should be reported annually (in the project's annual report) although new information may not be available every year for each indicator (in which case this should be explained in the annual report). All selected socio-economic and livelihoods indicators should be assessed (and compared with their baseline values) in time for the independent project verification after 5 years or more frequently. If possible, assessments should be conducted at the same time of year to avoid results being affected by seasonal factors. It is the responsibility of the project coordinator to ensure that this information is made available to the verifier.

In the event of the project expanding into a new area, or new participants entering a project, take care to ensure that a new baseline assessment is carried out for the new entrants and show the results clearly separated from earlier project entrants. For example, smallholders joining a project in year 4 cannot expect to experience the same socio-economic impacts in year 5 as those who joined in year 1.

Finally, do not assume that all socio-economic or livelihoods indicators will show positive changes as a result of the project. Unfortunately it is common for projects to have adverse effects on certain groups in a community and socio-economic indicators should therefore be selected and carefully assessed to show whether there have been positive or negative changes. In addition, during the participatory assessment for the socio-economic baseline it might be established in the 'with' and 'without' project scenarios that some socio-economic indicators are in decline, and the objective might be to prevent this decline rather than bring about an improvement. Negative socio-economic effects on vulnerable or marginalised groups should be addressed by projects as a priority through immediate changes in project activities or implementation structure and through designing mitigation measures that will counter such adverse impacts. It is important for projects to not only present information on the indicators, but to illustrate the causal pathways – that is how the project activities have led to the observed changes – in order to demonstrate that project specific changes can be differentiated (to a realistic degree) from broader external socio-economic drivers of change such as changes in the external environment.

Box 4: SMART Indicators		
Characteristic	Explanation	Example
Specific:	A socio-economic indicator that is narrow and focused on a specific group of people or sub-group of the community (disaggregated) e.g. on women, children, poorer households etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of women earning cash incomes from NTFPs • Number of girls attending school
Measureable:	An indicator that can be counted, observed, analysed, tested or challenged in a practical way in terms of the time, cost, technical ability or tools required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households attending community meetings • Sum of money available in the community fund

Attainable	The indicator reflects as aspects of people's livelihoods that can actually be achieved as a result of the project (as a co-benefit).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households in the village engaged in tree planting • Number of cases of illegal logging reported to the authorities during the year
Relevant:	The indicator should have some significance and meaning for local people and be one that measures an aspect of their livelihoods that they can readily relate to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households with access to clean drinking water • Number of households living in areas vulnerable to flooding
Time-bound	An indicator that can be expected to show some change during the course of the project or by its end with the time element of the indicator being specifically described	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of the project, all households with access to sufficient fuelwood from their own land • A 10 annual decrease in livestock grazing freely in the forest



5. PARTICIPATORY TOOLS FOR SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

5.1 Using Participatory Tools

This section describes a number of participatory tools (sometimes called PRA tools) that can be used at different stages in the Plan Vivo process. Before using any tool, familiarise yourself with these general guidelines about such tools.

- **Timing and seasonal aspects**

When working with rural people, be aware that certain seasons or certain times of day may be more suitable than others. For example, during important crop-harvesting seasons, people may not be free to participate. During the daytime people may be working in the fields, during evenings women may be busy with household tasks. Often early in the morning is the best time to conduct participatory exercises and it is best to avoid busy agricultural seasons. As a facilitator you should adjust your plans accordingly. Check with local people first what would be best for them and do not try to take up too much of busy people's time.

- **Planning and preparation**

Before starting work in a village environment, plan carefully so that you are clear what you want to achieve and to avoid wasting people's time. Once you have made a plan, discuss it with local leaders before implementing it to make sure that they agree. Give plenty of warning to the people you would like to participate and do not change your plans at the last minute. But remember that if an unexpected event should happen in a village, e.g. a funeral, you may need to respond accordingly. When you go to the village, make sure that you bring all the necessary equipment and materials. The separate tool descriptions describe what you will need.

- **Logistics**

Although you will not normally be paying people to attend village meetings and participatory exercises, you should ensure that they receive some hospitality (snacks, food, drinks, etc.) to improve chances of meaningful participation. In some contexts attending a meeting can mean abandoning a whole day's activities and can thus act as a major barrier to participation of women or more vulnerable individuals or families. Make preparations appropriate to the local context and culture and ensure equitable practices are applied between individuals, groups and villages. Also make sure that you have identified and checked a suitable venue or location such

as a community building or even a suitable spot outdoors. If necessary you may need to organise seating. Make sure that toilet facilities are available close by.

- **Registering/naming participants**

At the start of any session involving villagers make sure that everyone has had an opportunity to introduce themselves. You may wish to write down the names of everyone participating. Also remember to introduce yourself and other members of your team. Often, when you finish an exercise, it is a good idea to list the names of everyone who has contributed and write them down. You can later use this to prove to the validator the level of participation and it will also help to encourage a sense of ownership over the whole process – people may be keen to show that they have contributed.

- **Sequencing of tools**

Use the participatory tools carefully. It may be necessary to spread them over several days to avoid taking up too much time on one day or all at once. Generally it is best not to try to do more than 1 or 2 exercises in one day. Remember that one tool may build on the findings/results of another so it is important to use them in a logical sequence – although be aware that on different occasions different people may participate so you will usually need to have a recap at the start of each new session.

- **Numbers of participants**

Participatory tools are designed to be used in groups. Up to 20 people can be effectively involved in one session (depending on the type of activity) although for larger groups (e.g. more than 10 people) it will be more effective to split participants into smaller sub-groups. With large numbers of people it becomes very difficult to ensure that everyone participates fully and the sessions tend to become more formal.

- **Facilitating group discussions**

The most important skill needed for using the participatory tools is facilitation. This means leading a session with a group of people whilst ensuring that as far as possible everyone gets an opportunity to participate and contribute. It also means steering discussions and information gathering in groups to obtain the types of information and ideas that you need. Often in larger groups people may start to depend on a spokesperson and may become unwilling to express their own ideas, while in some social groups and cultures having a spokesperson is normal, and people are confident enough add their ideas or opinions when they feel they have not been articulated well by others. Knowing when and how to engage people in discussion is an essential and learned skill.

- **Working with sub-groups**

If there are many people present, or if there are different socio-economic or other divisions in the community a good technique is to divide participants into smaller groups and get them to work on the exercises separately. At the end each sub-group is given an opportunity to share their results with the whole group. For example you might want to have women's and men's sub-groups or groups based around tribe/caste or occupation e.g. farmer/non-farmer. This is a good technique to empower socially disadvantaged groups and also to compare and contrast the ideas and information between different groups.

- **Drawing/writing**

Many of the tools result in information being produced and written down or drawn. Be aware that in many rural areas illiteracy levels can be high and certain people may not be able to read and write. Consider ways to address this e.g. by using drawings/pictures rather than text so that everyone can understand. A good picture can be used as an alternative to a written explanation.

- **Photographs**

Photographs can often be used to illustrate a point. They can also be used for monitoring and recording – for example, photographs showing participants at meetings, photographs showing a particular environmental issue or socio-economic activity. You can include photographs in your PDD if you wish.

- **Recording and writing up**

Keep records of all the participatory tools you use and if necessary write up session notes later. For example you may wish to do a well-being ranking exercise. At the end of the session, write down the numbers of households falling in different categories and use photographs of the outputs of the tools to illustrate specific points. Always remember to date any materials produced so that you can build up a record of when different tools were used.

- **Ownership of ‘outputs/deliverables’**

Each tool results in a particular type of output or deliverable - usually a flipchart paper with writing or a picture. These products are the property of the village and should remain at the village – not taken away. Encourage people to display them in a communal building or other prominent place. If you need to make a copy – take a photograph.

Box 5: Recording Village Meetings

The following standard information should be collected and recorded at every village or group meeting or other community event. This will provide evidence that FPIC principles were applied and it will assist the validator and verifier in their respective roles. It will also help to provide continuity for village participants since often different people will turn up for different meetings. It will help you to understand exactly who was involved in the different meetings, and how. Key information to be recorded includes:

- Name of village
- Name of facilitator/ note-taker
- Where the meeting took place
- Date and time
- Participant list (names), total number of men and women
- Criteria for selection of the participants
- Notes from the facilitator on the quality of the method and meeting
- List of meeting outputs (deliverables)

5.2 The Tools

The following tools may be used for socio-economic and livelihoods assessment at different stages during the Plan Vivo process. These are given for guidance only. Not all of them will be necessary for all projects and project developers may find it useful to draw on other tools not described here. All the tools have the common characteristic that they are conducted as participatory exercises with groups of local people. This ensures that the information and ideas produced properly reflect those of the target communities and that they understand and agree with them.

After each tool we have included some examples of the types of output that you might produce. There are many variations for all these participatory tools, so the outputs will vary accordingly. You may wish to modify or adapt the tools to suit the particular circumstances of the project.

1. Stakeholder analysis
2. Participatory well-being assessment
3. Time-line
4. Seasonal calendar
5. Community meeting/group discussion
6. Local institution mapping
7. Participatory resource mapping
8. Forest product assessment
9. Semi-structured interviews
10. Participatory climate vulnerability assessment/mapping
11. Public Hearing/Public Auditing

For each tool is described in a standard format that covers:

- What it is for
- At what stage(s) in the PV process is it used
- The materials required
- Time required
- Participants (to be involved)
- A step by step description
- The deliverables/outputs of the tool (with examples/pictures from real projects where these are available)

TOOL 1 – Stakeholder Analysis



Photo 4: Community Meeting in Drawa, Fiji

What it is for

Different groups of people (stakeholders) have different positions and views on many topics concerning natural resource management. Stakeholder analysis is a participatory tool that can be used to help to identify the key actors (or stakeholders) for a project and assess their respective interests or influences on it (see Box 6). Specifically, stakeholder analysis is used:

- To ensure good governance i.e. to determine which groups or individuals need to participate in the PV Process and how this level of participation can best be assured
- To ensure inclusion of disadvantaged groups and to avoid their dominance by others
- To assess the levels of different stakeholders in terms of their capacity to participate in the process
- To ensure 'ownership' or endorsement of the project resulting from the process
- To identify potential conflicts between stakeholder groups

Stage(s) in the PV process:

Use stakeholder analysis early in the PV process during initial discussions (PIN stage) or for more detailed discussions during preparation of the PDD. It is best to conduct stakeholder analysis and involve key stakeholders as early as possible during the PV process to avoid conflicts arising later due to their not being involved in decision-making.

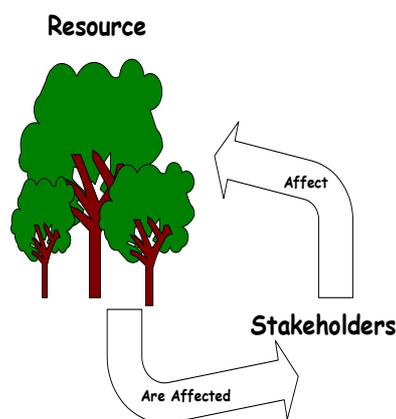
Box 6: What is a stakeholder what is a stake?

An individual, group or institution that has an interest in a particular natural resource (this interest is sometimes called their “stake”).

Stakeholders may affect the resources’ management and use and/or may be affected by its’ use (either positively or negatively).

A stake is a particular product or service that is provided by the resource e.g. fuelwood, timber, bush meat, food or water (all products); recreation; biodiversity conservation; scenic beauty, cultural enhancement (all services).

It is sometimes useful to distinguish between primary stakeholders (those who directly benefit from or are disadvantaged by the resource and its use, and secondary stakeholders (those who are more indirectly affected).



Materials required

- Note-taking materials;
- Flip-chart and markers;
- List of households (if available).

Time required

Normally 1-2 hours.

Participants

Stakeholder analysis requires the participation of some (but not necessarily all) representatives of concerned stakeholder groups. Remember that stakeholder representatives will later participate in other steps of the PV process - stakeholder analysis helps to decide who should participate and how. Although all stakeholders (or even all their representatives) do not necessarily need to take part in stakeholder analysis, it is important that those who do have a good understanding of the local situation. Ideally a small, diverse group of about 15 people can participate most effectively in stakeholder analysis.

Find out if there are any existing organisations or institutions which can represent a wider group of stakeholders e.g. women’s organisations, farmers groups, or religious organisations. Invite representatives from these organisations to participate.

Stakeholder analysis should be facilitated by someone who is preferably not a stakeholder themselves but who knows the local situation well and who has credibility amongst all stakeholder groups

Step by step notes

- i. Do stakeholder analysis at an early stage project planning because it will then help to ensure effective stakeholder participation later
- ii. Stakeholder analysis is best done through brainstorming and sharing ideas in a group discussion. Make sure that all ideas coming from the discussion are written down by the facilitator.
- iii. In a group of selected participants first explain the purpose of the stakeholder analysis i.e. why it is being done and what will be the result. Refer to Boxes 6,7 & 8 during this
- iv. Explain the 'rules' of the exercise i.e. that everyone should be given an opportunity to speak (everyone has a voice), everyone should listen and important points will be recorded (written down)
- v. The next step is to identify key stakeholders. There are various ways of doing this – all should be used in most situations:
 - o Self-selection. During the meeting ask individuals and groups to come forward and identify key stakeholders or stakeholder groups (risk of powerful stakeholders dominating)
 - o Let other individuals or local organisations who know the area well identify key stakeholders
 - o Use written records and data e.g. land registration data; population census; permit holders; historical information; records of forest offenders etc.
 - o Identification and verification by other stakeholders. During early discussions with others.
- vi. Make a list of the main stakeholder groups identified by these methods. For each stakeholder, ask a series of questions i.e.
 - a. What is their stake?
 - b. Who are potential beneficiaries of the project?
 - c. Who might be adversely affected by the project?
 - d. Who has existing rights?
 - e. Who is likely to be voiceless?
 - f. Who is likely to resent change and mobilise resistance against it?
 - g. Who is responsible for implementation of actions?
 - h. Who has money, skills or key information?
 - i. Whose behaviour has to change for success?
- vii. Next, consider the effective representation of stakeholders and consider how each stakeholder or stakeholder group can effectively participate in further project planning

Box 7: Questions to ask during stakeholder analysis

- Who is affected (either positively or negatively) by management or use of the resources being considered?
- What is the stake of each stakeholder group?
- Who are the “voiceless” for whom special efforts have to be made?

- Who are the representatives of those likely to be affected? How can you contact them?
- Who speaks for biodiversity?
- Who is likely to support or resist any planned activities?
- Who will increase the effectiveness of the planning process by their participation? Who can reduce the process's effectiveness by not participating?
- Who can contribute financial and technical resources to project planning?

Box 8: Stakeholder Interests the '4 Rs'

Each group of stakeholders will have interests that can be categorised according to 4 "R"s.

- Rights - their legal rights to use various natural resources
- Responsibilities - their official and unofficial responsibilities for the managing natural resources
- Returns - the things they get from the natural resources (the benefits or products)
- Relationships - their relationships with other stakeholder groups (these can be collaborative or conflicting)

Outputs

Use the facilitated discussions to complete three different types of output:

- List of stakeholders showing their stake and showing the potential impacts of the project on them (positive or negative) - Table 5.
- List of stakeholders showing their capacity to participate and identifying ways they can be represented during the PV process - Table 6.
- Influence/interest matrix for identified stakeholders - Figure 2. This matrix helps to decide who is most important in the PV planning process and who needs particular support or control.

Table 5: Template Stakeholder analysis summary

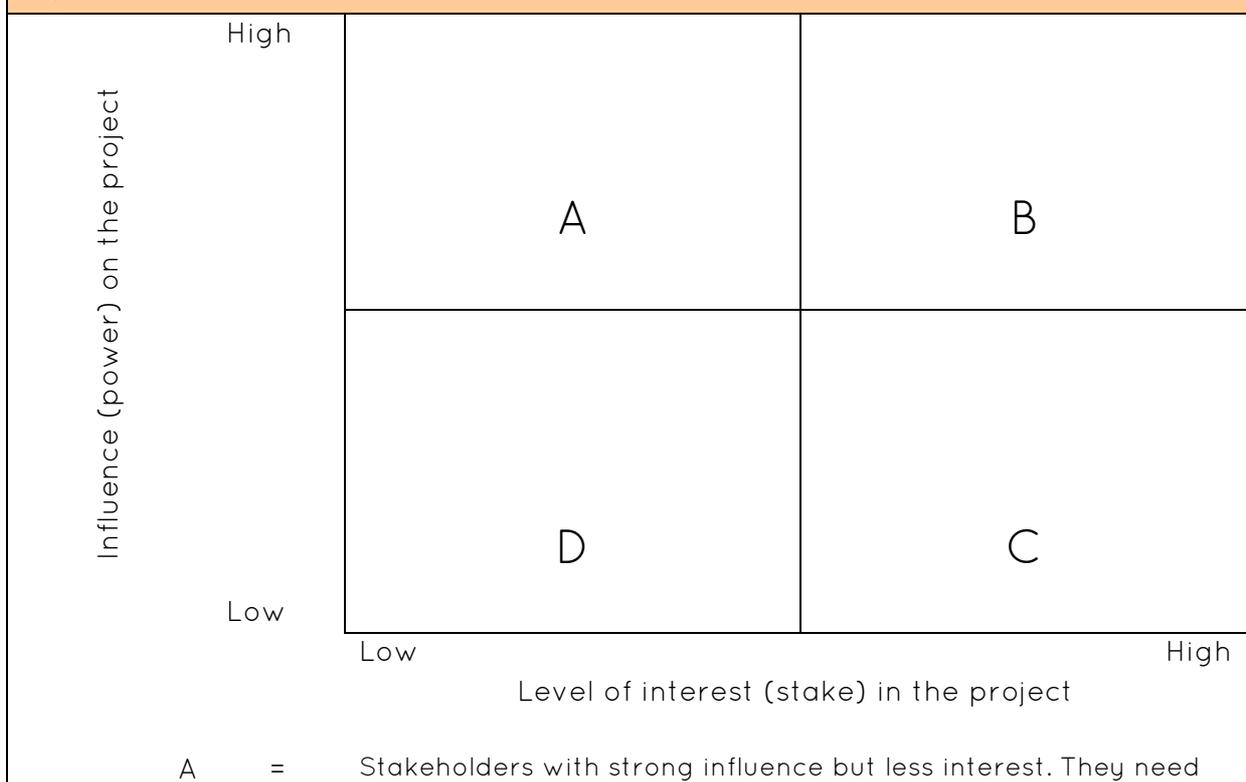
Stakeholder or stakeholder group	Stake or major objective	Potential positive impacts/benefits of the project for stakeholder	Potential negative impacts/costs of the project for stakeholder
1			
2			

3			
4			
5			

Table 6: Stakeholder capacity to participate

Stakeholder	How affected by project	Capacity to participate	Representative organisations (association, group, NGO etc)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Figure 2: Interest/ Influence Matrix



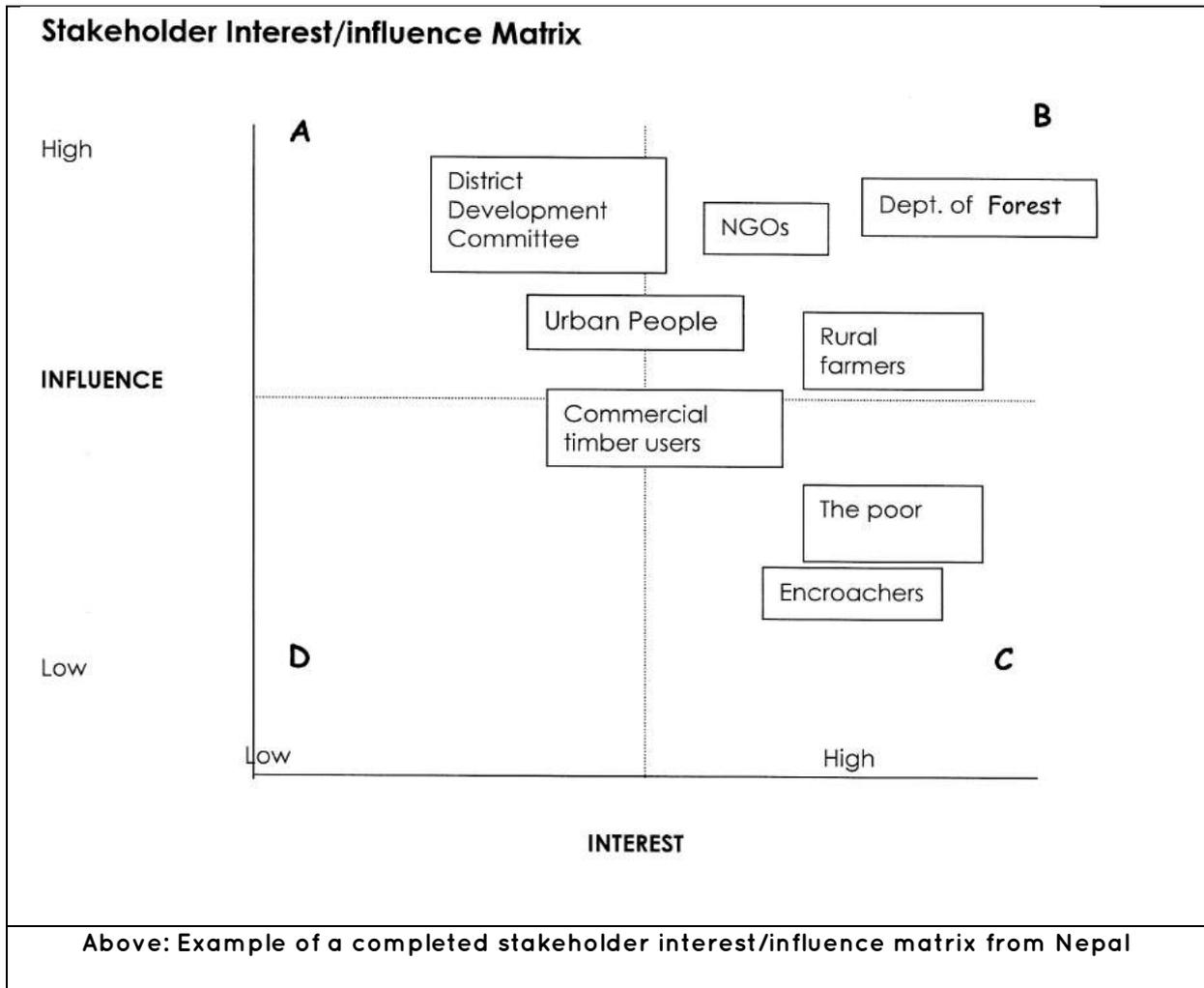
		to be involved but should be kept in check so that their influence is not out of proportion to their stake
B	=	Stakeholders with strong influence and a high stake. They need to be closely involved at all stages.
C	=	Stakeholders with weak influence, but a high stake. They need to be involved and their involvement needs to be supported to overcome their lack of influence
D	=	Stakeholders with weak influence and only weak interest. They could be involved in some steps but this is probably not critical to the overall process.

Adapted from: Vermuelen (2005) IIED Power tools series

Figure 3: Examples of stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder	Examples of 'Stake'
Urban people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuelwood supplies • Employment (as head-loaders and in wood using industry etc.) • Other forest product supplies
Rural farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest product supplies • Environment stability
Encroachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land • Forest products
Department of Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue from timber royalties • Biodiversity conservation • Environment stability
Department of Wildlife Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity conservation • Tourism revenue
Forest User Groups (FUGs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest products • Revenue
District Development Committee and Village Development Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue • District level development (economy) • Welfare of population
Refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest products • Land
NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • Community empowerment • Political influence
Commercial timber users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timber supplies • Profit
The poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and income • Subsistence forest products • Land for cultivation (encroachment)

Above: Example of Stakeholder analysis table for Terai forest in Nepal



TOOL 2 - Participatory Well-being Assessment

What it is for

In Plan Vivo projects improved peoples' livelihoods and increased levels of well-being are key outcomes. Participatory well-being assessment can help participants and project developers to understand local livelihoods strategies, understand local concepts and indicators of well-being and can help to design appropriate livelihood activities that contribute to people's own goals. Well-being assessment can identify project target groups and indicators to track project impact. Participatory well-being assessment can:

- Help understand how people perceive well-being in a given context, and how different livelihood activities and strategies contribute towards well-being.
- Identify variations in well-being in a given context, between households, social groups and by gender (contextual equity) in order help design activities with potential to contribute to well-being of particular target groups
- Identify relevant socio-economic indicators for monitor the project's impact on these

Stage(s) in the PV process

Participatory well-being assessment is a useful entry-level tool. It can be divided into its component parts (described below) which are: the exploratory understanding of well-being (done at the Plan Vivo Stage 1 (PIN)); the more detailed identification and collection of data on well-being indicators (done during the socio-economic baseline Plan Vivo Stage 2 and repeat assessments of these indicators for annual reporting (Plan Vivo Stage 5) or project verification (Plan Vivo Stage 6).

Materials required

- Note-taking materials.
- Flip-chart and markers.
- Village map (if available).
- List of households (if available)

Time required

- Focus groups to define definitions of well-being: 2 hours.
- Combined group meeting to decide on indicators for inclusion: 1 hour.
- Collection of well-being indicators: dependent on method employed, sampling strategy and sample size.

Participants

- Focus groups to define definitions of well-being depend on the target group. Usually these groups would be divided by gender. Further divisions of groups depend on time and resources available, and could include age and different occupations or ethnic groups.

Step by step notes

There are a range of approaches to understanding and assessing well-being⁷, and this is currently an area receiving much academic attention. This section suggests a rapid technique suitable for Plan Vivo projects.

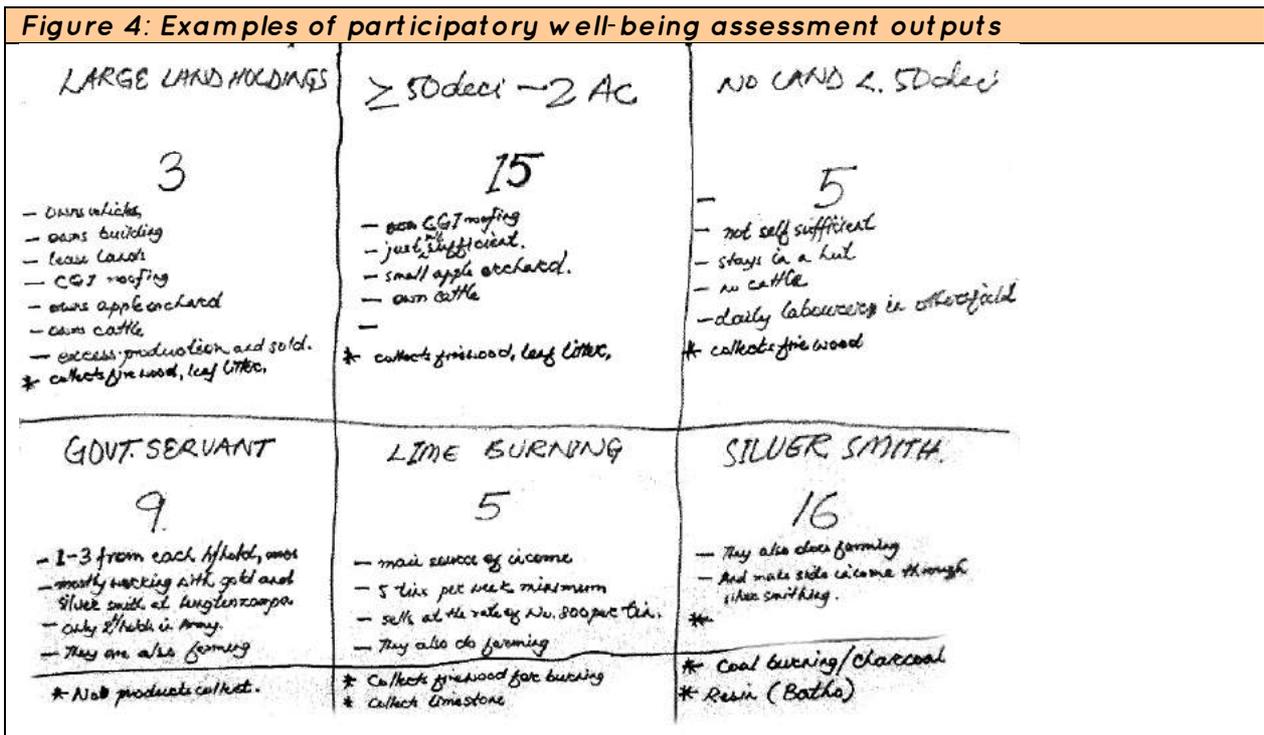
- i. Step 1: Define well-being and indicators using focus group discussions
 - Decide on the groups you need to meet with, and organise the meetings.
 - Hold a combined meeting either with group representatives, or with all the group participants to agree on a definition of well-being. The definition should be locally defined and meaningful: this will be a local language term for well-being, or the closest equivalent, and will be standardised across all discussions. Distinguish between wealth and well-being (Pretty et al. 1995: 253).
 - Define the unit of analysis: will indicators be for individuals or households, or another locally-appropriate social unit?
 - Meet with each group separately to:
 - Discuss and agree how you know when someone is well, or has a high level of well-being, and indicators for this.
 - Mark these indicators on a flip chart alongside a symbol depicting each indicator.
 - Discuss and agree the characteristics of these indicators, and a definition for each indicator: what is it, what are the threshold values e.g. number of livestock, or type of house etc
 - Agree on the priority indicators for the group. This can be done through preference or pairwise ranking (Pretty et al. 1995: 85) to select 3-5 indicators.
 - Bring everyone back together in a larger and ask each group to present their well-being indicators.
 - Facilitate a discussion and reach a consensus on which are the best indicators for the project to use (refer to **Box 4** in this guidance manual)
- ii. Step 2: Collect data on well-being
 - Once the unit of analysis and well-being indicators have been defined, well-being indicators can then be collected in various ways.
 - Formal surveys and questionnaires are not usually necessary – a better technique is to use group discussions (Tool 5) or semi-structured interviews (Tool 9) with key informants. This depends on the size of the village, any sensitivities around well-being indicators and data collection, team capacity, and existing information availability.
 - If a household list is available, or has been generated, then one method is to hold a village meeting with key representatives of each district or concession of the village, who have a good knowledge of the different households, and:
 - Make a matrix of all the households and well-being indicators;
 - Consult the representatives household-by-household, or individual-by-individual, with a binary (yes/no) of the indicators.
 - Collect basic individual or household characteristics e.g. gender of household

⁷ The method focuses on subjectively chosen indicators of well-being, but essentially garners mostly information on 'material well-being' rather than 'relational' or 'subjective' well-being.

head, number of members, etc.

Outputs

- A local understanding and definition of well-being, and what it means to people.
- A list of well-defined well-being indicators, and how these vary between different social groups.
- A table or chart showing which households are represented by the different well-being indicators or showing the % of the total number of households in each well-being category for the village.
- An understanding of the variation in well-being, and how this is linked to different households or individual socioeconomic characteristics.



Above: Example of a participatory well-being assessment from Bhutan showing the number of households in each well-being category (Source: Branney 2012)



Above: The output of a participatory well-being assessment (PWA) with Baka women in

a village in East Cameroon. The exercise brought to light the cyclical problems of alcoholism, domestic violence, financial management (bottom of diagram) and (above) their indicators of well-being – a field which produces enough for their children to eat well; good clothes; a lamp in the house; and pots and pans in the kitchen. (Source: Michael Riddell, Bioclimate, 2010)

TOOL 3 - Timeline

What it is for

A village time-line is a qualitative, exploratory method. It can be adapted depending on the nature of the project. It is used to understand the chronology of families arriving in a village or area or for documenting key developments or climate events in a climate vulnerability assessment. It helps the project developer and participants to understand:

- The timeline for the origins and key developments of the village
- Social and livelihood changes over time and an understanding of the socio-cultural context of existing livelihood activities
- Changes in land use, land tenure and land cover

It also provides an opportunity for younger people in the village to learn about their village history, and if documented and printed, means the village will have a written account.

Stage(s) in the PV process

Stage 1: Project Idea Note (PIN). It gives the project developer an idea of the social history, which can help understand the socio-economic context, and ensure the project team has a better understanding of the villages and local families.

Materials required

- Note-taking materials
- Flip-chart and markers (post-its) for time-line

Time required

- 1-3 hours, depending on the depth of discussion desired. The time for a reliable village timeline shouldn't be underestimated. It can take time to clarify specific details, such as names of village leaders, exact dates and events.

Participants

- People who know the village history, who are often (but not always) more elderly members of the community, and leaders. Include both men and women in the discussion.
- Between 8-10 people, unless it is conducted as a community forum, then men/ women/ youth can be invited to participate.

Step by step notes

There are various ways to conduct a village timeline. The method normally benefits from some form of semi-structured questions to help prompt people into describing different areas of interest to the project. In many cases it might be difficult to put dates on events, so establishing locally-relevant time periods is a key first step – these can include local leadership at the time, or political events. An indicative process might be:

- i. Introduce the exercise and explain its aims. Allow participants to introduce themselves
- ii. Ask a few introductory questions to get the ball rolling: e.g.
 - o Why does the village have this name?

- Who were the first people to arrive in the village?
 - When did they arrive?
 - Why did they settle here?
 - What happened next?
- iii. During this process the facilitator should work directly with participants providing the village history, and the note-taker can create a village timeline on a flip chart or board, and take notes. This can be done by drawing a line on a flip chart or on the floor and adding pictures, dates and notes along it to represent the events and dates that participants describe. Use post-it notes to help you to be flexible as these can be moved around as a result of discussions until agreement is reached
 - iv. It is important to establish the time-line early on (from village origin to present day) and have this marked on the flip chart, prior to investigating other themes.
 - v. Once the time-line has a structure to it, additional themes can be added to the discussion. Examples might include:
 - Land use and land cover: How did people use the environment around their village when they first arrived? What was the vegetation like around the village when the first people came here? How did this change over time?
 - Development and infrastructure: How did the village infrastructure (e.g. wells; schools; key public buildings) get developed, when, and by whom?
 - Demographics: how has the population change over time? At what times have migrants entered the village or community and why?
 - Key livelihood activities: how have agriculture, and natural resource-based livelihoods evolved over time?
 - vi. At the end of the discussion, explain that this will be documented and then verified.
 - vii. Verify the details with the people involved.
 - viii. Take photographs of the main outputs

Outputs

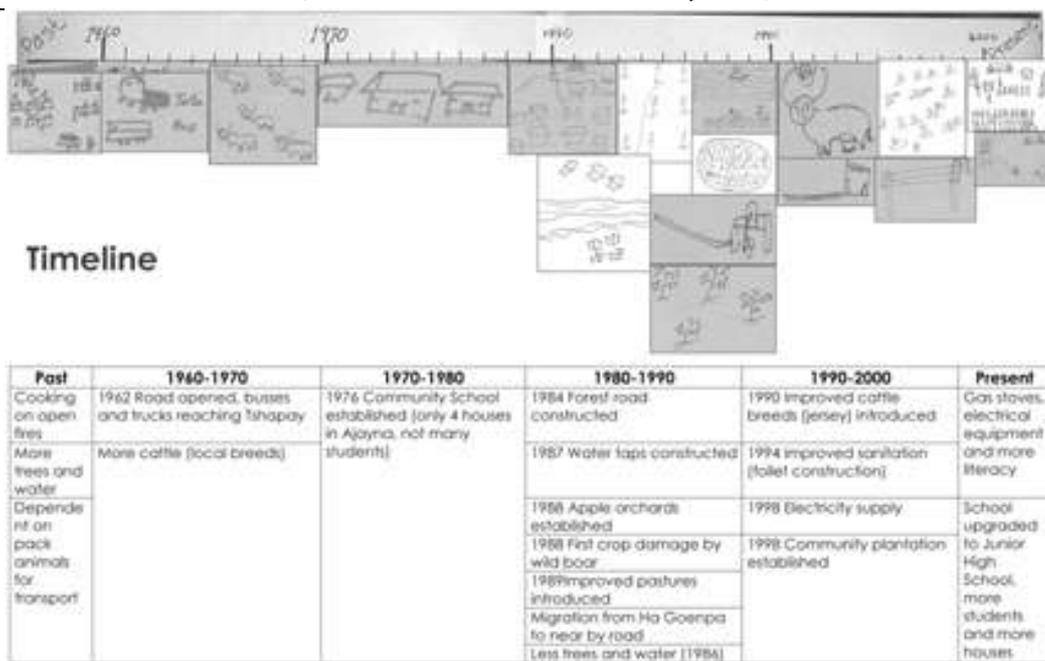
- Written or drawn timeline of key village development events.
- Descriptive text of the village history.

Examples

Figure 5: Examples of village timelines

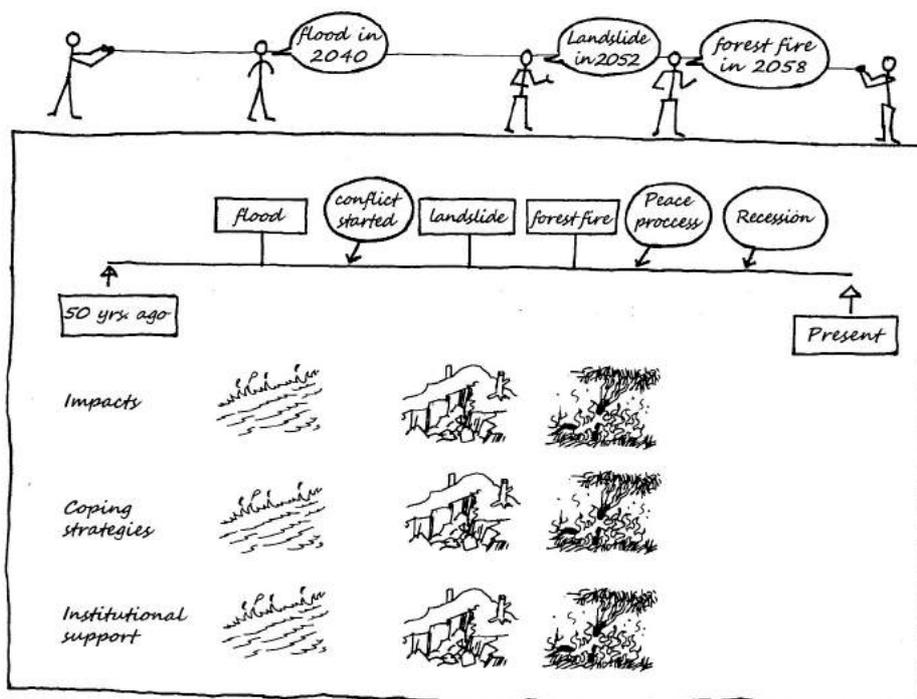
CHRONOLOGIE HISTORIQUE KOUÏGOU HOMME EVENEMENTS	
ANNEE	
2000-2005	Secheresse et Famine "Soyon Aka" ChiRanaTchigawa
2002	Fonçage du puits central du village
1999	- Installation sur le site actuel du village Création de l'école
1995	Délimitation des frontières du village
1984/1985	Secheresse et Famine Distribution gratuits de vivres Korakou
1973	Secheresse avec perte massive d'animaux "Kakabawo"
1965	Secheresse et Famine "Taballe" Arrivée du colon "Max bouye" Création du village de Kouïgou

Above: Example of a village timeline exploring key climate events in Mozambique (Source: Riddell and Rosendo, 2015)



Above: Example of a village timeline showing key forest-related events in Tshaphay Village, Bhutan (Source: Branney 2012)

Example



Above: Example of a village timeline showing key climate-related events in a village in Nepal (Source: Regmi et al 2010)

TOOL 4 – Seasonal Calendar

What it is for

A seasonal calendar is a valuable participatory tool for working with rural, agricultural based communities because participants are able to provide a lot of information based on their own direct experiences. It is used to find out more about the natural resource based livelihoods of participating households, to identify traditional resource use patterns, systems and pressures over a typical year and document the flow of products (especially food) over the year. More specifically, it can be used to find out the seasons where people have labour available for carrying out project activities.

Stage(s) in the PV process

The seasonal calendar is used during the early stage of the Plan Vivo Project, especially during preparation of the PIN (PV Stage 1) and development of the PDD (PV stage 2).

Materials required

- Note-taking materials
- Flip-chart and markers (post-its) for time-line or (preferably) don't use paper but mark the seasonal calendar on a large open space on the ground at the meeting area
- Sticks; seeds of different kinds; samples of forest products etc. can all be used to indicate time collected.

Time required

- 1-2 hours

Participants

A mixed group including both men and women involved in farming or natural resource management of various kinds in the village. Make sure that all the key stakeholder groups are represented.

Step by step notes

- i. Choose a place flat enough to work on, and large enough for all to see. Explain to the group the purpose of this exercise.
- ii. With a stick to draw a line across the top of the work area to represents one year. Then hand over the stick and ask people to mark their natural resource based activities over the year.
- iii. When discussing forest use, lay out samples of different types of forest products in a column along one side of the calendar.
- iv. Ask participants to divide up their year in any way they choose. It may help to start with seasons – possibly the rainy season first, and then moving on to the other seasons, depending on how they divide their year. Work with a calendar that people understand. Lay out items such as stones or seeds to represent the seasons.
- v. Draw lines to complete the grid as shown in the example and mark on the grid which products are collected or which activities take place during each season.
- vi. Discuss each product or activity one at a time to avoid confusion. Use seeds, stones or

- other objects to show the relative availability of each product indicating low and high yield periods
- vii. After describing availability of products, draw or put other objects in the grid to show the general workload of men and women during different seasons. They can show peak labour demand periods for different types of products such as fodder, fuel, food, cash crops and raw materials.
 - viii. Finally, facilitate a discussion on the grid which has been produced. Ask questions for more information, bearing in mind the objectives of the exercise.
 - ix. Highlight the times when labour is available by season, food or product availability by season, and any conflicts or complementarities between forestry, agriculture, livestock and any other natural resource management activities
 - x. When it is finished, make a sketch of the charts (and later make copies). Use pictures rather than words and numbers to make it easier for everyone to understand.

Outputs

- A chart showing the seasonality of different natural resource management activities and availability of different products

Examples

Figure 6: Examples of seasonal calendar output

Products	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Timber				
Fire Wood				
Leaf Litter				
Fodder				
Ferns				
Mushrooms				
Grazing (local)				
Grazing (migrant)				
Work Load of Men				
Work Load of Women				

Above: Example of a seasonal calendar from Bhutan showing products, workload and activities in 4 seasons (Source: Branney 2012)

CALENDARIA SAZONAL												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
CHUVAS	+	++	+++	+								
PREPARAÇÃO DO TERREIRO	+											+
SEMENTEIRA	+	+										
PRAGAS	+	+	+	+	+							
COLHEITA					+							
VENTO (KUSZI)				f	+	++	+++	+	+			
VAZIO (MULAM)	+	+									++	++
ATIVIDADE												
PESCA	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
PREPARAÇÃO DA SEMENTEIRA	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
COMÉRCIO	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Above: Example of a seasonal calendar produced during a Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment in northern Mozambique (Michael Riddell, 2015)

TOOL 5 - Community Meeting/Group Discussion

What it is for

A community meeting or group discussion is not a participatory tool as such but there are certain features of participatory meetings or discussions that distinguish them from more formal meetings which makes them more useful at different stages of the Plan Vivo process (**Table 7**). The overall aim is to facilitate meetings and discussions that:

- Are inclusive i.e. everyone gets an opportunity to participate and speak (everyone has a voice)
- Are respectful – everyone is listened to regardless of their social status
- Are effective in meeting objectives – they do not get distracted onto unplanned topics
- Result in a proper written record of the meeting and of those who have participated
- Are efficient in terms of use of time

Community meetings are good opportunities to use some of the other participatory tools described in this guideline.

Participatory meeting	Conventional meeting
Everyone participates and speak out their thoughts, not just the one who speak loudest	The fastest thinkers and best speakers get more time to speak
Different opinions are allowed within the group. Everyone knows everybody's position or opinion	Differences of opinion are treated as conflicts that must be ignored or 'solved'. No one really knows what everybody's position or opinion is.
People try to understand each other by asking supporting and exploring questions. "Is this what you mean?"	Questions are often understood as challenges, as if the person being questioned has done something wrong
People are able to listen to each other's ideas because they know their own ideas will also be heard	People have difficulty listening to each other's ideas because they are busy thinking about what they want to say
Each member contributes in discussions on controversial issues.	Some members remain quiet on controversial issues.
When people make an agreement, the decision reflects a wide range of perspectives	When people come to an agreement, it is assumed that they are all thinking exactly the same thing

Stage(s) in the PV process

Community meetings and group discussions can be used at all stages in the Plan Vivo Process.as per requirements of the community or project coordinator.

Materials required

- Flipchart paper and pens – essential tools for all participatory meetings
- Camera is also useful to record the meeting and any outputs

Time required

Very variable – this depends on the level of participation and the willingness of participants to contribute and be involved as well as the actual topic of the meeting.

Participants

Any group of participants can be involved in a community meeting. The most effective meetings are those where there is a diversity of participants with a diversity of views and where there is a clear agenda and high quality facilitation.

Step by step notes

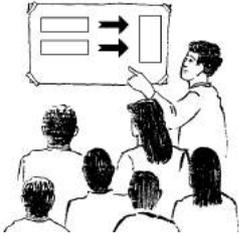
A crucial function of community meetings is to support participatory decision-making. Meetings are a tool that helps diverse stakeholders share their issues, develop common understanding and identify possible solutions. Planning for the community meeting is just as important as the meeting itself and follow-up actions between meetings can be more effective than trying to achieve certain outcomes during the meeting itself. **Table 8** gives a checklist to be followed for planning an effective meeting.

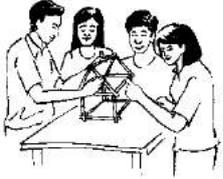
Table 8 Checklist for planning a community meeting			
Checklist	Deadline	Status	Notes
Date, place and time of meeting			
Who will participate, who has to be invited?			
Is external support needed from higher level?			
What materials are necessary to prepare? (Poster, flipcharts...)			
What resources are available to support the group? (Maps, survey data...)			
What are the main topics to be discussed?			
Prepare a structured agenda clearly linking topics to outcomes			
Leave the time schedule flexible for small changes			
Plan sufficient time for breaks			

Facilitating effective meetings

There are many techniques that can be used for facilitating effective meetings. A skilled facilitator (Section 3) will have a diversity of techniques to hand that can be used during community meetings as the need arises. **Table 9** lists and briefly describes a number of participatory techniques for community meetings.

Table 9: Facilitation techniques for effective community meetings to ensure good levels of participation

Technique	What for?	How?	To be considered
Participatory presentation/lecturing 	Introducing new subjects or presenting summaries/overviews, for group of any size, especially suitable for very large group.	A prepared talk plus questioning and answering at the conclusion, combined with visual aids, completely controlled by trainer.	Limit lectures to 15 – 20 minutes Break lectures up with short buzz sessions, to illustrate key points Do not be afraid of pauses to allow the group to absorb your points and for you to check their understanding Speak clearly. A resonant voice carries further and sounds better. Dealing with questions and answers Avoid the use of power-point in village situations
Small groups 	Sub-groups discuss specific issues, during a longer session, to exchange ideas and draw on their collective experiences while 'buzzing', to reflect on the contents of a lecture, generate ideas, comments and opinions	Plenary breaks into sub-groups by pairs, trios. One member of each group reports its findings to the plenary.	Time (having more groups will take more time) Seating arrangements
Brainstorming 	To discover new ideas and responses very quickly, to generate as many ideas as possible without judging them	List ideas exactly as they are expressed on a board, flipchart, cards, etc. They can be grouped/ analysed, or discussed/evaluated further	Limit the time, to avoid losing attention of some participants
Role play 	Give participants the opportunity to understand/feel other people's views, feeling	Participants use their own experience to play a real life situation.	Participants willing? Careful debriefing Tasks must be clearly defined

<p>Group work</p> 	<p>To deeper discuss a certain topic</p>	<p>Split participants into groups Give them group task Group work Plenary presentation</p>	<p>Think of group division beforehand Write clear group task (incl. time)</p>
<p>Plenary discussion/ presentation</p>	<p>Thorough /in-depth discussion to get consensus; exchange ideas and knowledge from individuals and groups</p>	<p>Play the role of a moderator. Use visualization aids</p>	<p>Observing Balancing between free flow of discussion and controlling the direction</p>
<p>Case study</p>	<p>Participants can learn how to use techniques in a certain situation</p>	<p>Presentation of situation/case Simulation Debriefing</p>	<p>Case must be clear Objectives must be clear Careful facilitation</p>
<p>Participants' inputs</p>	<p>To let the participants exercise what they have learnt; to share participants' experiences.</p>	<p>Participants give short presentation about a certain topic.</p>	<p>Inform participants before workshop about objective, length, time</p>
<p>Adapted from KfW8 (Vietnam) Training of Trainers handbook (2016)</p>			

Outputs

All meetings should have a clear aim and a defined output. This can consist of charts, matrices, meeting notes etc. depending on the purpose of the meeting and on the facilitation techniques used.

TOOL 6 – Local Institution Mapping



Photo 5: Participatory land and resource mapping in northern Sierra Leone (Michael Riddell, Bioclimate (2013))

What it is for

Local institution mapping is a participatory tool that can be used by project developers during the design of a project and preparation of the PDD. This tool is sometimes referred to as a Venn Diagram chart. Although external stakeholders may already know the local situation and the local institutions quite well, the tool helps them to better understand the situation from the perspective of the community. The aim of local institution mapping is:

- To identify which are the local institutions that affect and influence local livelihoods
- How important these institutions are for local people
- To show relationships between institutions and how effective information and resource flows are between them

Stage(s) in the PV process

Since an understanding of the local situation is essential for the design of an effective PV project, Local Institutional mapping is a tool that should be used either during the preparation of the PIN or (preferably) during the discussions taking place with the community to prepare the PDD (PV Stage 2).

Materials required

- Flipchart paper and pencils (rather than pens so that changes can be made)

Time required

- 1-2 hours (including discussion)

Participants

A mixed group of community representatives – if there are more than about 15 people they should be divided into 2 groups e.g. men/women.

Step by step notes

This is a simple process for carrying out the local institutional mapping tool. There are many variations and additions to this basic tool – or you may choose to adapt it yourself to meet specific local requirements.

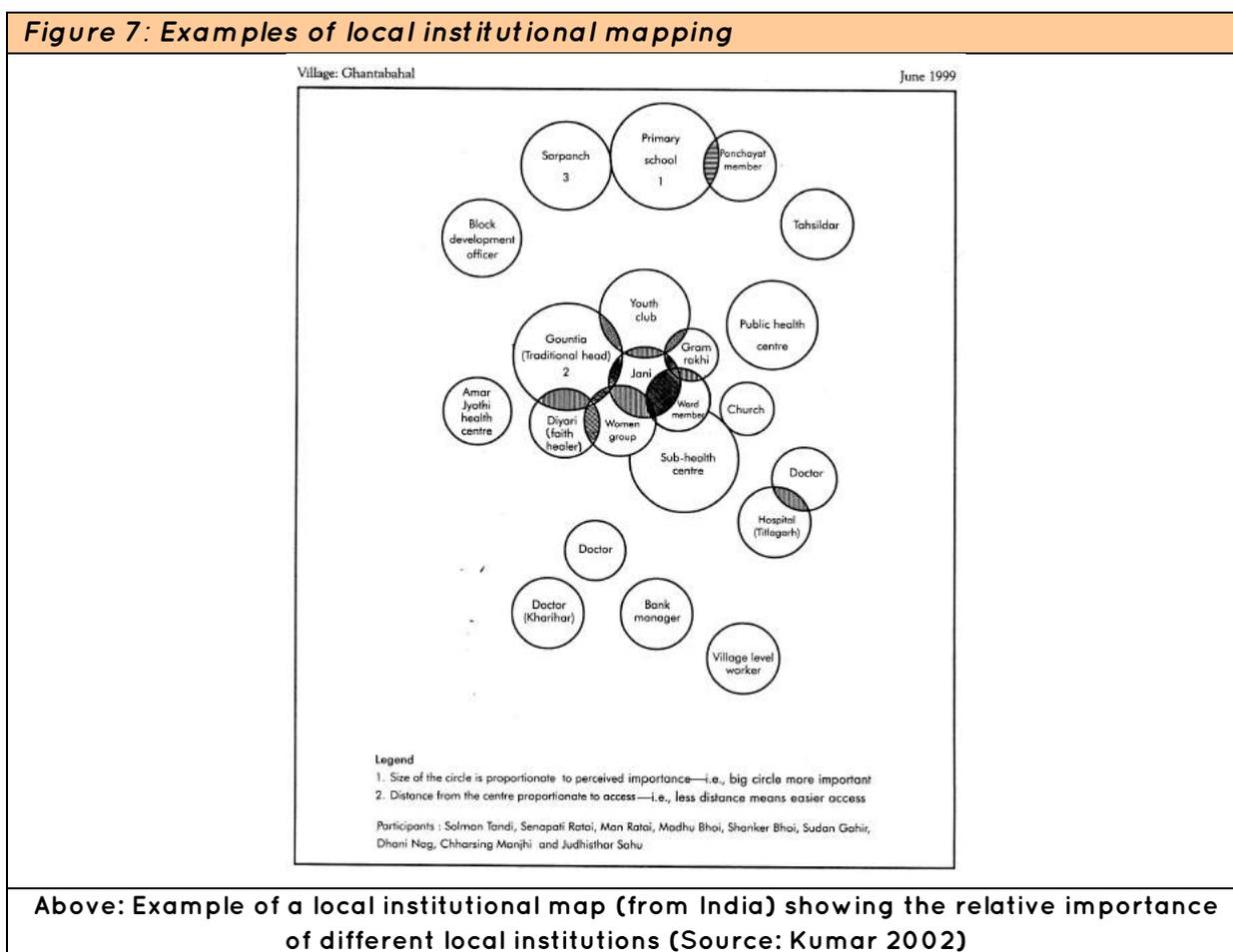
- i. If time allows form separate groups of men and women participants.
- ii. Explain to the participants the aims of the exercise
- iii. Ask participants which local organisations/institutions/groups there in the village and which there are from elsewhere in the village. Discuss all types including government, local government, community-based, non-government (NGOs), projects, religious groups, federations, trade associations and private organisations. They should also include small non-formal groups.
- iv. As institutions/organisations are identified, ask the following types of question:
 - What ways of assisting each other exist among local people?
 - Which local groups are organised along environmental issues (water, grazing, arable land), economic issues (saving, credit, agriculture, livestock, forestry groups), social issues (health, literacy, religion, tradition, education, sport).
 - Are there any political groups?
 - Are there any religious groups?
 - Which groups make important decisions?
- v. Ask one participant to write down all the institutions that are mentioned and to give each organisation a symbol which everybody can understand.
- vi. Ask participants to draw a big circle in the centre of the paper or on the ground that represents their village.
- vii. Ask them to discuss for each organisation how important it is for them. The most important ones are then drawn as a big circle and the less important ones as smaller circles. Ask the participants to compare the sizes of the circles and to adjust them so that the sizes of the circles represent the importance of the institution, organisation or group. Add names and symbols to the circles.
- viii. Ask them in what ways they benefit from the different organisations.
- ix. Ask them to show the degree of contact/co-operation between themselves and those institutions by the distance between the circles. Institutions that they do not have much contact with should be far away from their own big circle. Institutions that are in close contact with the participants and with whom they co-operate most, should be inside their own circle. The contact between all other institutions should also be shown by the distance between the circles on the diagram e.g.
 - Circles at a distance from each other = little or no contact or cooperation
 - Circles close to each other = loose contacts exist
 - Touching circles = some co-operation exists
 - Overlapping circles = close co-operation

- x. Ask participants which institutions only accept women or men as members. Are there any institutions or groups that only provide services for men or for women? Show the answers by marking the circles with a common symbol for men or women.
- xi. Ask participants to discuss about organisations in which poor people do not participate and why. Ask if there are any services of certain organisations from which poorer people are excluded. Mark these institutions on the map by using a symbol for poor. You might also ask if there are other groups of people that usually are excluded from some of these institutions or services.
- xii. Only if time and the motivation of the participants allows, ask the group to discuss and document the strength and weaknesses of those institutions which were reported as most important.
- xiii. At the end of the exercise – take a photograph of the diagram and leave the original in the village.

Outputs

A picture or diagram showing local institutions and their relationships and importance for local people

Figure 7: Examples of local institutional mapping



Above: Example of a local institutional map (from India) showing the relative importance of different local institutions (Source: Kumar 2002)



Above: Example of a Venn Diagram output from a fisheries Project in northern Mozambique (Michael Riddell, 2008)

TOOL 7 - Participatory Resource Mapping

What it is for

Participatory mapping is a generic term for all types of mapping directly involving people, where the purpose is not to create an accurate map, but to understand peoples' perceptions of their landscape and resources. There are a number of techniques ranging from mapping by community by collecting data on their smartphones through to 3-D maps using paper maché to sketch maps laid out on the ground using leaves, sticks and stones to represent features. While participatory natural resource mapping is specific to natural resources, participatory resource mapping can include all sorts of resources important to people, including social and cultural resources. Participatory mapping aims to understand:

- The types of natural resources available to the people in the village.
- How these resources are distributed in space, and how people perceive them.
- How people use these resources in time and space.
- How this use has changed over time.

Stage(s) in the PV process

Participatory mapping is often used during the design of project activities in Stage 2 (preparation of the PDD), as the method helps with identifying the project area and in designing specific activities.

Materials required

Materials will depend on the type of mapping used. To be prepared you would need:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers pens of different colours
- Tape for fixing paper

Time required

Allow at least 2 hours for a thorough participatory map. Mapping exercises have been known to last all day!

Participants

A mixed group of community representatives – if there are more than about 15 people they should be divided into 2 groups e.g. men/women.

Step by step notes

- i. Step 1: Select and organize the group
 - Decide on how many different social groups will make separate maps.
 - For each group, invite between 7 and 10 people to be part of the participatory mapping exercise.
 - Explain the reason for mapping and the proposed process.
 - Explain that a copy of the map will be made and left in the community (for example a version copied onto a sheet or the map itself).

- ii. Step 2: Map physical features
 - Orientate the paper so that the direction participants are looking is the direction that the map is (e.g. towards a particular physical feature, like a forest area).
 - The facilitator will work with participants, and aim to hand over the pen/ marking stick once they get the idea so that they design the map. The note-taker should create a separate Map Key page, representing all the different symbols, land cover types, etc.
 - Begin by asking the participants to mark a spot on the map to represent where they are.
 - Ask participants to map key physical features in and around the village. In the village features can include key houses, mosque/churches, school buildings, while outside of the village these features may include paths, hills or rivers. Be sure to leave enough space for the whole of the land/ forest area used, which can be considerable.
- iii. Step 3: Add layers of information to the map
 - For each layer of information required, introduce the type of information required, agree on categories and symbols, and then mark on the map. This can include land use and land cover types, areas of cultural importance such as sacred or archaeological sites, and use of specific forest products related to the initiative – for example key NTFP collection areas.
 - It is better to let the participants add what they want on the map, and then start making suggestions and requests!
 - It can help to mark on local names of different areas prior to adding information.
- iv. Step 4: Question the map
 - Once a version of the map has been completed, ask questions about the map – it is a tool for discussion! For example:
 - Why do people use one area for agriculture, and not another?
 - Why has that forest area been left intact, but not another?
 - Do other people use the resources within this area – e.g. neighbouring villages; pastoralists? Do they come into conflict?
 - How have resources changed over time (e.g. trend mapping)?
 - How does use change by season, or how has it changed?
- v. Step 5: Finalise the map
 - Copy the map onto a sheet and leave a copy with the group.
 - Take several photos of the paper copy of the sheet.

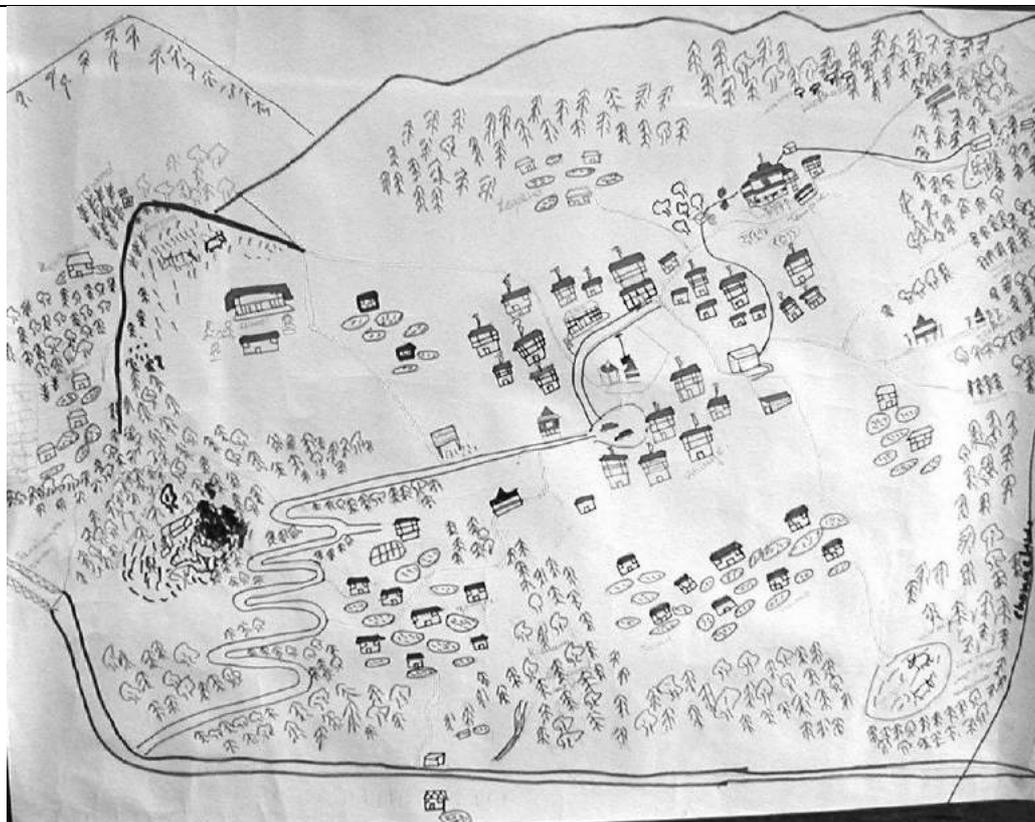
Outputs

- The map itself.
- Map Key with agreed categories of land use and land cover types.
- Notes on discussions, decisions, and questions asked about the map.

Figure 8: Examples of participatory resource mapping



Above: 3-D forest map produced by a village in Vietnam showing different land uses in different colours (Source: Branney, 2016)



Above: Example of a participatory resource map (forest-based) from Bhutan. Different symbols have been used to show different resources and their use (Source: Branney 2012)



Above: Participatory land and resource map from northern Sierra Leone (Michael Riddell, Bioclimate, 2013)

TOOL 8 – Forest Product Assessment

What it is for

This is a tool that would normally only be used for community-based REDD-type projects where you need to find out more about how a forest resource is being used, what the causes of degradation are and what potentials exist for sustainable forest management. It is often useful to use this tool after a participatory forest resource map (Tool 8) has been prepared. The main purpose of this tool is:

- To show preference and priorities for different products (or uses of the forest) by different stakeholders (especially between men and women)
- To identify the most important products available in a forest area
- To identify changes in forest product availability over time

All these findings will contribute to the participatory development of a management plan for a forest during development of a REDD+ project.

This is not so much a tool about social assessment, but about comparing the views and needs of different social groups in terms of their use and requirements from the forest.

Stage(s) in the PV process

During PV Stage 2 (PDD preparation) and during Stage 6 (verification)

Materials required

- Flipcharts
- Pens
- Samples of different forest products (optional) or post-it notes or meta-cards with symbols representing different products

Time required

- 2-3 hours

Participants

Not more than 15 participants. If there are more people, divide the group into 2 (based on different subgroups) and make sure that there is opportunity for each sub-group to present their finished chart to the whole group

Step by step notes

This participatory exercise has three parts. First you will need to do a forest product ranking exercise (Part A) to find out which forest products are most important. Based on the results of this, you should then do a forest product prioritisation matrix (B) to see which species are preferred for each product. Finally, carry out a forest product demand assessment (C) to find out how much of each product households in the community use or require.

Part (A): Forest product ranking

- i. Divide participants into at least 2 groups (preferably one men's and one women's group).
- ii. Select a place with a good surface for drawing the matrix e.g. bare soil for drawing with a stick, or concrete/wood floor in a house for drawing with chalk.
- iii. Explain to participants that you would like them to identify which forest products are most needed by them (ranking).
- iv. Using the participatory forest resource map (if you have prepared one earlier) to make a list of all the forest products being used
- v. Select a symbol for each product e.g. green leaves for fodder; dry leaves for litter; a piece of wood for timber etc. and draw these on post-it notes. Put post-its (or samples) of these in the squares along the top and also down one side of the matrix drawn on the ground.
- vi. Start to fill in the matrix by getting participants to decide between pairs of forest products which is the most needed e.g. which is most needed, fuelwood or timber? Put the selected product's picture/symbol in the relevant square. As each square is filled, ask why participants chose that product.
- vii. Once the matrix is complete, add up the number of squares in which each product occurs. The product that is in the most squares is the most needed.
- viii. Check with villagers about any differences between products by asking further questions.
- ix. Compare the men's and women's matrices. If they are different, ask participants why they think this is so.
- x. Copy the final matrices onto a sheet of paper for future use.

Part (B) Forest product prioritisation

- i. Divide participants into small groups (one for women and one for men)
- ii. Across the top of a large sheet of paper, write the forest products they identified in the forest product ranking exercise order of preference e.g. the most important on the left and the least important on the right. You can also include forest 'services' such as water, environment, biodiversity etc. if you wish. Be as specific as you can – for example rather than writing 'timber', put down sub-categories such as construction timber, or small building poles etc.
- iii. Ask participants to agree which species are the most important for each of these products. Write this list of species down the left hand side of the sheet of paper. Make sure that you use the local names for species. You can also include shrubs and herbs as well as trees if these are important.
- iv. For each species assign a value (between 1 and 5) showing how important the species is for that particular product – this is the species preference. For example if oak is the most important species for fodder then give it a value of 5 (5 stars). Put symbols to show this value in the matrix.
- v. Next, assign a value to each species to show how scarce or abundant it is in the forest – its availability. For example if oak for fodder is scarce then give it a value of 1 (1 star). Put symbols to show this, using different symbols to avoid confusion with species preference e.g. XXX and ***.
- vi. Remember that some species can be used for more than one product e.g. oak can be used for timber, fodder, and fuelwood.
- vii. Try to break down different products into useful sub-categories e.g. if some species are more suitable for construction timber, you could have a category called construction timber and perhaps a different category for building poles.

- viii. Select someone from each group to present the completed matrix to the other groups.
- ix. Discuss any differences between the matrices prepared by different groups. Also discuss how this information can be used to develop rules or activities for the forest management plan or *plan vivos*. Remember to make a record of all the points raised.
- x. Later, transfer the information from the large sheet onto the smaller format shown so that it can be included in the management plan.

Part (C) Forest product demand assessment

- i. Divide participants into small groups. Each group should complete the same exercise. If possible have separate groups for men and women.
- ii. Each group should prepare a list of forest products they use in their households. This should be as detailed as possible, and include all forest products e.g. don't just write 'timber' but break it into different categories or uses. Get participants to describe these categories.
- iii. Ask each group to estimate their annual household requirement for each product. Make sure that you use local measurements as far as possible e.g. timber should be estimated in terms of numbers of trees, poles etc rather than cft or m³. Firewood could be measured in back loads or trailer loads.
- iv. Ask each group to estimate how many households in the village actually use these products. For example out of 60 households, only 55 might actually require fodder. If all households use the product, then write "all".
- v. After each group has completed their table, get groups to present their figures to each other. Point out any inconsistencies or differences between groups and discuss these until they have agreed on household use figures.
- vi. Calculate the forest product requirements for the whole village by multiplying household use by the number of households. Record this information in the format provided.

Outputs

Each part of this exercise has an output. Each output consists of a chart/matrix:

- Part (A): Forest product ranking matrix
- Part (B) Forest product prioritisation matrix
- Part (C) Forest product demand assessment matrix

Figure 9: Examples of participatory product assessment outputs (all from Bhutan)

							
Timber	X						
Firewood		X					
Mushrooms			X				
Fodder				X			
Leaf litter					X		
Water						X	
Grazing							X

Above: Part A: Forest product ranking matrix

Species \ Uses	Firewood	Timber	Leaf litter	Fencing	Plag Poles
Blue pine	X *****	XXXXXX *****	XXXXXX *****	X ***	XXX *****
Oak <i>(Q. sp.)</i>	XXX ***		XX ***		
Elephantiasis	X **				
Spice		X ***			X **
Bamboo				X *	
Ash	XX ***			XX ***	
Rice			XXXX *****		
Grass / dung <i>(G. sp.)</i>	XX *****		XXXX *****	XXX ***	

Note: xxxxx - Highly preferred x - Little preferred
 ***** - Highly available * - Little available

Above: Part B: Forest product prioritisation matrix

Forest Product Demand

Products	Demand/HH/Year	Total /year
Fuel wood	200 back loads	6600 backloads
Fodder	180 back loads	5940 backloads
Leaf litters	100 back loads	3300 backloads
Flag post	9 Nos	297 Nos
New Construction Timber	Every after 30 years	
Drashing	4 Nos	5 Nos
Shingleps	6 Nos	7 Nos
Cham	80 Nos	88 Nos
Tsim	80 Nos	88 Nos
Dangchu	100 Nos	110 Nos
Renovation Timber	Every after 5 years	
Drashing	3 Nos	20 Nos
Cham	6 Nos	40 Nos
Tsim	8 Nos	53 Nos
Dangchu	10 Nos	66 Nos
Fencing post	80 Nos	2640 Nos
Agriculture Implements (handle)	As and when required	
Incense (Blue Pine needles)	As and when required	

Above: Part C: Forest product demand matrix

TOOL 9 – Semi-structured interviews

What it is for

Semi-structured interviews are flexible and participatory tools that can be used for many purposes. Usually they are used to add depth to existing information or ‘to find out more’. They are also useful for checking information that has been provided or obtained from elsewhere and so they can be especially useful during PV project impact monitoring, validation and verification.

- To investigate issues in more depth
- To find out whether particular interest groups or stakeholders are involved in the CF process (for checking to see if equity issues are being addressed)

Semi-structured interviews can be used on their own as a separate participatory tool, or as part of other participatory exercises. It is often useful to use semi-structured interviews at the end of another participatory exercise to get a better understanding of the issues that have just been raised by a larger group.

Stage(s) in the PV process

At many stages, including PV Stage 2 (preparation of the PDD), Stage 3 (validation), Stage 5 (annual reporting) and Stage 6 (verification).

Materials required

- No materials required except notebooks and pens

Time required

Individual interviews should last no more than 30 minutes – but the total time taken will depend on how many people are being interviewed. It is also possible to carry out semi-structured interviews in small groups (not more than 4 or 5 people).

Participants

Selected according to the type of information that is required.

Step by step notes

- i. Prepare a checklist based on the interview objectives.
- ii. Identify individuals or groups to be interviewed. If you want to check on equity issues, then you will need to select persons (or groups) that represent particular interest groups in the community e.g. you might wish to interview a group of women, or a group of small farmers
- iii. Select a site where there will be no interruptions. Sit in circle with everybody at the same level and not too many facilitators.
- iv. Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of the interview to the group or person.
- v. Ask questions and listen carefully. Materials like participatory maps, matrix or calendars generated by other participatory exercises are useful to initiate the discussion.
- vi. Avoid leading questions. Ask open-ended questions starting with Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why?
- vii. Maintain eye contact and don't take notes because it's difficult to do both these at the

same time! If necessary, another person can take notes.

- viii. Allow the conversation to flow and be relaxed. If the conversation gets off-track, then bring it back onto the topic.
- ix. Give every group member an opportunity to participate. If people aren't speaking, then try to direct questions at them as individuals rather than the whole group.
- x. Write up the notes of the interview afterwards. Try to remember key words or sentences which people used, and also their stories. These bring alive reports and convey the quality of the conversation.

Outputs

The aim is to get a better understanding of the socio-economic situation of different types of households.

Figure 10: Example



Above: Key informant interview being conducted by a local research assistant in Nkolenyeng village in the South Region of Cameroon to understand women's participation in new agricultural techniques introduced by the project. (Michael Riddell, Bioclimate, 2011).

TOOL 10 – Participatory climate vulnerability assessment/mapping

What it is for

Increasingly, communities are becoming concerned with the effects that climate change is having on their livelihoods. As a result, a number of participatory tools have been developed for communities to identify these effects and to plan for increasing their resilience through community based adaptation activities. Therefore, socio-economic assessments and livelihoods analysis for Plan Vivo projects should aim to introduce some of these aspects with a particular focus on enhancing climate resilience of the most vulnerable members of a community (these almost inevitably being the poorest and most socially disadvantaged households) by using appropriate social assessment tools. The aim of these is:

- To identify and rank climate hazards
- To assess the effects of climate change/hazards on livelihoods and natural resources and on community assets
- To identify households most vulnerable to the effects of climate change
- To identify and plan for appropriate climate adaptation activities at community level especially for the most vulnerable households

All these can be incorporated into Plan Vivo projects to enhance the livelihoods of the identified target groups.

Stage(s) in the PV process

Normally these tools will be used during Plan Vivo Stage 2 (PDD preparation)

References

A comprehensive set of participatory tools for assessing climate change effects and impacts and for exploring adaptation options is given by Regmi et al (2010).

Figure 11: Examples of Participatory climate vulnerability mapping



Above Example of a participatory transect walk in Burkina Faso, where the participant is explaining historical changes in agricultural land due to changes in rainfall and the water table (Michael Riddell, Bioclimate, 2013)



Above: Participatory hazard mapping session as part of a Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment in Namirumo village, northern Mozambique. The diagram shows the initial design of the village map prior to adding on the location and frequency of climate hazards affecting men in the village. Michael Riddell, 2015.

TOOL 11 – Public hearing/public auditing

What it is for

Public hearings and public audits are useful participatory tools for assessing levels of group governance and for holding community leaders (committee members) to account in a project. They are particularly important as ways to engage participants in large village meetings in discussions that contribute to assessing progress made during implementation of a PV project and for informing them about the project e.g. during annual assembly meetings or when a project is being assessed by a validator or verifier.

The aim is to raise and discuss issues about progress with activities (public hearing) and financial matters (public audit) in ways, which can be fully understood by community members, and in an open and transparent way so that they feel that the project is being well governed and that the concerns of different groups are being addressed. The public element to this participatory tool is important because committee members may have made decisions and actions during the year of which general community members are unaware.

Stage(s) in the PV process

Public hearings and public audits are most useful during PV Stage 3 (validation), Stage 5 (annual reporting) and Stage 6 (verification).

Materials required

- Nothing specific – except notebooks and pens

Time required

- Up to 2 hours is usually sufficient for a combined public hearing/public audit

Participants

A larger group of community members (if possible representing different stakeholder or interest groups) can participate but it is also important that committee members (from the community) are present – especially the chair person, secretary and treasurer. In addition it is often useful to have non-community representatives present as participants or observers because specific questions can be addressed at them if necessary – for example local government officials, forestry agency staff, project staff etc.

Step by step notes

- i. Start by introducing the meeting and (if time permits) ask every participant to introduce themselves briefly with their name and any other relevant details.
- ii. Assign one or two participants to take notes on issues raised and recommendations made
- iii. Start the discussion by listing all the project's committee meetings that have been held over the past period (usually the past year). Use the records of these meetings to explain to participants of the reasons for the meetings, what was decided at the meetings and any other points arising.
- iv. Encourage participants to listen, comment on and discuss the points being made.
- v. In cases where it was agreed to carry out certain activities – allow participants to comment on whether these have been properly carried out and what (if any) were the problems or

under-achievements.

- vi. After a short break – move on to the public auditing part of the community meeting.
- vii. Ask the treasurer to share information with participants about the financial records including expenditure, income and other information over the past year
- viii. Ask participants to raise questions, comments and concerns about the financial information presented and ask the community committee members to respond.
- ix. Based on the discussions during the public hearing and public audit, prepare an action plan for addressing issues. Ask the whole group to endorse the points listed in this action plan and inform participants that this will be used during the next public hearing/public audit to ensure transparency and to check progress.

Outputs

The main output is the meeting record consisting of:

- Action plan prepared during the meeting
- List of participants

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