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Using stakeholder and power analysis and BCPs in multi-stakeholder processes

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Introduction

Many community protocols will be used by the communities in negotiations with other (usually more powerful) stakeholders, e.g. over proposed large-scale developments or mining or oil exploration on communities' lands. Similarly, FPIC processes involve negotiations with other stakeholders. These negotiating processes are often referred to as 'multi-stakeholder processes' (MSPs). In some cases there is a formal platform, or common space, that is collectively owned by all the stakeholders, where negotiations can take place. In other cases, the stakeholders do not all meet in one place but are still engaging in various ways. Analysing the interests of stakeholders and the power dynamics operating (whether a formal MSP process is in place or not) is very important in enabling communities to plan how to negotiate with these more powerful parties.

This Tips for Trainers discusses an action-research programme which is analysing power dynamics in MSPs and exploring how to strengthen the capacity of local communities to negotiate with more powerful stakeholders. The programme began in 2011 and includes 12 projects in nine countries.¹ Six Dutch NGOs, their southern partners and the Change Alliance are implementing the programme, funded by PSO, an umbrella organisation of Dutch development organisations.² Some of the action learning sites are already established multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs), whilst in other cases communities are pushing for such a space to be created.

The first part of this Tips looks at the methodological framework used in the action-research. The second part focuses on the efforts of local communities in Lamu, Kenya to claim their rights through a biocultural community protocol (BCP)

¹ A learning event is planned in 2012 to compare the findings amongst the participants, with support from an academic expert reference group.

² The Change Alliance is an emerging global network of organisations joining forces to increase the effectiveness of the multi-stakeholder processes in which they engage.

process, and to demand negotiations over a large-scale port development that has been proposed by the Kenyan government. It discusses how participatory tools such as stakeholder and power analysis are helping them in this. They are being supported by local researchers working as part of the larger action-research programme.

Why analyse power in MSPs?

MSP advocates often argue that, because of the interdependence of stakeholders in solving complex issues, MSPs create trust-based relations that enable the empowered and active participation of all stakeholders. However, the distribution of power, capacity and resources is generally imbalanced. Power differences are embedded in the social fabric of society and can be reproduced, or even reinforced, in an MSP. Even if participants are willing to engage in dialogue on an equal basis, there are still differences in the level of experience, access to resources and information. The MSP process itself will also generate new interpersonal power dynamics based on charisma, skills and persuasiveness, the ability to mobilise funds, seniority and many other elements.

However, failure to recognise power dynamics can result in some stakeholders dominating others. Less powerful stakeholders can be abused, overruled or excluded. Such dynamics prevent joint learning and innovative solutions which one would expect as outcomes of a good MSP. The outcome of such a MSP will not reflect the interests and needs of less powerful stakeholders, often those representing the grassroots level. So there is the need for a thorough understanding of power dynamics in MSP processes by the parties involved.

The action-research described here is intended to help address this. Local researchers are supporting the weaker stakeholders (communities) to analyse

power dynamics and learn together how to effectively engage with and influence processes that involve more powerful actors. Through this, communities should gain the confidence to engage more effectively with these more powerful stakeholders in the future.

Methodological framework

In order to ensure a coherent methodological framework for the 12 action-learning projects, seven research questions and seven action questions were agreed during a programme inception meeting in November 2011 (Table 1). Local researchers, facilitators from the Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University, The Netherlands, and conveners from the six Dutch PSO member organisations participated in this meeting. An accompanying menu of tools for stakeholder analysis and power analysis has been drafted to help local researchers select tools for their specific situations. The local researchers will conduct stakeholder analysis with local communities before entering into power analysis (Table 1 and Box 1).

Demanding a voice: the Save Lamu coalition

Lamu County is on the coast in northern Kenya. It has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2001 and was declared a UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve in 1980.³ Lamu town is also the oldest and best-preserved Swahili settlement in East Africa. The people of Lamu are proud of their cultural and natural heritage: Lamu County is home to rare marine species such as sea turtles, sharks and dugongs. However, this has been threatened by the proposed Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) corridor project. This project would build a pipeline to deliver oil from South Sudan to a new refinery near Lamu town, build port

³ See: <http://tinyurl.com/unesco-man-biosphere>. Full URL: www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme

Table 1: Research questions, action questions and tools

Research questions	Action questions	Tools
1. Who are the key actors involved? Understand the different degrees of power among MSP actors, their bases of power and the manner in which they use their power.	1. Are these the right actors? Do other actors need to join the MSP?	Stakeholder analysis: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 Power analysis: 6, 7
2. What are the interests/goals of the different actors? Actors have common longer-term objectives, but may have different interests and inter-dependencies which may be a source of conflict, strength or (in) effectiveness.	2. How can common interests be strengthened? How can different interests be overcome? What other options are available?	Stakeholder analysis: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Power analysis: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
3. How is the problem framed and by whom? Actors in control of agenda-setting can exercise their power. Participatory and empowerment tools are needed to balance the level of influence of all actors in the MSP.	3. What is needed to strengthen the influence of the least influential? How can empowerment be promoted?	Stakeholder analysis: 1, 2, 4, 9 Power analysis: 6, 8, 9, 10
4. What are actors' key resources (e.g. material, immaterial, political, economic, social, institutional)? How does control over resources affect each actor's ability to exercise influence?	4-5. How can inter-dependence at the level of resource access and control be realised? Which capacities of which actors need to be strengthened?	Stakeholder analysis: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 Power analysis: 6, 7
5. What are the (resource) dependencies between actors? Different actors have different access and control over resources that determine their influence and their capacity to realise their interests.		Stakeholder analysis: 1, 4, 7, 8, 11 Power analysis: 2, 6, 8, 9
6. What are the decision-making rules? Understand the institutional dimension of the MSP. What are the rules? How and by whom are they set? How are they enforced, arbitrated and sanctioned?	6. What are the constraints in the decision-making process? Can governance agreements be changed?	Stakeholder analysis: 9 Power analysis: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10
7. To what extent are different interests reflected in outcomes of decision-making? The decisions taken are an expression of the results of the power dynamics in the MSP.	7. How can decision-making be organised such that all actors benefit and see results that meet their interests?	Stakeholder analysis: 3, 6 Power analysis: 8, 9, 10

facilities to ship the oil from a giant tanker terminal, lay more than 1700km of new highways and railways to South Sudan and Ethiopia, and build three new airports and tourist resorts in Lamu, Isiolo and at Lake Turkana. It would also bring an estimated 1.2 million people to the area (an estimated tenfold increase), giving rise to fears that local cultures will be lost.

Different ethnic communities in Lamu

County came together in 2010 to form a coalition called Save Lamu, in response to the Kenyan government's plans, part of its Vision 2030.⁴ Although the planned infrastructure will have irreversible environmental, social and demographic impacts on what is a unique and politically sensitive area, State decision makers have not consulted the Lamu community as the key stakeholders, and no environ-

⁴The different Lamu ethnic groups include the Bajun, Kore-Maasai, Sanye, Boni, Pokomo, Orma, Mijikenda and are represented by local leaders. See: www.savelamu.org

Box 1: Stakeholder and power analysis tools

Stakeholder analysis tools:

1. Rich picture
2. Problem tree analysis
3. Interest/influence matrix
4. Stakeholder characteristics and roles matrix
5. Spiderweb network diagram
6. Fast arrangement mapping
7. Stakeholder interests, roles and skills
8. Community institutional resource mapping
9. Institutional analysis
10. Four quadrants of change framework
11. Value chain mapping

Power analysis tools:

1. Power cube
2. Sources and positions of power
3. Expressions and faces of power
4. Spaces and levels of power
5. Power ranking
6. Net-map (tracing power and influence in networks)
7. Power matrix
8. Political analytical tool
9. Biocultural community protocol
10. Circle of coherence

Source: Brouwer *et al.* (2012).

mental impact assessment has been carried out.⁵

On the 25th January 2011, Save Lamu filed a petition with 1000 signatories from different villages in the Lamu archipelago. The coalition demanded that:

- the Government of Kenya (GOK) publicly shares all information on the proposed project with local communities;
- the GOK facilitates a comprehensive environmental impact assessment to be carried out by independent experts;
- a participatory process is undertaken with the local communities involved in the assessment of the impacts and planning of the proposed project; and
- the land rights violations against the indigenous Lamu communities are adequately investigated and addressed

before any further development plans are inaugurated.

The action-research in this case aims to support local communities in their efforts to persuade the government to accede to the demands in their petition.⁶ This entails trying to get powerful stakeholders to start negotiations on possible impacts in a peaceful manner, i.e. create an MSP. Save Lamu has been campaigning for this space to be created in various ways, including petitions, writing letters, demonstrations, legal action against ministries and use of the media. At the same time, 46 Lamu communities are claiming their right to give or withhold consent to the developments affecting them through an FPIC process as part of a BCP which will be finalised in 2012. Two BCP teams (Lamu East and Lamu West) were involved in developing the BCPs, based on visits to 46 villages in Lamu County. The BCP includes the histories, culture and values of the communities, their resources and how they use them for their livelihoods. They also cover their rights under the Kenyan constitution and in national and international laws.

An example of stakeholder and power analysis

The action-research has focused around meetings of the Save Lamu coalition. The first meeting was in February 2011 and a further five meetings are planned for 2012. During the early meetings, stakeholder and power analysis tools were used.

Stakeholder analysis: using the interest/influence matrix tool

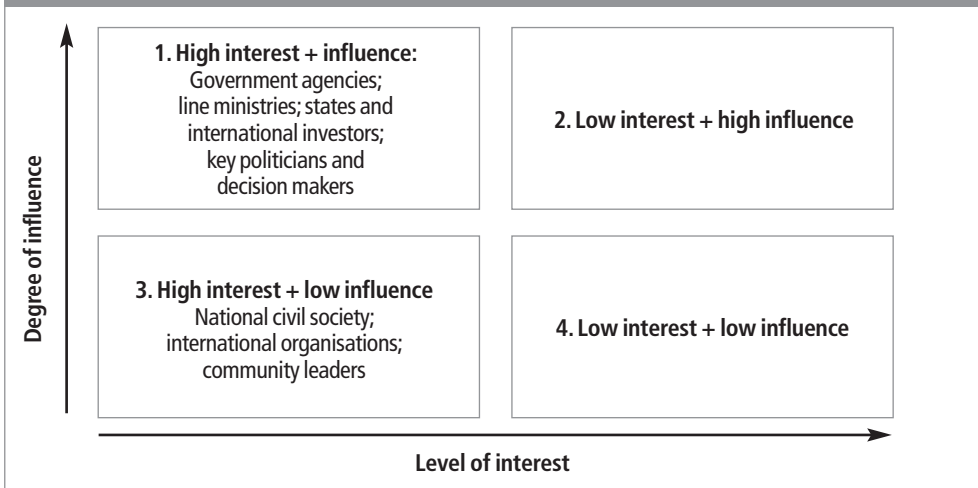
The researchers first carried out a stakeholder analysis to identify all key stakeholders affected by the proposed port. The assessment of stakeholder power dynamics was done using the interest against influence matrix.⁷

⁵ An environmental impact assessment is an assessment of the possible positive or negative impacts that a proposed project may have on the environment, together consisting of the environmental, social and economic aspects. Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_impact_assessment

⁶ The action researchers became involved in Lamu in October 2011 after developing a research proposal between ETC COMPAS, Save Lamu and Natural Justice.

⁷ See for example: www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/6509.pdf

Figure 1: Interest–influence matrix, Lamu



The power of pro-LAPSSET stakeholders exceeds considerably the power of the community actors.
 Source: Goldsmith (2012).

Stakeholders were divided into six categories and graded according to interest and influence: high or low (Figure 1). Because all the stakeholders named are by definition already highly interested parties, the grading used only the influence axis. Stakeholders were categorised as being either high influence or low influence.

Power analysis: using the power house tool
 The power cube was discussed with members of the Save Lamu management committee, and representatives from the two BCP teams. The representatives included hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, farmers and fisherfolk, covering a wide range of interests. Pilly (one of the co-authors of this article), who is from Tana River, an area neighbouring Lamu, was the main facilitator. The dimensions of the power cube were written in English and Pilly translated the concepts into Kiswahili.

We first introduced the concept of power and its different dimensions: **forms, spaces and levels** of power (Figure 1).

• **Power forms** refer to visible, hidden and

internalised forms of power.

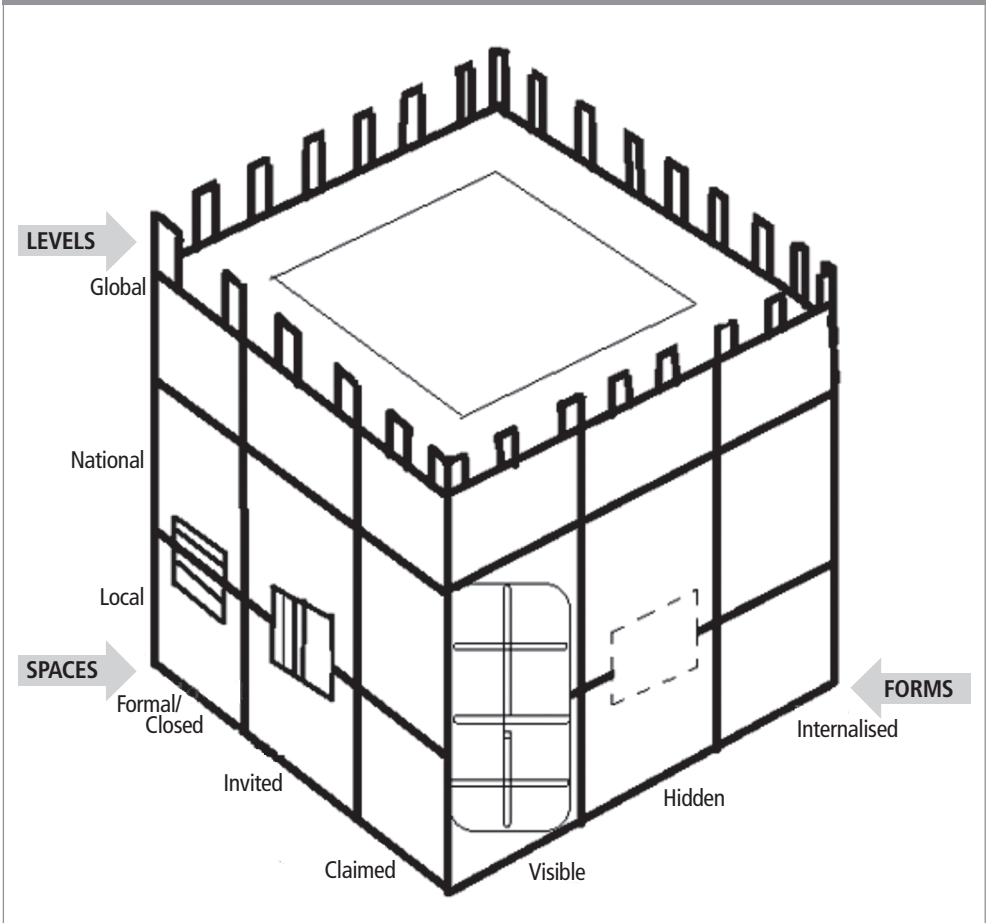
- **Power spaces** refer to potential arenas for participation and action – closed, invited or claimed.
- **Power levels** (local, national, global) refer to different layers of decision-making and authority.

To facilitate understanding, the power cube became a power house, using analogies of Islamic architecture in Lamu. People were asked how they would fit themselves and other groups involved in the LAPSSET project into the power house. This led to a very animated discussion. For example, in Figure 1:

- The door represents the **visible economic power** of the communities at local and national levels, and is a powerful symbol of Lamu culture.⁸
- The window represents **formal/closed power**, crossing the local and national levels, e.g. the GoK Vision 2030, which communities are unable to participate in.
- An example of **internalised power** is the BCP which communities have been developing. It is internalised because it reflects

⁸ Lamu doors are very ornate and unusual, and part of the Swahili architectural style. The door symbolises both Lamu culture and their economic power, because the doors are exported. They are made from mangrove trees, which grow in saline water. However, the mangroves, from which the doors are made, and which are also integral to marine-based livelihoods like wood trading and fishing, are threatened by the port.

Figure 2: The power house



their histories, cultures and customary governance of resources.

- People felt that elected local leaders had **hidden power** since they only have power when they talk to local people, but are not listened to at the national level. This is represented by a window with dotted lines.
- The half-open window represents **invited space** at local and national level. For example, the government created the Lamu Port Steering Committee, which Save Lamu members are now invited to participate in. However, they are not involved in agenda-setting.

Lessons and challenges in using the tools

The early meetings between the researchers and communities were as

much about finding common ground between the different groups in the Save Lamu coalition and trying to resolve internal tensions through dialogue as about developing strategies to fulfil their demands. People have different views of the history of the coastal strip, some valuing their Arab heritage, others seeing it as colonialism and slavery. The way in which the different societies operate also varies. Some are based on respect for elders, whilst others are more egalitarian. This creates tensions and mistrust between different groups, and makes it difficult to come to a unified understanding. Each group has its own way of doing things and this is a huge challenge in terms of developing a joint BCP to be used for advocacy purposes.

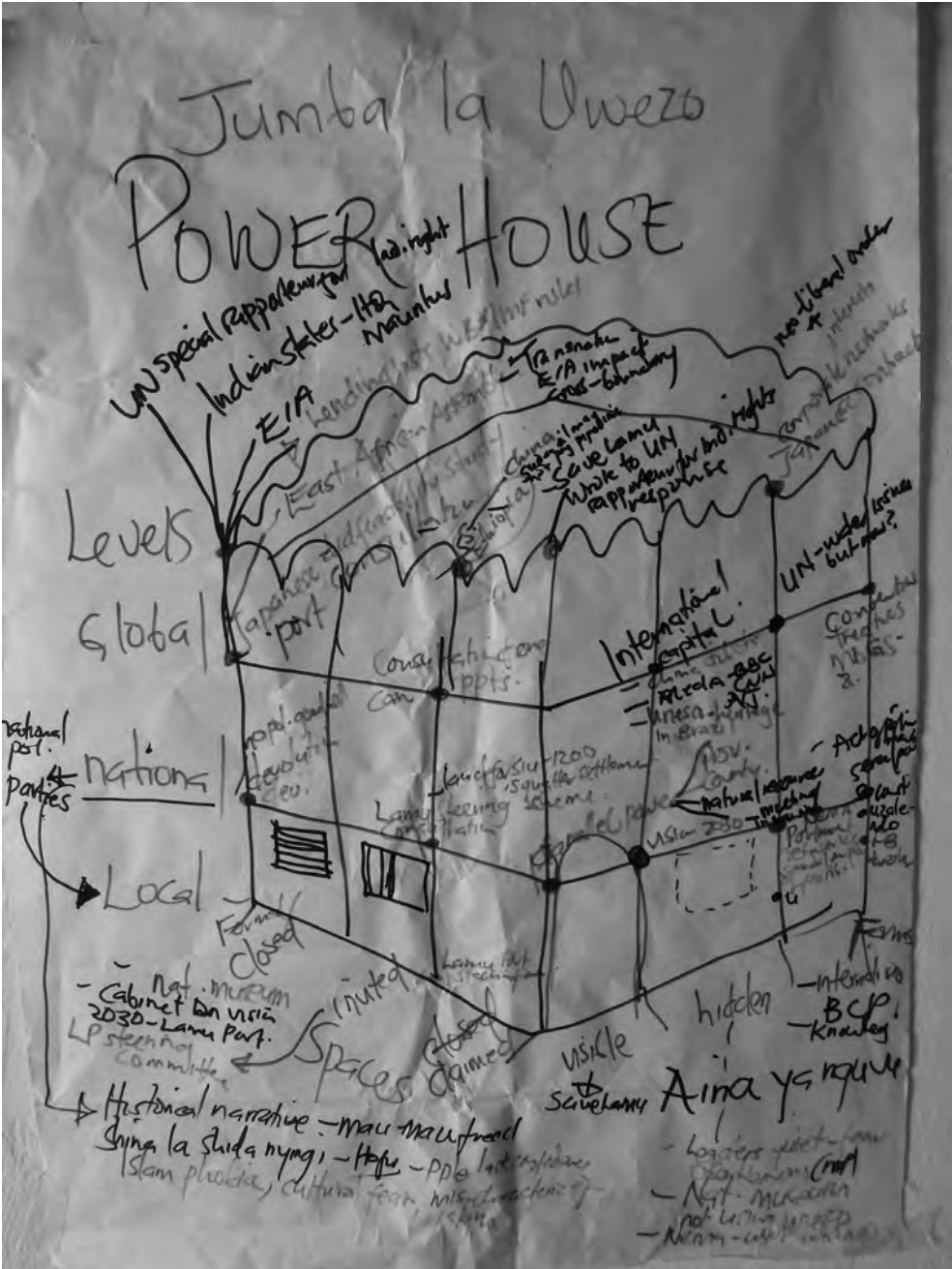


Photo: Pilly Martin

The Lamu power house.

Having a facilitator from the local area was important because four different Kiswahili dialects are spoken. But this sometimes led to a perception that some groups were listened to more than others. The facilitator was very aware of that and

made great efforts to ensure she was seen to be inclusive in bringing in different perspectives.

The meetings have also helped Save Lamu to strategise in terms of their relationships with other stakeholders. For

example, the coalition has been seen as anti the Kenyan government itself, rather than just its actions. They felt they needed to appear readier to compromise and to negotiate. The power analysis helped them identify spaces for action to change this perception. For example, the Port Steering Committee has been set up by the government to solicit views from the local community. This was initially an invited space, but is now moving towards a claimed space as three members of the coalition have joined it. As relations between government and the coalition have improved, local government officials (such as the district commissioner) have attended the fourth meeting of Save Lamu. There is now an open door policy with local government officials – Save Lamu can go to the government offices any time for discussions or to request information. This step is crucial as it helps in developing a formal MSP process.

The analysis also helped identify that it was important for Save Lamu to talk to the local media and put forward their point of view, as media coverage of Save Lamu has at times been quite negative.

Further analysis is needed to better inform future meetings and the advocacy strategy that will emerge out of them. After four Save Lamu county meetings, a regional and a national meeting are planned to coordinate and mainstream BCPs as an advocacy and dialogue tool to engage with powerful stakeholders. This meeting also plans to present the BCPs to other communities that might be affected by the LAPSSSET project, in the hope that they will be inspired to develop their own BCPs.

As one MSP researcher reports (Goldsmith, 2012):

It is naïve to expect one BCP by itself to make the government of Kenya and the international finance partnership be accountable to local communities' biocultural rights. Its influence will, in contrast, increase exponentially when it becomes part of a mosaic of BCPs covering all the LAPSSSET affected communities (and others indirectly involved) in Kenya. Bringing communities from Sudan and Ethiopia will raise that influence to another level.

The regional and national meeting will work towards that agenda. The interest/influence analysis will be repeated to enrich and expand the information generated by the meetings in Lamu County. The power house will also be revisited to monitor changes in power positions and rules for decision-making.

The Lamu communities decided in January 2012 to sue five Kenyan ministries because their right of access to information and their rights to a clean and healthy environment and to their land are being denied. The court case, the BCP and the pressure to begin a multi-stakeholder process are thus mutually reinforcing. It is not yet clear whether powerful stakeholders (Government of Kenya and politicians) will be ready to listen to the demands of concerned citizens and negotiate modifications that could make Lamu the greenest African port, and safeguard community rights to lands and livelihoods.

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