

**No. 11**

**Forest  
Participation  
Services**

**Capacity to  
manage role  
changes in  
forestry**

**Introducing the  
'4Rs' framework**

**Olivier Dubois**



**International  
Institute for  
Environment and  
Development**

**Forestry and Land Use  
Programme**

# **Capacities to manage role changes in forestry**

## **Introducing the '4Rs' framework**

**Olivier Dubois**

**May 1998**

### **Note on author**

The author has more than 15 years experience in rural development in third world countries, mainly in Africa and Asia. He is currently working as Research Associate within the Forestry & Land Use Programme of IIED

## Preface

This paper draws mainly on the findings from studies and workshops carried out in Niger, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Uganda and Zambia. Collaborators in these countries have accepted to play a pioneer role in the use of the '4Rs' framework in a variety of contexts. The '4Rs' framework being a new tool, they could not refer to any handbook. Their work has therefore been quite challenging, and has allowed for the display of great competence and innovative spirit. The author is very grateful for the quality of their tasks.

This paper would not have been possible without the financial support from DANIDA throughout the first Phase of the AFRICAP Project. This support is gratefully acknowledged.

The author would also like to extend his thanks to his colleagues from the Forestry & Land Use Programme of IIED for the quality of their comments

and their assistance in the editing of this paper.

Despite the collaborative character of the AFRICAP project, the author takes full responsibility for the opinions expressed in this paper.

The '4Rs' being a new instrument, the main aim of this paper is to introduce this tool for collaboration in forestry. The preliminary findings discussed here need therefore comments and further experimentation. The author sincerely hopes to receive opinions from practitioners and decision-makers who are interested in this topic, and more broadly in issues pertaining to partnerships for better management of natural resources.

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*May 1998*

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## Executive Summary

This paper is addressed to practitioners and decision-makers - in governments, development-assistance agencies and NGOs - who are faced with the difficult task of managing collaboration in forestry, but lack tools and methods to assess stakeholder roles, reconcile divergent interests, and assess power structures.

There is an increasing agreement that sustainable use and management of forest resources require more collaboration between primary stakeholders, i.e. the State, the Private Sector and Civil Society. This stance can be found in several initiatives and, increasingly, in policy documents. However, the political dimension of such an approach implies the need to address issues pertaining to power differences at the resource level. The political dimension of forest management, when acknowledged, is often weakly dealt with by development agencies, mainly due to the lack of tools to assess stakeholders' roles and power, and lack of capacity to manage role changes in forestry.

This paper synthesises and discusses the findings of a three-year DANIDA-supported project, which has tried to contribute to the development of such

tools. In collaboration with partners in six African countries, IED has developed a framework, whereby stakeholders' roles are defined by their respective '4Rs', i.e. their Rights, Responsibilities, Returns/ Revenues and Relationships. The framework has been tested under different circumstances, in different biomes, and involving different types of stakeholders.

The outputs of the project show that the '4Rs' framework can contribute to approaches aimed at improving collaboration in forestry: This framework complements other tools such PRA and stakeholder analysis, by teasing out issues pertaining to the sensitive and little-explored area of stakeholders' power. However, as such, this framework should be used cautiously and requires further experimentation.

The next step should be to consolidate the experience gained so far on the '4Rs', by using it in the role negotiation process in some pilot cases. Feedback from these experiments will determine how to develop and disseminate the tool. This should be carried out in parallel with the assessment of capacity needs to manage role changes in forestry.

## Coming to terms with capacity

Most people seem to agree that capacities are key for development in a changing institutional environment. As the World Bank put it several years ago:

*In the most fundamental sense, development depends on the capacity to initiate, sustain and accommodate change (1988, cited in Austin, 1994).*

However, this is about the only point of agreement concerning capacity, and when it comes to its practical application, several issues emerge.

The first issue is that *capacity means different things for different people*. For instance, it is interesting to look at differences between dictionary definitions of capacity, e.g.:

- The Pocket Oxford Dictionary uses the term *power* to define capacity, i.e. 'receiving or containing power, producing power, mental power';
- The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language prefers the term *ability*, i.e. capacity is defined as 'the ability to receive, hold or absorb, the ability to learn or retain knowledge'.

These two definitions suffice to show that capacity encapsulates many notions, ranging from benign ones such as 'knowledge' or 'ability' to the more contentious one of 'power'. This explains the complexity of, and confusion often associated with, the concept of capacity.

The diversity of perceptions of capacity also explains a second difficulty in its use: it starts losing meaning when it is taken *outside a specific context*, i.e. when we try to define it as a generality. Hence, we refer to the definition provided by OECD/DAC (1994):

*Capacity in the environment represents the ability of individuals, groups, organisations in a given context to address environmental issues as part of a range of efforts to achieve sustainable development.*

We tend to prefer the expression 'capacity development' to 'capacity building', likewise OECD/DAC (1993). The former conveys better the message that we are dealing with a dynamic process. Furthermore, it suggests that there are existing capacities on which to build.

Hence capacity development in the environment (CDE) describes:

*the process by which capacity in environment and appropriate institutional structures is enhanced (OECD/DAC, 1993).*

This definition leads to the third issue associated with initiatives on capacity, i.e. its *relation to power*. It actually highlights two different aspects of capacity, i.e. technical capacities and institutional capacities. Dia (1996) describes these components as follows:

*Technical capacity focuses on the*

*supply of skills and transferring new technology, methods and systems. In this context, capacity development is essentially associated with training, education, and technical assistance that complements local supply.*

Technical capacity therefore relates to the 'supply' side approach of capacity development. The major issue to be addressed is the adequacy of the resources: does the country (or department, community or other organisational unit) have enough qualified and experienced staff, money, infrastructure and equipment to do the job? If not, then the implication is that missing resources should be provided. The 'supply' approach has dominated aid agencies' attempts to promote capacity development in LDCs (Moore, 1996).

*Institutional capacity focuses on the ability of the country to make optimal use of the existing technical capacity and resources in a sustainable fashion. The focus here is on capacity utilisation and absorptive capacity (Dia, 1996).*

Institutional capacity therefore relates more to the environment of an organisation than the organisation itself. It is more a 'demand' approach, i.e. 'what are the features of this environment that will encourage organisation to strive to do a good job, and make good use of the resources they have available' (Moore, 1996). Here, the main issues are (Dia, 1996):

- *commitment of leadership;*
- *local ownership;*
- *representativeness and legitimacy of institutions;*

- *accountability to clients;*
- *autonomy of organisations;*
- *the extent to which incentives encourage service and improve performance;*
- *enforceability of rules.*

There seems to be a convergence of opinion that, in recent years, institutional capacities present more reason for concern than technical capacities in LDCs, and that the emphasis placed so far by donor agencies on the latter did not bring about the expected results. The scant success of such an approach stems from the fact that development-cooperation was mainly conceived as a technical task, with little attention paid to the conflicting demands from different stakeholders over development and environmental resources; hence to matters pertaining to authority, power, negotiation and politics. This is not to say that technical capacities should be overlooked. However, they will be significantly enhanced if they are used in an appropriate institutional environment.

A further difficulty associated with capacity development concerns the *difficulty in measuring impacts*. Indeed, capacity often starts making sense in the *longer term*, and in *different fashions*. For instance, the training of a graduate forester on participatory management might bear fruits only when he or she reaches a senior position.

In addition, whilst measurement of impact implies a direct causal relationship between an action and its output, in the case of capacity, results are often dependent on a range of factors.

## Making sense of the "Battlefield": Different pressures and stakes in Forest Management

When looking at how the status of forests has evolved over the last decade or so, one has to admit that despite vast amounts of energy, money and time being invested in improving people's participation, organising international meetings, improving existing policies, etc, the amount of forests being sustainably managed has not significantly increased.

One major factor associated with this rather gloomy picture lies in the partial paradigm shift in forestry over the past 10-15 years, from state control to increasing involvement of private operators and civil society, and the difficulties associated with this transition.

This new paradigm can be correlated with some broad-scale trends (Bass *et al*, 1998):

- the transition of former centrally-planned economies to market-based economies;
- an increase in democracy, notably in Latin America;
- increased globalisation of the world's economy, with trade and capital liberalisation and currency reform;
- economic imperatives to increase the efficiency of resource utilisation or to liberalise pricing systems;

- the realisation that local communities need control of local resources if their livelihoods are to improve; and,
- a series of structural adjustment programmes promoted by international lending institutions, which led many national governments to reduce public sector expenditures and price distortions.

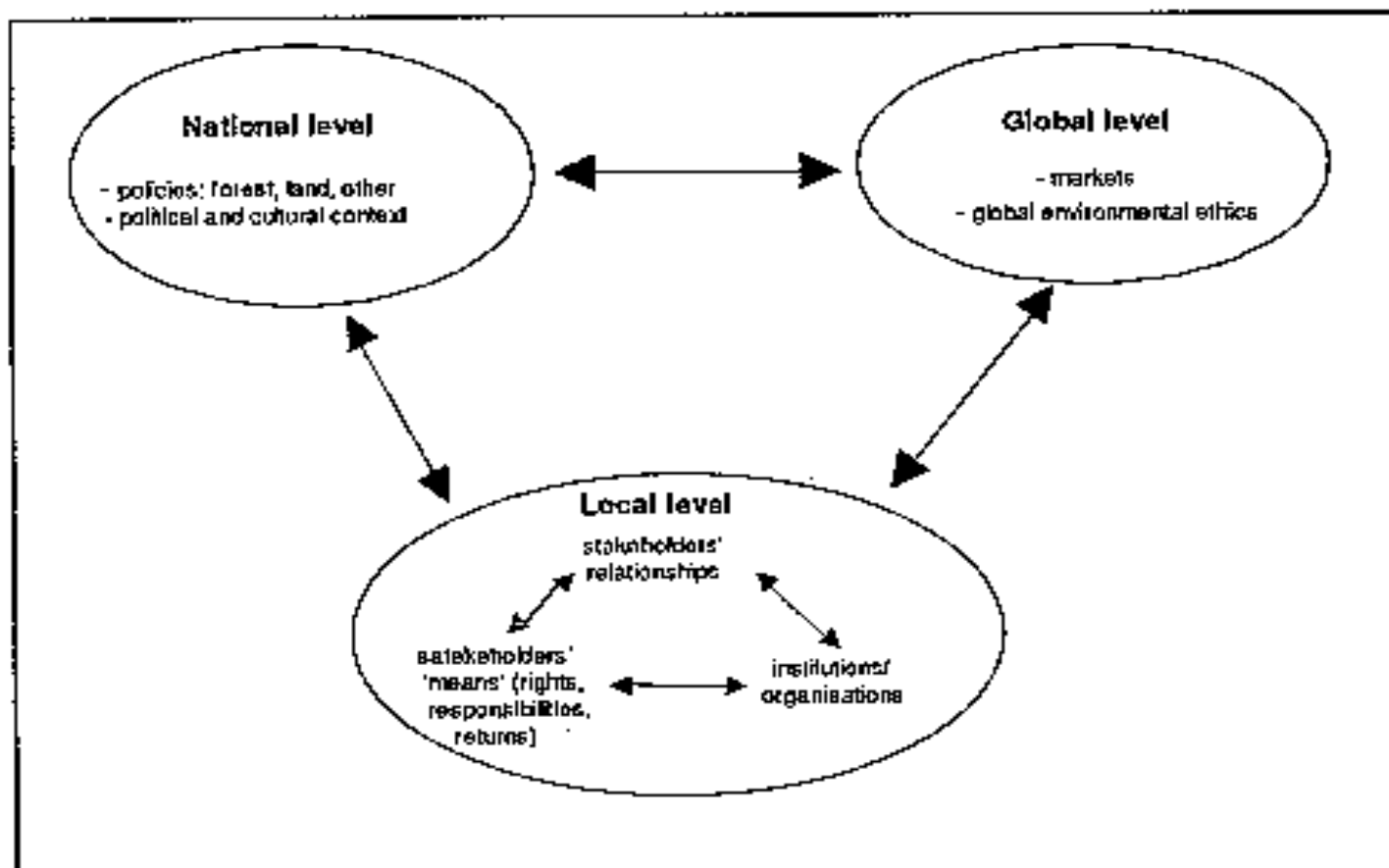
This has resulted in more and diversified pressures on forest authorities, at local, national and even international levels. Moreover, the realisation that forestry should be geared to people's livelihoods as well as to trees has forced forest management to expand beyond forests and encompass other types of land uses.

Inevitably as players increase, conflicts spiral, especially until capacities are developed to deal with them. There is a need to address the sensitive issues of shared decision-making, and power relationships come into play. This forces forest management to take a political stance, and to encompass the complex linkages between politics, market, policies, institutions and capacities.

Mahir (1997) compares forests to 'battlefields which social actors are struggling to manage and make sense of'. This battlefield is tentatively illustrated in diagram 1.



**Diagram 1: Making sense of the Forest "Battlefield":  
Different stakes and pressures in forest management**



Several points emerge from this diagram, i.e.:

- Policy implementation, institutions and stakeholders' roles in forest management are all embedded in the local political and cultural context;
- Policies address the issue of *what* is needed at the resource level, but;
- It is the interactions between the means, institutions and relationships that determine *how* policies are to be implemented. This is therefore the level where capacity development should be given priority;
- The argument about forest management usually concerns stakeholders' 'means' (rights, responsibilities, and returns) and institutions, but;
- Progress often hinges on the quality of local stakeholders' relationships, local politics and culture, and the influence of outside pressures;
- Development assistance agencies experience difficulties in dealing with such realities because:
  - although they can directly influence the substance of the argument, institutions, and, to a lesser extent,

outside forces; their effective influence on the actual main driving factors of progress - politics, culture, relationships and outside forces - is often more indirect and therefore must span a significant period of time<sup>1</sup>. This influence occurs via cumulative influence from projects concerning the substance of the argument and institutions, e.g.:

- platforms for dialogue such as the recently established national working groups on certification in Cameroon, Gabon and Ghana;
- critical mass of challenges to existing practices, such as informal community-based or local partnership initiatives; leading to the realisation of the need to change 'the rules of the game'.

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<sup>1</sup> Donors can sometimes attempt to influence these factors more drastically, e.g. by rewriting policies in Papua New Guinea and Cameroon. However, such hasty moves are seldom effectively implemented.

## The AFRICAP Project

The challenge is to transform the forest from a battlefield into a shared asset, capable of meeting divergent interests.

There is a growing *consensus* amongst key decision-makers about *what* is needed to make the transition to more sustainable forest management, i.e. forestry which will ensure the security of forest-related goods and services at household, national and global levels. This transition is likely to involve an iterative process of continuous trial and improvement.

However, reconciling different interests requires skills with which forest authorities are ill-equipped by themselves. The process would require action, not by governments alone, but also by the market and civil society bodies. What is lacking are instruments to operationalise the transition to sustainable forest management (SFM). Consequently, at present, forest management often amounts to managing confusion; which, as in all battlefields, suits the mighty parties, but is unsustainable in the long run.

To evolve sustainable patterns of forest resource use, where various interests can be satisfied, and where existing good practice and poor management can be recognised, *stakeholder's roles need also to evolve*. Hence the need for

processes by which mutual learning, exploration of options, and negotiation of roles can take place.

IIED has been contributing to the search for approaches and methodologies to cope with change in forestry, through a DANIDA-supported project on "Capacity Development for Sustainable Forestry in Africa" (AFRICAP in shorthand). Since 1995, this project has been collaborating with partners in six African countries<sup>2</sup> in the testing of a framework to clarify stakeholders' roles in forestry, as a prerequisite to defining capacity needs. This framework attempts to operationalise the concept of roles by defining these as stakeholders' '4Rs', i.e. *their Rights, Responsibilities, Revenues/Returns from the resource and Relationships*, as illustrated in diagram 2.

In Africa in particular, there is an imbalance between the '4Rs' of the primary stakeholders<sup>3</sup>. This limits local capacity to accommodate the transition to SFM:

### The State

- has too many responsibilities relative to its means - usually has ownership rights over forest resources
- often receives inadequate returns from forest resource use
- relationships with the local communities and the private sector

<sup>2</sup> Six countries had been chosen as focal countries, based on the need to cover the main biomes (Sahel, rainforest and dry/miombo forest), institutional settings and language blocks (Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone): Niger, Senegal, Cameroon, Uganda, Zambia and Mozambique (later replaced by Côte d'Ivoire).

<sup>3</sup> Primary stakeholders are those who have a direct stake in the use of forest resources. NGOs are thereby considered to be secondary stakeholders. This does not belittle their essential role in facilitating processes aimed at better management of the forest.

are usually uneasy and depend on local, often covert arrangements. Mutual distrust is common amongst these stakeholders.

#### The Private Sector

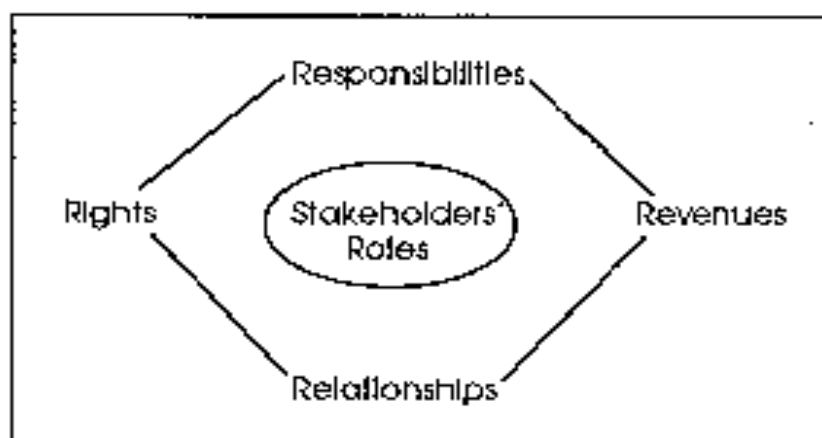
- is given concession rights to exploit the resources
- is not responsible for the long term objectives of the natural resources, i.e. those related to resources as a public good
- although it has some means to manage the resource
- the level of returns is not clear and constitutes a controversial issue. The private sector claims it is too low to finance sustainable forest management; yet other stakeholders believe it is high, especially when compared to the price paid for the right to exploit the resource.
- often has opportunistic relationships with local communities

#### Local communities

- usually have no or few formal/legal responsibilities
- have no significant official rights besides user rights. Customary rights are often more important than formal rules
- in theory, need permits to obtain tangible financial returns from the resources; such returns are usually small.

This situation creates an imbalance in power relationships and conflicts of interests, which, in turn, makes it difficult to achieve good relationships between stakeholders and clarity

**Diagram 2: The '4Rs' framework to define stakeholders' roles in forest management**



concerning their roles. As a result, what prevails is a *patchwork of local arrangements* and *quasi open access to land and forest resources*.

In such a context, the use of the '4Rs' framework has helped in teasing out issues and highlighting leverage points in relation to collaboration between stakeholders.

*The capacities needed to manage role changes are likely to be better assessed once roles are clarified and agreed through the establishment of a neutral forum or several fora for mutual learning and negotiation.* They might include:

- capacities for learning,
- capacities to explore options and achieve constructive negotiation, and
- capacities to develop the institutional environment to enable such processes to occur.

Further information regarding the AFRICAP project are synthesised in Box 1 hereinafter.

**Box 1: Some information about AFRICAP**

**A. Goal**

The overall goal of AFRICAP is, through collaborative arrangements between IIED and African partners, to develop and implement *methodologies* to better understand capacity needs for collaborative forest management (CFM), and develop *pilot* capacity development activities.

**B. Methodology**

The project is based on the following principles:

(i) *Need to encompass both technical and institutional capacities*

(ii) *Capacity needs can be assessed only once stakeholders' roles are agreed* This is because primary stakeholders' roles - the State, the Private Sector and the Local Communities - are being currently questioned and need to be (re)negotiated.

(iii) *Determine stakeholders' roles using the '4Rs' framework.*

(iv) *Collaborative Research and capacity development with local partners* IIED's extensive experience in collaborative research has shown that this type of research is:

- \* very effective in utilising and fostering capacities in recipient countries from the outset of the research process;
- \* sustainable in its impact, as local partners share ownership of the research and its outputs with IIED, hence emphasising the local dimension of issues.

(v) *Adaptive Research* Finally, the research is *adaptive*, such that the precise activities and target users of each phase of the work will be based upon the lessons emerging from the previous phase.

**C. Activities**

The project comprises three phases, i.e.

(i) *Setting up the institutional environment*

\* Phase 1: "*Understanding*" Phase (1995-1997; DANIDA-funded) aimed to contribute to a clear understanding of primary stakeholders' roles, desirable changes and forms of partnership to achieve SFM;

Activities that have been completed during the first phase of the project include:

- \* round tables in the six focal countries;
- \* the setting up of local working groups (WGs) to take forward key issues discussed during the round tables;
- \* evaluation of Phase 1 workshops in each focal country;
- \* the publication of a selection of papers concerning the '4Rs' issues and related capacity needs;
- \* an overview report.

\* Phase 2: "*Role Negotiation*" phase (as from 1998, aiming for multi-donor funding), where the purpose will be to test the '4Rs' framework in initiatives involving role negotiation.

**(ii) Capacity development**

- \* Phase 3: "Capacity mapping" phase (from 1999), aimed at:
  - disseminating and providing training on the '4Rs', and
  - defining what capacities need to be developed to manage roles changes agreed during the second phase of AFRICAP.

**D. Outputs**

Outputs from Phase 1 of AFRICAP are synthesised in Table 1.

One notable feature of Phase 1 lies in the diversity of situations analysed, e.g.:

- \* with respect to *biomes*, from Sahelian conditions in Senegal and Niger to dry deciduous miombo forests in Zambia and rainforest in Cameroon and Uganda;
- \* in terms of *stakeholders*, from communities (most cases) to private operators (e.g. the Masinda Pitsawyers Association in Uganda), always with the involvement of the State;
- \* as regards use of *forest resources*, from lower-priced products - in monetary terms - such as charcoal (e.g. in Zambia and Niger) or NTFPs (e.g. cane in Cameroon) to timber (one case in Uganda); and also conversion of forests to non-forest use (e.g. parks in Uganda, agriculture in Zambia and Niger).
- \* different *institutional conditions*, from non-supported initiatives (e.g. two cases in Zambia, case study in Cameroon) to project-supported schemes (most of the cases in Niger and Uganda).

This diversity has allowed for some comparisons discussed in section 4.

Table 1 Main outputs of Phase 1 of AFRICAP

National level (country-specific outputs)						IIED level (more generic outputs)	
Niger	Senegal	Cameroun	Uganda	Zambia	Côte d'Ivoire	Publications	Methodological inputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Proceedings of roundtable (May 1996)</li> <li>* Study on perception of '4Rs' at local level, and on how projects perform on the '4Rs', based on four case studies (January 1998)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Proceedings of roundtable (June 1996)</li> <li>* Study comparing formal and real '4Rs', and on means to spread information on the '4Rs' at local level, based on four case studies (January 1998)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Proceedings of roundtable (March 1996)</li> <li>* Nation-wide workshop on the '4Rs' (August 1996)</li> <li>* Study on the '4Rs' in relation to NTFPs (cane), based on one case study (February 1998)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Proceedings of roundtable (November 1996)</li> <li>* Overview report on the use of the '4Rs' in different fora related to CFM (December 97)</li> <li>* Examples of activities follow up (1998): - use of the '4Rs' to review timber concession system - use of '4Rs' in CFM: eco-tourism, JFM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Proceedings of roundtable (May 1996)</li> <li>* Study on the '4Rs' in relation to charcoal making, based on three case studies (September 1997)</li> <li>* Examples of activities follow up (1998): - use of '4Rs' in CFM: two case studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Study on the '4Rs' in different cases of CFM: farmers/ authorities, farmers/ migrants, co-operatives, forest operators (July 1997)</li> <li>* Study on the '4Rs' on farmland subject to logging (April 1998)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Forest Participation Series No's 6-10 (July 1997)</li> <li>* Annual progress reports</li> <li>* Overview Report (April 1998)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Develop the '4Rs' analytical framework</li> <li>* Comments on national working groups activities; working plans, draft studies, etc.</li> </ul>

## Lessons learned

Lessons from Phase 1 of AFRICAP are discussed according to *issues* and the use of the '4Rs' framework.

### 4.1 Issues

More often than not, the forest authority is unable to handle its new role as facilitator of shared forest management, due either to its weak presence in the resource area, or to its inclination and capacity to perform tasks linked to its previous responsibilities - especially control tasks - rather than its new ones (e.g. technical assistance). Therefore, in those areas, local arrangements and uncontrolled access to the resources prevail.

In some instances, practices have preceded policies, and local communities have taken over and set up informal rules, especially concerning access to the resource. Examples of such initiatives concern arrangements between slash-and-burn farmers and charcoal-makers in Zambia, or patrolling of forest boundaries by community rangers in Senegal. Populations and local interest groups have accepted more responsibilities as long as, in parallel, they have gained more rights and revenues. There is therefore a condition for local initiatives to emerge, i.e. the *'letting go'* by local forest authorities, either passively, in *absentia*, or more formally through agreements. Where they are operational, locally-derived mechanisms to enforce local '4Rs' seem to be of greater significance in forest cover than

commonly attributed factors such as population density (e.g. in Zambia).

Yet, such mechanisms are often significantly hampered by their illegality when it comes to counteracting powerful outside interests, sometimes backed by local governments (e.g. in Cameroon).

Moreover, the current balance between the '4Rs', both within and between stakeholders' groups, often does not provide enough resilience to local interest groups: the more rights to and revenues you get from the forest, the more likely you will be able to counteract outside pressures, and local interest groups are often poorly endowed in that respect.

Finally, local stakeholders, be they government, private or communities, often lack information on the formal '4Rs'. This is often compounded by the rapid turn-over of regulations (e.g. in Senegal the Forestry Code passed in 1994 - and its Application Decree of 1995 - have been replaced by a new Code in 1997).

However, one should not revert to the other extreme of the pendulum and provide full '4Rs' to communities without a 'referee' role for the government bodies - centralised or decentralised - to reduce the risk of local 'despotism' (e.g. often the case in Niger, due to the official recognition but also strong political clout of traditional authorities).

The case studies have made it clear that just increasing tenure rights is not sufficient to foster income generation



from land and forest resources. Hence, beyond subsistence economy, more secure rights to the forest must be accompanied by better access to market outlets.

One frequent key fact concerning the '4Rs' is the usually uneasy relationship between the forest authority and the other parties, especially villagers. Distrust and opportunism prevail. Hence, simple values and factors that might not have seemed important before become essential under the new paradigm, i.e. *confidence-building, time and flexibility*.

These factors are often fostered by the intervention of third parties. Such intermediary roles are usually played by projects, with or without NGO assistance, and with mixed results.

- On the positive side, project interventions often empower local communities and ease the relationships between these and forest authorities at local level. Elements used to achieve good results include stakeholder analysis, participatory techniques, support to existing village institutions or creation of new ones (especially in societies with little social hierarchy such as Cameroon) and village planning.
- However, projects often also create negative effects:
  - they add to the confusion caused by the duality between formal and customary laws by superimposing

their own rules, as shown in the Niger study;

- the elements they create and rely on are usually not replicable outside project-supported initiatives, and they sometimes promote existing privileges.

One example relates to the creation of *village-development committees* in "Gestion de Terroir" type projects (i.e. village-based development projects in Francophone West Africa). So far they exist only in the context of projects, and it seems very unlikely that such committees will ever cover the whole territory of this region. Moreover, they are often too sophisticated to be of any real use to villagers, aside from when foreign experts visit them, or to local elites to take advantage of development activities. It would make perhaps more sense to simplify the process and develop sets of norms (rather than plans) concerning the use of natural resources, emphasising more what not to do than what to do<sup>4</sup>.

Another example is the *development committees set at community level*. Few projects actually worry about the fact that these committees have no legal existence, and that they will probably not survive or be operational once the project pulls out.

More generally speaking, and as shown in the Niger study, *participatory approaches* (even if applied correctly), *village development plans* and *local development committees* do not ensure sustainability of project outputs and outcomes. Indeed,

<sup>4</sup> A comparison between local management of natural resources and the football game might be useful, as this game is almost universal:

- in football, rules are set by a Federation in order to determine mainly what cannot be done on the pitch.
- there are no official plans aimed at telling players what to do.
- this is the role of the coach;

The comparison with local management holds if one assimilates the Federation to local governance, the coach to local leaders and the players to different individuals or groups in the community.

project initiatives are ill-equipped to tackle issues pertaining to the '4Rs' and power relations. We have already mentioned the lack of legal recognition of village development committees. In

addition, Table 2, developed during the Evaluation Workshop of AFRICAP in Niger, shows the limitations of PRA in this respect and illustrates how the '4Rs' could assist.

**Table 2 Comparing PRA<sup>5</sup> and the '4Rs' framework in the project cycle and policy analysis**

Stage of project /area of work	Weaknesses of PRA regarding the '4Rs'	Potential inputs from the '4Rs' framework
Diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Superficial analysis</li> <li>* Focuses on the village level (one or several)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Can deepen the analysis (e.g. regarding benefits, power structures)</li> <li>* Broadens the range of stakeholders beyond the village level</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Often too concise</li> <li>* Most often relates only to project frameworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Guarantees that the '4Rs' are systematically assessed</li> <li>* Hence, it helps in decision making</li> </ul>
Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Most often, it involves only projects and village-based actors (interest groups)</li> <li>* Lacks transparency regarding the '4Rs'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Forces the involvement of other stakeholders (e.g. line agencies, local authorities)</li> <li>* Negotiation can take place at any time</li> <li>* Much more transparent regarding the '4Rs', and hence on stakeholders' commitments</li> </ul>
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* There is often a risk of unplanned outcomes (e.g. enhancing existing privileges), hence of conflicts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Reduces the risk of unplanned outcomes</li> </ul>
M & E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Reasons for unplanned outcomes/conflicts often more difficult to elicit because uses mainly group discussions</li> <li>* M &amp; E of '4Rs' is often superficial, if existing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Reasons for unplanned outcomes/conflicts more easy to elicit because: - '4Rs' are systematically discussed; - based on smaller groups/individual interviews</li> <li>* '4Rs' can lead to the definition of performance indicators on related issues</li> </ul>
Policy analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* So far limited to project level; no macro-level work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Allows for policy analysis at macro-level (comparative analysis, policy development, etc)</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> In this paper, PRA is considered in its restricted meaning, i.e. as a toolkit. The more political perspective of PRA acknowledged by some is seen more as a combination of the toolkit and other aspects which determine participation, including the '4Rs' framework.

PRA and the '4Rs' are different things and complement each other: the former is a *methodology* that can actually use the '4Rs' *framework* to address some key issues related to power structures. However, the '4Rs' are often difficult to assess in a fully open way (e.g. village meetings), and small groups and/or individual interviews seem preferable.

Finally, one key issue has emerged from the Cameroon study. In this case, villagers are concerned with replenishing their source of rattan. Their main request is for technical assistance - both for less damaging harvesting methods and nursery techniques. To them, the '4Rs' are somehow not very important, since they know that, under current circumstances, laws and formal rules are not respected anyway, leading to the prevalence of ad-hoc and local arrangements. This raises the issue of the relevance of negotiations and formal agreements on the '4Rs' in places where formal rules are weakly enforced. Some might be tempted by a

*laissez-faire* attitude. However this increases the risk of unfair and unsustainable local deals regarding the use of forests, as they depend a lot on the power structures at any given time.

## **4.2 The use of the '4Rs' framework**

### **i. Use of the '4Rs' to analyse situations and diagnose problems.**

All the national working groups have used the '4Rs' framework to analyse situations and diagnose problems. For instance, Tables 3 and 4 illustrate such uses in the case of Zambia.

Based on Table 3 a strength and weakness analysis would show notably a clear imbalance between the private operators' responsibilities and their rights and benefits.

Table 4 highlights the usually poor state of the relationships between the State and the other stakeholders.

**Table 3 A summary of the rights, responsibilities and revenues in Lukolongo**

Stakeholders	Responsibility	Rights	Revenues
Subsistence farmers	Custodians to land	Forest harvesting, cultivation of the land	Income from forest & agricultural products
Emergent farmers	Some land management	Land cultivation	As above
Charcoal producers	None	Wood harvesting	Income from forest products
Charcoal traders	None	Charcoal marketing	Income from trade
Curlo-makers	None	Wood harvesting	Income from forest products
Fishermen	None	Fishing	Income from fishing
Forestry Dept.	Forest management, forest law enforcement	Collection of revenue from forest taxes	Revenue from forest taxes
ECAZ (an NGO)	Facilitator of development	To facilitate development	Indirectly, creation of employment

Source: Makano et al, 1997

**Table 4 Stakeholders' relationships in Lukolongo**

	Subsistence farmers	Emergent farmers	Charcoal producers	Curlo-makers	Fishermen	Forestry Dept.	ECAZ
Subsistence farmers							
Emergent farmers	Good						
Charcoal producers	Good	Good					
Curlo-makers	Good	Good	Fair				
Fishermen	Good	Good	Good	Good			
Forestry Dept.	Fairly good	Fairly good	Poor	Poor	Fair		
ECAZ	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Good	

Adapted from Makano et al, 1997

**Table 5 Policy statements and legislative provisions in relation to the "4Rs"**

Legislation and Policy statements	Provisions in relation to the "4Rs"			
	Responsibilities	Rights	Revenues	Relationships with local people
Forest Act	Government	Government	Government and local people	Poor
Wildlife Act	Government and local people	Government	Government and local people	Good
NEAP	Government and local people	Government	Government and local people	?
Water Act	Government	Government	Government and local people	?
Energy	Government	Government	Government and local people	Poor
Land Act	Government and chiefs	Government and chiefs	Government and local people	Poor
Local Govmt. and Housing Act	Government and Landlords	Government and Landlords	Government and local people	?

Source: Makano et al, 1997

**ii. Use of the '4Rs' to assess/compare policies**

Table 5, taken from the work carried out in Zambia, shows one possible use of the '4Rs' framework to compare different policy statements and assess their coherence.

A strength and weakness analysis of policies on the basis of Table 5 would clearly show that:

- there is a lack of harmonisation of the different regulations in terms of rights and responsibilities;
- in the case of revenues, there is

harmony between the different policies. However, in this case, the policy statements do not correspond to reality, as almost no revenues return to the local level from the Central Treasury;

- the quality of relationships are seldom mentioned in policy statements. More generally speaking, they are also more difficult to assess than the other 'Rs'<sup>6</sup>

**iii. The use of the '4Rs' framework in the negotiation process**

So far this framework has not been tested in the negotiation process itself. It is likely that it should be adapted accordingly, i.e.

<sup>6</sup> This point is further discussed in section 4.2. (vii)

- The negotiation on stakeholders' respective '4Rs' cannot start directly, given the typically poor quality of relationships between government agencies and other local stakeholders. Therefore, it is advisable to first 'level the ground by':
  - using this framework around very specific issues rather than the general topic of forest resources. Piecemeal negotiation could then lead to a gradual improvement of relationships;
  - start by assessing the needs with a conventional participatory approach, in order to differentiate needs from desired '4Rs'.
- The issues related to the '4Rs' are often very sensitive, and difficult to discuss in public by marginalised groups. This may lead to the prioritisation of small social groups/ individual interviews rather than assembly meetings, in order to elicit the opinion of less vocal groups
- When using the '4Rs' to negotiate, it is important to assess three types of situations, i.e.
  - the '4Rs' according to the *policies*;
  - the '4Rs' according to *reality*;
  - the desired '4Rs' for the *future*.

It is recommended to start with the desired future state, as a more likely point of agreement; and subsequently discuss how the reality should change to reach that stage.

- Given that negotiations on the '4Rs' indirectly imply potential changes in local power structures, they are likely to raise higher expectations than PRA. It is therefore recommended to

use this framework in negotiation only if it can be followed by effective change in the '4Rs', even on a pilot basis.

Cameroon provides an interesting example where the testing of the framework to negotiate the '4Rs' is timely. Indeed, in this case the negotiation around the issue of rattan production by a community could provide interesting insights to the current debate on community forestry. The existing regulation seems to entail a rather cumbersome and expensive process for communities to acquire a portion of forest. The case under focus in the AFRICAP case study in Cameroon could provide an interesting element for comparison between this formal process and a simplified procedure, whereby a multistakeholder, locally-derived agreement would be reached via a negotiation on the '4Rs'.

#### iv. The use of the '4Rs' beyond forestry issues

The first feedback from the evaluation workshop in the focal countries shows that there is an agreement that this framework could and should be tried in all aspects related to the management of natural resources.

#### v. The '4Rs' framework in projects

One of the outputs of the Niger working group has been a methodology to evaluate CFM projects as regards their performance on the '4Rs'. This has led to two types of comparison:

- Between project objectives and results, in relation to the '4Rs', leading to one matrix per project, framed as follows:

'4Rs'	Project objectives	Results (from surveys of CBO members)
Rights Responsibilities Returns/Revenues Relationships		

- A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis (SWOT) of the '4Rs' for each project, leading to the following type of matrix:

'4Rs'	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats/Risks
Rights Responsibilities Returns/Revenues Relationships				

#### vi. The '4Rs' as a complement to stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder analysis (SA) is defined by Grimble et al (1995) as 'an approach for understanding a system by identifying the key actors or stakeholders in the system, and assessing their respective interests in that system'. This definition shows that SA, likewise the '4Rs', complements participatory approaches in dealing with some of the structural factors likely to give rise to conflicts of interest.

However, the '4Rs' framework, in turn, complements SA in this respect, i.e.:

- It does not limit the analysis to stakeholders' interests, but also encompasses their relative power, by proxy assessment, as discussed below;
- Whilst SA assesses stakeholders' relationships vis-à-vis the resource, the '4Rs' adds stakeholders' mutual relationships to the picture, and this factor is key in CFM

- SA is often carried out by outsiders, usually project teams. Whilst this has so far been also the case for the assessment of the '4Rs', this framework allows for the involvement of key stakeholders when it is used in the negotiation of roles itself.

On the other hand, SA can complement the '4Rs' framework in identifying stakeholders<sup>2</sup>.

#### vii. Assessing stakeholders' relationships and power

Despite their importance in 'making things work', assessment of relationships was found to be particularly difficult by most national working groups within AFRICAP. The best attempt has been made in Cameroon, where the local working group has used three criteria to qualify relationships (Foteu et al, 1998):

- formal/informal;
- weak/strong, based on the frequency of contacts;

<sup>2</sup> Indications on how to identify stakeholders, their interests, their potential influence and importance in projects and/or forest enterprises can be found in ODA (1995) and SGS/IBD (forthcoming).

- good/fair/poor, based on convergence of stakeholders' opinions.

However, these criteria do not provide enough information on the performance of the linkages between stakeholders.

More generally speaking, the assessment of stakeholders' relationships is a topic where information on methodologies is scant. Outside forestry, one interesting attempt was carried out by FAO in the Philippines, in evaluating the performance of the linkages between farmers, researchers, traders and agricultural technicians (FAO, 1995). The criteria developed in that experiment include:

- awareness of other actors' service;
- relevance of other actors' service;
- timeliness of other actors' service;
- accessibility to other actors' service;
- communication medium through which link is mediated;
- linkage control.

This experiment was focused on transfer of technologies, hence the service between actors. Service is actually only one among several factors suggested by GTZ (1996) to categorise relationships.

These factors include:

- service;
- legal/contractual;
- market (determined by demand and supply of goods and services);
- information exchange;
- interpersonal;
- power.

These types of relationships are not mutually exclusive.

Special attention should be paid to the

nature of the power-type relationship. Power assessment has always been a difficult task, and it has usually been carried out through the assessment of the outcome of negotiations between stakeholders. As an *ex-post* assessment, this is not very helpful in the preparation of negotiations. To overcome this pitfall, GTZ (1996) suggests that three key questions must be answered:

- On what basis is power built?
- How does power affect the relationship?
- When and how do power relations change?

The first question relates often to some type of *dependency*. The economic (e.g. financial dependency); social (e.g. hierarchical dependency, expertise) and emotional (e.g. personal dependency due to nepotism, cronyism; etc.) dimensions of the relationship are good indicators for the source of power.

With respect to the second question, power can affect the relationship in three ways, i.e. physically, materially or in terms of social status. In many instances, the mere potential to exert power suffices to make power relationships work.

The third question helps understand how to best induce changes in an attempt to assess and rectify the imbalance in stakeholders' '4Rs'. It might therefore be argued that the balance of stakeholders' '4Rs' can constitute a *proxy measurement* of stakeholders' power in forestry. They can usefully complement dependency and other factors, such as education, wealth, locally recognised authority and "whose knowledge counts" - as used by Colfer (1995) to determine stakeholders' power deficit.



## **Conclusions**

The objective of Phase 1 of AFRICAP was to contribute to the understanding of stakeholders' roles (their '4Rs'), desirable changes and forms of partnership to achieve SFM. At this stage, the project has therefore only addressed some of the key research issues related to the '4Rs'.

Despite it being relatively new, the '4Rs' framework has been felt by its users, and those who have been exposed to it, as relevant to the current transition in forest management, which implies the accommodation of often divergent interests through a negotiation of roles, but still lacks tools to achieve this. The '4Rs' framework contributes to the development of such tools in several ways:

- It is simple to understand;
- It makes the concept of stakeholders' roles more operational;
- It helps in the transition from community participation to multistakeholder negotiation;
- By looking at the balance of the '4Rs' rather than each 'R' separately, this framework complements other tools like PRA and SA, by addressing issues that constitute potential sources of conflicts, such as power structures;
- Consequently, it has the potential to

make the outcomes of CFM more sustainable.

However, venturing into such a sensitive and unexplored field as stakeholder power also bears some risks and constraints, i.e.

- The use of the '4Rs' in the negotiation of roles may disturb existing social structures and power relations if misapplied;
- As it raises expectations regarding changes in power structures:
  - it should be used only if changes resulting from the negotiation on the '4Rs' can be implemented;
  - it puts a lot of pressure on the facilitators of the process, requiring highly skilled and diplomatic mediation;
- It is therefore recommended to use this framework in a step-wise fashion, starting with pilot experiments.

The next step should be to consolidate the experience gained so far on the '4Rs', by using it in the role negotiation process in some pilot cases. Feedback from these experiments will determine how to develop and disseminate the tool. This should be carried out in parallel with the assessment of capacity needs to manage role changes in forestry.

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## **Capacity to manage role changes in forestry: Introducing the '4Rs' framework**

The political dimension of forest management, when acknowledged, is often weakly dealt with by decision-makers and practitioners, mainly due to the lack of tools to assess stakeholders' roles and power, and lack of capacity to manage role changes in forestry.

This paper synthesises and discusses the findings of a three-year DANIDA-supported project, which has tried to contribute to the development of such tools. In collaboration with partners in six African countries, IIED has developed a framework, whereby stakeholders' roles are defined by their respective '4Rs', i.e. their Rights, Responsibilities, Returns/ Revenues and Relationships. The framework has been tested under different circumstances, in different biomes, and involving different types of stakeholders.

The outputs of the project show that the '4Rs' framework can contribute to approaches aimed at improving collaboration in forestry: This framework complements other tools such as PRA and stakeholder analysis, by teasing out issues pertaining to the sensitive and little-explored area of stakeholders' power. However, as such, this framework should be used cautiously and requires further experimentation.

### **IIED's Forestry and Land Use Programme**

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