Community tradeoffs assessment:
for culture-sensitive planning and evaluation

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Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

This tool describes a methodology to conduct community-based planning and evaluation by looking for hidden tradeoffs between economy, ecology, society and culture. This approach empowers local communities to undertake business, conservation and development initiatives that fit with their unique culture and value systems.

Many groups involved in supporting local resource management and sustainable livelihoods initiatives rely on conceptual tools, such as the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, to guide their approach to working with local communities. These conceptual tools combined with practical methods for participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation with communities have been improving the extent to which development and conservation practice is able to incorporate the perspectives and priorities of local people in the planning and execution of projects. While participatory techniques help to incorporate the priorities of local people, their value ultimately rests on the strength of the 'conceptual tools' that guide their application. Our 'conceptual tools' – ways of conceiving and ordering the world and the forces that act upon it – fundamentally shape how we define priorities and measure success together with local people.

Conservation and development practitioners are seeking to apply certain 'conceptual tools', such as the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, across the globe to work with a wide diversity of local communities and distinct cultures. The method described here can support their effort by providing a practical approach to achieving a fundamental first leap whereby local people shape the 'conceptual tool' that governs interventions and then apply a systematic approach to uncover acceptable and undesirable tradeoffs in the decision-making process.

What is the Community tradeoffs assessment tool (CTA)?

This tool details a step-by-step process for developing a customised *Community tradeoffs assessment tool (CTA),* which consists of:

i.   A *conceptual map,* which is specific to the community and local culture. This is a conceptual framework, which is the primary tool for analysis – a way of identifying and classifying aspects of community life, resources and forces that act upon these.

ii.   A *systematic* method of conducting *pair-wise comparisons* between every aspect of the conceptual map (economic, social, cultural, ecological etc.) in order to draw out acceptable and non-acceptable tradeoffs.

iii.   Through this approach a community can pragmatically define its development goals (*standards* they seek to achieve) along with *indicators* of both success and failure that would guide ongoing management, evaluation and future planning.

CTA is based on the premises that:

i.   Genuine local participation rests on the negotiation of a common conceptual framework to guide activities, not only between outsiders and local people, but also among local sub-groups.

ii.   A systematic approach is required to identify properly the benefits and costs of engaging certain activities and hidden trade-offs. Even in the most well intended participatory process, achieving this can be a practical challenge.

iii.   Sub-groups in communities need to negotiate and agree on acceptable tradeoffs, goals for the future and indicators of success for a planning, monitoring and evaluation process to be genuinely community-based.

CTA was developed in Guyana with the Makushi people, the fourth largest indigenous group in South America. In Guyana, the Makushi occupy the area in and around the Iwokrama Forest. It is the nature of CTA that it should be continuously refined as it is put into practice. The local communities, their NGO the North Rupununi District Development Board, and Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development will continuously refine CTA as they put it into practice. Users should feel free to use, adapt and refine it. Please share your feedback and experiences with us at www.iwokrama.org or www.iied.org.

Who Can Use CTA and For What Purpose?

CTA can be used to plan and evaluate any sustainable livelihood or other integrated resource management, business, conservation and development project with local people. It can also provide initial information, which can then be used to design and implement detailed monitoring programmes.

CTA is primarily useful to groups with long-term interests in building capacity for self-management in local communities and to organisations – such as protected aArea management authorities, forest companies and other natural resource extraction companies - that have a long-term presence and responsibility to a particular area. However, users can use CTA for rapid assessments when planning or evaluating a particular project by conducting a rapid refinement of the conceptual framework and applying the pair-wise comparison technique to assess tradeoffs.

There are two use options:

1. Develop CTA with a community, including standards and indicators for measuring success, and build local skills to use the tool developed and pair-wise comparison method on an ongoing basis to rapidly assess any initiative. Once CTA is developed with a particular community, the community can apply it independently, or in conjunction with partners, to rapidly assess any proposal for business, conservation or development projects.   The approach can also be used for external evaluation of projects and programmes in that community, depending on the amount of time and resources available.

2. More rapidly assess a proposed or existing project by applying and adapting the community *conceptual map* described in this tool to suit local circumstances, and by conducting a rapid pair-wise assessment of the impact of each output of the project against each component of the conceptual map. This gives some general feedback to improve consistency and focus of the project.

While CTA is useful to groups engaging with communities to work on projects and for rapid assessment, the approach would be used to its full potential by those who are committed to raising consciousness and long-term capacity of local communities to define and manage their own development and natural resources.

CTA is not only useful to outsiders working in partnership with local communities but also to communities as they plan and execute internal activities or self-mobilised initiatives. Indeed the approach seeks to provide a framework for community leaders to integrate the projects and activities conducted by several different groups within any particular community. CTA supports integrated planning both in terms of bringing into line different projects or initiatives that may be ongoing in the community as well as examining cultural, other social, economic, and ecological tradeoffs produced by actions in particular areas.   The approach of developing a customised

community tool, which can then be applied to assess any initiative, empowers communities to be more thorough within the usually relatively short time period that communities have to decide whether they wish to become involved in businesses, sustainable livelihoods or other conservation and development initiatives.   Communities can assess any particular project or initiative against the overall community priorities using a systemic pair-wise comparison technique. This increases the community's ability to assess proposed or ongoing initiatives against priorities they set independently of any particular project, to uncover hidden trade-offs, and make decisions according to their value system.

However, it is not likely that many local communities will have the independent capacity to develop and use CTA. Anyone seeking to use the methodology with local people should make provisions to support the development of local skills to apply the methodology and*, importantly,* to sustain its use during and beyond the life of your particular intervention.

CTA can also be very useful for groups interested in working with local people to strengthen local governance and accountability. The approach is particularly suited to working with socially distinct groups, such as indigenous peoples, as it focuses on acceptable tradeoffs, particularly as these pertain to culture and identity. However, it could be adapted for use with multicultural communities that share a dependence on a common natural-resource area. CTA was developed with small forest communities in the Guiana Shield. It is well suited to working with small communities, but could be useful to larger communities as well.

How long does the process take?

The overall development of CTA with a small community can take approximately two and half months and require resources of a small project. This estimate includes time for complete preparation, fieldwork, village sensitisation, mobilisation, training, documentation and follow-up activities. The development of CTA is equivalent to the execution of a small project. The actual fieldwork for developing CTA with one lead facilitator in one village, with an approximate population of 300-500, would take some 3 weeks. This includes an estimate of the length of time it would take to develop a village conceptual map, develop village goals (standards) and indicators for monitoring development goals and to test the CTA developed. A CTA can be developed in a shorter time with a number of well-trained lead facilitators working simultaneously with different village sub-groups.

The entire process does not have to be compressed; it can be spread out over a longer period depending on the availability of villagers, facilitators, resources and the nature of engagement. The amount of time it would take also depends on the level the familiarity of facilitators with the local context, the villagers' experience with participatory processes, their commitment to the process and their capacity to organize. If the village is not comprised of a single socially distinct group, then the time to negotiate a set of common goals is likely to be longer and several steps would have to be repeated at various levels to develop the conceptual map, standards and indicators. In general, sixty percent participation from each subgroup interest identified in a village is sufficient to develop a meaningful customised village tool, which can be refined with greater use and participation at the local level.

Structure and use of this tool

This tool is organised into seven additional chapters. These generally reflect the stages for Developing CTA.

Chapter 2 provides a summary description CTA and theoretical frameworks employed in its development.

Chapter 3 provides guidance for preparing and tips for getting yourself and the community ready to undertake the development of CTA.

Chapter 4 describes Stage 1 of developing CTA - a step-by-step process for developing the Village Conceptual Map.

Chapter 5 describes Stage 2 of developing CTA – a step-by-step process for developing and negotiating village standards (goals).

Chapter 6 describes Stage 3 of developing CTA – a step-by-step process for developing simple 'word-picture' indicators for each of the village standards.

Chapter 7 describes the testing phase – a step-by-step process for testing and adjusting CTA.

Chapter 8 summarises the main steps and conclusions.

On order to understand the methodology fully, this tool should be used in conjunction with the Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement, which outlines lessons learned and gives illustrated examples, practical explanations and insights into the products at different stages of developing CTA. These case studies and examples are keyed in each section of the tool for easy reference.

2. Summary description of CTA and theoretical frameworks employed in its development

Summary description: Stages for developing CTA

CTA consists of:
  i.   A customised community *conceptual map,*
  ii.   *Standards* for each component of the conceptual map,
  iii. Simple 'word picture' *indicators* for each of the standards,
  iv.   The regular application of a technique of systematic pair-wise comparison, and
  v.   Facilitated negotiation to arrive at common village standards, indicators and acceptable tradeoffs

The Conceptual Map, Standards and Indicators represent the overall priorities areas, goals and means for the community to measure success and adjust on an ongoing basis.

In summary, the methodology for developing CTA with a particular community consists of the following major stages plus overall preparation and reporting to community leaders:

I. Preparatory Phase: Getting Yourself and the Community Ready

A series of steps to ensure that there is full local ownership, commitment and that local people are adequately prepared to participate in the process. This phase includes preparation for fieldwork, scheduling and coming to agreements for reporting and reviewing progress to local leadership.

II. Development Phase
Stage 1: Development of a Customised Community Conceptual Map

This is done through a series of open-ended exercises that do not constrain local people's conceptual categorisation of their world or the forces that they believe act on that world. The final conceptual map is produced through a process of negotiation between different community sub-groups. This map can be cross-checked with external conceptual frameworks. In this case the Sustainable Livelihoods and the Human Ecosystem Frameworks are used in combination (Boxes 1 and 2 respectively), to determine whether there are additional aspects that may have been overlooked but are important to the community. This Customised Conceptual Map is the basic tool for village planning and evaluation.

II. Development Phase
Stage 2: Development of Standards for each component of the Community Conceptual Map (goals for a specified period)

This is achieved through a learning oriented series of steps to reflect on historical changes and underlying causes and identify current issues and priorities for each component of the conceptual map. The standards set for each component of the Community Conceptual Map are systematically compared to identify and reach decisions on acceptable trade-offs and to weed out inconsistencies. In order to develop a common set of community standards that do not disenfranchise any particular subgroup, the standards are first negotiated within community sub-groups and then negotiated between all sub-groups.

II. Development Phase
Stage 3: Development of Word Picture Indicators for Each Standard

This involves the development of simple, sensitive, measurable, specific 'word picture' indicators for each of the community standards. Indicators are developed in sub-groups and collated at the community level.

III. Testing Phase
Testing CTA Applying to Evaluate a Project

Testing of the initial Standards and Indicators by evaluating an existing project or initiative within the community. This provides for necessary fine-tuning and adjustments of all aspects of the approach, including the Customised Community Conceptual Map. Indeed, with each application of the

Box 1: Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Since the 1970s, the development sector's understanding of poverty has broadened. A sustainable livelihood can be defined as:

'a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long and short term."
(Chambers and Conway,1992)

Several Sustainable Livelihoods frameworks that are fairly similar are in use by various agencies. The frameworks focus on the different strategies people use to meet their livelihood needs and the level of access to 5 capital assets: *social, human, physical, financial and natural.* Important as well are factors that influence access to assets and opportunities. Key among these are: macro level institutional structures and policies, *trends* such as economic or technological transformations, seasonal variation, *shocks* such as natural disasters or conflict; and processes resulting from such factors as policies, law and culture.

In principle the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework is supposed to:

- Be used in a participatory manner so that practitioners are guided by people's priorities
- Begin with analyses of people's strengths, not needs
- Influence the macro level processes and institutions to improve household livelihood options
- Understand and respond to the dynamic nature of poverty and the influences on them, which would entail a learning approach to understanding the cause-effect relations of poverty
- Support and promote livelihoods that are economically, environmentally, socially and institutionally sustainable, that is, that are resilient to shocks, independent of external support, maintain long term productivity of natural resources and do not compromise livelihood options open to others.
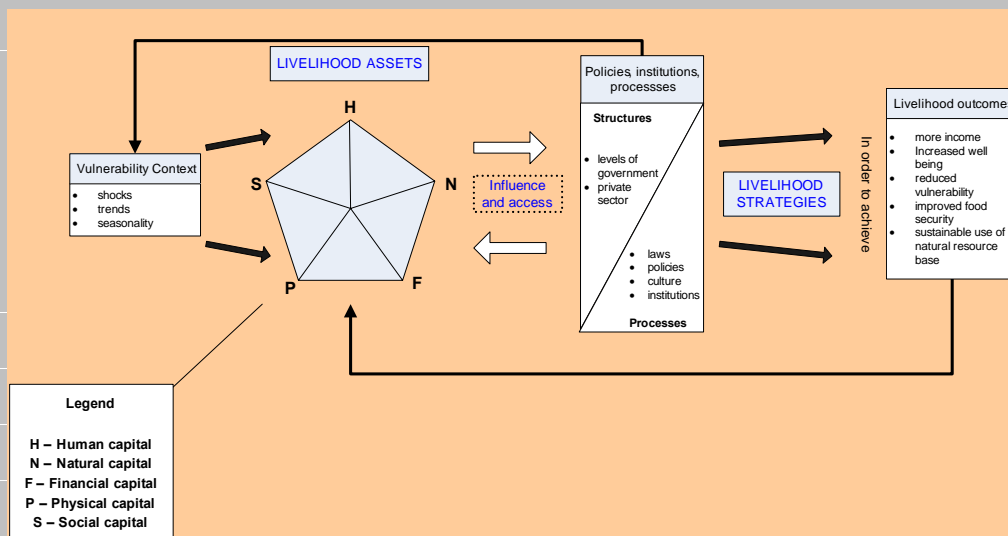
Source/Further Information:
www.livelihoodconnect.org

Box 2: Human Ecosystem Framework

The Human Ecosystem Model regards any particular ecosystem as a 'human' ecosystem: "a coherent system of biophysical and social factors capable of adaptation and sustainability over time" (Machlis et al. 1997). In this view, an ecosystem is a bounded and dynamic entity of critical natural, socioeconomic and cultural resources that flow through the system. Resource flows within ecosystems are regulated by social institutions including health, justice and law and by changes in physiological, individual, institutional and environmental cycles. Importantly, the resources within an ecosystem can be used within the system, moved out of the system, or imported from outside. For example, external financial capital, information and skills and exported goods are critical drivers of change in ecosystems. Finally, resource flows are often strongly affected by social order including individual and group identities, social norms, and social hierarchies. The critical resources and the social systems regulating their flow can be represented as in Figure 1. Machlis et al. (1997) recommend that this model for a human ecosystem can be used as an organizing framework for social impact assessments associated with ecosystem management plans. The value of the model in this context is that it provides guidance to capturing the full range of potential impacts of changes and also permits examination of the trade-offs and linked changes.
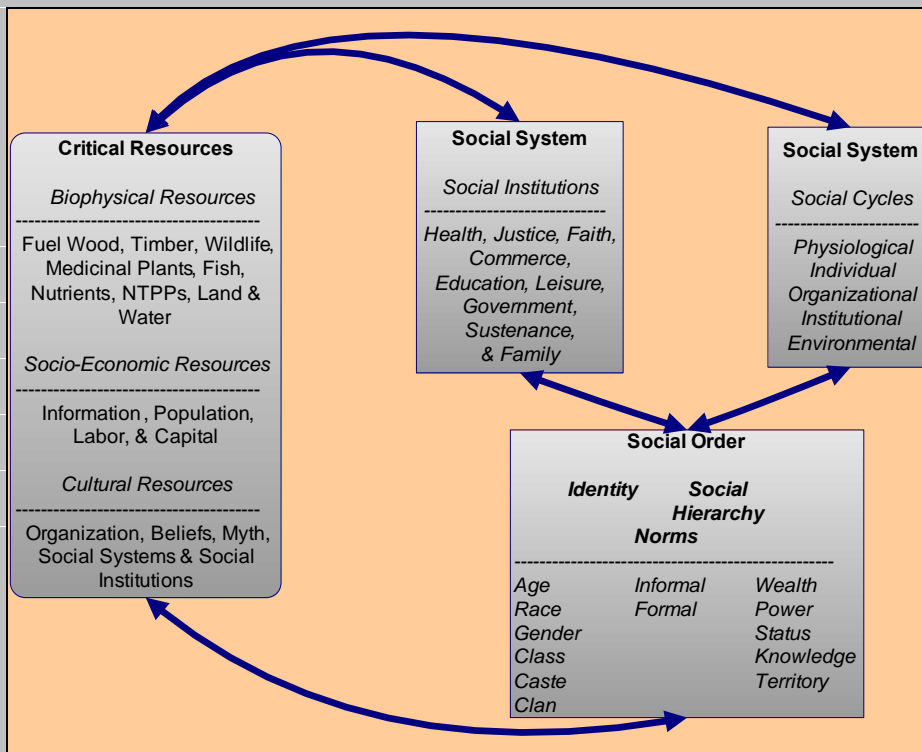
Figure 1: Human Ecosystem Model (after (Machlis et al. 1997))

Sources/Further Information:

Force, J. E., and G. E. Machlis. 1997. The human ecosystem. Part II: Social indicators in ecosystem management. Society and Natural Resources. **10**:369-382.

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Machlis, G. E., J. E. Force, and W. R. J. Burch. 1997. The Human Ecosystem Part I: The Human Ecosystem as an Organizing Concept in Ecosystem Management. Society and Natural Resources **10**:347-367.

3. Preparatory phase - Preparation and management of the overall process

Intensive planning with any community depends on careful organisation. In the Preparatory Phase you should ensure that community leaders and members are fully aware, committed and ready for the process, and that local resource persons are identified and trained to support the process.

This section describes some steps for engaging a community to undertake the development of CTA. These steps are only some of the activities required to prepare for fieldwork with a community. Users would have to customise their overall approach to suit the specific context in which they are working.

> **► Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement**
>
> **Specific Reference**: Case Study 1: The Overall Process for Developing a Customised Planning and Evaluation Tool with the Makushi in Guyana.

Objectives of preparatory phase:

You should:
- Identify key sub-groups within the community and other factors that should guide your planned work with the community. These include, seasonal migration, resource use patterns, key formal and informal leaders and other factors.
- Identify and share information fully with key village leaders, sub-groups and community members in general. If there are many villages in a particular area with umbrella leadership, undertake preparation at the both village and inter-village levels.
- Organise appropriate sessions to raise awareness and discuss with key representatives your proposed work. Seek their approval through a process of informed decision-making. Plan with them an approach for sharing information and seeking approval of community members for the research and the overall process. This should include provisions for reporting progress to the leadership, ongoing evaluation and mobilising and preparing villagers to participate.
- Arrive at a common understanding with the community of the overall process for research and a schedule for completing the process.
- Identify and train local resource persons to support facilitation and participant observation to provide ongoing evaluation, interpretation and facilitation support. These persons would be involved in action-oriented learning. They are a key resource pool for further training to enhance the community's capacity to continue to apply CTA.
- Develop a method for daily evaluations and progress tracking together with local resource persons.
- Hold a village inception meeting to share information, obtain feedback, finalise a schedule of activities and secure commitment to participate.
- Arrange all logistics and ensure that leaders and resource persons have the appropriate support to work with villagers to prepare for the field research.

Preparatory phase steps:

Step 1	Approach local community leaders: introductory meeting
Whom to involve? Local leaders: A few meetings with key leaders and presentations during their meeting times.	➢ Contact community leaders at their meeting forums for introductory discussions. Introduce the concept through mutual trust and respect - show them openly the financial and other resources you have to commit. ➢ Leaders are elected persons as well as traditional leaders, heads of village institutions, traditional healers, local persons responsible for projects etc. ➢ Try to find out their experience with projects and establish whether leaders already perceive the value of an internal planning and evaluation tool and what has already been happening in this regard. ➢ Discuss whether and how to go forward with planning a broader inception meeting and decide on a preliminary process with leaders.

Tips
-Talk to individual leaders in depth about the merits of the methodology and sound out their concerns to prepare for the introductory meeting. Be sure to share information on available resources and budgets fully and be very clear on the expected time and other demands on the leaders and communities. -Be very clear on how the input of the leaders and community would be incorporated into the process and make necessary changes based on their feedback.

Step 2	Conduct background assessment: key stakeholder groups within the community
Whom to involve? Local leaders: You can use a range of methods including focus groups, rapid assessments, and key informants.	➢ Focus on all possible types of social differentiation within villages: gender, age, access to assets, income-subsistence brackets, individuals who might be more/less accustomed to interacting with outsiders etc. ➢ If there is a tendency to migrate for jobs, establish the pattern of migration and determine periods when seasonal migrants could be present to participate. Identify planned/recurring events that could limit or support participation. ➢ Identify persons who hold key positions such as teachers, health workers, village project officers, shamans, village council members, and leaders of women's groups. ➢ Discuss and decide on a strategy for engaging key leaders or representatives of the village subgroup(s) in a planning workshop.

Tips
-How much you have to do here depend on how familiar you are with the community and existing information. The information gathered will help for both planning an Awareness and Planning Workshop and field work in the community. -You might engage local workers that are more familiar with the context to assist. Seek the input of leaders. -Focus on identifying established and informal local institutions/network and representatives that could come to the inception workshop and go back to their respective groups and explain the purpose of your engagement.

Step 3	**Plan and mobilise key representatives to attend an Awareness and Planning Workshop**
Whom to involve? Local leaders Hired/Volunteer Mobilisers Mobilisation and planning takes about 3-4 weeks. Can complete planning in local meeting forums.	➢ Discuss a suitable time and venue. Propose the agenda for the workshop with leaders and adjust as necessary. ➢ Plan for local leaders to conduct outreach to the representatives of sub-groups identified particularly to invite them to attend, explain the purpose of the workshop to ask them to discuss it their constituencies. ➢ Provide whatever is required to support this process, including letters where appropriate, logistical support etc. ➢ Engage other local officials and invite them e.g. Local Officers of Government Ministries, Forest Officers etc. Their support and awareness can be critical to long-term success.

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Tips

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-There is no better substitute than for community leaders to meet and mobilize representatives of groups, this is provides an early indicator of their commitment.
 -Allow at least three weeks for mobilization so that people can fit it into their schedule and you can plan appropriately.
-Double check that each participant will be attending and provide transport where necessary.

Step 4	*Conduct a participatory awareness and planning workshop with key leaders and stakeholder representatives*

Whom to involve?
 	
Local leaders
Representatives of key stakeholder groups
Local officers (government, development/ conservation projects etc)
 	
The presence of local government and other officials may inhibit local participation. You would have to judge this on a case by case basis and decide whether to invite them at this stage or to hold separate discussions accompanied by leaders.
	➢ Introduce the purpose of the workshop in a simple and clear way.
	➢ Encourage community self-awareness:
	   o Conduct participatory exercises to encourage participants to think about the current level of self-direction in the Community in relation to external projects.
	   o Examine projects that were entirely locally driven for their outcome and how they could have been improved.
	   o Collectively examine the need for an 'improved' local planning and management process.
	➢ Draw out the local forms of 'planning', 'monitoring', 'evaluation' and 'indicators' – local analogies from participants to 'indigenise' unfamiliar terms and explain the link between these.
	➢ Examine whether the CTA development can lead to greater self-direction and whether the participants believe that undertaking the proposed process to develop the methodology would be beneficial. If so:
	➢ Discuss and identify what groups, individuals as should be involved and potentially an initial list of local resource persons who can support the process.
	➢ Design an overall process with participants, which should include timeline, points of reporting to leaders, plans for mobilising community members and for conducting the fieldwork.
	➢ Conduct an interactive exercise where participants practise 'taking the message' out, this will give you feedback on the extent to which they grasped the main ideas and help to reduce the potential to misinform stakeholders.

Tips

Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement: Case Study 1: The Overall Process for Developing a Customised Planning and Evaluation Tool with the Makushi in Guyana.
Case Study 2: Report on the Annai District Planning and Awareness Workshop.

Step 5	For each village involved, identify appropriate sub-groups with which to conduct the fieldwork
Whom to involve? Local leaders May require some focus groups and rapid assessments.	➢ Finalise the key 'sub-groups' in each village. The number of sub-groups will determine your overall plan. The criteria should include age, gender, population structure, particular resource-interaction relations, migration dependence, extent of income and other factors peculiar to the area. ➢ Decide which 'overarching' category you will work with. For example, you may group firstly by gender, then break up gender groups by age, as reproductive stage and numbers of children may make a big difference in livelihood strategies and outlook. While power differences may exist, you may decide that grouping all young women (age e.g. 15-25) could work or you may want to create sub-groups if there are marked differences. ➢ Review your grouping with key community representatives.

Tips

-Subgroup categorisation will vary with context. However, whatever subgroup categories you choose, definitely separate gender and age groups, who tend to have different priorities for the future.

-Use the size of groups to help in further subdivisions (approx. 20 is good size) for running the exercises.

-Be careful not to subdivide too much as this could diminish collective learning, which is important to this process.

-Note as well that you will have to conduct all the steps with each group and negotiate in plenary. Take into consideration the amount of time and resource this will require (without compromising quality).

-The key to ensuring participation is how you facilitate the process, and making time to discuss issues with individuals.

- Local resource persons are familiar with local circumstances and can help to decipher undertones and support less powerful participants in sub-groups.

Step 6	*Identify and train local resource persons / mobilisers for the village level exercises*
Whom to involve? Local leaders Representatives of key stakeholder groups May require community meetings in some instances where particular stakeholder groups would like to select their resource person.	➢ If you are not aware of a pool of suitable resource persons ask community representatives or other researchers or workers who are more familiar with the area to assist. ➢ Give clear criteria. Screen candidates using at least the following criteria: conversant in all local languages; acceptable to the local community and particularly the subgroup you expect support with; able to express themselves; have prior experience organising; drawn from a diversity of families not solely from local elite families; reflect the demographics of the community i.e. try to recruit within age, gender and other key stakeholder groups, such as hunters, to reflect all sub-groups; willingness to commit to training; and availability to the community over time. ➢ A team of about 10 resource persons should suffice depending on the size of the village (population 300), you will likely match resource persons to the sub-groups during the process. ➢ Spend at least 1 week preparing resource persons by explaining the basics of facilitation, planning, monitoring and evaluation. Establish clear roles and responsibilities, review issues specific to sub-groups and test planned exercises – both to train the resource persons and refine the exercises for the local context.

Tips

-Testing planned exercises with resource persons is a good way to refine exercises and raise issues that might improve facilitation.
-Foster team spirit and a culture of open feedback. Give opportunities to resource persons to lead sessions.
-The amount of time and training you have to invest will depend on the context and may take more than one week.

Step 7	*Develop, with resource persons, methods for daily evaluation of the process and for tracking participation*
Whom to involve? Resource persons	➤ Discuss and agree to parameters that resource persons will track over the period of the village work (later you will share these with villagers for their feedback) to evaluate the process. ➤ Develop a system for tracking participation. For example, for each subgroup, draw up a list of households represented in the village. ➤ Plan daily feedback sessions with resource persons and feedback sessions with villagers. Ensure that resource persons are clear about their role.

Tips
-Focus on 'evaluating as you go' to track performance and adapt to suit the local context as you implement the methodology -Remember to discuss the evaluation mechanism at the start of work with each subgroup. -Ask local resource persons to identify ahead of time, traditionally marginalised sections of the community to assist. facilitators to ensure that the perspectives of these groups are not lost in the process. -Use simple visual methods to track participation.

Step 8	*Make a schedule of activities and mobilise villagers sufficiently in advance*
Whom to involve? Local leaders Resource persons	➤ Confirm with leaders and villagers the dates for village level work (they should confirm these at village wide meetings). In particular, set a date and time for a *Village Inception Meeting*. ➤ Work with leaders and resource persons to devise a household mobilisation plan and divide responsibilities between resource persons to ensure attendance at the Inception Meeting. ➤ Hold practice sessions where resource persons can practise the 'message' - information they will share with households to minimise potential confusion or misinformation and to prepare them for the inception meeting. ➤ Double check with leaders and representatives of key stakeholder groups that their constituencies will attend or trouble shoot if necessary and take the necessary actions to conduct effective outreach with target groups.

Tips
-Focus on ensuring that villagers can come out to an inception meeting where you will again present the concept and seek their commitment. -If all were going well, leaders would have already secured agreement from the village to attend and participate, resource persons would simply be 'reminding' villagers and sharing information so that they can be better informed.

Step 9	**Hold a Village Inception Meeting**
Whom to involve? Local leaders Villagers (all sub groups)	➢ Village leaders should convene the meeting and introduce the team. ➢ Explain clearly your purpose, the overall process and reason why you are seeking to work with villagers. ➢ Explain clearly the planned exercises with the village, expected outputs, time demands for their feedback. ➢ Propose sub-groupings and explain clearly the rationale for selecting sub-groups and the reason why it is important that members of sub-groups (gender, age, etc.) and the whole village participate. ➢ Seek villagers' feedback on the sub-groups and willingness to commit. Make space for any sub-groups that emerge. ➢ Propose the schedule of activities and finalise the dates and times and secure commitment to attend. ➢ Be clear about your expectations – the exercises build on each other so villagers have to be willing to come to all the sessions for which their subgroup is scheduled. Be clear about level of participation expected. ➢ Make sure you are clear about villagers' expectations of the process – ensure you manage expectations so people know what outputs to expect. ➢ Address any concerns raised by villagers and incorporate their feedback into your approach.

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Tips
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-Your knowledge of the community and experience working with the villagers would be of great benefit to you here.
-Be very flexible and prepare to move around dates and times. Different sub-groups will be able to come at different times depending on their livelihood patterns. Be careful not to exclude less fortunate groups that may not have lots of 'extra' time.
-Ensure the time needed does not overload groups; spread out sessions if that is the case
-Ensure that villagers understand that they would have to participate in the whole process once they start, otherwise the approach will not work. Emphasise the learning value and the value to their community and future.

Step 10	**Plan logistics carefully and ensure necessary support for the process**
Whom to involve? Local leaders Villagers	➢ Make sure your venues are appropriate for the planned activities and located in accessible areas. Customary local village meeting places should be given priority. ➢ Sessions take all day; make sure you arrange for snacks and meals. Note also that children may come along with women and plan accordingly ➢ Source as much as you can from local people and suppliers. ➢ Organise reliable transportation if necessary.
Tips -Logistics and smooth planning are important to not squandering the time of participants. Ensure that sessions are well timed and that meals can be prepared on time.	

Summary of preparatory phase steps

- The primary purpose of this phase is to come to a common understanding with the village leaders and villagers of an overall process for conducting fieldwork, complete with a schedule of field trial activities and reporting sessions.

- Identify and prepare a group of local resource persons to support the process.

- Make all necessary logistical arrangements to support fieldwork.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND VILLAGE LEADERS: 5 days

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND FACILITATORS: 1 month (inclusive of preparation and events)

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF RESOURCE PERSONS: 15 days

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGERS: 2 days

4. Development phase - Stage 1: Negotiating the village conceptual map

The development phase for CTA involves fieldwork at the village level to develop a conceptual map, standards and indicators. These are the basic building blocks for CTA. Throughout this phase, the technique of conducting pair-wise comparisons to look for tradeoffs, inconsistencies and synergies is introduced and reinforced. The overall participatory approach in the Development Phase is to group the village into sub-groups of shared interests or circumstances to ensure that the range of views in the village is captured in the development of the CTA. The results of subgroup work are progressively amalgamated through a negotiated process to arrive at a common set of standards and indicators for the village.

The successful development of CTA rests, among other things, on the quality of facilitation, the facilitators' grasp of local social-ecological issues, and the contribution of local resource persons. This Phase can be strenuous and difficult, as it requires the lead facilitator to take part in all of the subgroup activities in order to follow the stream of issues and to support the negotiation process effectively. The exercises are designed to raise awareness and promote dialogue and slowly build toward achieving the outputs of this phase. The opportunities for learning and sharing among villagers are profound and should be regarded as part of the output of the entire process.

Stage 1 of the Development Phase is concerned with developing with the village a commonly accepted *Village Conceptual Map.*

Objectives of development phase: Stage 1:

You should:
- Explain again to all participants the purpose of the undertaking, ensure that they understand the full process and the demands it would make of their time, secure their commitment to participate and determine whether any participant has special needs that should be addressed.
- Establish and ensure that ground rules for participation are understood and followed by all participants. These ground rules have to do with respect and the right to opinions of each individual, among other things.
- Conduct warm-up exercises that give you insight into individual aspirations, the degree of similarity or variance within, and among sub-groups, and insights into critical issues in the communities that are of concern to villagers.
- Conduct exercises that allow each individual to reflect on their life and interaction with resources, institutions and other people to contribute to the construction of a community conceptual map.
- Develop a common village conceptual map by convening sub-groups and then by bringing together sub-groups to agree on a common village conceptual map.

Development phase: Stage 1 steps

Step 1	*Explain the purpose of the undertaking, outline and discuss ground rules and secure commitment to participate*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups Conduct this exercise with each subgroup. (1 hour)	➢ Arrange circular seating. ➢ Introduce yourself and give time for participants' and resource persons' self-introduction. ➢ Explain again the overall process that will be undertaken and ask for feedback or clarify any matters. Give sufficient time for questions and secure commitment to participate in all sessions. ➢ Discuss and come to consensus on 'ground rules' – how the group will deal with disagreements and interact with each other. ➢ You can either write or have participants draw symbols to represent each ground rule and post in a very visible place to revert to when necessary. Once you have developed ground rules in one subgroup, you can use it as the starting point for discussion in subsequent sub-groups.
	Tips
-Observe the level of participation in drawing symbols to express the ground rules. Note which persons are participating actively and which ones are not. -You will spend significant time with each subgroup, observing interactions throughout will allow you to understand dynamics and enhance your ability to catch undertones and to facilitate effectively.	-Ground rules for interaction should include at least: allowing everyone a fair chance to put forward their views; attacking the issue and not the person; a system for dealing with disagreements; and one main conversation versus many side ones. It is important to enforce these rules consistently. -It is very important that you secure commitment from participants for the whole process. Impress on them that the sessions build on each other and that the value to the community and individuals cannot be realised if they don't attend all of the sessions.

Step 2	*Ideal and worst future*

Whom to involve?
 	
Sub-groups
Conduct this exercise with each subgroup.
(20 min individual; 30 min feedback)
	➤ Ask individuals to draw on either half of an A4 sheet an imagined scenario 15 years, for example, into the future.
	    o On one half– a drawing of their ideal future
	    o On the other half – a drawing of the worst-case scenario for their future
	➤ Let everyone explain his or her drawing to the group.
	➤ Pin drawings to the wall and discuss issues arising.

Tips	
-Note how many people locate themselves within the community and the state of the community in their future (do not make a point of this with participants as it may adversely affect some participants). -Note the range/similarity in aspirations. -Compare sub-groups: Look for trends in aspirations and fears. Do younger people express more individuality in their drawings versus older ones? Any other trends? -Look for useful insights into life in the village.	-This is a warm up exercise. It provides good insight into the village and people's aspirations early in the process. -The facilitator and resource persons should join in this exercise. This way you can share a bit about yourself, community, and lessons from your culture with the group. -Note names on the back of drawing paper. As part of your evaluation, you can redo this exercise at the end of the process to see whether people change their personal aspirations and how. -Use drama instead of drawing if preferred (or both).

Step 3	*Exercise – 'Good' village, 'troubled' village*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups: Conduct this exercise with each subgroup (20 mins. individual; 30 mins. Feedback)	➤ Ask participants to individually set out what aspects they like about their community (they think is going well), and what aspects they think should be improved. They should use words, pictures or drama. ➤ Let everyone explain his or her list/drawing/performance to the group. ➤ Discuss each issue as it arises.
Tips	
- Look for critical issues and priorities and the extent to which participants within each subgroup agree on problems and their underlying causes. - Compare subgroup responses: try to discern trends in priorities, pressing issues for the particular age group/gender.	-By this time, you should get some insight into the perceived problems in the village. Facilitate the discussion to draw out the issues and underlying causes. -Look for potential conflict and points of departure among participants. -Keep a keen eye out for dominant versus less confident participants.

Step 4	*Exercise – Brainstorm: our world*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups Conduct this exercise with each subgroup (45 min brainstorm 1.hr group discussion) or (45 minute life-pattern profiles; 15 minutes collation; 1 hr. discussion)	➢ Ask participants to brainstorm together all the things that make up their life (all aspects of life in the community) e.g. land, relationships, and institutions – what kinds of things are important to them. ➢ Make a list with the participants and ask them to group like things together e.g. land, forest, wildlife would be 'natural resources' whereas school, health centre etc. would be grouped under 'institutions' – However, let them start the groupings and observe how they organise and name the categories. Use lead questions if they are struggling, for example "is this similar to that in some way?" Carefully record their rationale for grouping the various things. ➢ Use the Human Ecosystem and Sustainable Livelihoods Frameworks to cross check whether there are major elements that have not been taken into consideration. Rely on the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework only for checking or prompting further consideration among the group. ➢ Discuss how the participants categorised the components of the map, explain in simple terms the conceptual frameworks used by 'outsiders' and discuss the difference and similarities. You should introduce and explain the basic aspects of the frameworks. This will empower local people to be conversant in the categories used by outsiders with whom they have to deal with (without erasing any of their categories). ALTERNATIVELY ➢ Work with focus groups drawn from each of the village sub-groups and go through what activities they are engaged in from when their day begins to when they go to sleep - note differences during weekends, dry or rainy seasons, school term or other cyclical patterns. ➢ Note the natural resources they mention, institutions, cultural practice etc. ➢ Collate these to build a list that be taken to the entire subgroup to look over and build on.
Tips	
-Look for patterns of ecological, social, economic and cultural bases of community life. -Look for trends among age and gender groups and for insight into differentiation within the village. - Observe how individuals group the components – what categories they assign. Look for differences between different sub-groups. - You should note that it is not possible to engage local people without there being an exchange of values. It is important to make this exchange explicit and empowering. Participants may combine their input with aspects of these frameworks to produce the final categorisation.	- Facilitators should prompt participants and use stories and narratives to get them to recall what resources they rely on for their livelihood, but may take for granted. -Facilitators should not ask for a list of things. For example, do not list 'institutions' but rather focus on local terms people use. Remember that sometimes from the local perspective, concepts such as 'institution' are often embodied in a person, say a Regional or Central Government or NGO representative. You will need to draw this out. -The list will be ad-hoc, a mix of resources, institutions etc. The process of grouping will be very revealing.

Step 5	*Exercise - Creating a Village Conceptual Map*
Whom to involve? All groups together (Village 2 hrs)	➢ Ask each subgroup to put its conceptual map up for visual display. ➢ Allow participants to wander for a bit and talk about the maps. ➢ Facilitate the combination of the different 'conceptual maps' by grouping like things, discussing odd things, asking about whether anything is missing. ➢ Review the finalised map with the community to ensure that everyone agrees. Negotiate and reach agreement on all components. As a rule include a component that may be preferred by one subgroup rather than exclude it. See Box 3 for example of components of a village conceptual map. ➢ Conduct an exercise in which villagers draw pictures to represent each component of the conceptual map (even if you are working in a literate society). Ask each person to select one component to draw. Ask for volunteers and discuss their drawings. This helps to diffuse tension and provides feedback on the extent to which participants grasp the concept. ➢ Ask the group to identify 'critical' resources – life / death resources from the list. Start this by asking which of the components they could not possibly live without and why. Discuss why they categorise the components in the way they do.

Tips	
- The responses will vary, depending on the level of acculturation (extent to which the society has adopted the culture of external groups) of the community. The more traditional the community is, the more incomprehensible outside categories may appear, bringing an authority that may silence their organic cultural world. With a more acculturated group, there will be a greater familiarity with and use of the discursive markers of the outside world: sustainable development, collaborative management, the 'Rights' discourse, etc. - Facilitators need to look for openings through which discussions can be led that enable the group to articulate, even re-discover, their practices and conceptual worldview.	-In our experience groups tend to identify natural resources, social-economic resources such as population, information and cultural resources such as language and knowledge as critical resources. -The components of the conceptual maps have tended to correspond highly with the Human Ecosystem framework. However, they are usually more detailed. Interestingly, in our experience, groups have consistently categorised cultural attributes as 'critical resources'. --The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework on the other hand tends to be useful to support dialogue. For example, it is useful for discussing 'shocks', which allow participants to expand their analysis to look at resources or aspects of their life in times of duress. The emphasis on access to external institutions is also a useful complement to the more integrated social-ecological approach of the Human Ecosystem framework.

Box 3: Example of components of a Village Conceptual Map

CRITICAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources

Firewood
Wild Animals
Fish
Cattle
Drinking water
Land/territory
River
Village housing area
Forest
Farmland and fallow
Medicinal plants
Light

Cultural Resources

Traditional system of
organisation
Beliefs
Myths
Language
Equity
Matriman (collective work)
Ecological knowledge

Social Resources

Population
Labour (ability to work)
Cash
Transportation
Communication
Information

SOCIAL SYSTEM

Institutions

Government Clinic
Piai Man (traditional
healer)
Churches
Traditional Faith
School
Makushi Education
(parental mentoring,
traditional skills)
Elected Village leaders
Recreation

Social Cycles

Individual (daily/weekly)
School terms
Pay cycle (and alcohol
consumption)

Environmental Cycles
Wet and Dry season
El Nino
Malaria Season

Social Order

Family
Age
Gender
Race
Individual Identity
Makushi (indigenous) self-
image
Wealth
Knowledge
Power

Step 6	*Exercise – Evaluate as you go*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups Conduct with each subgroup (1 hr)	➢ Hold feedback sessions with resource persons to reflect on the process thus far and lessons learned. ➢ Conduct similar feedback sessions with each subgroup. ➢ You can use a range of participatory techniques to 'lighten' the discussion and may wish to change venue or hold the discussion informally over a group meal. Your choice of approach should depend on the context. Often combining a formal session with informal discussions is the best way to get feedback. ➢ Discuss the schedule for further activities participants and secure their commitment.

Tips	
-Focus your analysis on matters of logistics, difficulty of the exercises, and quality of interaction between participants. -Draw out concerns of different individuals and try to find a way to accommodate them as you move forward.	

Summary of steps 1-6

- The primary purpose of steps 1 to 6 is to produce a key building block - a customised Village Conceptual Map detailing components of village life to use for planning and evaluation. (Note that this is done at a particular village level. You may need to repeat these steps with several villages if the goal is to produce a planning tool for a 'community' consisting of several villages.)

- The process of developing the conceptual map should foster collective learning and build the confidence of participants to take part in the process. Keep good notes and track the information shared along the way, including drawings etc.

- You should track participation throughout and hold feedback sessions with the resource persons to understand the local dynamics and nature of any debates that arise.

- You should consistently uphold the ground rules.

- Encourage participants to edit actively /change their maps in the process of developing them, so that these tools are 'owned' and transformed.

- Conduct Step 6: Evaluation to assess the process.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGERS: Approximately 1 day for each subgroup (number of days work for facilitator depend on number of sub-groups) followed by approximately two hours village meeting (this may be greater if it requires language interpretation, you should work in the local language). Each participant would be giving one full day of his or her time and possibly an additional half-day.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF FACILITATORS: Approximately 14 days, assuming six subgroups and one lead facilitator. This includes subgroup events, village meeting, preparation with resource persons and documentation.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF RESOURCE PERSONS: Approximately 10 days

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGERS AND LEADERS: 2 days.

- APPROXIMATE SIZE OF SUB-GROUPS: Maximum 20. Tailor the sessions for the village workshop according to the size of sub-groups that will come together.

- LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION: Seek approximately 60% of individuals in each subgroup identified for the village. Secure consistent participation throughout the process.

5. Development phase - Stage 2: Developing village standards

Stage 2 of the development phase is concerned with developing standards for each component of the village conceptual map. This is done by looking at historical changes in each component of the conceptual map, discussing current problems and issues and setting a standard – a state that the community would like to achieve for that component by a certain time.

The technique of pair-wise comparison is introduced at this stage of developing CTA. Pair-wise comparison is the process of comparing one thing against another. Pair-wise comparison is central to CTA as it provides a systematic method for looking at how changes in one component of the village conceptual map impacts on every other component of the map. By systematically comparing what is proposed for each component, the community is able to look purposefully for tradeoffs that are often hidden. The community can also identify inconsistencies and synergies in their goals for the different components of their village conceptual map. The pair-wise comparison approach is therefore an important building block for achieving integrated planning.

> **► Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement**
>
> **Specific Reference**:
>
> Case Study 2: Developing a Customised Community Conceptual Map and Village Standards with Surama Village, Annai District, Guyana.

The process of negotiation is critical to the development of a commonly agreed set of village standards. The standards are developed in sub-groups. They are then compared and negotiated among sub-groups within their gender grouping. Final village standards are negotiated between gender groups at the village level.

Objectives of development phase stage 2:

You should:
- Conduct a series of learning-oriented exercises within sub-groups that allow villagers to reflect on the changes over time in each of the components of the village conceptual map and to discuss their views about these changes. Build on this with exercises through which villagers assess what is working well and what could be improved for each component and set standards that they would like to achieve for each component.
- Introduce and train villagers to conduct pair-wise comparisons, to examine tradeoffs between goals they may have set for one component and goals in another component, and to develop consistent goals that are acceptable to individuals in each subgroup.
- Actively illustrate how one could be inconsistent and the importance of applying a systematic approach that looks for hidden tradeoffs in order to plan effectively.
- Facilitate the coming together of sub-groups within gender categories to negotiate a commonly agreed set of standards and to support a similar process between the amalgamated male and female groups to arrive at a commonly agreed set of village standards.
- Foster dialogue and promote learning and information-sharing between different sub-groups, encourage less powerful groups to give their input and create an understanding among villagers that their success depends on being able to take into full consideration the situation and concerns of all members of the village.
- Support active participation of resource persons and gradually assign them facilitation tasks to build their capacity throughout the process.
- Conduct daily and other evaluations with resource persons and participants to assess the process and make necessary adjustments to improve it.

Development phase: Stage 2 steps

Step 7	*Constructing a 'village history' – learning from the past*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups Conduct with each subgroup. (3 hours)	➤ Encourage participants to choose key markers in the village history, against which everyone can measure before/after. Say, for example, when the village was established, or the road came/was upgraded; or before/after a well was installed. You may actually want to do this component of the exercise with the village in Step 6 to get a consistent set of markers, but you would have to adjust for different age groups. ➤ Using the village's 'conceptual map' ask participants to consider how each component of the map has changed in his/her lifetime and against time markers. Ask them to explain what caused the changes. For example, for fuelwood, is it more or less abundant, how long does it take to gather today versus 5 years ago? Why? ➤ Record the information on changes and purported reasons against each component. ➤ Facilitate discussion on each component.

Tips	
-This exercise gives voice to many different sub-groups in the community to construct their history. Many of these sub-groups have been marginalised or made 'invisible'. -Observe the debate within the sub-groups and trends/differences between sub-groups. -Note where there may be conflicting information on changes and discuss these.	- Focus on analysing what has changed and why people thought it changed. Note that there is likely to be a debate about the underlying causes. Ensure that you note all the reasons for future analysis. Guide participants to reflect on both external and internal factors that produced change and on their own role in the process. -You may need to 'pass the stick' or enact some method of ensuring all members of the group speak out. -Facilitators should review ground rules on how to deal with diverging/ conflicting analyses. Make a rule to note everyone's perspective and ensure these are given attention throughout the process.

Step 8	*Village situation analysis*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups Conduct with each subgroup. (3 hours)	➢ Go back to each component of the 'village conceptual map' and focus on the present. For each component, ask what is going well and what is not going well. ➢ Prompt participants for explanations of the current situation. Ask what are the problems in each area and what they think are underlying causes. ➢ Discuss problems and causes along with potential solutions. Prompt people to look at how changes in one component may have led to changes in others. ➢ Record 'good' and 'not so good' aspects against each component.

Tips	
-Analyse whether participants see themselves as having played a part in causing the problems. -Analyse whether participants see themselves as part of the solution. Prompt with questions. -Look for trends in whether participants identify 'outsiders' versus themselves as having a part to play in problems. Take note of recurring names of agencies, projects and other groups that may be identified with the causes of problems.	-Different groups within the village will likely have different preoccupations. Note any trends and prompt participants to reflect on whether they are part of causing the problem or if there is anything they can do to solve the problem. Focus especially on how they see their role as problem solvers. Discuss what they have been doing or plan to do about the problems they identify. -Prompt participants to look at how changes in one component (say forest - farming) may have affected another. This is the first step to building the skill to examine tradeoffs between components.

Step 9	*Setting subgroup standards*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups: Conduct with each subgroup. (4 hours)	➢ For each component of the conceptual map ask participants to reflect on the previous exercises and come up with a desired state they hope to achieve in the future (what 'standards' they aspire to) - say within 5-10 years. ➢ Allow participants to discuss freely and to lay out what they hope to achieve for each component.

Tips	
-Assess differences in future aspirations within and among sub-groups. Check whether these correlate with age or any other subgroup characteristics. -Note the extent to which participants focus on immediate needs, medium, and long-term priorities.	-This exercise generally can lead to a 'wish list' for each component. Their goals for each component will be tempered in the next exercise when you ask participants to consider the impact of what they want for one component on every other component of their conceptual map. -Look for whether there are participants who, without prompting, are already practising the process of deciding on what they want under a particular component by looking at how it affects other components of the conceptual map. This is the key skill to build in each participant.

Step 10	*Pair-wise comparison to assess tradeoffs*
Whom to involve? Sub-groups Conduct with each subgroup. (5 hours)	➢ For each component look at how the proposed 'standards' will affect every other component on the conceptual map (pair-wise comparison, which should be done for each component in group discussion). Facilitate this session carefully. ➢ Guide participants to search for tradeoffs between components, or opportunities for reinforcement. ➢ Where necessary discuss inconsistencies and conflicting goals between different components. Encourage participants to seek possible solutions and to discuss their priorities in cases where choices are necessary. ➢ For situations where choices are necessary, record carefully the differing perspectives among participants and facilitate to ensure that these are reflected in the final choice. Double check whether the choice is acceptable to all participants. Discuss and resolve instances where there are disagreements. ➢ Conclude when the group has reached an agreeable decision on goals for each component.

Tips

-Assess differences in group outlooks and aspirations for the future. Is the community homogenous? Note whether immediate and medium term priorities are reflected in the choices the participants make. -Look for what tradeoffs people are willing to make: are they willing to forego some types of things for others and in particular are there things that they will not forego under any circumstance. Their rationale can be very insightful. Identify their priorities.	-This is a critical step in the whole process. It may take some time to ensure that all participants develop the skill to systematically 'check' on how what they are proposing for each component will affect other components and adjust until they find a good compromise. -Be sure to draw out the rationale for the choices made and ensure that these are recorded to assist participants to articulate their points when the groups are consolidated. - If an agreement cannot be reached, this can be brought for the feedback from other groups.

Step 11	Agreeing on standards in gender groups
Whom to involve? Sub-groups combined into their gender groups Conduct with amalgamated gender groups. (5 hrs)	➢ Convene all sub-groups within the same gender (e.g. different age sub-groups). ➢ Discuss the process so far, noting the difference between their initial goals and the goals that emerged after they systematically looked at tradeoffs. Stress the key skill, which is to be systematic in comparing all components to look for 'tradeoffs'. ➢ Reiterate the ground rules for dealing with different viewpoints. ➢ Ask the sub-groups each to put up their conceptual maps with their goals noted for each component. ➢ Ask for volunteers to constitute two teams to role-play: 'consultants' and 'villagers'. Ensure that each team has participants drawn from all the sub-groups. You can vary this depending on the local context. ➢ Ask the 'villagers' to travel from 'station' to 'station' where groups have their conceptual map with standards posted, ask consultants to present their standards. Ask the 'villagers' to interrogate 'consultants' – so that the team can explain the basic rationale for why they arrived at their standards. This usually reinforces the skills needed to compare goals in each component and make tradeoffs explicit. It also fosters debate between the groups. Spend about one and a half hours on this exercise. ➢ Return to a full group. Systematically, component by component, discuss which standards are common or complementary and ensure there is agreement on these, then move them to an 'agreed' corner. Facilitate the discussion for participants to come to a compromise where there are conflicting differences in their standards. ➢ Review the final set of standards for each component with participants.
Tips	
-This is the first instance in which different age groups or other sub-group types come together. Note the similarly and differences in their priorities and how the extent to which they are willing to compromise. This will give some indication of the power structure and level of cooperation in the village. - You may find it useful to explicitly discuss the role of compromise and negotiation in planning.	-Facilitators need to ensure that dominant voices do not drown out the views of marginalised groups within the community. It is important to remind people of the rationale for choices that were given in sub-groups. If the larger group discussion begins to overlook issues or silence less articulate persons, you need to get the viewpoints in the sub-groups back into the discourse. -Facilitators should experiment with a range of PLA methods to encourage role-play and humour. The key is to achieve a comparison and agreement on common standards. -Where there are outstanding disagreements, you can ask the group whether they wish to defer to when the whole village (both genders) gets together to make a final decision. -Look for recalcitrance among certain individuals and try to get at what is the underlying cause. Often this occurs when there is a particular incident or existing conflict that needs to be addressed sensitively.

Step 12	*Negotiating village standards*
Whom to involve? Entire village: all sub-groups 1 day (5 hours)	➢ Hold a workshop with all sub-groups (combined male and female groups). ➢ Reiterate the ground rules and the important role of each person's contribution to meeting goals, regardless of gender. ➢ Ask each group to present their 'standards' for each component of the conceptual map. ➢ Go through each component and compare the standards developed by the two groups. Discuss which standards are common or complementary and ensure there is agreement on these. ➢ Facilitate discussion of conflicting viewpoints to reach acceptable agreements.

Tips

- Actively and carefully analyse the process of negotiation to ensure that the group decision does not lead to tradeoffs that sub-groups were unwilling to make. -By this time each participant would have had practice in looking systematically at tradeoffs and rationalising their choice and should be able to do it at this session as well as explain their rationale. In general, we find that 'stronger' personalities (male and female) lead in these sessions. This is not necessarily problematic (unless the decisions are not representing the tradeoffs that each sub-group is willing to make). -Observe carefully whether there are outstanding persons struggling with making the comparisons and tradeoffs so that resource persons could work with them individually.	-This session is very sensitive to gender dynamics in the community. It is important to reiterate throughout the process that the work and contribution of each member of the village will make a difference to its strength and ability to cope with external forces. If you get a clear acknowledgement and keep reinforcing this point throughout the whole process then you should be able to refer back to it to aid the negotiation process at the village level. -By this stage, you would have had a clear sense of which factors/components are critical to women and men. This should guide you in bringing out the rationale for choices should they begin to be overlooked.

Step 13	*Break the ice – our experience with development projects*
Whom to involved? Gender groups then combined village group. Need 2 lead facilitators (3 hrs, at close of the 1 day village workshop)	➢ Split into male and female groups. ➢ Ask participants in each group to describe one development project (let them note if it was initiated by the community or outside organisation) they were involved in and to name one thing they thought went well and one thing they thought could have been done better. ➢ Ask participants to reflect on this for 15 minutes– they can write, draw, enact, or speak aloud (and record what they say). ➢ Ask participants to share their experience with the group. ➢ Discuss the issues raised, including what participants thought were the underlying reason for satisfactory or less than satisfactory experiences and what could have been done differently. ➢ Bring groups together, summarise findings from each group, and discuss issues. ➢ Discuss whether there were hidden tradeoffs from the inception of any of these projects and whether participants believe they would have uncovered these from the start if they had used a systematic process such as pair-wise comparison to plan. Note their responses and underscore the importance of using a planning process that systematically considers the tradeoffs. ➢ Introduce the concept of monitoring and evaluation as 'measuring as you go along' to address problems and ensure that mistakes do not get worse. Discuss the next steps in the fieldwork, which is to try to develop indicators for each of the village standards and the usefulness of indicators for assessing the status of initiatives over time. ➢ Ask participants to identify a project or two projects, which they would like to use to test the CTA. However, do not seek a decision at that moment, ask them to discuss this among themselves and make the decision with village leaders. ➢ Leave the standards with the village (copies on flip charts) so that they can digest and reflect some more on these during an upcoming break period in the field activities.

Tips

-Observe how people describe their experience. Do they mention tradeoffs that they did not think about at the start of the project? -Assess the extent to which people are aware of these tradeoffs or whether do you have to bring them to their attention. This gives some feedback as to whether the whole process of thinking through tradeoffs is taking root.	-Focus the discussion on lessons learned and whether people perceive the benefit of using a systematic process to assess tradeoffs when planning. -The issues that arise will give a very good insight into the type of ongoing initiatives in the village. These issues usually have to do with problems within projects, the level of coordination between projects and the extent to which projects fit with local priorities. -This exercise will be valuable for testing the CTA later i.e. refining the tool by applying it to evaluate a project.

Step 14	Evaluate the process
Who are involved? Entire village: all sub-groups Half of an hour at close of 1 day village workshop	➢ Conduct a simple evaluation of the entire process. ➢ Distribute two cards to each participant: red and blue. Ask them to write/draw what they liked about the process so far on the blue card and what they thought could be improved on the red cards. ➢ Collate the cards, go through them in the meeting and discuss. ➢ Secure participants' commitment to continue the process. ➢ Prepare a wall chart with four rows: 　　"I learned a lot" 　　"I am pleased with the final standards" 　　"I think this process will be useful to my village" 　　"I feel confident that I can do this exercise without support" 　　Ask participants to pin either a smiling face, non-expressive face or unhappy face for each of these on their way out. ➢ Your daily feedback with resource persons and individual feedback sessions should also support the evaluation.

Tips	
-Resource persons should assist members of the community that may struggle with the format. -Save all of the information for presentation in the next stage.	- Assess evaluation results, you may need to discuss these at the beginning of the next stage or adapt if the feedback suggest that participants are struggling with the process.

Summary of steps 7-14

- At the end of these sessions you should have a negotiated set of village development standards according to each component of the conceptual map. You may find that during the process new components come up and need to be added to the map for analysis.

- Document all of the information from the sessions and leave them with the village so that leaders and other community members can discuss. Allow sufficient time for reflection on these before returning for additional fieldwork (approximately 2 weeks).

- Conduct a review with resource persons of the whole process and plan the upcoming fieldwork and next steps.

- Explain clearly to the village the next steps before the close of the village meeting.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGERS: Approximately 4 days.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND FACILITATORS: Approximately 15 days (assuming 6 subgroups and inclusive of preparation and documentation)

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF RESOURCE PERSONS: 15 days

6. Development phase - Stage 3: Developing indicators

Stage 3 of CTA development is concerned with identifying practical and simple means for the community to check whether they are achieving their standards over time or evaluate whether any particular project is contributing to their goals or undermining them. The primary output of this stage is a series of simple 'word picture' indicators for each of the standards set under each component of the conceptual map.

The community defines these indicators. They are precise and measurable states representing a range, from success to failure, for each component of the conceptual map. The indicators are developed by subgroups and reviewed and finalised at the village level. The development of indicators concludes the development of the key building blocks for CTA.   These building blocks are the village's conceptual map, standards for each component of the map and indicators to assess whether the community is achieving those standards.

Before commencing this phase, you should have conducted feedback sessions with resource persons on the effects of Stages 1 and 2 in the community, prepared resource persons by reviewing key concepts of 'monitoring', 'evaluation' and 'indicator', and ensure community mobilisation to resume the fieldwork. You should have also reported the outcomes thus far to the community leadership (especially if there are several villages with a hierarchy of leaders) for their feedback.

Objectives of development phase stage 3

You should:
- Review with villagers their conceptual map and standards and the systematic pair-wise comparison technique for uncovering tradeoffs. Refresh their minds, discuss any matters arising, and adjust the conceptual map and standards as appropriate. Discuss the evaluation conducted at the end of the previous stage as necessary.
- Clarify the next steps for completing the development of CTA. Review the schedule for fieldwork and adjust as necessary.
- Reinforce awareness that planning is not a one-time event and underscore the need for simple ways to measure both success and failure in an ongoing and systematic way. Hold mentoring sessions with subgroups to explain the basics of the relationship between planning, monitoring and evaluation. However, do this by engaging with participants on the way they currently do these things in everyday life. This would empower them to define the concepts of 'monitoring', 'evaluation' and 'indicator' – rather than relying on the external expressions of these concepts.
- Explain that an indicator has to be specific, measurable, achievable, sensitive and valid in order to reflect the status of any particular standard.
- Develop a range of indicators from success to failure for each component of the village conceptual map. Develop indicators in subgroups, review, and finalise at the village level.
- Explain the difference between monitoring and evaluating a specific project according to the overall village goals versus monitoring and evaluating the specifics of a particular project. Clarify that, for specific projects within a community, the CTA will be useful for judging whether the project is meeting the broader village goals. However, there will be specific project goals that require specific monitoring approaches.
- Evaluate the process for developing indicators.
- Identify at least one project that the community can evaluate to test CTA. Identify the stakeholders and make necessary preparations for fieldwork to conduct the evaluation.

Development phase: Stage 3 steps

Step 15	Hold a village review meeting
Whom to involve? Village Three-quarter day. Lead with resource persons and key subgroup representatives with good grasps of concepts	➤ Village leaders should convene the meeting and introduce the purpose. ➤ Explain clearly the purpose of the meeting. ➤ Review the process undertaken thus far in the development of the CTA. ➤ Review the village conceptual map (let resource persons lead). ➤ Review standards for each component of the conceptual map (let representatives of subgroups and resource persons lead). Be clear that major revisions would have to go through a fully consultative process and note where this may be an issue. ➤ Discuss any issues arising and incorporate feedback where necessary. ➤ Propose the next steps for developing indicators and testing the 'tool' by conducting and evaluation of at least one existing project. ➤ Finalise a schedule of activities, dates and times and secure commitment to attend from subgroup members. ➤ Be clear about your expectations and make sure you are clear about villagers' expectations of the process – ensure you manage expectations so people know what outputs to expect. ➤ Address any concerns raised by villagers and incorporate their feedback into your approach. ➤ Finalise which project the village would like to evaluate.
Tips	
- Assess the level of participation (indicator of commitment). - Observe whether new persons have joined the group and whether they agree or disagree with the standards developed.	-Often powerful individuals can join the process late and you will have to balance their inputs against the input of other participants. -Guard against the unravelling of standards by individuals who may have participated in the process and wish to sway it. Have your documentation of the negotiation process at hand to ensure that new suggestions are reviewed against the full set of perspectives brought forward previously. Facilitate as necessary.

Step 16	*Subgroup mentoring on indicators*
Whom to involve? Subgroups: (4 hours)	➢ Convene and review the schedule of activities – secure commitment to participate. ➢ Choose a livelihood activity – say farming or herding. Facilitate a discussion on how villagers know what actions to take to avoid problems. Say for example, the appearance of a certain caterpillar on cassava will trigger the farmer to clean all the beds surrounding the cassava to avoid pest destruction. Focus on drawing out how a farmer plans (has a target for cassava production), checks (monitors his/her crop), looks for 'signs' (uses indicators, like early appearance of caterpillar) and evaluates (weighs information to deduce the circumstance, makes decisions) and takes action (cleans surrounding beds, keeps a close eye on the situation) – a full cycle of management. ➢ Ask participants to offer examples and prompt them with some examples from your knowledge of the local culture. Break each example down as done above. ➢ Choose at least three of the village's standards and practice identifying indicators that could be checked as easily as villagers check everyday activities. ➢ Introduce criteria to judge the validity of the indicators participants suggest. The indicators must be must be very *specific* (one exact thing); *measurable* (possible to measure it and measurement can be done easily by villagers); *achievable* (must be a realistic, where changes can be seen easily); *sensitive* (will signal problems early); *valid* (changes in the indicator is actually linked to changes in the standard); and bound within the time frame the standard is set.

Tips	
-Focus sufficient time on the local indicator identification exercise before introducing criteria for screening indicators. Otherwise, you may confuse participants or make the exercise seem unachievable to participants.	-Assign resource persons within their gender groups. - Encourage participants who have a good grasp of the concept to support fellow participants. You want to foster internally generated learning process rather than one that is constrained by external language and ideas. - Pay attention to individuals who are struggling. You may want to give individual attention to them afterwards. -Tailor your examples to suit the subgroups.

Step 17	*Review indicator development with local resource persons*
Whom to involve? Resource persons Half-day	➢ Convene local resource persons. ➢ Reflect on the previous exercise on trying to identify indicators. ➢ Discuss the comfort level (confidence) of each resource person in providing support to village groups as they work towards developing indicators for their standard. ➢ Conduct further local example based exercises to clarify and assist resource persons to attain the level of confidence required to provide support during the fieldwork. ➢ Review plans for the next session and assign resource persons to different subgroups.

Step 18	Develop 'word picture' indicators
Whom to involve? Subgroups: Total one and half days women's groups Total one and half days men's groups Conduct in 2 three-quarter day sessions if possible.	➢ Convene all subgroups at the same time and place; arrange three 'working areas'. ➢ In the large group, explain the process of developing indicators for each standard under each component of the village conceptual map. ➢ Ask participants to draw up a range of categories (using local terminology) for how they will decide whether they are achieving their standards or not. Begin with fully achieving the standard (excellent), through to on the way to achieving the standard (good), to not fully achieving the standard but no indication of moving negatively away from the standard (okay), to definitely moving negatively away from the standard (not good) to moving dangerously away from the standard (very bad). As follows: VERY GOOD – GOOD – OKAY – GOOD – VERY BAD ➢ Explain that for each component of the village conceptual map they should define a state of affairs – easily measurable indicators – according to the above categories. ➢ Facilitate the group to look at least at three components and standards and come up with indicators under the range of five worst to best states. For this exercise cross-check that the indicators fit with the criteria introduced in the previous step. ➢ Break into subgroups. ➢ Ask participants to imagine that they are being visited by an outsider who wants them to *prove* that they are achieving a particular standard. What *evidence* would they bring to prove it? ➢ Resource persons should support the process whereby participants look at each component and standard and develop indicators by deciding what they would measure to prove it. ➢ For each indicator that the group comes up with resource persons should prompt participants to double check that they meet the criteria described in the previous step. You will need to explain these criteria again in the subgroups using local terminology so that they are properly understood. ➢ Each subgroup should deal with different components and standards in the same order. The lead facilitator should visit groups to trouble shoot and provide support. ➢ After about three hours of work, bring participants back into a large group, pick three components and standards and discuss the indicators that the different groups have developed. Facilitate a discussion on why groups chose those indicators. Ask all participants to give feedback and to decide which two indicators they would use for the example standards and components. ➢ Discuss any difficulties that participants are experiencing. ➢ Reconvene the break-out groups to continue to work on developing indicators. ➢ Break and reconvene on a different day to continue the exercises. ➢ Review the final set of indicators with each subgroup to ensure they meet the necessary criteria.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2" align="center">Tips</th></tr>
<tr><td>- This is a very intensive and important exercise. Do not conduct it for more than 6 hours in total. You will need to break and reconvene the group on another day to complete indicators for all the components of the conceptual map – do not attempt to get it done in a short span of time.
-Learning is as important an output as the final indictors developed. Therefore, put emphasis on ensuring that participants understand why they need to develop these indicators and on their skill in doing so.</td><td>-You will find that different groups work at different paces and will need to ensure that they all finish before bringing them together.</td></tr>
</table>

Step 19	Finalise indicators in gender groups
Whom to involve? Gender subgroups: (4 hours)	➢ Convene subgroups into their gender groups after they have completed developing indicators for each standard under each component of the conceptual map. ➢ Facilitate a systematic process of comparing indicators developed by each subgroup for each standard under each component of the conceptual map. ➢ Ask participants to discuss and agree on at least one (preferably two) indicators for each standard. ➢ Cross check that the indicators are consistent by looking at whether indicators in one component are inconsistent with indicators in another component of the conceptual map. Apply the technique of pair-wise comparison, which villagers should be familiar with by this time. ➢ Review the final list with participants. ALTERNATIVELY: Depending on the volume of information, you can convene all subgroups into one village meeting. This decision will depend on gender dynamics: you may want to ensure, for example, that the women finalise what they want measured, before they enter into negotiation with the men on what should be measured.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2" align="center">Tips</th></tr>
<tr><td>- Analyse any trends in debates that may arise (dominance, power etc).
- The process of developing indicators can shed light on the standards, particularly whether they need to be discussed further or revised.</td><td>-Observe whether there are any heated debates about what to measure to prove that a standard is being achieved. Sometimes, a villager may agree to a standard but would not wish to be the one making the sacrifice to achieve it. Look out for free-riders that want to dodge certain indicators. If this surfaces, ensure that you engender board debate and reflect the views of the village in a balanced way.</td></tr>
</table>

Step 20	Finalise village indicators
Whom to involve? Village: (4 hours)	➢ Convene gender groups in a village meeting. ➢ Facilitate a systematic process of comparing indicators developed by male and female groups for each standard under each component of the conceptual map. ➢ Finalise the list of indicators for each standard, ensuring that they reflect the different priorities of subgroups. ➢ Cross check whether any new indicators are consistent as before. Apply the technique of pair-wise comparison. ➢ Review the final list with participants and ensure that there is full agreement.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2" align="center">Tips</th></tr>
<tr><td>- Keep careful notes and track the dialogue to ensure that the reasons for the final decisions are fully captured.</td><td>-Observe whether there are any heated debates about what to measure to prove that a standard is being achieved. Take steps to review the standards and ensure agreement before closing the session.</td></tr>
</table>

Step 21	*Evaluate the indicator development process and identify a project to use to test CTA*
Whom to involve? All groups: Final village session on Indicators (2 hours)	➢ Conduct a short evaluation exercise of the process of developing indicators. ➢ Divide the room into two groups (balanced gender and age on either side). ➢ Ask participants in one group to imagine that they had a bad dream about indicators and to prepare to share with the group what that dream was (writing, drama, drawing). ➢ Ask participants in the other group to imagine that they had a good dream about indicators and to prepare to share this dream with the village. ➢ Give about 20 minutes for dreaming and preparing to present back in the large group. ➢ Join in the exercise with resource persons. ➢ Facilitate the presentations back to the group, taking careful note of the issues raised. ➢ This session should be humorous and lightening and lead to the closure of the sessions. ➢ Before closing, finalise with the village which project(s) they would like to use to test the CTA. ➢ Ask each subgroup to convene and elect at least 3 persons to represent them to conduct the data analysis component of the trial project evaluation (otherwise the number of participants will be too big and unmanageable).

Tips	
- Keep careful notes of the issues raised as these will guide in offering future capacity support to the village to use the tool developed.	- Document and leave copies of information with the community.

Summary of Steps 15-21

- At the end of these sessions you should have negotiated set of indicators for each of the village's standards and refine the standards if necessary.

- Document all of the information from the sessions and leave them with the village.

- Conduct a review with resource persons of the whole process and plan the upcoming fieldwork and next steps.

- Identify one or two projects to use to test the CTA and representatives of each subgroup that will participate in the data analysis component of the planned evaluation.

- Explain clearly to the village the next steps before the close of the village meeting.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGERS AND VILLAGE LEADERS: Approximately 6.5 days.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF FACILITATORS: 10 days, including preparation with resource persons and documentation.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND ON RESOURCE PERSONS: 10 days.

7. **Testing phase – Applying CTA to a trial evaluation**

Once the basic building blocks of CTA – village conceptual map, standards, and indicators – are developed, a community can plan or evaluate initiatives by using the technique of pair-wise comparison, and negotiation, to arrive at acceptable tradeoffs and priorities. With every application, the community will be able to refine the tool and improve its relevance and ease of use. However, the relevance and practicality of CTA should be tested in the first instance as part of the development of the tool. Applying it to evaluate a project can do this.

In practice, it is useful, if possible, to choose two projects to evaluate – one that involves collaboration between the community and an external party, and one that is mobilised from within the community without the input of external parties. This extends the awareness-building aspect of this process as it demonstrates that one can genuinely overlook tradeoffs regardless of whether the project is self-mobilised or influenced by outsiders. This is the crux of the empowerment value of this approach. By improving the thoroughness with which communities identify costs, benefits and priorities, CTA could help communities to be better prepared to take actions that fit more with their value systems than external agendas.

This section outlines some steps for planning and conducting a simple evaluation of an existing project or initiative using the CTA developed with the community. The purpose of this section is to offer some key considerations for engaging a participatory trial evaluation with the community and some generic steps for applying the tool to evaluate a project. With respect to evaluating a particular initiative, the application of CTA is primarily concerned with evaluating how the initiative performs against the standards set by the community. However, this is not the only aspect of the evaluation that needs to be undertaken. It is also necessary to evaluate the project outcomes against the specific goals set for that project. The primary concern is to evaluate the initial goals that were set for the project, and the impacts of the project, against the extent to which they fit with the priorities expressed in the standards developed by the community.

Objectives of Development Phase: Stage 3

- Secure the cooperation of the individuals and organisations involved in the project(s) that the community selected for evaluation.
- Hold a session with community leaders and representatives of stakeholder groups to report the findings of the process to date and seek their input for executing a community-led evaluation of the project(s).
- Facilitate election of a small team (five people), drawn from outside the village, to role-play as external 'jury' for the evaluation exercise.
- Prepare resource persons and the jury team so that they understand the conceptual analysis and simple steps involved in conducting the evaluation. Assign roles and responsibilities as necessary.
- Plan the evaluation with individuals and organisations involved in the project(s) and ensure that the information needed is available ahead of time or could be generated through the evaluation process.
- Hold a sensitisation workshop with villagers participating in the evaluation exercise to ensure that they know what to expect and that they understand their roles and the basic underlying concepts involved in conducting the evaluation.
- Execute the evaluation through a community-led process with the support of resource persons and the jury team.
- Report the findings of the evaluation and hold a final discussion with villagers on the lessons learned in applying CTA and the value of ongoing application of the tool.

- Evaluate the whole process at the village level. Assess villagers' confidence with respect to applying the tool independently and provide the village with the developed CTA and records of information generated in the process.
- Conclude the tool development activities with the community or village leadership and clarify different ways that the community can apply the approach.

Testing Phase: Steps

Step 1	*Approach individuals and organisations involved in the project(s) selected for evaluation and secure their commitment*
Who to involved? Village Leaders Facilitator May take up to two weeks, depending on context.	➢ Work together with village leaders to make all necessary formal contact with organisations involved in projects selected for evaluation. ➢ Discuss the purpose of the evaluation and invite the individuals to a *Review Workshop*. ➢ Clarify your expectations and the public nature of the exercise. ➢ Secure commitment from organisations and relevant individuals. Ensure that they understand and accept that the project would be brought under public scrutiny. ➢ Determine whether there is sufficient information to conduct a simple and rapid evaluation successfully.
Tips	
It helps to scope out the potential projects from the beginning and build relationships with individuals involved in them to foster their interest.	

Step 2	*Secure commitment of the villagers who were involved in the project to participate in the evaluation.*
Whom to involve? Village Leaders Project staff/managers Facilitator May take up to two weeks to finalise, depending on context.	➢ Work together with village leaders and project staff to contact villagers involved in the project being evaluated. ➢ Hold focus group meetings or individual discussions to explain the purpose of the trial evaluation. Invite the individuals to participate along with representatives from various subgroups of the village that participated in the development of CTA. ➢ Be clear about your expectations and the public nature of the exercise. Ensure that you understand the villagers' expectations and address their concerns. ➢ Invite villagers to the *Review Workshop* with the community leaders and key stakeholder representatives. ➢ Secure villagers' commitment to participate in both the workshop and trial evaluation process.
Tips	
Check in the village meeting (final assembly in the last phase) whether there were individuals involved in the projects selected for evaluation (include this as one of the criteria for selection of projects – see previous section). This will help you with mobilising.	

Step 3	*Conduct a participatory review workshop with key leaders and stakeholder representatives*
Whom to involve? Local leaders Representatives of key stakeholder groups Project participants Project managers/staff Elected subgroup representatives 1 day	➢ Reconvene the participants from the *Awareness and Planning Workshop* held during the preparatory phases of the process. ➢ Report on the CTA development process so far and lessons learned. ➢ Address participants' concerns and discuss ways forward. ➢ Plan the trial evaluation and develop a schedule with participants. ➢ Explain the methodology for conducting the evaluation, particularly the role of a 'jury' in role-playing during the evaluation process. Note that the 'jury' will play an independent role by deliberating and giving a position on deductions made by villagers on the success and shortcomings of the project. ➢ Ask participants to nominate and endorse a jury – a panel of five persons, consisting of one male and female resource person drawn from the village and three persons from the area drawn from other villages or that have other associations. The jury should represent as much as possible a cross section of interests. ➢ Finalise the schedule for the evaluation – preparation, analysis session and public village review.
Tips See case study.	

► **Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement**

Specific Reference:

Case Study 4: Preparing for Trial Evaluation with the North Rupununi Communities, Guyana.

Step 4	*Conduct a training session with resource persons and the jury on the concepts and methodology for the rapid evaluation.*

Whom to involve?
 	
Local Leaders
Resource Persons
Jury
 	
2 days
	➢ Begin with an interactive session where participants introduce themselves and questions they have about the training session and overall process.
	➢ Facilitate a discussion to clarify expectations.
	➢ Present on the basic concept of evaluation and the value of community-led evaluation. Clarify the concepts.
	➢ Reinforce the main ideas and skills presented with practice sessions. This should:
	  o Use local examples offered by participants (or pre-prepared examples depending on your familiarity with the local context).
	  o Focus on understanding the requisite conceptual analysis:
	    ▪ Unpacking the assumptions underlying the goal of the project (what are the problems and solutions identified and what assumptions do they rely on?).
	    ▪ Testing the validity of assumptions (are they correct?)
	    ▪ Learning to look for differences between the 'stated' purpose of a project and its purpose in reality. (Based on weaknesses in assumption, are there likely to be different outcomes than the project explicitly intend? Is there any evidence of this already?)
	  o Understanding indicators:
	    ▪ Support resource persons to lead an exercise in looking at the indicators initially identified for the project, revising or identifying new ones.
	    ▪ Explain *use*, *product* and *benefit* indicators. In doing so illustrate the different levels at which a project should be evaluated. Highlight that an evaluation not only determines whether the planned activities are achieving their *intended* goals but also assesses internal management. Illustrate the distinction with examples.
	  o Understanding integration assessment: highlight the need to assess the project against other initiatives on the village. To illustrate, use local examples and apply a pair-wise comparison approach to determine whether the project positively or negatively affects other initiatives in the community.
	  o Understanding CTA assessment: highlight the need to apply the pair-wise comparison approach to assess the impacts of the project in relation to the standards set for each component of the conceptual map.
	    ▪ Explain that the project will be evaluated against each indicator developed and that deductions will be made about its overall influence on the standard -that is, whether it supports or undermines that priority.
	➢ Evaluate the training session using a simple set of cards. Ask each participant to fill out per card the following:
	  o 'what went well'; 'what was difficult'; 'what I understood'; 'what I am having difficulty with'; 'definitely help!'
	➢ Discuss the evaluation and ways to modify the training sessions for greater impact with the villagers participating in the evaluation.
	➢ Discuss the details of the plans for conducting the community-led project evaluation and incorporate feedback from participants.
	➢ Assign roles for assisting with a *Sensitisation Workshop* - to deliver a similar training to villagers.
	➢ Mentor resource persons and jury members as necessary to ensure that they achieve the understanding and confidence necessary for the undertaking.

Tips Adjust the days of your training course based on the existing capacity of your jury. Use participatory techniques appropriate for the context. Leave a few days between your training course and other activities to allow for mentoring.	

Step 5	*Prepare for sensitisation workshop*
Whom to involve? Facilitators Resource persons 1 week period	➢ Mobilise village representatives to attend the *Sensitisation Workshop* on the basics of evaluation and the community-led project evaluation (house visits etc.). ➢ Collect and compile all supporting information and conduct preliminary analysis to support the rapid evaluation process (numeric data etc.). ➢ Focus on any existing information relevant to the standards and indicators developed for the each component of the conceptual map and on evaluating the intended objectives of the project. Look also for studies and other information that give insight into the relationship between the targeted project and other projects in the community. ➢ Conduct preliminary discussions with key informants to understand the inter-personal and other dynamics that may be relevant to the project. ➢ Organise the logistics of the community-led evaluation exercise and sensitisation workshop. ➢ Work with project staff and intended target groups to distil the relevant information they would need and to prepare a presentation on the project at the beginning of the community-led evaluation.

Tips
Invest the time to help resource persons understand what kinds of information they should obtain for projects in general. If necessary, impress upon them the need for the village to routinely keep and store documents and ways for doing so given the local environmental conditions.

Step 6	*Sensitisation workshop on basics of evaluation*
Whom to involve? Local leaders Project participants Project managers/staff Elected subgroup representatives Resource persons Jury members (if they wish to repeat) 2 days	➢ Repeat the first five major bullet actions in Step 4. ➢ After the group evaluation discuss and determine whether you would need to mentor some key persons. ➢ Discuss the details of the plans for conducting the community-led project evaluation and incorporate feedback from participants. ➢ Clarify respective roles and responsibilities. ➢ Conduct a participatory exercise with participants on their 'hopes' and 'fears' about the whole evaluation process they would be undertaking. Use two sets of colour coded cards. Give each participant about 20 minutes to record their hopes and fears. ➢ Discuss these hopes and fears and ensure you address individual concerns about such matters as criticism or condemnation during the evaluation. ➢ Develop with the participants a set of ground rules for the community-led evaluation – record them on large sheets as 'DOs' and 'DON'Ts' for application throughout the evaluation process. ➢ Review the schedule of events and secure commitment to attend from participants.

Tips
Be on the alert for nervous participants. Make time to discuss concerns with them individually as they may be unable to share their concerns openly. Use these discussions to prepare for facilitating the sessions.

Step 7	*Community-led evaluation of the project – Day 1*
Whom to involve? Local leaders Project participants Project managers/staff Elected subgroup representatives 3 days	➢ Convene participants. ➢ Review the agenda and incorporate feedback as necessary. ➢ Explain the activities planned and ensure there is clarity on role and responsibilities. ➢ Review ground rules. Make minor changes if necessary. ➢ Assign working groups (e.g. project staff, jury, villagers that are not intended beneficiaries of the project, intended beneficiaries of the project). The categories will vary with context. ➢ Facilitate a *concise* presentation by project associates on the project. Ensure that the essential information that needed for the evaluation is transmitted and understood by participants. Aid this process by recording essential information on large wall sheets for quick reference. ➢ Convene working groups for 1 hour. In each group, conduct a Conceptual Analysis of the project, (see Step 4). Resource persons should support groups and the lead facilitator should visit all groups to provide support. ➢ Facilitate a one-hour reporting back and discussion session. Draw out conclusions about the project's assumptions and record these visibly. ➢ Conduct a PROVE IT exercise for about one and a half hours. For each project objective facilitate a brainstorming session on how participants would 'prove' whether the goals were achieved or not. Summarise the 'ways to prove' that come up. Present them back the group as their 'indicators' of project success. Apply the criteria for valid indicators to ensure they are sound. Work with participants to group the indicators into two groups: 'information they have at hand' and 'information that would take a long time to get'. Focus on what you have at hand to continue the exercises. However, acknowledge and put into perspective the value of information that should be collected as part of monitoring. ➢ Summarise the indicators for each goal to ensure that everyone understands and agrees. ➢ Assign working groups – one working group per objective (draw from a cross section of stakeholders for each objective). Explain that the small groups will conduct specific tasks to determine whether the project has achieved or is achieving its goals. Assign one jury member to each group to observe the process. ➢ Convene working groups for 1.5 hours, assign a resource person to assist them to assess the information available to assess the information at hand to determine whether the particular objective of the project was achieved. ➢ Break for the day after 1.5 hours – working groups can resume activities the next day.
Tips You may need to give a break between days one and two to allow the participants to digest or collect more information if necessary.	

Step 8	*Community-led evaluation of the project – Day 2*

Whom to involve?
 	
Local Leaders
Project participants
Project managers/staff
Elected subgroup representatives
 	
3 days
	➢ Reconvene working groups from Day 1 to complete their work if necessary.
	➢ Assemble the jury.
	➢ Facilitate working group reporting sessions with the jury role-play in place.
	    o Let each group present their findings on the information they analysed and their conclusions as to whether the project had or is meeting that particular objective. Give a simple column format for them to summarise as follows: Goals – Findings Data – Conclusion
	    o Facilitate a discussion on their findings and conclusion. Note disagreements. Refer to the jury to deliberate on the issues raised during the discussion. If necessary ask the jury to produce a final 'verdict' on whether the objective was achieved or not and explain their position.
	    o Summarise the conclusions for each objective and record these visibly for future reference.
	➢ Rapidly assess the project in the context of its impact and relationship to other projects in the village. Ask participants to identify other projects in the community on a flip chart. Supplement this with information on other projects gathered earlier. Ask participants to note on a card whether the project they are there to evaluate was 'good' or 'bad' (or undecided) for each of the identified projects. Ask them to stick their cards next to the label for each of the identified project. In the interest of time pick five projects (representing a range of responses) and discuss the issues raised. Record these for future use. Explain that it would help to look at responses for all the projects when time permitted. Summarise the findings and discuss the lessons learned.
	➢ Do a PROVE IT! again. Display and review the conceptual map, standards and indicators for participants.
	➢ For each standard, facilitate a group discussion on whether the project under evaluation is helping the community to meet its standards or is affecting the community in an undesirable way. To achieve this, split participants into 5 working groups (representing a wide cross section). Let them analyse the impact of the project for each component (approx. 7 to group) and record their findings.
	➢ Reconvene the large group and discuss the findings of the subgroups. Record the information clearly for presentation at a broader village meeting.

**Tips** See case study.

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Step 9	*Community-led evaluation of the project – Day 3*
Whom to involve? All village subgroups Local Leaders Project managers/staff 1 day	➤ Convene a village meeting. ➤ Explain the evaluation process and what had been done so far. ➤ Review the agenda, objectives and ground rules for interaction. ➤ Conduct an open-ended exercise where villagers write, draw or act out what they think is 'going well with the project' and 'what they think is not going well'. Give twenty minutes for participants to prepare. Facilitate a discussion on their feedback. Draw out any similarities with what had been found the previous day. ➤ Facilitate a presentation from each subgroup from the previous day on their findings on the effect of the project on each of the village standards. Do this component by component and facilitate a discussion for each component. Refer to the jury where there are great differences of opinion. Record the conclusions (not enough information to assess could be a conclusion, which informs the village planning process). ➤ Present to the village the conclusions of the evaluation the previous day on the underlying assumptions of the project and whether the project was meeting its stated objectives. Facilitate a discussion. Draw out the extent to which the project is achieving 'stated' objectives versus 'unstated' objectives, note differences of opinion and refer to the jury if necessary for a second opinion. Summarise the conclusions. ➤ Review all of the conclusions of the evaluation and wrap up by congratulating the project associates and staff for their participation. Be sure to point out their demonstrated commitment to the village. ➤ Conduct a simple evaluation– using smiling, non-emotional, and unhappy faces. Ask participants to pin one against three simple sheets: 'this exercise was useful'; 'this exercise was ok'; 'this exercise was not useful'. ➤ Discuss the outcome of the evaluation exercise seeking clarification and providing explanations where necessary.

Tips

Be prepared to address conflict and be very sensitive to the feelings of the project staff. Ensure that you spend time with the project associates in the mornings before start time to prepare them for what to expect with the exercises and to evaluate their responses as the process unfolds.

► **Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement**

Specific Reference:

Case Study 5: Evaluation of Surama Village Ecotourism Project, North Rupununi, Guyana.

Step 10	**Post-evaluation meetings**
Whom to involve? Resource persons Local leaders Representatives of key stakeholders Jury Project staff 3 hours for participants evaluation Half day for meeting with villagers	➢ Convene the participants who took part in all three days of the evaluation. Review the whole process; discuss what went well and what could be improved for the next time. ➢ Meet with village leaders, resource persons and other key leaders in the community. Review the entire process of developing and testing CTA and the main findings. Discuss the different ways in which they could use the tool. These include screening proposals rapidly, planning village initiatives, or developing a simple monitoring plan to assess the effects of projects in their community. Discuss also the limitations of CTA in their overall planning and stress the need for planning to be an ongoing exercise that requires feedback and adjustment. Clarify that CTA's application is only part of that process. ➢ Discuss next steps and how you would leave information with the village for their use.

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Tips

Hold a separate discussion with project staff as well to understand the impact of the exercise on them.
If possible, conduct an evaluation on the impact of the process in six months or a year's time.

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Summary of Steps 1-10

- Test CTA by evaluating at least one project in the community.

- Train resource persons, jury and focus group of villagers on conducting a project evaluation.

- Report to the community and village leaders on the process for developing CTA and the lessons learned.

- Document and share all conclusions and information with the village.

- Evaluate the process.

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGERS (GENERAL): 1 day

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF VILLAGE LEADERS: 5 days

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF FOCUS GROUP OF VILLAGERS: 10 days

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF JURY: 10 days (12 if anyone wishes to repeat the evaluation training)

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF FACILITATORS: 25 days, inclusive of preparation, data collection and documentation

- TOTAL TIME DEMAND OF RESOURCE PERSONS: 20 days.

8. **Conclusions**

A Community tradeoffs assessment tool (CTA) is customised to a community. The methodology for developing CTA is action-learning oriented and designed to reinforce skills for using the tool. CTA consists of three fundamental building blocks: a village conceptual map, standards for each component of the conceptual map and indicators that represent best to worst scenarios for each of the standard. Processes of pair-wise comparison and negotiation between different interests in a community are central to the development of CTA. Each successive application of CTA should produce information that can be used to refine and improve the effectiveness of the tool.

CTA is useful to communities as well as external parties interested in working to support actions that fit with the priorities of local people and their unique value systems. The methodology for developing a customised CTA is involved: as such it is of special value to outsiders interested in capacity building for governance, who have a long-term presence in a particular area. While the process for developing the tool requires investing adequate time, CTA is very valuable to a community afterwards as a tool that can be applied to rapidly assess any initiative in a manner that is thorough and uncovers otherwise hidden tradeoffs. CTA empowers a community to assess initiatives against broader community goals rather than depending on an ad hoc process of looking only at the scope of a proposed project.

CTA is not a panacea for community-based management. It primarily helps in identifying priorities. It would be most valuable to a community if it were applied as part of a suite of management approaches, which should include the identification, scheduling and execution of priority actions. CTA is also not a tool to *preserve* the unique value systems of socially distinct cultures. Ultimately, the priorities of communities have to do with the tradeoffs they are willing to accept. CTA empowers communities systematically to factor in their unique values when planning interactions with external parties so that they may make choices that are more informed. These choices determine the extent to which a community is able to retain its cultural distinctiveness.

The authors strongly support the use of CTA by persons committed to supporting self-direction among a particular group of resource users. However, users can be creative and adapt aspects of CTA to conduct more rapid assessments to support planning and evaluation with communities.

Users should use this tool in conjunction with the Learning Points and Case Studies Supplement, which illustrates many of the concepts and practical results. Please feel free to adapt and use the material as necessary and share your feedback with us.