

An approach to rural development:

PARTICIPATORY and NEGOTIATED
TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT (PNTD)

April 2005

Preface

The emergence of territoriality in the current discussion on rural development is not fortuitous. It is the product of economic and social changes within countries and in the wider political context of globalization. It responds to the need to adapt methodologies, instruments and activities to the new requirements imposed by these changes and their undesired impacts. Finally, it promotes a different image of territorial issues and directly involves rural populations in the design of new development perspectives.

Actors define the territories they live in or interact with. The actors' territoriality, or territorial vision, helps to establish a common identity and supports the realization of actors' strategies and projects. In addition, a plurality of actors with different and sometimes conflicting interests and values influence the dynamics and interrelationships within the same space.

The following document is a product of the continuous research of a common denominator of experiences, elaborated and implemented by SDA officers. The document proposed here takes up these preoccupations and aims to link the work done in this regard within the FAO Rural Development Division (SDA). Both Services of the Division, the Land Tenure Service (SDAA) and the Rural Institutions and Participation Service (SDAR), have worked on the complementary aspects of a territorial approach for the development of rural areas.

In recent years, a number of SDAA and SDAR officers have analyzed the existing relationships between local actors and their territories and the implications of these relationships on local development. The output of this first effort to conceptually frame the idea of territorial development resulted in the "Methodological orientations for a participatory and negotiated territorial approach". These reflections focus mainly on the territorial diagnostic process as a means to promote social dialogue within a territory and which leads towards a negotiation table for rural development.

Awareness was growing in SDA that this approach could help the Services to complement each other in their respective work. Consequently, various interviews with SDA officers were conducted with the aim of highlighting commonalities in the approaches developed in the Division through field experiences, and supporting and complementing the key principles put forward in the "Methodological orientations for a participatory and negotiated territorial approach".

At the beginning, in collaboration with representatives of NGOs, the International Land Coalition (ILC), experts and university professors from various countries, a workshop was held in Venezuela (April 2001) to share experiences and to study more deeply the issues related to "territoriality and actor-based approach" and "decentralised institutions and participatory territorial planning". This document also received valuable inputs from the workshops' discussions held in Colombia and in Hungary in 2003.

In parallel, similar discussions have started with several other services at FAO. Firstly, within the Sustainable Development Department, the Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE) and Environment and Natural Resources Service (SDRN) which have contributed to the reflections related to information and communication issues. Secondly, the mainstreaming of integrating all actors in the participation of the development has shown that the Gender and Population Division, SDW, is also considering the "gender-sensitive in local planning", especially during a workshop held in Thailand in 2000. The gender-specific limitations stemming from applying information generated from participatory processes and gender gap issues stemming from involving women in participatory local planning should be examined by planners at the provincial and district levels, to streamline the planning process with local communities.

In evolving towards more sustainable production systems, agriculture and rural development, efforts should ensure the attainment of three essential goals:

- Food security by ensuring an appropriate and sustainable balance between self-sufficiency and self-reliance;
- Employment and income generation in rural areas, particularly to eradicate poverty;
- Natural resources conservation and environmental protection.

The sustainability of every human activity is closely connected to the impact of their exploitation of renewable resources, losses in eco-system services etc.) The most intensive causes of socio ecological conflicts or crises are related to an unsustainable management of agricultural land.

In this sense, the Globally Important Ingenious Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) initiative, with its efforts to promote local/indigenous agricultural systems and raise awareness of their importance for biodiversity conservation and food security as well as their contribution to natural, landscape and cultural heritage, will have as one of its core challenge to develop methodologies which allows for the conservation of the heritage characteristics of agricultural systems, while allowing for their evolution and adaptation to changing socio-economic and environmental contexts, and, more importantly, the sustainable development and livelihood security of their populations.

Last but not least, the chapters which follow are elaborated on the synergies and cross-cutting issues of rural development and other specific abilities of different FAO services. This only illustrates the possibilities of improving the efforts of those working in rural development but without replacing the individual specificities and main area of technical assistance.

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I. Rationale and Use

Classic rural development approaches do not respond to the complexity of rural contexts. Current changes occurring in rural areas further test the capacities of these approaches to promote rural development.

This document suggests an approach to Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD) which offers concrete answers to the challenges of improving trust among social actors, strengthening social cohesion and promoting a systemic territorial development.

The concept of territorial system is derived from the school of Agrarian System analysis¹. The definition of territorial system includes, in addition to the dynamics of the agrarian systems, the interrelationships between rural and urban areas, the existence of poles of attraction linked to market, production and technology, new information systems and the resulting changes in the environmental, social, economic and cultural dimensions. Territorial systems are open to influences from the national and supra-national contexts and from the interrelationships between territories.

1 Failure of top-down approaches and the rise of bottom-up concepts

In the last 30 years, technical assistance projects were mainly based on top-down, supply-driven approaches. Interventions were defined by sectoral issues (agriculture, natural resource planning and management, soil and water conservation, etc.) and addressed only partially the constraints and potentialities of the territories they dealt with. Therefore they were rarely adapted, nor adaptable, to local contexts. To compensate for these limitations, these purely technical projects became large integrated programs, which were very often overcharged with activities and thus unmanageable.

A growing awareness from civil society and NGOs for the need to fill the gaps left by these large projects, led to the promotion of bottoms-up approaches and a wider use of participatory methods. Working mainly at grassroots levels these new approaches took into account the real needs of local populations but were limited in scale and not easily replicable when successful. These constraints stemmed from the fact that civil society and NGOs did not have (and still do not) the capacities to integrate local action into national and international governance context.

2 Current challenges in addressing rural development issues

Since territories are open systems, they are constantly influenced by and influence external forces. In fact, environmental, social, economic and political global processes, regional changes, national adjustment and development policies all influence dynamics and functioning of rural areas, even in the most remote areas. The natural resources upon which people rely are changing, markets and economic processes are shifting, information is rapidly spread and institutional environments are less stable. Hence, globalization processes affects the positioning and redefinition of the role of “territories”, “local spaces” and “proximity”.

Many uncertainties and unpredictable dimensions of the interactions between local and global have to be taken into account in addressing development issues. The adoption of the territory as the

¹ “An agrarian system, after M. Mazoyer, is a (predominantly agricultural) way of exploring an environment that has been established over a period of time and is durable, is adapted to the bio-climatic conditions of the given area and is responsive to the conditions and the social needs of the time. The expression agrarian system looks at the interaction between bio-ecological, socio-economic, cultural and political systems, across agricultural practices.” (FAO 2003)

system of reference and considering the new active role of civil society are key issues to counteract with negative impacts of these changes and redefine the parameters of the rural development.

In this sense, local actors have to be given the awareness and capacities to protect their rights and livelihood choices, overcome constraints and reduce the effects of global changes, enabling them to enter actively in policy and decision-making processes. In fact, local actors have to face to the high uncertainty on the analysis and comprehension of global environmental processes, their causes and the effects for their life (e.g. climate changes, pollution, and land degradation).

In addition, they are submitted to the less predictability of economic and rapid technological changes and their possible dramatic effects on livelihood (e.g. witness of Argentinean crisis, collapses major commodity markets such as coffee) and they have to react to the new arrangements of institutions and governance processes (decentralization) and the creation of new spaces for different groups to shape these processes (e.g. actors in the private sector, particularly multinational corporations; but also social global movement of resistance).

Finally, social processes are transforming as economic and institutional change occurs. For instance gender relations, demographic trends (e.g. urban-rural migrations, southern-northern migrations), cultural identities can take new forms. Understanding how individuals and households support themselves and try to secure and improve their well-being in the face of this complexity is a major challenge². Rural areas face a changing economic, social and political environment which requires a redefinition of the parameters of their development. Rural actors have to be given the capacities to face the challenges emerging from these changes.

Decentralization and disengagement of the state cause a lack of public service provision

Imperfect decentralization – deconcentrating responsibilities without devolving power and without equipping the lower administrative levels with the needed financial and human resources – or disengagement of the state has resulted in severe gaps in the fulfilment of the state's functions. Such inefficiency from the side of public institutions (partially filled by CSOs and NGOs) creates obstacles to the realization of actors' projects and cause a decreasing credibility of Public Administration in the eyes of civil society. In turn, this lack of credibility reduces the margins of action of Public Administration when enforcing law and order, redistributing welfare, collecting taxes, and providing basic services.

Diversity of actors and their projects may cause inefficiencies in local resource use and management

The diversity of rural people comprises a wide array of actors (public-private, groups and individuals) and does not limit itself to the agricultural sector. Powerful actors influence decisions and people's strategies of life within a territory but they are often not participating in social dialogue, which is essential for sustainable local development. Those actors are for instance the private sector, powerful policy-makers, and landlords. The diversity of actors, their values, and the interdependencies between them often lead to conflicting interests causing the improper use and inefficient management of local resources.

Interdependencies within and between territories cause difficulties in defining their limits

Territorial delineation is not an easy task since territories are social products conditioned by their history. Territorial resources are limited which leads to competition over their use among the actors. Another dimension is the competition between territories reinforcing the marginalization of some of

² Keeley (2001)

them. The dynamics and exchange flows within a territory and between territories (permeability of the territory) also make it very difficult to limit the scope and scale of a territorial intervention.

3 Innovation – added values of the proposed approach

The Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD) approach sets out strategic lines of territorial development to overcome the challenges described above. The debate remains open on the danger of including marginalized and disadvantaged actors in a process of negotiation, dialogue, without strengthening their bargaining power and realizing their rights. Also, negotiation processes have to be conducted in a way that the fundamental human rights (political, socio-economic, cultural, and environmental) of the actors are not questioned.

Mostly, the dialogue and negotiation among the actors occurs already without external support. In this sense, the negotiation process is supported in respect of the human rights based approach and in virtue of the first article of the international covenants on Human Rights which states that all peoples have the right of self-determination

Building credibility between public and private actors

In view of the growing competition on limited resources among actors and territories and a decreasing credibility of Public Administration, this approach focuses on establishing and maintaining social dialogue within the territory and restructuring and/or strengthening territorial institutions. Intermediary level institutions have an important role in integrating the territory and its actors in the existing governance framework (aggregation of demands, differentiation of policies).

Strengthening social cohesion to improve local resource use and management

Territorial diagnostics are a means to promote dialogue between pluralities of actors. The aim is to reach a negotiated agreement defining territorial development activities that allows the realization of the actor's environmental, social, economic and cultural projects and recognizes them as promoters of their own development. A wide participation has to be guaranteed including powerful actors with low interest in dialogue. The proposed approach assumes an inbuilt learning process with the objective to increase social cohesion, strengthen the bargaining power of the marginalized, increase people's and institutions' organizational capacities and improve their access to information and channels of communication, and their abilities to use these for their own development.

Conceiving the territory as an arena for dialogue and negotiation

A systemic vision of the territory (two dimensions: multi-sectoral and holistic) offers an accurate view of its functioning (dynamics, flows, inter-territorial relations, boundaries) and enables vertical and horizontal integration between territorial scales and levels (e.g. geographic, socio-economic, administrative). Furthermore, working on a territorial level allows focusing on the assets of the territory (including the cultural and natural heritage), its potentialities and constraints. A valorisation of the territorial assets serves to develop synergies within a territory while taking into account linkages with other territories (competition, but also complementarities) and helps to revitalize formerly marginalized territories.

The different and sometimes conflicting values, visions and interests related to the use and management of the land and other natural resources coexist in a given territory and have to be oriented towards a common ground as a basis for the design of territorial development strategies. Negotiation is the means to conduct this dialogue towards an agreement. With the term negotiation we do not only refer to the management of conflictive situations but to any process of searching through dialogue a way to harmonize the diversity of interests.

Conceptual Principles of the Approach:

Actor based: Recognition of the heterogeneity of the actors' interests and visions of the territory.

Territorial based: Based on the territories as spatial units of analysis, shaped by the social and historical relations between the actors and the territory.

Dynamic: Understanding of and learning from the complexity of a changing environment to support positive patterns of change and help mitigate negative patterns.

Systemic: Assumption of the complexity of a territorial context and the interdependencies within and between territories.

Multi-sectoral: Integration of the environmental, social, economic, political, cultural dimensions of the actors' visions of the territory.

Multi-level: Integration of different territorial levels and scales in the governance system.

Participatory and negotiated: Notion of the territory as a negotiation arena to strengthen dialogue and mutual trust, and increase bargaining power.

4 Objectives and target audience of the document

The objective of this document is to enable the Division as a whole to deal with territoriality and rural development in an integrated way. The target audiences of this document are FAO officers and other development practitioners of international agencies and NGOs. Furthermore, in the different regions, this document could support the action of government officials at different administrative levels and national NGOs and CSOs to promote territorial development. This document provides suggestions to:

- Formulate rural development projects and support ongoing field activities;
- Empower disadvantaged actors and their organizations to voice out their needs and concerns;
- Support bottom-up decision making processes and strategy formulation;
- Promote local development initiatives in the context of national regulations and international norms, with special reference to the realization of human rights and the conservation of the environment;
- Foster inter-agency collaboration and partnerships with governments, NGOs and civil society;
- Discuss international strategies for rural development.

II. The process

This chapter describes the purpose and objective of the PNTD process, the key principles it is based on and a short description of the methodological process.

1 The purpose of the PNTD approach

To be ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just, culturally appropriate and humane development interventions need to address the issue of power asymmetries that are determined by unequal access to and control over resources and information, and unequal capacities.

The purpose of the PNTD approach is to reduce these asymmetries in supporting a process aiming at the creation of socially legitimized agreements by involving all stakeholders and leading to their commitment and ownership over the development process. It is thus addressing the complexity of the territorial system, its national and supranational context, and the diversity of actors' interests and strategies to promote the appropriation of bottom-up decision-making processes by the actors.

Clearly, these social change processes are ongoing and can take generations. In view of the limitations in time and resources, external project interventions have to be of catalytic nature stimulating and/ or initiating change processes and ensuring their inclusiveness.

Influencing these change process will mean to also address deeply rooted social fractures and to provide a long-term vision for development theory. The PNTD approach can serve as a guide to addressing some of the challenges posed by the will of the international community to build a sustainable future.

“The prevailing systems for decision-making in many countries tend to separate economic, social and environmental factors at the policy, planning and management levels, influencing the actions of all groups in society and affecting the efficiency and sustainability of development. An adjustment or even a fundamental reshaping of decision-making may be necessary in order to put environment and development at the centre of economic and political decision-making.³”

This need, to integrate environmental, economic and social objectives of development, is also reflected in the discussions on Chapter 14 of Agenda 21 on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD). In addition, this discussion underlines the necessity to propose technically appropriate solutions to local problems⁴.

Whether at national, regional or local level, one of the functions the state has is to promote, guide and implement a concerted strategy for territorial development, integrating both civil society and the private sector. However, in many countries the state does not have the capacities nor the resources to fulfil this function. Instead, civil society has to be capacitated to assume a leadership role and in collaboration with the state guarantee that development is planned and implemented to include all the social groups.

³ Cited from Agenda 21, Chapter 8: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/decision_making/decision_making.htm

⁴ Adapted from <http://www.fao.org/wssd/sard>

2 Basic characteristics of the process

The process must be:

A learning process. The methodological approach is not outcome oriented but attention is put on the process of re-establishing social dialogue in order to guide the course towards a negotiated territorial agreement that effectively takes into consideration and involves all the actors. “The ability to recognize and learn from error, and even to change objective (...) [is] the key to success⁵”. It is important that the right questions are asked. Open questions start with: who, how, why, when and where. They help people to speak and express themselves and allow having in-depth discussions.

Coherent and feasible, in order for the process to be as efficient and effective as possible given available resources (financial resources and time). In this context, precision does not mean the pursuing of in-depth observations and exact data per se, but the attention not to neglect anything important for understanding problem causes and territorial trends.

Transparent and accountable, based on a wide access to and an open sharing of information and its use through the participatory design and implementation of communication strategies. A transparent process guarantees a clear assumption of responsibility by the actors and this is a key indicator of the quality of the process.

Iterative and progressive in order to be able to come back to a question and draw up new hypotheses, analyses, evaluations, adding new elements to the diagnostic little by little and allowing for a renegotiation of the outcome and agreements.

Flexible and replicable both in space (i.e. applicable to different geopolitical, agro-ecological and socio-economic contexts) and in time. The progressive analysis is carried out with a continuous adaptation and responsiveness to changes in the cultural and social context; respecting actors' pace of learning and expression modalities, and in order to ensure that resulting plans are feasible and sustainable. Simplicity and practicality are required in order for the process to be easily understood and to allow actors' involvement in each phase.

3 Phases and key issues describing the process

The process can start and be sustained at different territorial scales and levels depending on the geographic, administrative and/or socio-economic context and the issues at stake. The efforts of opening the dialogue at various levels of the political sphere and within civil society are done to stimulate the establishment of several tables and arenas for dialogue and negotiation, around various and interrelated issues which occur at the same time and feed into a wider process of development linking the micro, meso and macro spheres.

The process can be operationalized in four main phases.

Views

Firstly, the existing demands for external support have to be critically assessed to understand their rationale, their nature and the interests and strategies of the actors from whom the demand originated (including hidden agendas). History is the leading thread to analyze the different actors'

⁵ Chambers (1988)

visions of the territory. This analysis reconstructs in a coherent framework the actors' positions, interests, and strategies, and the potentialities and vulnerabilities of their territory.

In particular, this phase corresponds to the territorial diagnostic and is the moment to open the dialogue among the actors. It serves to put all of them on an equal footing regarding the information on the territory. The context-specific political, institutional and legal framework will be analyzed in order to understand the existing rules of the game at regional, national and international level and their influence on local development.

Horizons

In the second phase, the actors are supported to set out coherent and feasible perspectives for the future development of the territory and to formulate proposals for later negotiation.

Setting up a negotiation table depends on actors' margins of flexibility, their willingness to negotiate and their bargaining power or ability to access the negotiation arena. On the other hand, the historical analysis allows identifying the causes of the existing territorial constraints, understanding actors' visions of territorial development (e.g. access to and use of land and natural resources), and highlighting current dynamics and territorial trends. By validating the diagnostic, the actors become aware of all the issues at stake within the territory, allowing them to formulate possible proposals for territorial development, as a common ground for negotiation.

Negotiation and the Social Territorial Agreement

Once the preconditions are met and the proposals are made, the involved actors enter the third phase of negotiation. The term "negotiation" here is interpreted in a wider sense that not always refers to conflictive situations. In this sense, it is the means to aggregate the diversity of interests in a given territory in order to formulate rural development proposals. The negotiation process follows procedures and rules that the actors must agree upon in advance and that are enforced by a credible and legitimized third party. It has to be underlined that the negotiation is not simply about voting proposals and prioritizing them but to find a consensus that satisfies all the interests to the greatest possible extent.

The Social Territorial Agreement (STA) is the result of a participatory process and includes plans of activities or initiatives for local development (at short, medium, and long term) defined through negotiation among the different actors in a given territory.

For the implementation of this contractual agreement external support might be required to build capacities and to access external resources. In addition to the concrete agreement on activities, institutional arrangements or distribution of resources, the process also leads to an improved social cohesion within the territory.

It results in an increased bargaining power of the weakest actors to defend their stakes. It incorporates the diversity of actors' interests that might not otherwise be voiced and integrated in decision-making processes. The overall PNTD process inserts itself in the existing social, economic and political systems and might have an impact also on them. Nevertheless, changes in these systems might be required for the enactment of the agreement.

Finally, the process is intended to lead to a new cycle of negotiation that will enable the actors involved to refine, adapt and complement the agreement they have reached initially. Therefore, the dialogue among actors should be institutionalized to consent to the replication of the negotiated territorial development process and to ensure its sustainability.

4 Role of external support of the PNTD process

The Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development approach requires the definition of a new role for the expert that acts as a facilitator and “honest broker” during the whole process. It is his or her task to stimulate social dialogue with the goal to find common ground to build consensus confronting the actors’ different interests.

External support plays a key role in the identification, analysis and provision of coherent information on local problem areas. A multidisciplinary PNTD team will be created (experts, administration staff and other key players in territorial development) to get a comprehensive understanding of local problematic issues and research on possible solutions, study the options’ technical feasibility and, finally find ways to achieve a coordinated and effective response to local problems. Moreover, the PNTD team spearheads the process of linkage between the local community and other relevant key-players in the area, supporting integrated territorial planning and providing valuable inputs to municipal and provincial development actors.

Strengthening partnerships with civil society organizations will help in optimizing available forces, knowledge, energies, and capacities. A system approach building on identification and use of Communication for Development tools and approaches can set the operational framework for this process.

In this case, the NGOs and CSOs play the major role in information analysis, dissemination and exchange, thanks to their direct field experience, while FAO, as an international organization, is called to act as the facilitator of the dialogue among civil society and governments in the national (but also regional and local) and inter-governmental arenas. Therefore, in the PNTD approach participatory tools and methods are both technical and awareness building instruments.

Literature on conflict management suggests that the roles, tasks and responsibilities of the legitimized mediator(s), animator(s) or referee(s) are to be clearly established in the negotiation phase. Also, the negotiation mechanisms and procedures are to be defined in advance. These mechanisms will be context specific with the adoption of aspects of customary procedures.

The mediation role is not part of FAO mandate but it can provide training to potential mediators. These mediators should fulfil certain criteria to be able to facilitate a territorial negotiation. She/ he should have a neutral position, a specific training on conflict management and a part from personal skills and attitudes (e.g. sensibility, commonality of language and culture with participants), should have a good knowledge of the local context.

The PNTD team also accompanies the implementation phase of the Social Territorial Agreement and the monitoring and evaluation activities jointly with the actors involved in the process, to allow for the continuous renegotiation of the agreement. Moreover, the team will play a key role in inserting local analysis into a higher territorial level perspective, in order to harmonize local development planning processes and objectives, with plans of higher administrative units, as well as linking local analysis to regional and central level decision making.

5 Thematic entry points

The key entries for the application of the proposed methodological process towards a social territorial agreement depend on the geopolitical, cultural and socio-economic context. The PNTD process helps actors understand their territorial system in order to face the rural development challenges and to support the sustainability of the process of change.

The Social Territorial Agreement may propose solutions to deal with issues at different scales, and may imply different time frames. The agreement is a necessary instrument for the local ownership of strategies and projects on the territory. These interventions aim at revitalizing territorial economic activities, achieving greater autonomy in the management of local resources by communities, responding to territorial vulnerabilities and improving the use of territorial assets in order to allow for a wider access of marginalized people to basic services and resources management.

To respond to the local demands, the social territorial agreement provides inputs for an adaptation or redefinition of national and local policies, by clarifying the rules of the game and making them shared and respected (e. g. indigenous rights, recognition of customary tenure, environmental protection, land access, natural resources use and management) and strengthening and reforming rural institutions (e. g. cadastre, local organizations, local funds for income generating activities).

Particularly, this methodological proposal could be a useful tool for analyzing the causes of tension arising from competitive access and use of land and natural resources, in order to prevent or manage conflicts.

Following boxes are illustrating different key points to implement a kind of PNTD process

Box: Philippines Agrarian Reform: PATSARRD

The FAO-PATSARRD project (FAO Philippines-Australia Technical Support for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development) provides technical support to the Philippine Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) in its mandate to implement the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) whose objectives are to achieve a more equitable distribution and ownership of land and to improve the quality of the lives of the farmers through greater farm productivity.

The development of Agrarian Reform Communities (ARC) requires several strategic interventions and the coordination of multi-sectoral efforts. To sustain such efforts and their effective coordination FAO-PATSARRD has developed a Participatory Area Planning (PAP) approach, which is a methodology based on Farming System Diagnosis⁶ for the support of area-focused and participatory design and implementation of ARC Comprehensive Development plans. The overall objective of the project intervention at ARC level is the strengthening of the capacities of Barangay and Municipal administrations, Municipal and Provincial Agrarian Reform personnel and farmers leaders to work together for supporting the community development efforts and promoting informed and sound decisions over local resources use and management⁷. A major challenge in this process is to help development actors redirect bottom-up planning approaches in view of the present market-driven environment and given the requirements of the present policy and institutional framework.

Having the Ten-Year Philippine Project achieved a wide coverage - PAP training and planning activities have taken place by now nearly nation-wide - a need was felt by FAO-PATSARRD national project team for a review of the PAP process that would allow for improved consistency and integration of ARC plans within the overall Municipal plans and in a wider framework of rural development.

The Agrarian Reform Community (ARC) of El Progreso located in the Municipality of Carmen, Province of Bohol was chosen as a pilot project area for the adaptation of the methodological guidelines for Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD) to the needs and context situation of the FAO-PATSARRD project (mid-2003). The standard PAP development planning process was conducted in El Progreso ARC complemented by key elements of the PNTD methodology for a participatory territorial diagnostic. This initial integration of inputs from PNTD aimed at prompting the involvement of a wider array of actors (farmers, landowners, NGOs, local institutions, various national agency bodies, the private sector, universities etc.) in the local development planning process and in the achievement of integrated rural development (at Barangay, ARC, Municipal, and Provincial levels). This PNTD-PAP pilot implementation helped El Progreso PAP team gains a systemic view of the territory and better highlight the complexity of the territorial system and of the issues at stake.

The inputs from this pilot project served as a basis for the subsequent discussions with PAP team members, FAO national experts and other actors at local, provincial, regional levels, about possible ways of improving the community development planning process and PAP methodological guidelines, in order to generate relevant information for a systemic territorial analysis and negotiated development. These consultations resulted in concrete PNTD inputs to PAP methodology and laid the basis for the preparation of a draft methodological proposal for the meso Kalahi Agrarian Reform zone's level application of an integrated PNTD and PAP approaches for future policy support analysis and decision-making.

⁶ FAO-PATSARRD Participatory Area Planning process provides an accurate picture of the present situation at ARC level, and of the major crops being produced. The PAP approach guides local planning teams in the analysis of ARC's main problems and constraints, supports the household system's financial analysis, farm production and support services diagnosis

⁷ Supported and capacitated by FAO-PATSARRD training process, the FAO-PATSARRD Participatory Area Planning (PAP) Team play an important role in local development planning and in carrying out the various components of the implementation of the territorial development plan as well as in promoting the integration of the ARC development plan within in the municipal development plan. The PAP Team prepares the ARC Comprehensive Development Plan with the active participation of the community in the area, and of the Barangay and municipal Local Government Units. Members of the team are the Barangay Captains, farmer leaders and chairpersons from various farmers organizations and Cooperatives; the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO) and the Development Facilitators (DFs), sit as team members from the Department of Agrarian Reform, together with the Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator (MPDC), the Municipal Engineer (ME), the Municipal Agricultural Officer (MAO) and the Municipal Social Worker and Development Officer (MSWDO), from the Municipal LGU. Once the development plan is drafted the PAP team acts as the ARC Implementing Team.

In particular, PNTD inputs in PAP methodology are focused on:

Addressing land issues: DAR has an historical mandate to tackle land issues and particularly land tenure issues. The ARC development plan preparation is an occasion to raise problems and constraints occurring in the territorial system. The systemic analysis of the territory and its actors aim to better understand agrarian reform community situation and to address land tenure improvement interventions. The objective was to promote a more active role of the PAP team in the monitoring of local problems and compilation of field data, and in the establishment of better coordination among local actors to support the finding of negotiated solutions for the identified problems.

Promoting awareness of the territorial assets and local resources mobilization: Regarding the weak management of land and natural resources, the objective is to highlight potential negative impacts of present practices and assess current trends of local development. The PNTD aims at promoting an accurate awareness of local resources and territorial assets confronted with actual constraints, in order to ease local resources mobilization for self-help actions.

Facilitating the dialogue and bottom-up decision-making processes: This improved planning process would strengthen the PAP multidisciplinary team capacity to go beyond sectoral analysis for gaining a systemic understanding of local processes for rural development. The processes and outcomes of local activities of information gathering, problem analysis, joint finding of solutions and decisions implementation would be articulated to higher-level policy-making to support the definition of strategic lines.

Integrating ARCDP community development process into municipal and provincial rural development: The ARC community development plans will be oriented to better deal with raised local issues thanks to the improved understanding of the territorial system and in view of the insertion of the ARC Development Plan in a wider rural development framework.

Box: Support to the preparation of the Forestry and Rural Development Plan (FRDP) of the Buják region, Hungary.

The critical economic and social situations in the Hungarian countryside require significant efforts by all stakeholders involved with the obligation for governmental entities to assume a leading role in providing the necessary political, institutional and conceptual framework. Moreover cross-sector, inter-institutional approaches are needed since the agricultural development of the country has to be conceptualized and integrated within the broader framework of rural development. Consequently rural-regional development strategies, policies and projects have to take in consideration local needs and requirements, develop holistic, cross-sector approaches, integrate the notion of space including the rural-urban nexus, improve rural dwellers access to capital assets and hence increase the attractiveness of rural areas.

Each stage of the process to support the preparation of the Forestry and Rural Development Plan (FRDP) of the Buják region was accompanied by workshops to outline and discuss with the stakeholders and beneficiaries the relevant steps and methods. Once the crude information was obtained, the team members evaluated, filtered, consolidated, processed and documented it in the analysis report. In a subsequent workshop the draft report was presented to all parties, comments and amendments were discussed and integrated and major potentials and constraints identified. In the strategy workshop the sector approaches were discussed with all interested parties. The critical audience provided a wealth of new and innovate inputs and ideas, which were included in the final strategy document together with the necessary binding, cross-sector elements. With the sector strategies endorsed the planning team moved forward with the formulation of concrete measures, project proposals and the action plan divided in activities of immediate impact, medium and long-term outcomes. The proposals were again presented to the stakeholders and approved right after. In a further effort to achieve broad participation during the extension phase of the project a public consultation was undertaken to rank the project proposals according to the population's priorities.

The national consultants together with three university students carried out this activity during a period of three months in the seven villages utilizing PRA tools and instruments. It is worth mentioning that the establishment of a regional development agency came out top of the list. In this context it should be stressed again that openness and transparency proved to be the cornerstones for success. Both stakeholders and beneficiaries were kept informed about each step in the preparation of the plan. Meetings, workshops and seminars provided the forum for dialogue, information exchange, knowledge sharing, accountability, monitoring and evaluation. The experts gave a detailed account of progress made, problems encountered and results achieved. Members of the stakeholder association received periodically working papers and interim reports produced by the experts. Interested parties had access to information regarding the status of the project and the opportunity to contribute with their views, aspirations and modifications to the project document at any time.

However beyond concrete project's achievements there are other results.

Participation in the project has changed people's attitude, in particular of those directly involved in the process such as the members of the Project Management Unit, local decision makers and representatives of relevant government ministries.

Summarizing the lessons learnt there is now a general perception that

- Development or progress preserving the natural and cultural heritage even under unfavorable conditions are possible.
- Intra- and interregional cooperation proves to be more efficient and effective than pursuing individual interests.
- Medium and long- term visions and perspectives have to go alongside short-term interventions.
- Synergy effects from both public- public and private- public partnerships can overcome resource limitations.
- Relying on endogenous potentials contributes significantly to the diversification of economic activities and the development of alternative sources of income and employment.
- The integration of external factors and elements might be unavoidable but has to follow clear and transparent rules and regulations.

Combining those lessons with the acquired skills and knowledge project the key stakeholders should now be in a position to:

- Recognize and analyze rural- regional development problems
- Identify trends and tendencies
- Define development goals and objectives
- Know how to access resources
- Harmonize the interests of different entities and individuals in this context,
- Build- up and maintain contacts with key stakeholders and actors

As for the desired multiplicatory effect the continuous process of information exchange and knowledge sharing has raised awareness and interest not only in other regions and neighboring countries but also among donors and development agencies.

Fritz Rembold, Land Tenure and Rural Development Officer

Box the case study of Angola: reinforcement of Land Tenure for displaced people and resident communities

The FAO project in Angola started as a Technical project on the reinforcement of Land Tenure for displaced people and resident communities. It was followed by a project of support to a Decentralized Land Management Program (TCP/ANG/00168:“Improved Land Tenure and Food Security for Internally Displaced Persons and Resident Communities in Selected Areas”).

A preliminary analysis of the main actors revealed a situation of misbalanced power forces between government and the other social parties with a historical (pre and post independence) lack of rights security for local communities.

The post conflict situation highlighted the lack of trust and level of fear of local people, the weakness in the organization of civil society, the awareness of the Government of Angola (GoA) and International Community about the need to reopen dialogue about the land issue.

In this context the FAO worked as an honest broker and its intervention was oriented from the beginning to provide technical support for specific skills and to facilitate a message to national, regional and local governments, pointing out the importance to involve all the social actors in a dialogue process towards a Negotiated National Solution.

For this reason, the finding of an internal articulator (key figure or champion) of the process was essential. In this case a government counterpart was individualized as a key figure, committed and credible in the eyes of the International Community and the social actors, with access to all actors and information, and, at the same time, with an influential position within government factions in order to drive the process.

The information concerning rights of land and other natural resources access and use/management was very reduced: it was based on oral knowledge at local level while at political level Law and Institutions were inappropriate. Nevertheless, the project started without in-depth knowledge of current situation working on three levels/issues: legal, institutional and support in the management of local conflicts.

In the first phase (7/8 month) to test credibility of the government Counterpart as possible articulator, and to assess the legal and institutional framework, the project started building trust among all actors through the solution of one local conflict in the north of Quenguela region.

A preliminary diagnostic was oriented to assess conflict historical analysis, social actors, their origin, their visions, their willingness and margins of negotiation, including the Angolan Government. The actor based diagnostic revealed the superposition of land titles of different actors with inequalities of power, from the Secretariat of the President of Angola and Ministers, to fictitious and local communities, entrepreneurs and small-scale farmers.

The State recognized the inexistence of true titles and the diagnostic was the base for the preparation of proposals for a negotiation process supported by FAO. Some powerful actors were excluded from this first phase of negotiation to avoid a situation in which one side could have taken complete control of the process. It was uncovered that some actors did not live nor work in the area they claimed and therefore they as well were not considered in the negotiation process.

The weak and often not existing state institutions were sought human resources to build on and to stimulate a new interest: future democracy. This was a good opportunity to initiate a process of democratic dialogue since the powerful actors who were involved wanted to have the land they claimed recognized and legalized.

In the second phase the project was scaled up in other areas of the region where the debate on laws for the recognition of land rights was initiated. Step by step, through an iterative process, the project aimed at strengthening trust between FAO and GoA, and building dialogue among the actors and with the local government.

At the same time parallel activities of sensitization of NGO/ CSO and the International Community on Land access were carried out by the FAO team with two objectives: Firstly, to empower the non-governmental sector in collecting, analyzing and disseminating relevant information in a transparent way and secondly,

little by little trying to generate a demand with regard to the land issue so that NGOs and civil society representatives can defend the interest of the most vulnerable groups. There is more and more need of information from the local levels to carry the horizontal dialogue forward and amplify the use of a negotiated approach to the land issue. This information is provided by local animators whose main duty is to undertake participatory delimitation of land also using GPS and GIS.

In the third ongoing phase the attention has been moved from the management of local conflicts over land to the institutional questions at provincial level, with the perspective to eventually influence the formulation of the land law at the national level. It was the purpose of the projects to create conditions of trust and the recognition and realization of human rights. Although it was clear from the start that non-governmental actors would be too weak to participate in the formulation of the new land law, this was the entry point for the projects. This entry point served as an excuse for the project to initiate dialogue within the country and presented the opportunity to demonstrate the power of a bottom-up approach in creating trust and tenure security at local level to serve as precedents for the law formulation and to build the conditions for the law to be respected and applied.

6 PNTD in relation to other approaches

The principles of the PNTD approach are in line with those of other integrated rural development approaches and provide complementary insights into territorial development. In the following paragraphs, several approaches that are at the basis of the present proposal, will be briefly introduced - Liasons Entre Actions de Développement de L'Europe Rural (LEADER) , Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA), Farming Systems (FS), Gestion de Terroirs (GT), Integrated Rural Development (IRD) .- and comparisons will be made with the PNTD approach to better highlight some of its characteristics⁸ . It should be noted that this list of approaches should not be seen as exhaustive of the reflections on development theory.

The PNTD approach is borrowing, building-upon and improving the concepts, principles and methods from those experiences, in order to address the current challenges in rural development.

LEADER

The European Commission's LEADER program, implemented in marginalized areas of the European Union, promotes the creation of Local Action Groups (LAG) designated to propose projects of local development with specific requirements (e.g. area-based, based on a new conception of rurality problems). In this sense the LEADER initiative is project oriented. The members of the LAG come from different sectors (private, public, COs) and they are willing to negotiate the use of the financial resources made available by investors. The strength of LEADER is its focus on "developing a territorial project (...) to ensure that local players and institutions acquire four types of skills: the skills to assess their environment, to take joint action, to create links between sectors by ensuring that maximum added value is retained, and lastly to liaise with other areas and the rest of the world" .

However, the agreement of the actors on the strategy for development is only implicit and the actor's sensitization and capacity building process is limited. Furthermore, the risk is that a counter-process results in competition over funds.

Gestion de Terroirs

The "Gestion de Terroirs" (GT) was developed in the '80 in West Africa to overcome the sectoral focus of technical assistance. In the GT approach, the "terroir" is regarded as a socially and geographically defined space within which community resources and associated rights are located in order to satisfy their needs⁹. GT experiences systematized a bottom-up approach focusing on community based natural resources management, empowerment of local communities and their capacity building, and stakeholder involvement in the identification of local priorities, though participatory rural development processes.

Unfortunately, it has experienced relative high start up cost and dependency from outside technical expertise and donor funds for project implementation. A main challenge GT faced was to successfully counteract local elites taking over control and include marginal groups in the decision-making processes. The local projects tended to operate in relative autonomy thus macro and micro linkages are not established and policy vacuums had not yet been filled.

⁸ All presented approaches are described here in their "text book version", and elements that are not explicitly included might nevertheless be drawn on when applying the approaches in the field

⁹ For an overview of the literature about SLA, GT, FS see FAO (2003a).

Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) has emerged at the end of the 1990s from experiences of OXFAM, CARE and others and was further developed and strongly supported by the British Department of International Development (DfID). Its concern was to move the focus of development interventions from food security to the wider concept of livelihood strategies. It considers the Pentagon of Assets (Human, Natural, Financial, Physical and Social capital) available to rural people as a paradigm of any effort to promote sustainable development. The approach focuses on livelihood outcomes instead of project objectives with an emphasis on holistic diagnosis. In practice sectoral issues are used as entry points for projects subsequently trying to amplify the focus of project interventions to work in a multi-sectoral way. Its focus is mainly on community and households as direct beneficiaries of projects trying to build the conditions for them to realize their livelihood outcomes. Recent experiences increasingly focus on establishing vertical integration of development strategies.

Still, limited attention is given to define the role of the market in local development. SLA has proven valuable in analyzing project contexts and impacts yet it has rarely been implemented throughout the full project cycle. The desire to take into account the full complexity of the context is limited by available time and financial resources and these are the main constraining factors in implementing the approach in a traditional project rationale.

Farming Systems

The Farming Systems approach (FS) was developed at the end of 1970s building on experiences in different regions. It sets out to link theoretical reflections to field experiences. The FS approach focuses on agricultural development as a key element in poverty reduction in both rural and urban areas. It analyzes the functioning of the individual farming system to provide technical answers to productive problems also building on human capital. Methodologically it consists of a diagnostic of the agricultural sector, dynamically implemented that includes agronomic analysis, elaboration of models, study of the context specific interactions between physical and social systems. A criticism that is often made to FS is that the approach has not always been successful in overcoming the top-down rational, in some cases even jeopardizing the achievement of project objectives.

Integrated Rural Development

Finally, Integrated Rural Development (IRD) emerged in the 1960s focusing on small-scale agriculture as a reaction to the prevalence of large scale, industrial agriculture. IRD set the basis of an integrated approach to rural development, covering the provision of some basic services that are today considered key functions of national governments. A big importance was given by the approach to the development of infrastructures. Despite its multi-sectoral approach to rural development, in practice, IRD implemented projects which tended to be production oriented, large scale and top-down interventions, failing in achieving its ambitious objectives. The notions of local capacity building and institutional sustainability were not given much attention in IRD projects and local communities were not included in development processes.

Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development

The Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development approach (PNTD) is based on the theoretical reflections of the French school of Agrarian System analysis and on the field experiences of Ordenamiento Territorial Participativo and concerted management of natural resources carried out, principally in Latin American and the Caribbean, in the 1990s.

The PNTD approach goes beyond the classical analysis of the rural space as a productive system since it proposes a systemic analysis addressing linkages between territories, resulting flows and dynamics and their impact on the promotion of local development and creating linkages of the territories with national and international markets. Such an analysis allows identifying and assessing the existence of competition over space and resources and the conflicting interests of different actors, highlighting the initial lack of trust between them. The PNTD approach consents integration (both cross-sectoral and vertical) of rural development interventions in prospect of impacting on the policy context.

This bottom-up and negotiated approach promotes a consensual decision making process which involves all the actors of the territory in finding solutions for territorial development issues on the basis of socio-political considerations rather than on purely technical or economical concerns. Taking into account policies and practices, the PNTD approach addresses the question of how local actors can be empowered to use available assets for their development projects. Moreover, the approach allows mobilizing local resources for territorial development through a process that promotes decentralization and the strengthening of financial, administrative and political capacities of the intermediary government level to provide basic services.

This systems approach implies an inherent complexity of development processes and thus does not pretend to achieve tangible outcomes of dialogue and social change, but wants to stimulate them. The challenge of applying this approach in a project context, determining an appropriate timeframe and needed human and financial resources, is to define indicators for the evaluation of interventions that show clear progress attributable to the PNTD process.

Despite the lack of institutionalization of the elements and fundamental principles of the overall PNTD process in a project context, this document shows numerous examples and field experiences that illustrate how such a process can be applied responding to the key questions put forward.

III. A methodological approach for Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD)

In this chapter the four phases of the PNTD approach will be described in more detail, and important issues will be highlighted and illustrated with concrete examples from field experiences and some boxes presenting in-depth descriptions of key points.

The systems approach aims to understand not only each component of the territorial system, but also the interactions among components and their interdependences at different levels. These interactions produce identifiable characteristics and rules (internal and external, formal and informal) that govern the behaviour of each system, through which they can be analyzed.

"Governance (regulation) is the activation of a set of rules and management of exogenous or endogenous perturbations affecting the system. As these are typically irregular in pattern, the creation of a new internal rule can be usefully viewed as dealing with uncertainty. The link between system governance and uncertainty is memory: identification, storage and comparisons of patterns of irregularities. Memory defines the scope or range of possible future events, which themselves defines the uncertainties affecting the system at present. The set of future possibilities defines the system's vision, which can deeply affect its behaviour. Vision is rooted in past history¹⁰.

The territorial diagnostic has to produce a vision of the territorial system and the strategies of the actors for the access to, the use and management of natural resources. This vision will form the basis for the subsequent phases of the PNTD process.

Phase 1 – Views: Understanding the actors and the territory as a social product

The objective of this phase is to carry out a diagnostic process of the actual situation by taking into account the actors concerned and the territory as a whole system. The systemic vision implies a vertical and horizontal dimension of assessment. This process involves qualifying the territory and conducting an analysis of actors and institutions to understand the issues at stake and their causes and interdependencies. Using participatory tools and methods ensures that the process implementation is stimulating for social dialogue.

The historical analysis of the territorial system is essential for a coherent understanding of actors' global visions and livelihood strategies and for formulating possible scenarios of evolution of the main issues under discussion (e.g. right and access to resources, land use and management, relationships within the whole productive chain).

Rationale of the required intervention

Before assessing the actor's positions and interests, and the potentialities and vulnerabilities of the territory, it is very important to identify the explicit or implicit reasons for the request of external support and their implications with regard to the modalities of interventions. Obviously, the requester can only draw a partial image of the problem.

¹⁰ Schilizzi (CIRAD) cited in FAO (1999)

This analytical process is significant because it brings to light certain problems, the existence of which is often well known, but which, for one reason or another, have not been expressed or taken into account (the unsaid, hidden, and disguised issues). The formulation of these problems is important, but the changes that this assessment can produce in the perception by the various stakeholders of the territorial issues, are even more important.

The following questions arise:

- Why is an intervention needed?
- How to identify and stimulate demands?

The idea is to try to understand or clarify the background of the intervention in order to assess the general context in which the intervention will be implemented.

Many countries are carrying out institutional reforms of the central state in order to redistribute the competencies and responsibilities for the management of land and local natural resources. New decision-making powers are delegated to decentralized political and administrative units and a greater popular participation in planning and implementing local development is foreseen. The municipality, commune and district become the main actors of the decentralized state at the local level.

However, in reality, decentralization often results in a mere deconcentration of state institutions, causing increased frustration for the local administrators involved in land management and local development. Local Governments are progressively made responsible for designing and carrying out development interventions, yet, their decision-making powers, their capacity to assume new responsibilities and to propose and conduct actions on the territory, as well as their financial autonomy, remain very limited. This contradictory situation inhibits local initiatives and, in general, hampers actors' will for action. Public officials and the institutions responsible for local development are therefore those who mainly request external technical support for territorial development.

On the other hand, often, the expressed demand is induced by standardization of issues brought by the will of international organization to mainstream their interests (gender sensitive, sustainable environment, good governance etc.). It can lead to a certain kind of opportunistic behaviour from the part of the local NGO that go with the mainstream.

In fact, it might appear that the problem definition and the identification of the actors concerned clarify better the real nature of a required intervention.

For instance, in Angola, a FAO project dealing with land delimitation, had to take into account the interests of powerful private entrepreneurs who claimed parts of land formerly occupied by local communities.

Thanks to an initial analysis it had become evident that all actors (local communities and private entrepreneurs) were ready to accept a loss in land in exchange for a legalization of the rest of the land they claimed being theirs. For the communities this meant that the powerful entrepreneurs accepted their presence and their rights over land in the area, and for the private entrepreneurs this process was the opportunity to "legalize" their claims over land that they never had owned officially.

The key informants

The use of key informants is an efficient technique to quickly collect information and different and in-depth points of view over current issues. A key informants express opinions and provide analyses of the situation. In addition, they actively collaborate in the survey by pointing to other information sources and suggesting new directions of research. It is by means of their perceptions, and the judgments and memories of such persons that the researcher can perceive certain underlying tones

in the midst of the numerous observations and, as a consequence, detect any coherence or incoherence in the arguments.

It is, however, necessary to diversify the choice of key informants according to their status and position with regard to change, in order to avoid biased collection of information and results analysis. In general, they should be selected among those persons who possess sufficient historical knowledge of the study area: its inhabitants and the other actors on the territory. There is no univocal way of identifying key informants, as this depends on the type of information required (history of the territory, social relations, etc.), the scale of information, the characteristics of the actors and/or groups of actors they represent or about which they talk.

Nevertheless, during the whole process, key informants' representativity and the relevance of the information collected should be evaluated and qualified. In addition, their contribution is essential for ensuring the "open demand" character of the survey, which is an iterative process based on a research-action strategy. It should be noted that there is a certain risk with the data produced, as the key informants may influence the type of data to be collected due to their strategic position, opinions and perceptions of reality. There exists a very vast bibliography on the subject, but a few examples of key informants are given below:

	Local agents	Local structure, strategies and policies, general situation of farms
	Community elders	History, traditions and customs
	Religious leaders	Science, taboos, religious obligations
	Women and women farmers	Integration of women, home economics, nutrition and health; Constraints: social, religious, cultural and economic, in their roles as agricultural producers
	Local tradesmen and merchants	Marketing channels, production lines, conditions for credit, prices
	"Progressive" farmers	Development opportunities and pre-requisites for their implementation

Identify explicit and hidden demands

This information allows identifying explicit and hidden demands (internal and external) and the origins of the request. It gives a first overview of the issues at stake, the existing asymmetries within the given civil society and with the governmental authorities.

Furthermore, when looking at beneficiaries of an intervention, it is important to understand the indirect target that will be also affected by such intervention and to include them in the whole process of the implementation of activities.

In Bosnia "Inventory of Post-War Situation of land Resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina" GCP/BIH/002/ITA, the second phase of the project is a participatory land use planning which worked to bind several stakeholder groups into locally-based working partnerships directed at

cooperatively recognizing the territorial assets and resources, identifying problems, developing strategies and implementing solutions to promote local development.

These groups who had an important role in achieving the project aims, are: (a) the local communities, (b) the local municipalities (c) the 'better-performing' farm (d) the research institutes and universities (e) the agricultural schools (f) non-government organizations (NGOs); and (g) economic agents including first, second and third sectors, particularly agriculture, mining, environment and infrastructure.

The municipalities were identified on the basis of a number of criteria such as agri-ecological setting, political system, size, organizational capacity etc. Most important factor considered was the commitment of the municipality and the support given by the mayor to ensure the feasibility of a participatory process to land use planning. The main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project are the targeted municipalities. The municipalities are elaborating the land use plans through the respective technical services. Nonetheless, the participatory process allowed also indirect beneficiaries, local stakeholders from private sector and civil society organizations, to voice out their concerns and interests regarding municipal land use.

Along the project process, from a common issue to be tackled, the beneficiaries can be extended to other actors who had not been recognized as such at the beginning of the process or to reorient or widen the scope of a project.

After the draught that affected in 1987-1988 the South of the Lempira Department (Honduras), FAO intervened in the region with emergency aid to address the damages. The preliminary investigation revealed a dramatic situation of degradation on mountain land by extensive cattle ranching and slash-and-burn farming practice, a consequent decline of production and productivity, high rate of emigrations, few local organizations with little popular participation, and geographical and political marginalization caused by a lack of basic communications infrastructure. Also, it found that the region's decision-making was dominated by a small number of land owners and local elites. Another project (PROLESUR) started in 1994 and initially oriented to food security, which pursued the strategy to change the production systems.

Target group were small scale farmers, but by the end of the first phase of PROLESUR it had been broadly recognized, that the local planning procedures in the area had to be strengthened in order to enhance and assure sustainable rural development processes involving all the relevant actors. The analysis of the situation pointed out the need to tackle conflictive issues related to the recognition of land rights (access and management) and the consolidation of people's organizations at the community and municipality levels.

Identify the driving forces impacting on the territorial system

As underlined earlier, global change processes are impacting on the dynamics and the functioning of territorial systems. The specific driving forces that will influence the intervention have to be identified taking into account the risks and opportunities of the current trends in the environmental, economic, institutional, and social context.

A change in government, a transition to a market economy, changing patterns in social relationships, the introduction of new technologies, the failure of past policy or programmes, a conflict or a peace agreement, whether gradual or sudden climatic disasters can all offer opportunities to stimulate a change process, because such event can generate a collective awareness of the need to change.

Historically the South of the Lempira Department, in Honduras, has been perceived by the State as a territory without limits and since the beginning of the XX century laws and interventions were oriented to the agricultural frontier expansion.

In the early 1990s 50 % of the people did not own land or had less than 1 ha. Most of the land belonged to large farms that used the landless as farm workers or rented out small pieces of their land, with a permanence of clientelistic relationships and a destructive production system.

The intervention of the FAO project, in a post-emergency situation after the drought of 1987-1988, allows a change in the relations between demography systems and the production-environmental management that were close to the collapse. The key entry identified through the diagnostic was the technification of production systems that involved small farmers and landowners.

Identify key figures and leaders

From the beginning of the process, which can take place at different levels (local, intermediary or national), it is necessary to identify key figures at the respective levels that have the capacity to articulate the key demands, are responsible and committed, trusted, credible and respected by the involved actors. These key figures will for example help to overcome historically built mistrust and reduce the existing gap between public administration and civil society. Also, possible strategies and alliances with NGO, CSOs or international agencies to start the intervention and to support it have to be built (see [Box: Key figures in Angola](#) p. 72).

The Actors of the territory

The first step of the diagnostic process is the identification of the actors of the territorial system and its assessment, through a stakeholder analysis of their visions, interests, power relations, and margins of flexibility.

It is fundamental to understand along the diagnostic, the rules of the game that have shaped the relationships among the actors and the governance system.

The understanding of the given situation is not a research of the truth of an exact diagnostic, but is synonym of a process to build up a coherent framework of the territorial system thanks the historical reconstruction of its evolution.

The following questions arise:

- Who are the actors in this territory?
- What are their visions, positions, interests, power relations, margins of flexibility?
- What is the actor's understanding of the rules of the game?

“The modalities according to which natural resources are managed at a given moment in time and in a given context are the result of the history of a society and its external relations. They are the result – always evolving – of the application of rules produced by the rural society (customary rights) or introduced (modern law), the changes these rules have been subject to, the multiple combinations they have given rise to, but also the liberties individuals and families take vis-à-vis these rules, and specific adjustments (old and recent) that have been introduced.¹¹”

The challenge of an actor-based approach is to assess the role of social and institutional, historical or emerging actors, who implement actions to accelerate, reinforce, refrain, modify and bend the territorial dynamics or to initiate new ones.

In other words, an analysis of the actors helps assess the following elements:

- Existing models of interaction;
- Interventions on the territory and local resources and improvements to such intervention;
- The policy-making process;
- Measures for preventing tensions in the system.

What is an actor?

Actors will therefore be the “key entry” to assist in the identification of the issues at stake of the territory in a given area, and through their history, help understand their causes.

Through an analysis of this system of actors in terms of action strategies, relationships, their different interests, pressures (from or within their own groups and external) and their bargaining power (within their own groups and in their relationships with other actors) it is possible to assess trends in the use/management of the territory, as well as risks and tensions and, finally, evaluate actors' margins of flexibility and availability to enter a dialogue/negotiation process.

The term actor refers to a concrete, localized agent (in a context). An actor is any individual, social group or institution that possesses a stake (or interest) in the development of a territory. Actors can be thought of as those parties who are affected directly or indirectly by decisions-making, in a positive or negative way. It includes those who can influence such decisions, as well as those who would like to influence decisions.

¹¹ FAO, CIRAD-SAR, IRAM CIEAPAC, SIC-Terroirs (1995)

Actors can be grouped into typologies or classes. The following criteria can be used to identify groups of actors:

- The structural characteristics;
- The objectives and interests vis-à-vis the issue being examined;
- Power relations. By the term ‘power’ we intend the capacity of an actor to make another actor do something. The resources of power are competence, control over environmental relations, mastery over communications, knowledge about the system;
- The strategies¹²

In an analysis of a territorial system, it is important to consider not only the actors that are directly affected or directly affect the system but also the indirect actors. For example, an agro-industrial company even if located far from the intervention zone can be the stimulus for a migratory movement.

In Brazil for instance, almost 50% of arable land belongs to 1% of the population. Since the 1980s in Brazil, Bolivia and other countries of South America emerge some groups of households whom occupy part of these land or idle land as a protest against this situation of social inequality. In Brazil 4 million people live and work in legal and productive “settlements”, with access to health and education.

The displacements and migrations to attractive areas can contribute to feed socio-ecological conflicts among local actors and those more marginalized, indigenous people or small farmers. This is the case currently for instance in the Amazon frontier of Bolivia or in the Parà region of Brasil. Intense migration or displacement are principally due to natural disasters or other ecological conflicts, or moving back because of land redistribution issues as in the case of “Brasiguayos” in the frontier between Paraguay and Brasil or political reason etc.

In the Agrarian Reform Community (ARC) of El Progreso located in the Municipality of Carmen, Province of Bohol, in the Philippines, an increasing number of squatters are entering the area and tilling the land of titled properties with absentee landowner, without being acknowledged by the latter. The illegal settlers are Boholanos, from other Municipalities, who after migrating to Mindanao are now returning to Bohol given the poor peace and order situation in the island. More families are expected to enter the idle lands in the ARC in the future. The increasing population in Bohol and the expansion of oil palm plantations in the municipality of Carmen has increased competition over marginal lands even though these lands are not very productive and actual tillers need to make extensive use of fertilizers in order to plant cassava, which is an endemic variety in the area. More households and member of the families are expected in the future to enter the idle lands in the area.

This situation also creates problems connected to the qualification of the newcomers as agrarian reform farmer-beneficiaries. The agrarian reform law guidelines prioritize actual residents in the Municipality wherein the land is situated as beneficiaries, allowing selection of residents from adjacent municipalities only as a second and third option. The Department of Agrarian Reform must also ascertain whether the new applicants for the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program coverage possess land elsewhere.

Another example of marginalised actors is illustrated in the Yemen’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP, 2002) which highlighted that the poor participation of women in development is one of the causes of poverty in the country. The Strategy fosters women’s participation through:

- Women participation is considered central to all program’s interventions,

¹² Different actors or groups of actors may have the same objectives, but different strategies (= the totality of actions to reach an objective). We can cite here the *sem terra* and indigenous groups that compete over the use/management of the territory and the actions implemented.

- Women's representation in executives bodies is one of the eligibility prerequisites that qualify the community development organisation to program's assistance,
- Minimum allocations were set with regards to women shares of credit (25%) and training (30%) below which the programs postponed its assistance to the Community Development Organisation.
- Women are exempted from certain credit and training eligibility criteria. For instance, individual loans and non-credit-linked vocational training against the program budgets are only applied to women.

In addition, the strategy reflects allied national policies and strategies. This strategy highlighted situation-specific tools to cater for the apparent discrepancies in women circumstances among action areas and the existing social norms and values.

Some actors can be considered also on ethnic basis. In some case, the presence of actors on a territory is not legally recognised and remains ignored people by decision making process. "The major social and structural upheavals in Hungarian society since the collapse of communism, coupled with increasingly open discrimination, have had a disproportionately large and negative impact on Roma people, whose low social status, lack of access to education, and isolation make them relatively unable to defend themselves and their interests. Roma suffer nearly total marginalization within Hungarian society: they are almost entirely absent from the visible political, academic, commercial, and social life of the country."¹³

"The challenges are:

- Long-term unemployment
- Socio-geographic inequalities
- Unfavourable market position
- Limited access to services and resources
- Weak negotiation capacities

The methods and instruments

- Support to local initiatives
- Combination of grants and loans
- Thorough monitoring
- Support via Roma community houses
- Capacity building

The policy options

- Support to autonomous circles of local civil society
- Enhancement of participation on the local and national level"¹⁴

¹³ http://www.crin.org/docs/resources/treaties/crc.18/Hungary_NGO_Report.pdf

Human Rights Watch – Liaison Unit dci-ngo.group@pingnet.ch

NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child - Database of NGO Reports presented to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. 18th Session : May - June 98

¹⁴ http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/attackingpoverty/events/Austria_1029/csongor_1c_%20eng.pdf

Anna Csongor, Autonomía Foundation

Poverty Reduction Strategy Forum for Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, FR Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro

Baden, Austria October 29 October 29 –November 1, 2002

Box: A case of exclusion: the Bugkalots in the Philippines

Bugkalots, a tribe of former headhunters, gatherers and fishermen, were the first inhabitants of Malabing Valley, which used to be a densely forested area. Their community suffered the most negative consequences from the Ifugao resettlement and the new prevailing use of local resources for agricultural purposes. They used to live in temporary houses built along the riverbanks and move their village location every two-three months. Bugkalots did not create any resistance to Ifugao penetration in the valley. They preferred to retreat into more isolated areas in the forest believing there was enough space and food for everyone. The Bugkalots bartered their land with clothes and food in tins.

This retreat of indigenous gatherers and hunters when their territory is being penetrated by tribes of cultivators is a common occurrence in the upland areas of the Philippines. Cultivators are characterized by a strong identification with their territory and a tendency toward cohesion and organization. On the contrary, hunters and gatherers keep moving away thinking there is enough space anyhow.

There are only 13 Bugkalots families in Malabing Valley. They live in Capisaan, a remote area at the border with Barangay Dine (which is outside the Malabing Valley Agrarian Reform Community). Some Ifugao call the Bugkalots uncivilized because they lack farming skills and judge their living conditions as “very primitive”. They do not know the technology for nursing and budding; therefore they cannot plant citrus trees as most Malabing Valley farmers do. They produce ginger, beans, camote (sweet potato) and palay. They catch fish in the rivers. Most of what they produce and the fish they get are for self-consumption. They barter ginger in Capisaan in exchange for salt and sugar and find temporary occupation in Capisaan citrus plantations. They live in worse health conditions than most Malabing Valley residents. They can avail of spring water but suffer from diarrhoea due to food infections. There are cases of malaria among them (there are none reported among Malabing Valley residents). They have a high infant mortality (a high percentage of children less than one year old die). Barangay Capisaan midwife rarely reaches their area. Bugkalots go to Capisaan health centre for vaccinations when they are informed. The average family size is much smaller than Ifugao’. Children and young adults go to school but they are too shy to tell the teachers and anyone if they feel sick or have problems at home.

The Bugkalots participate in Capisaan Barangay assemblies but only to be informed of decisions, which have been taken without them. They are protesting that their requests are never given consideration. The Bugkalots live in harsh isolation: a large river crosses the only road that allows them to reach the valley. As a consequence, it is very difficult for the children to go to school if their parents do not help them ride the carabao to cross the river. The Bugkalots have asked the Capisaan Barangay Council for a hanging bridge and road rehabilitation, but have received no answer yet. The Bugkalots say they are never informed when a project is launched by external organizations employing local labour force. As a result of all this, the Bugkalots in Capisaan are trying to register as residents of neighbouring barangay Dine hoping to receive more support.

Compiled by Catia-Isabel Santonico Ferrer, SDAA Fellow, during her Master dissertation in the Philippines.

How to identify and characterize the actors?

Although a priori very simple, this question raises serious methodological preoccupations. The risk is that attention is given only to “dominant” actors or those who are formally organized, and that only what is explicitly told by them is taken into consideration when trying to understand their behaviour.

The identification of the actors is linked to the questions being asked and to the scale and purpose of the study. Furthermore, the identification of the key actors is supported by the information provided by key informants (See [Box: The key informants](#)).

Nevertheless, in whatever context the actors are being identified, methodological precautions need to be taken:

- Not to focus only on the “institutional” actors;
- Not to focus only on those actors who are physically present in the area;
- Not to rely exclusively on information provided by key informants that could influence the analysis and lead to/accentuate exclusion of certain groups.

In characterizing the actors, several features are considered:

- Their situation in terms of social category and status;
- Their resources (what they “have”): including the environmental capital (biotope: potentials and limitations), financial capital, material capital, human capital (knowledge, competencies, abilities) and social capital (relationships, networks).

Particular attention should be given to the actors’ visions of their resources, and the values they attach to them. Sometimes the actor can have a constraining or negative perception of such resources; e.g. family relations may be considered as a cost to be paid and thus a constraint, while at the same time being a remarkable resource, especially in case of migration.

- Their practices (technical and social) and reports about them (what they do and how they interpret it, what meaning do they give to it). These practices can be converging, diverging and sometimes conflicting.
- The perception or vision the actors have of their own situation (their resources and environment, the other actors surrounding them, assessment of risks and opportunities in their situation, etc.); this perception depends on the information available to the actors (quantity, quality) as well as on their points of reference, experience, social status, cultural and social categories and representations.

Why do people do what they do? It is important to understand the strategy “by interpreting actions taken in a significant direction¹⁵”. It is necessary to explore the values that influence the use and management of the territory and its resources (<http://www.fao.org/sd/LTdirect/LR96/bonnal.htm>), but also the economic, social and political factors that may determine or influence actors’ strategies more than other factors¹⁶.

A strategy is “the totality of the actions taken to achieve an objective, a hierarchy of actions and intermediate results.” A strategy can be defined based on the observation of practices, changes to these and strategic choices, i.e. investments, in the short or long term. Taking into account the economic, social and institutional constraints of the actors, it is possible to define a “field of

¹⁵ Weber (1995)

¹⁶ Politico-econological territorial approach in: Warren (1998)

possibilities” for each actor or group of actors that find themselves in the same conditions of resources and environment (this is defined as actors’ margins for action).

Thus, the actors belonging to a category with a weak margin for action (limited resources and/or very constraining environment, especially institutional) will have quite similar practices/livelihood strategies. Actors with a relatively large margin of action thanks to their resources or the distance they can take from the institutional constraints (e.g. from the law) or to their social status, may have more diversified projects, strategies and practices. These margins of action thus greatly influence the position of the actors. Actors’ positions vis-à-vis the issues at stake are often rigid and have few development possibilities because it is usually based on a short term perspective. The actors’ representatives do not therefore have much flexibility in the negotiation process.

The definition of the problem and of actors’ interests behind expressed positions, constitute a precondition for an analysis of the actors’ margins of flexibility. The identification of common interests - and thus common visions about the future in the medium term - thanks to an analysis of the actors’ margins of flexibility, is a precondition for any action undertaken to strengthen a sense of community.

Actors with large margins of flexibility can be more easily motivated to adapt to, hence also accept changes that do not directly fit in with their existing strategies. Propose policies change may also offer benefits to non poor as well as the poor. When powerful groups also stand to gain asymmetries are more likely to be reduced.

A stakeholder analysis conducted in the Lempira Sur project in Honduras found that the actors opposed to the project’s interventions where the landowners, the teachers, and the mayor. Most of the land (down watershed) belonged to large farms, principally dedicated to cattle ranching using the landless as farm workers or renting out small pieces of land to them. Communities and small farmers occupy the isolated upper part of the watershed. In this agricultural frontier area the land owners and local elites have historically play the most important role of influence over decision-making and strategies of life of local people (the so-called *patronato* structure). They are not motivated to change and normally the law of violence and psychological submission and intimidation prevail. This leads to a situation with a number of hidden and open conflicts. The project therefore aimed at working on the correlations of forces to create the necessity of negotiating distinct interests and power at play and neutralizing or reducing the opposition to change to guarantee the effectiveness of local governance. For this reason from the first phases of the project the work implied powerful landowners, supporting them through subsidies for recuperating lands and the technification of production processes.

The relationships among the actors

The inter-relations among the actors can be analyzed at two levels:

In absolute terms, the actors are linked by social relations defined by the structures of society: parental relations, productive relations, transactions, etc... From these social relations stem relations of power, dominance and submission. In order to objectively assess these power relations, (that are often unspoken or hidden), it is necessary to specify them in detail, including related flows (of goods, services, information, etc.).

For a purpose, around a given object (e.g. a resource), specific relationships exist between the actors (local and external). Relationships of cooperation and alliances are established, or to the contrary, of opposition and conflicts, depending on the degree to which the interests of the different actors on the territory converge or diverge and whether they are complementary or incompatible.

The actors may cooperate for a given purpose (e.g. the conservation of a certain area) and be in opposition on other issues. “Through the social network theory an attempt is made to understand the behaviours of the actors by analyzing the types of relations they establish and the way in which such relations are structured.¹⁷” In fact, in trying to understand behaviours or individual actions the study of such interactions allows to identify actors’ interests and strategies.

In this perspective, alliances and oppositions are considered as rational behaviours by the actors, a form of “social practice” and a strategy to reach their objectives. Numerous surveys on negotiation processes consider that the social context and any coalitions that are formed play a predominant role in determining the different procedures for negotiation¹⁸.

It should be noted that the social networks established around the management of a given resource may, over time, create a climate of confidence among actors who until recently had taken opposite stands:

“In the watershed of the Merin lagoon in Uruguay, local stakeholders have come to a common understanding regarding innovative natural resources management practices, although their interests are diverging (rice producers and traders, local authorities and ecologists).

On the opposite side, central government bodies that are far away, and the staff of the technical institutes that were part of the social network, were particularly reticent to modify their positions.¹⁹”

Stakeholder analysis

It concerns the inventory and analysis of:

- Current stakeholders and those potentially affected by future decisions;
- Their characteristics, such as interest, power, control over resources, knowledge and information, how they are organized or represented, and limitations for participation;
- Their relationships with others, such as coalition, dependencies, conflicts and strategies;
- Their influence and motivation towards decision making, including expectations, likely gains and willingness to participate and invest resources.

A stakeholder analysis can be used to predict the support that can be expected and the resistance that may be met in a participatory development process. It can be used to identify weak parties who may need special assistance and support in order to participate effectively. It can be used to avoid the pitfall of bypassing powerful stakeholders who can derail the process if they so desire, and other stakeholders who depend on and affect the resource in substantial ways.

Stakeholder analysis is a tool for planning and guiding participation in natural resource management. It is done for particular settings, situations and activities because these determine whom the stakeholders are in each case. Stakeholders’ perspectives and interests change over time.

'Influence' is the power a stakeholder has to facilitate or impede the achievement of an activity's objectives. 'Importance' is the priority given to satisfying the needs and interests of each stakeholder.

In an urban livelihoods programme, local politicians may have a great 'influence' over a programme by facilitating or impeding the allocation of necessary resources, while the urban poor (at least to start with) may have very little power to influence the outcome of the activity. At the same time, local politicians may have very little 'importance' as far as the activity is concerned, since it is not designed to meet their needs, while the urban poor are central and very important to it.

¹⁷ Rowley, 1997, cited in Ramírez (2001)

¹⁸ Ibidem

¹⁹ Ibidem

Importance/Influence Matrix.

	WEAK INFLUENCE	STRONG INFLUENCE
STRONG INTEREST	Stakeholders in this segment may prove helpful if they become supporters of the project	Stakeholders must be accommodated
WEAK INTEREST	Stakeholders will have little impact on the project	Stakeholders may become dangerous or very supportive to project if they become interested

Power analysis:

It is to assess the relationships of strength and power among the actors.

- What are the power relationships at stake?
- What are their means of influence? (access to media distribution, information sources, knowledge, levels of economic integration, social networks, etc.)
- What does power influence mean?

A matrix presented by J. Chevalier is a simple but useful instrument for analyzing power relationships.²⁰

Actors	Type of power source	Level of power	Interests
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And compare positions and interests:

Actors	At stake and importance	Position	Interests
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It helps to get a coherent picture of stakeholders' interests and power influence (it can always be both negative and positive) in order to underline potential conflict or tension, their reason and modalities.

Highlighting the stakeholders' potential margin of flexibility to determinate their bargaining power is about looking how people can collaborate and on what. The most imperative issue is to let emerge the common interests.

The 4 R approach is an analytical tool used in clarifying and negotiating the roles of the actors involved in using and managing natural resources in terms of balancing their rights, responsibilities, revenues/returns and assessing their relationships.²¹

Below a simplified version of the 3R matrix, elaborated to analyse actual natural resource management in the Mandena region (Southern Madagascar), is shown. A matrix actor / actor can follow, for an identification, theme by theme (e.g. technical, financial, regulatory, informal), of the relationships among the actors involved.

²⁰ *Ibidem*; for more detailed information, also see <http://www.iied.org/forestry/tools/stakeholder.html>.

²¹ For more information see <http://www.mtnforum.org/resources/library/duboo99a.htm>

Table 1: 3 R matrix of actual forest management.

3R	Rights	Responsibilities	Revenues/returns
Actors			
CRD (Regional committee for development)	Information on the state of natural resources	Diagnosing problems and proposing solutions	Regional development plan
CIREF (Forestry Service)	Land ownership Ownership of forest resources	Sustainable management of forest resources	Taxes on products A lack of budgetary resources, making it difficult to function
Village communities	Uses granted by the forest code Customary use	Traditional	Subsistence needs
Village wood cutters and other (independent) user groups	Uses granted by the forest code Customary uses Right to sell	None	Subsistence needs Sales of forest products
Fort- Dauphin wood cutters (independent)	Access to forest resources Right to sell	None	Sales of forest products (charcoal)
QMM (Québec Iron & Titanium Inc.) Madagascar Minerals S.A.	Access and use for research purposes as defined by the convention of establishment	To limit usage to research and experimental purposes	Research results

Normally also a 4R analysis should be carried out about the specific issues at stake. In this case, a desired 3Rs for co-management of resources derived from land reclaimed after mining could be proposed.

Analysis of institutional setting

It is important to clarify the difference between Institutions and Organizations. An institution consists of the formal and informal rules by which system actors interact. Institutions involve a range of areas such as normative structures, culture, legal frameworks, policies and trends. Organizations are defined as formalized entities that involve a cluster of people who are brought together for a common purpose. Organization both conforms to and influence institutions. They include a wide spectrum of human activity and can be categorized as private or public, for-profit or non-profit, governmental or non- governmental, and so forth.²²

Conceived as a continuum composed of a set of rules, forms of access and modalities of use, i.e. institutions, the territory reflects the relationship between such rules and the actors. Problems arise when one or more of these components no longer fit with the others, thus creating a distortion in the system. For example, when the following occur:

A set of unclear or not formalized rules (formal or customary), regarding:

Access to land: problem in the distribution and access to fertile soil within the community;

The management of natural resources, with improper or overlapping uses (e.g. competition over a transhumance corridor or fertile areas);

Security (environmental risks, etc.)

Such an unclear regulatory framework leaves the field open to competition and rivalry with consequent unequal and predatory relationships of force.

- Such rules exist but are not respected or acknowledged by all the actors:

²² Lusthaus et al. (2002)

- Often there are several instruments that regulate access to and use/management of land, such as laws, plans, programmes, strategies of intervention, etc., whose principles do not or no longer serve local needs or farming practices.
- It should be noted that such a scenario might emerge if the formal rules do not take into account traditional (customary) rules of land access and use. This is the case of indigenous territorial management systems (relatively efficient and sustainable) that progressively enter a crisis due to historical changes (migration, demographic transition, agro-industrialization, speculation over land and resources, etc.). Such a scenario is often found in marginal areas with strong ethnic components.²³
- When pockets of exclusion from the right to access local resources exist, affected groups in the community are deprived of development opportunities.

These various issues discussed above, contribute to generate territorial critical situations, which manifest themselves with varying intensity and modalities depending on the context.

Such situations generate area-specific problems of competitive and improper uses of land and natural resources, and this is happening in times when national and local politico-institutional systems are undergoing deep changes and encounter difficulties in implementing planned land policies.

Historical analysis

The historical analysis of the territorial system defined as “modality of social organization based on its relationship with the environment” is pivotal for a coherent understanding of actors’ global visions and livelihood strategies.

The objectives of a historical analysis are thus to describe in a coherent framework the causes of the existing territorial issues, actors’ visions regarding access to and use of land and natural resources and current dynamics on the territory and possible trends. This is the basis for the formulation of alternative options of interventions to be discussed around the negotiation table.

It is essential not to lose sight of the historical evolution of national and international policies and economics (macro dimension) and their effects on the territorial situation and the problems being considered.

What historical information are we looking for?

First of all, it is necessary to study the development of the local ecosystem (or agro-ecosystem), its organization and modalities of land use, environmental characteristics, degree of anthropization, geographic areas of influence and evolution of the landscape, but also to assess the evolution of productive means and forces taking into account the indigenous know-how, available tools, work productivity, etc.

The analysis of the evolution of social relations is fundamental in order to understand territorial dynamics: exchange flows, networks, systems of social differentiation and the adaptation/modification of social practises, actors’ livelihood strategies, modalities for territorial administration, etc. (See [Box: Municipal territorial code: an experience from west Bolivia](#))

²³ Refer to Nassirou Bako-Arifari (1997)

[Box: Municipal territorial code: an experience from west Bolivia](#)

In the framework of collaboration between the Municipalities of Alto and Medio Pirai, SEARPI - the organism responsible for managing the watershed - and FAO (project GCP/INT/542/ITA and the Land Tenure Service) a territorial diagnosis was carried out together with a historical system analysis and a participatory research-action survey.

“The key variables selected for this purpose were:

- *Soil cover*, i.e. the distribution over the territory’s space of the most meaningful natural and anthropical elements;
- *Population dynamics*, in terms of natural growth and migration;
- *Social stratification*, taken into account in the form of relations between the different social groups that can be distinguished according to their wealth, status and ethnicity; the *livelihoods strategies* of these groups, including their resources and capacities, as well as the activities necessary to earn a living (and capitalize it) at family level¹;
- *Political organization*, the way in which local communities relate among themselves and with municipal, departmental and national institutions.

Based on a discussion to organize these variables in a hierarchical manner, the holistic definition of the territory resulting from complex and multi-faceted interactions means that none of these factors is more important than any other when structuring the territory. In order to identify the linkages between cause and effect that would explain the current situation, it is necessary to consider:

- The *historical evolution* of the relationships among the five groups of variables;
- The *influence of external factors at local level* (in particular, the markets and regional and national policies) on the process of change.

This permits the development of future scenarios based on a historical analysis and medium-term trends that can be projected into the near future in a global and diachronic model.”

¹ Inter-regional project on participation and the conservation and development of the high plateaus (GCP/INT/542/BOL), Case study realized by Patrizio Warren, *Op. cit.*

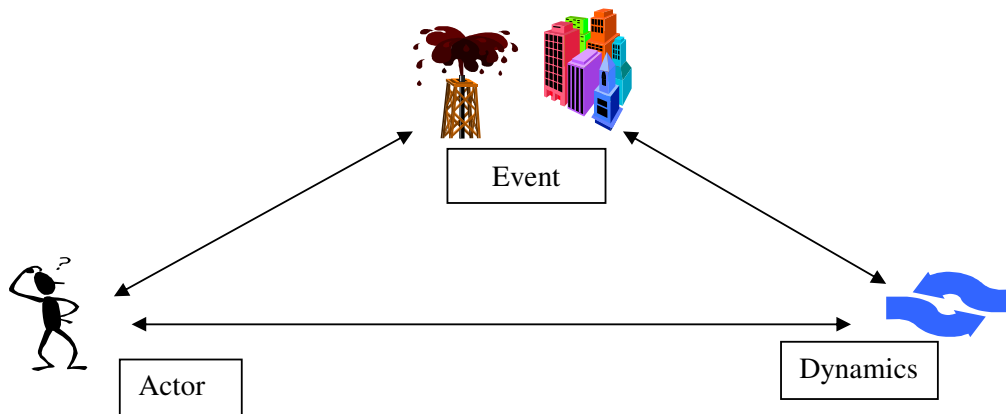
It is necessary to take into account the evolution of national economic policies, the market and its perspectives, constraints and opportunities related to the international environment, and to link each local event to the global system.²⁴

For each actor (central government, institutions or organizations on the territory, public and private actors, NGOs, etc.), their role (how and why) in the events and in influencing local dynamics will be taken into account.

This means that it is equally important to comprehend the history of projects and programmes (of the state, development agents, etc.) implemented in the area of interest or that have seen the involvement of the actors being surveyed.

²⁴ There are many studies on this subject. See, for example, Pacheco (1998)

The diagram below²⁵ shows the dialectic relations between events, actors and dynamics:



What information can be obtained through a historical analysis?

On the one hand, an inventory will be made of local and external events that have a connection with or an impact on the territory and the problem being addressed. Quick and simple explanations will be elicited. For instance, it will be important to reconstruct the evolution of the following aspects:

- Land tenure regimes, in terms of rules (formal or customary) for gaining access to land and its use;²⁶
- Soil cover as well as land and resource use (aerial photographs and satellite images are of help, but not strictly necessary);
- Production and agrarian systems;
- Demographic structure;
- Actors' livelihood strategies;
- Social and power relations between the actors and public institutions.

H I S T O R Y	1) AGRICULTURE LIVESTOCK BREEDING	Technical paths: methods, instruments, organization of work, environment, cropping season, cultivated areas, technology, population, etc. Particular emphasis on means and forces of production
	2) LAND TENURE	Forms of land appropriation and land development; Agrarian landscapes (agro-ecosystems): their changes and causes. Assessment of status of resources; Modalities of historical organization and land uses practices; Particular emphasis on productive relations and typologies
	3) ECONOMIC	Syntheses 1 and 2. Particular emphasis on macro- and micro-economic production lines, distribution and circulation in the agricultural and livestock sectors
	4) RURAL SOCIETY	Social, economic and political sphere of external forces in rural areas

²⁵ Venezuela workshop, 2001.

²⁶ In certain cases, the historical reconstruction of a land tenure dispute may provide possible solutions from a legal perspective, with the affirmation of rights and integration, in most cases, of modern and traditional rights.

Analysis of the territory

The PNTD approach allows the actors to position themselves and their territory within the existing political, socio-economic, environmental system. The systemic analysis of the territory is a key instrument for the study of a geographical space defined less by boundaries than by existing exchange flows, overlapping, interferences, trends and dynamics. Qualifying the territory and its assets will lead to a definition of territorial potentialities or problem areas to focus an intervention.

The actors themselves constitute one of the entry points in identifying critical areas for territorial management and it will be up to them to explain why and how their territorial system has evolved through history and to highlight the potentialities and constraints of their territory.

The following questions arise:

- How is the territorial system functioning?
- What are the potentialities and constraints of the actors' territory?
- What is the impact of the institutional setting on the territorial system?

The historical analysis of the interface between the actors and the territorial system is helpful in the understanding of the functioning of the territorial system.

The Foggara is a water management system based on social history. It is constituted by underground gallery for water provision, which begins below the groundwater level and goes towards the surface. This system was used in many countries around the Mediterranean and is a good example of a historically grown management system over a scarce resource in a given territory. In Algeria the legacy of the original system can be still observed in the distribution of water which is based mainly on social differentiation of actors: between the former nobles (the nomadic Touareg) and their former slaves, the latter having the less favourable access points.

The scope is not about giving a definition of territory but rather to illustrate the complexity of a geographic, social, cultural, economic, political, dynamic, interrelated, multilevel, interdisciplinary, territorial system analysis for rural development.

Over the last 30 years, the cities of the south have seen an exponential increase in their population,²⁷ caused by and connected with a general, uncontrolled population growth, displacements caused by war or violence in the countryside and a massive rural exodus as a result of a worsening agricultural crisis²⁸, regional disparities in infrastructures and productive opportunities, and national policies that favour certain areas and poles of attraction to the detriment of others. In fact, starting in the 60s (and in certain areas only in the 80s/90s) the rural systems have been subject to a profound restructuring, both in the north and in the south.

First of all, the theoretical opposition city versus countryside was redefined and interpreted as a functional and integrated relationship. The very concept of "city/industrial expansion", considered as a paradigm of modern times capable of organizing the territory according to its needs, enters progressively into a crisis. This phenomenon is mainly the result of an asymmetry between production and consumption units, which used to coincide.

Production units are sometimes far away from the markets where there is demand, giving rise to the potential so-called "niche of exclusion"²⁹.

²⁷ It is calculated that in 2025 approximately 60% of the world's population will live in urban areas. There will be a population growth of up to 4.7 billion persons, with an increase of 2.2 billion compared to 1995, mainly in the developing countries. UN (1998)

²⁸ Mazoyer and Roudart (1997)

²⁹ Areas where nothing is produced and where consumption patterns are insignificant

Increasing urbanization is leading to an enormous expansion of urban areas, without great coherence or logic and without pre-defined borders. The urbanization model is evolving to encompass the idea of “sub-urbanization” which is characterized both by the growth of the cities that, through their expansion, invade the surrounding countryside and the diffusion of urban-style settlement models and the exodus of city-dwellers in the countryside.³⁰

This phenomenon has also clear effects on the organization of the territory, with repercussions both on nearby and distant rural areas. It is therefore necessary to re-invent the notion of rurality, represented by the expansion of the urban space, also called diffused urbanization³¹. The space and distance between rural and urban areas constantly decrease due to interactions, inter-dependence, mutual contamination and competition over the use of human and natural resources.

“In western countries, it was not until the late eighties, notably with the emergence and dissemination of the concept of “rurality”, that pilot policies were introduced in a number of marginalised areas to help them recover their economic competitiveness. These policies paved the way for a micro-economic analysis based on processes of development and social change. This analysis has led to the identification of elements that are specific to the development (or non-development) of different rural areas, highlighting the concept of the “area” [territory] as a key element in structuring the relationship between institutions, the economy and social organisation.”³²

Analysing the territorial system potential

Developing local potentials requires the identification of the specific trends particular to the micro-region under consideration. An endogenous strategy must take into consideration the strength of regional cultures that include, regional economic trends, the unique characteristics of the regional culture, the specific networks of interaction and communication within the region, the preservation of the region’s cultural heritage as well as its natural resources. Every intervention geared towards improving the productive factors must take into account the condition of the natural resources in the area. This safeguards the sustainability of region’s endogenous potentials³³.

³⁰ On the subject, see also: <http://www.fao.org/sd/LTdirect/LR972/w6728t03.htm> (accessed in December 2002); Basile, Cecchi (2001).

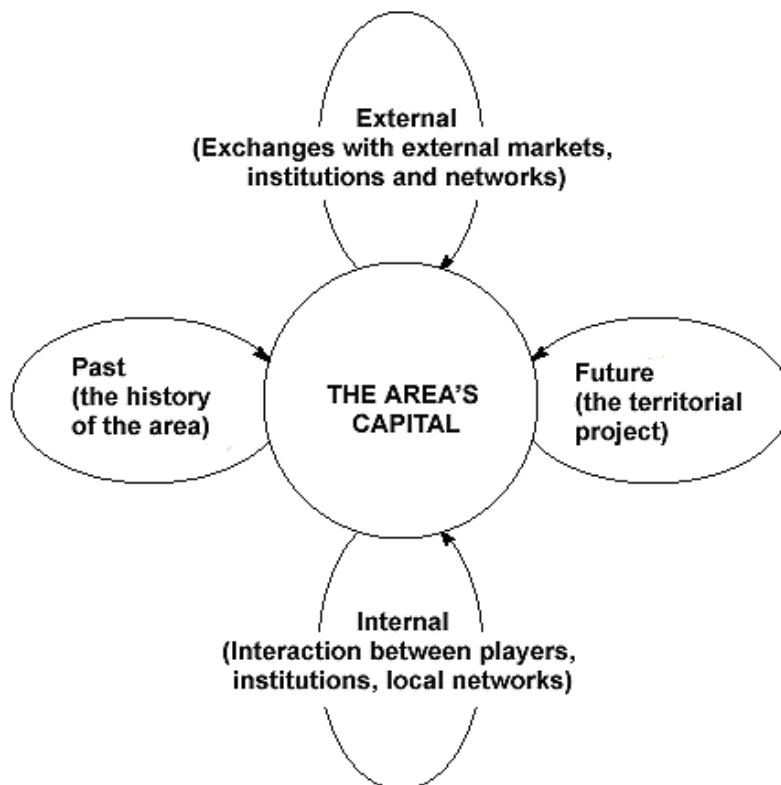
³¹ The urbanized territory is defined as “the totality of more or less extensive areas in which urban activities and settlements are mixed with unused areas that, however, often suffer culturally, socially, economically and environmentally from urbanization” Franceschetti *et al.* (1999). According to Cavalcoli (2001, cited in the synthesis *Pianificazione sostenibile delle aree periurbane?* Prepared by the Working Group of University of Padua and FAO-SDAA) peri-urban “(...) does not mean from the periphery. The term shows that it is no longer question of a hierarchical territorial structure of supremacy over an area directly related to its distance from the centre, but rather of a complex structure that expands its hierarchy and functions to a vaster territory in which roles and meaning are redefined”. On the subject, see also Groppo, Toselli (1997)

³² This part was drafted jointly by Gilda Farrell (Deputy Director of the LEADER European Observatory) and Samuel Thirion (INDE, Portugal). It is the product of discussions by the European LEADER Observatory’s Innovation Working Group, coordinated by Gilda Farrell and comprised of Evelyne Durieux (European LEADER Observatory), Martine François (GRET, France), Robert Luckesch (ÖAR, Austria), Elena Saraceno (CRES, Italy), Paul Soto (Iniciativas Económicas, Spain) and Samuel Thirion (INDE, Portugal). Yves Champetier and Jean-Luc Janot (LEADER European Observatory) helped to finalise the document. Production coordination: Christine Charlier (LEADER European Observatory <http://europa.eu.int/comm/archives/leader2/rural-en/biblio/com-eco/contents.htm>)

³³ Schmidt-Kallert (2002)

Territorial capital cannot therefore be evaluated purely in terms of the area's history. The past sheds light on the present, just as the present makes it possible to pinpoint elements of the past on which it might be possible to base a strategy. There is therefore an ongoing back and forth exercise between analysing today's capital and examining the past.

Similarly, the area's capital depends on how people see their future: what direction should it take? What strategic form can be made of the area's distinctive features?



Source: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/archives/leader2/rural-en/biblio/compet/sub21.htm>

Show opportunities versus problem orientation

“The literature of management is frequently concerned with problem solving and problem-solving capability. The path to development seems to lead through identifying problems and their causes and then through seeking solutions....but it is possible to present the existence of underdeveloped land in an area as a problem when it might more normally have been regarded as an opportunity.

There are two disadvantages in a problem orientation for rural management. The first is its negative connotation. Problems present themselves; opportunities, however, have to be thought out. The solution of problems is liable to maintain a static situation rather than promote a development one... The second disadvantage is that problem solving may lead to misallocation of resources... the opportunity orientation, by contrast, would direct attention to seeking out new possibilities rather than concentrating on what was already not working...”³⁴

In conclusion, the integrated approach serves as a common thread running through the entire process. It provides a system-wide view that takes into account the interactions between the various components.

³⁴ Chambers (1993), p19.

Assessing the interaction in act on the territory

The analysis of the territorial system issues can lead to widen the zone of intervention when assessing the various interactions between system's elements.

For instance, the Rio Grande Watershed flows down from the Bolivian High Plateau streaming through various small and medium size villages to the Provincial Capital City of Huihui. In its flowing down interacting factors deteriorate the water conditions, generating erosion problems, salinizing fertile soils of small farmers established along the watershed and turning them into deserted parcels, causing contamination impacts of water arriving in the town of Huihui. Financing of water treatment plants or payment for ecological services conservation for upper stream farmers are necessary.

In this case it was necessary to organize a territorial negotiation of upstream-downstream peoples for the watershed management. In addition, through the structural adjustment interventions and the removal of prize subsidies for agriculture, small farmers, maize and potatoes producers, could not derive their livelihood on staple food and were forced to migrate.

The actors' representation of the territory

New actors contribute to changes in the regional territorial system and, in some cases, to the exploitation/development of the territory and its resources, thus increasing competition over land and social tensions. The results are new responsibilities and challenges in the management of local resources, which make the question of the active participation of local communities a key issue.³⁵

The following examples are worth mentioning: migrants, pastoralists or farmers in search for land, new and old actors involved in development agencies' projects and programmes, forest planters, representatives of big pharmaceutical companies, miners or oil contractors, land speculators,³⁶ etc .

Bulgan Cum is a district in the province of Xovd, Republic of Mongolia. The field site lies against the international border with China, across which is the Chinese province of Xinjiang. The district 'center', Bulgan, is a town that serves as a focal point for the nomadic pastoralists that roam the district, and it is also their legitimate point of contact with state structures. The district is divided into bag (or 'brigades'), two of which comprise the town itself, while the rest carve up the nomads roughly along ethnic and clan lines. The bag are territorial units, in a sense, but the different lands which constitute the 'territory' of a bag need not be contiguous, as some of the nomads, and in particular the Bangyaxan clan migrate quite far to their summer pastures. In the process, they traverse territory belonging to other clans. The chiefs of the nomadic bag are invariably nomads themselves, are members of the relevant communities by descent and upbringing (which communities elect them), and migrate together with the rest. So the bag is in this sense a mobile social unit, whose minimal administration (in addition to the bag chief there is a forestry chief and a vet—all nomads) travels with it. Nevertheless, the bag chief is a member of the state structure, a government functionary, though at the lowest-level, and he answers directly to the elected bosses in the district centre.³⁷

It is important to see the territory as a systemic concept, more holistic than the concept of space and physical support for human activities. It becomes a complex system in which environmental, economic, social, political and cultural factors interact. It is thus understood as a multi-dimensional territory.

A territory exists as a social construction made by actors, but also is built on interest and has a specific value that depends on the social and cultural groups that utilize it and transform it

³⁵ Groppo P. (2001): *Sistemas agrarios: hacia un nuevo enfoque territorial ?* Presentación al taller Venezuela 2001

³⁶ Order of the day of *Vía Campesina* (International farmers' movement) for the International Campaign of Agrarian Reform.

³⁷ Gil-White (2003)

progressively, on the available technology, the predominant ideology, etc. The territory is a space of collective appropriation based on social representations.

A direct consequence of this definition is that several actors may define different territories in the same space (associated with a territory is the concept of cultural identity) . This is why, for example, the territory of the local population might be different from that defined by juridical-administrative authorities, with the two territorial visions not necessarily coinciding. In spatial-temporal terms, the territory is a projection that will be assessed by examining the past present future continuity.

In many cases, in addition to the geographic, administrative and historical borders of a territory, other phenomena can be recognized at work and help trace previously unsuspected borders. An example is the study of nomadic populations in Kerala province³⁸ (India). By following the life rhythm of these populations and by listening to them on such matters as marriage, work, politics, religious practices, legends and dreams, three main phenomena had been identified that defined the territorial borders as perceived by the community: the animal corridors, the construction of drums and two festivals. Based on those three elements each of the actor's vision of the territory could be reconstructed: it was discovered that there are sites inhabited by different emotions, that the region is not considered being one space but the sum of these sites, with a third dimension linked to the social or cultural networks. The territory is perceived more as a space with variable geometry and discontinuities than real borders.

The resources, assets and environmental aspects will thus be analyzed, together with the expectations, perceptions, visions and projects that the community has on the territory, taking into account all possible actors. Therefore, the system "can be understood only through an analysis of all the existing transactions and conflicts among groups of actors over its appropriation, its utilization and transformation"³⁹.

An example of land conflicts among autochthonous groups – settlement of migrants, re-definition of village boundaries – is the case presented in Gwendégué (Burkina Faso) in the 1980s.

These conflicts were managed through local land tenure administrations. In both cases, the conflicting parties (autochthonous villages) filed applications to all the official bodies present at local level. "After a few unsuccessful attempts at conciliation, the prefect withdrew leaving it to the 'customary administration', parallel to the law, to solve the problem. However, these administrative customs turned out to be problematic because there were many possible candidates for their ministrations. The conflict thus shifted to touch upon the local settlement history and notions regarding land acquisition and power thus rewriting the development history of the territory to take over the leadership in local decision-making."⁴⁰

Customary institutions involved in conflict management must, first of all, legitimize themselves in their roles as constitutionally qualified bodies.

Various angles to analyse the territory

From a methodological point of view, different perspectives on the analysis of the territory can be adopted which are not exclusive:

³⁸ Pruvost Giron (2000)

³⁹ The office of the Counsellor for the Environmental Code of the Ministry of the Environment, Colombia (1998), defined the territory as "the physical and environmental setting of sustainable development processes" and declared that "the territory is more than a mere repository or physical support for man's social, economic and cultural activities and therefore constitutes a social and historical establishment as a result of social relations expressed as different forms of use, occupation, appropriation and distribution of the territory".

⁴⁰ A more in-depth case study: Jacob (2002)

- A sectoral dimension that will focus on locating in space the physical-spatial, socio-economic and technical/productive components. These components describe the territory through a zoning of homogeneous areas based on the highlighted problems (such as “puzzle pieces”). An example are the agro-ecological zones identified through a superimposition of geomorphologic, climatic and ecological parameters that reveal, zone by zone, the limits and potentials of a particular type of resource use/management and of an ecological-social zoning (Ecological Economical Zones, FAO);
- A historical and systemic dimension based on the visions of the actors concerned, such as highlighted above. In this dynamic dimension the territory is neither polygonal nor composed of neighbouring blocks of homogenous zones, but is defined by of poles and pathways. The territory is thus represented in the form of a network, i.e. in terms of exchange flows and migrations, and is marked more by what “geo-symbols” than by borders⁴¹.
- Finally, it should be recalled that not only local culture would have an influence the territory through its transformation and dynamics. The territorial analysis should also take into consideration the economic and political set-up at macro level (national or international). Thus the relations of each of these levels with the problem under study can be established, as well as the key aspects of ascending (from micro to macro) or descending (from macro to micro) inter-relations (converging or diverging, of positive or negative influence, etc.). It is also necessary to identify the changes that have occurred over time on the territory and in its uses, while not losing sight of any structural change or the economic and political decisions adopted by the country under study, that are often conditioned by international constraints.

The territory and the territorial system analysis are closely linked to the governance system, including decentralized bodies and policy framework. Actually, the administrative limit as a constant represents a fundamental element in the local development process. The commitment of local bodies is sine qua non to any intervention. A systemic analysis cannot limit its assessment to such artificial boundaries. The functioning of the territory is not stopped by administrative boundaries and, in this sense; the intermediary levels of governance constitute an opportunity to widen the potentialities of management of local development. (see [Box: The CODEMs \(extended Municipal development councils\) in Honduras](#))

⁴¹ Cambrezy L., Bonnemaïson J., Quinty-Bourgeois L. (1999)

Box: The CODEMs (extended Municipal development councils) in Honduras

The Lempira Sur Governance project supported the enhancement of the administrative and financial capacities of local level institutions and more specifically of those belonging to the municipal chain. The project's activities were prompted, among other reasons, by the need to avoid elite control of decision making processes in the region and to stimulate a bottom-up political mechanism for a democratization of the governance system. The municipal chain connects the household level to the community level through the CODECOs (community development councils), then the CODECOs are linked with the municipal level through the CODEMs (Municipal development Councils). The extended CODEMs (with representatives from every CODECO, from civil society and powerful organizations with presence in the area) and the *mancomunidades* (association of more than one municipality) represent the super-municipal level of institutional organization. In this way families are enabled to have an impact on national policy decision-making processes.

This new structure constitutes a mechanism that allows the needs and priorities of the communities to be reflected in the decisions taken at the municipal level. Also, the Municipal Council should be extended to include rural areas neighbouring the cities and representatives from villages in more remote area with local municipalities sharing territorial responsibilities of planning.

The extended CODEMs meet periodically and they review key issues of common interest for the different villages in the municipalities. Participants discuss about the allocation of municipal resources and the contributions of the villages to the municipality (taxes and service provision by the municipalities). They are encouraged to sponsor multi-stakeholder events where people can voice their interests and needs such as town-hall meetings and referendum.

The creation of a new institution at the supra-municipal level (*mancomunidad*), provides a forum where municipalities can jointly seek ways of co-operating to achieve common interests. Associations of municipalities (e.g. the AMULESUR) were also created, with the integration of *mancomunidades* in order to reinforce advocacy and negotiation power.

By promoting *mancomunidades* and CODEMs the project has shifted from a sectoral to a territorial approach to rural development planning. These new institutions are interpreted as spaces for participation and negotiation among actors at different levels and, at the same time, they are officially recognized as bridges to higher decision-making levels. Also, collective resource management and joint administration might improve the efficiency of public service delivery thus reaching more areas and people. In addition, increased bargaining power of these intermediate level institutions reinforce their position for negotiation vis-à-vis external institutions and organizations and the central level. This combination of a bottom-up process and a governmental response to local demands (e.g. top down funding for a road), creating a sustainable linkage at the intermediary governance levels (e.g. at district level through decentralization), seems to have made it work.

Thanks to the Lempira Sur project, the systems of budget distribution (an exclusive right of cities before) and recollection of financial funds have changed. The municipal governments in consensus with their population have increased their revenue through re-organizing tributary cadastre units and taxing immobile properties. In addition, a principle of co-management and co-funding between CODECOs, the respective CODEM and the projects has been established.

The project emphasizes the social dimension of accompanying institutions in the development process, strengthening the municipal councils, stimulating a proactive participation of people, reinforcing the consultation around territorial natural resources management and of the application of operative agreements for rural development through self-managed and sustainable mechanisms.

The activities of the project were oriented to interchange experiences and to strengthen administrative, political, financial capacities at community and higher levels. Starting in 1995, the following capacity building activities were implemented: a conceptual and technical training program for majors and potential leaders by diversifying their expertise, a capacity building program on Bottom-up participatory Planning (PPB) for local organizations (including CODECOs and extended CODEMs), and a training for employees the corporations and municipal leaders in the following areas: municipal legislation, fund management, community and municipal planning, improvement of the financial administration of the municipalities.

Sources:

Interview with Tomàs Lindeman, SDA Officer, December 2003

Final documents of Lempira Sur project

Livelihood Support Program, Subprogram Participatory, Policy and Local Governance: Case study of Lempira Sur.

Managing the territorial development or elaborating any local development should take into account the cultural heritage and local knowledge and skills. It is important to consider the possibility of integration thanks a wide consultation with all the concerned actors.

In Bolivia ([Workshop Cali](#)): the Ayullu Majasaya (Department of Cochabamba) is a good example of a conflictive interest for land management, traditionally based on agricultural rotation of semi nomadic agriculture. Following the rules, every three years, farmers move the cultivation on idle land, and so in order to pass through the whole territory, in a rotation cycle of 16 years. In this condition, each plot has 16 years before being again cultivated. The totality of idle land represents 90% of the territory and is used as collective pastures. The organisation of the occupation of territory is thus divided in 16 segments; each of it corresponds to a community. Within each segment, each plot belongs to one Ayullu household who has a number of parcels that he cultivates in family. This ancient territorial system is regulating the land access and the pasture zones for all families.

In this context, and after the analysis conducted by the research center AGRUCO with the actors, they have decided to find out a new way of land management, in respect of the existing rights and considering the new challenges of the territorial development. It was clear that such new land management was not replacing the ancient and traditional one based on parcels rotation, but looked for fine-tuning with the new local development challenges. It has been agreed with the communities a combined solution which recognises the former rights on land of the indigenous lands, the collective conservation modalities with rotation organisation on parcels and pasture, but also the introduction of intensive agriculture in low irrigated land of municipalities (or with potential of irrigation).

The analytical process or diagnostic process represents a large panel of collected information and creation of information. It is an opportunity for all the actors and the team of rural development to share visions, perceptions, facts, and elaborate strategies for a negotiated territorial development. (see [Box: The new role of the professional: the facilitator](#))

Box: The new role of the professional: the facilitator

“The apparent ignorance of the rural people is only a product of the experts’ inability to assist their interlocutors in expressing themselves and sharing their knowledge. What is missing are attitudes and behaviours conducive to human relationships.”⁴²

In the context of the PNTD approach, the role of the professionals in development projects and programmes is re-defined: from providers of technical services to facilitators of dialogue and trust-building processes.

The assistance of external professionals in a given area is requested and legitimized by specifically formulated demands and highlighted problems (normally by governmental authorities and often reflecting a partial vision of the problem). This request is generally due to the local authorities’ weak capacities of intervention.

The external support, or “third party”, helps the reconstruction of a coherent and concerted analysis of the territorial system, accompanies the different actors towards the opening of social dialogue (horizontal and vertical dialogue) through the finding of a common ground, and supports a wide participation in seeking a territorial consensus, able to ensure good governance. This third party has to orient the PNTD process according to the principles of independence and impartiality (“honest brokers”) in order to gain the confidence of the actors at different levels (governmental and community level) especially when dealing with extremely unbalanced power relations and strong political influence.

The facilitator’s profile is not only based on his/her technical knowledge or expertise and capacities, but rather on specific attitudes⁴³. PNTD is based on a historical perspective and a systems approach to territorial development that is multi-dimensional, multi-sector, participatory and gender sensitive. The competencies of the facilitator range from her/ his expertise in the analysis of systems and their history (e.g. productive, agrarian, territorial, institutional) and in the capacities of separating process from content, and interpreting the underlying dynamics of the actors, to the skills in evoking participation and creativity (e. g. skills on participatory methods and tools, non-verbal communication), managing actors relationships and finding solutions to overcome obstacles in the process.

An attitude of critical thinking, adaptation to changing situations, natural curiosity and constant doubt will assist the expert in verifying the pertinence and reliability of information and in guiding the process from the diagnostics to the formulation of proposals for intervention possibly leading to a Social Territorial Agreement. He/she is willing to spend time in building relationships rather than always being task-oriented. To observe and listen will be the “two ways of meeting the demands of reflection and action”⁴⁴.

The facilitator expresses emotions, but she/ he is able to be restrained when the situation requires it, is more enthusiastic than systematic, is more outgoing than serious, and can keep the big picture in mind while working on detail.

The fulfilment of this role will require the synergic collaboration of a multi-disciplinary team of experts and animators. They will have knowledge on the themes relevant to the analysis of the systems in question (environmental experts, local agronomists, professionals knowledgeable in agrarian systems and social organization, anthropologists, etc.) and their task will be to ensure that all information is shared. Partnerships with civil society organizations and NGOs, well-informed on the local systems, can help in optimizing efforts, knowledge and energies.

These facilitators, as we have presented them here, could come from FAO and other UN agencies or from international and national NGOs. Locally, they can be representatives of local organizations or NGOs. But also leaders or animators can grow into the role of facilitator.

⁴² Chambers, (1993)

⁴³ For more information about the role of the expert see for example: Chambers (1999), <http://www.rcmp-learning.org/french/docs/ppcd0019.htm> (last accessed December 2002).

⁴⁴ Funel, (1999)

Phase 2 - Horizons: Dialogue and proposals

The objective of this phase is to open a discussion among the actors over the development of their territory. Once the actors have accepted the different views of the situation and the preconditions for dialogue are met (the actors' margins of flexibility, their willingness and ability to dialogue) concrete proposals for development can be elaborated. These proposals should include alternative scenarios that, through the establishment of a common ground, will eventually ease the consensus building process.

Participation is a continuous and iterative process. Accompanying this process with concrete activities is not limited to one phase in time, but will be implemented along the overall process. The main objective of the participatory process is to strengthen the sustainability of actions, building credibility, strengthening social cohesion, and integrating the territorial system into the overall governance system.

Outlining coherent and feasible proposals for territorial development

The diagnostics result in a coherent understanding of the functioning of the territorial system and its assets (cultural specificities, socio-economic organization, environmental potentialities and vulnerabilities, institutional setting), their historical interrelationships and interdependencies within and between territories. In this phase the role of the facilitator will help drawing the conclusion about the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the existing system, the causes of the problems identified and the territorial tendencies. These results will assist in the formulation of feasible proposals for territorial development.

These proposals for intervention will be the key subjects for discussion among the participants. From the very start of the process, the efforts should be directed to find ways to (re-) establish dialogue and trust among the actors and to find a common ground to start territorial dialogue.

The following questions arise:

- How to evaluate the results of the diagnostics, i.e. the information about the territorial system and its resources, to support the design of coherent and feasible proposals?
- What are the proposals for negotiation in the territory?
- How to guarantee the feasibility of the proposals?
- How to (re-) establish dialogue and trust among the actors?
- What is the common ground to start territorial dialogue?

Validation of the diagnostics by the actors of the territory

When the degree of complexity and the uncertainties in the analysis increase significantly, the role of the facilitator is central in helping the actors to cope with systems as a whole, and for taking into account their internal dynamics and external driving forces.

The facilitator, as external support, has the responsibility to join the threads of the analysis, adding elements to the reflections on the territorial system, and to initiate the dialogue. In fact, she/he has the task to organize and examine the key information to ensure the analysis is consistent and adequate to the context (see [Box: The new role of the professional: the facilitator](#))

The results of the diagnostics should be a historical analysis of the agrarian systems and productive patterns, the social, economic and political processes and their relationship with ecological systems, and the principal factors (endogenous and exogenous perturbations) that could affect the system's functioning (short, medium and large time evolutions). At the end of the diagnostic phase, adopting

a system approach, the facilitator (and the PNTD team) should contribute critically to point out, through the actors' visions and the recollected information, the prioritization of problems and the vulnerabilities of territory as well as the importance of preservation, rehabilitation, valorisation of resources and local potentialities. These constraints and potentialities will allow the facilitator to understand the tendencies (e.g. demographic, socio-economic, political trends). For this reason, to evaluate the key factors of competitiveness of a given territory analyzing the complexity of relationships societies (economies)-environment, it is important that the facilitator evaluates not only the biophysical components and state of environmental health but also:

- Practices and knowledge of actual and historical land use and natural resources management and their value;
- Life strategies (economical, social, cultural)
- Rules of social organization and institutions (e.g. land tenure rights)
- Real space and perceived image of a territory,
- External relationships, as for instance links micro-macro between territories and markets (e.g. suburbs, need to reinforce internal markets or to find alternative markets, awareness of global environment changes), reticular territorial systems (e.g. attractive poles), vertical relationships between territories (e.g. management system of natural resources through "pisos ecológicos" in the Andean region)

First of all, the role of the facilitator is to valorise the existent, to be sensible, to capture endogenous processes. There are many examples (historical and actual) of ecological planning of sustainable development practices carried out by local communities, indigenous or not, that work valorising the complementarities among spaces and social organizations, the diversification of environmental functions, the internalization of local potentialities, integrating regions of different ethnic territories, thank for instance to the interregional commerce or inter-community interchanges and generating alternative strategies of development. (Enrique Leff, 2004) (see [Box: Negotiation tables in the PROMACIZO project: arenas for dialogue, concerted formulation of projects and their implementation](#)). In this sense, various services of a given territory should be valorised and strengthen (economical, social, residential, space of cohesion, cultural and educative, recreational) its comparative advantages, the synergies between territories.

This actor based coherent reconstruction should show potential ways to reinforce or create new territorial identities and to solve conflicts between different aspirations. At this moment, the actors concerned will have validated all the results of the diagnosis.

To stimulate and sustain a learning process and socialize knowledge, focus groups and workshops can be useful to disseminate and share the information collected and the results of the analysis. It reflects a situation in which the different actors recognize theirs and others visions on the territory (and resources), converging and diverging interests, availability for dialogue. In this phase, the conclusions about actors' margins of flexibility are verified with the actors themselves.

Particularly, ad hoc focus groups can be organized in order to facilitate the strengthening for marginalized people (women, young and other subgroups of actors) to allow them to voice out their concerns and interests in dialogue.

Finding the words and the channels through which to communicate effectively to the community of actors - using plain language, or perhaps different language in different ways for different people - is a central and crosscutting challenge.

Reconstruction of a framework of options and technical/ social alternatives and their feasibility coherent with the territorial diagnostic

Based on the analysis validated by the actors, the facilitator, with the help of the PNTD team, will propose a set of methods and tools to guide the discussion towards the formulation of possible strategic options.

Participatory management is not the same as confronting local actors with the simple choice between different options formulated externally, it is rather the management of internal negotiation within the community in order, for the latter, to formulate their own options. Based on real objectives, clear information, available resources, existing constraints and opportunities and built capacities, such participatory management explores the possibility of elaborating a new territorial project to be discussed at the negotiation table toward a social territorial agreement.

The facilitator should have the responsibility of sharing information transparently and linking the actors, depending on their margins of flexibility. (S)he should be able to create bridges between actors with convergent concerns or interests to start discussing jointly. They will have their major role by getting involved in the search for and joint formulation of proposals. For example working groups could be established with the task to formulate joint proposals, already initiating the process of negotiation. Providing information on current trends and tendencies will enable the actors to design possible scenarios (see [Box The scenario setting of Buják](#)) and formulate alternatives for interventions at medium and long term. To achieve this, it is also important to recognize the local (local and regional level) and external driving forces (at national, global level) that could influence the formulation of possible options. In fact, scenario building can be useful of the group to reflect on which strategies to adopt in situations different from the present and desired option. It can be helpful to think of: “What is the best that can happen?” and “What is the worst that can happen?”.

For reasons of efficiency and credibility but also practical reasons (such as medium-term interventions time and financial resources constraints), and in order to take advantage of the mobilization created by the process of the territorial diagnostic, it is important to schedule and organize short-term interventions, which include the most urgent ones. An example could better illustrate this idea. In the project SEARPI/FAO of San Carlo sub-watershed management (Santa Cruz, Bolivia), after an actor based system diagnostic, medium term proposals for the *ordenamiento territorial* of the watershed were elaborated and discussed in a negotiation table among the actors involved (see [Box Bolivia: San Carlo sub-watershed, definition of short and medium term planning and management proposals](#)). To respond to the concern of local actors it has been proposed to also identify short term activities, carried out through available resources mobilized at the municipal level, at the project level and at the level of the *Organizaciones Territoriales de Base* and farmers interested.

For this reason, the following activities’ implementation was negotiated: realization of demonstrative parcels of improved grazing through agroforestry, capacity building program in agroforestry through classes and field interchanges from farmer to farmer, technical assistance in agroforestry and management of fruit trees thank to the extension services provided by the Municipal Technical Unit and the project, technical assistance for apiculture activities and support for the creation of a association of apicultures, realization of a program in environmental education in the schools, with emphasis on principles and techniques of sustainable agriculture and organic horticulture, technical assistance to the Municipality by the SEARPI team for realizing activities of delimitation of protected areas.

Subsequently, the technical, social, economic and political feasibility of these proposals has to be analysed and the actors themselves have to weigh the various proposals on the basis of the potential risks and benefits of each of them. The results of this activity clearly depend on the specific context and the problems being considered. The final proposal for negotiation should include requests to other groups, higher administrative levels or development agencies including the specific questions for which assistance is needed.

Box: The scenario setting of Buják

An example of the scenario setting goes from the project carried out in the Buják region – Hungary, supporting the preparation of the Forestry and Rural Development Plan. Alternative development scenarios based on the actual political and socio-economic situation and predictable prognostics for the imminent future such as the forthcoming EU membership were described and jointly formulated. The main features of the different are the following:

- Scenario 0 (Trend scenario): Impromptu economic and social development in the project area. Local authorities do neither provide leadership nor direction to the communities. The population is declining and ageing. With young people leaving the area, the general level of education and qualification remains stagnant. The area attracts no further investment. Social and economic disparities widen. The main assets are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few people. There is hardly any economic growth and the remaining small enterprises are facing increasing difficulties. Tourism grows slowly and environmental conservation receives less attention.
- Scenario A: External investors inject fresh capital into local development projects but local authorities are unable to exercise normative control due to the lack of standards, rules and regulations. The investments attract only cheap labour. The wealth gap grows further and the quality of the natural and cultural environment deteriorates. From a social and economic stand point the outcome is similar to the previous scenario.
- Scenario B: Local entrepreneurs initiate development projects, but likewise there is no community based control and the individual efforts remain uncoordinated.
- Some local producers find it easier to market their products. Environmental problems are still prevailing.
- Scenario C: Coordinated development efforts among local actors, public- private partnership and joint endeavours between local governments, entrepreneurs and non-governmental organizations. Statutes, rules and regulations for investments are in place; development projects, supported by endogenous resources, focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources and adapted to the specific local features, are selected and implemented. The social and economic situation is likely to improve since people have a perspective to secure and consolidate their livelihoods. The quality of the environment is improving. The stakeholders opted unanimously for Scenario C and requested the experts and specialists to develop the strategy accordingly

For the final evaluation of the proposals, socio-cultural, environmental, economic criteria have to be defined to assess alternatives or scenarios elaborated, which should be designed to reflect the actors' way of understanding.

The facilitator might have to integrate the local data with other information collected by him to suggest a common ground for negotiation. An evaluation tool like the multi-criteria analysis can be applied to evaluate the different alternatives or scenarios (see Box below).

Box. An example of Social Multicriteria Decision Evaluation: the Diafanis project in Catalunya

The Social Multicriteria Decision Evaluation⁴⁵ is a potential useful framework for the application of social choice to the difficult policy problems of our Millennium, where “facts are uncertain, values in dispute, stakes high and decisions urgent”⁴⁶.

The multicriteria decision theory teaches us that as consequence of taking into account various dimensions (ecological, economic, social) simultaneously is impossible to optimise all objectives at the same time. A social and technical compromise solutions are needed i.e. the balance between conflicting incommensurable values and dimensions.

The social multicriteria process is an instrument to reconstruct dialogue among many stakeholders (e.g. individual and collective, formal and informal, local and not), helping the development of contemporary public policy and orienting the decision-making processes with an active involvement of the peer community to solve problems and conflicts. It must be participative and transparent as possible.

The DIAFANIS project (1999-2001) is a good example of a SMCDE application. The Spanish Ministry of Environment financed it and the research staff of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona carried it out.

⁴⁵ Munda (2002)

⁴⁶ Funtowicz, Ravetz (1994), pp.197-207.

The problem dealt with was the possible expansion of a ski infrastructure in the Catalan Pyrenees (north-east Spain). It was very clear from the beginning that the choice of the geographical scale would determine the policy option considered desirable. In fact, local people living close to the area think that the expansion would bring more tourists and as a consequence more economic welfare. This perception changes as long as one leaves the immediate neighbourhood of the zone affected by the expansion project. Thus for example in Barcelona preservationists, since the area in question is close to a natural park and even declared by the autonomous government of Catalonia as a possible natural area of European interest, are quite against the project.

To understand if other possible courses of actions exist, an historical and institutional analysis was carried out and participatory techniques were undertaken. By means of focus groups (or in some case individual interviews or questionnaires) it was possible to have an idea of people's desires and it was then possible to develop a set of policy options.

For the evaluation matrix (alternatives/criteria), eight alternatives of territorial planning were discussed, considering the following options: business as usual, interventions in infrastructures and building of the tunnel, the expansion of sky infrastructures without any other conservative intervention, alternatives of environmental protection (e.g. settlement of a *teletransportador*, creation of a natural park, re-valorisation of spaces of connectivity).

The selected criteria for the evaluation of alternatives come directly from the public participation process and they should be "translated" by the research team, following the principle of coherence, no redundancy, and independence. They referred to the different system dimension: the ecological dimension (e.g. maintenance of vegetation mosaic, effects on relevant species, landscape quality, conflicts with protectionist key figures), the economic dimension (e.g. job employment, diversification of activities, economic benefits for local administration), the social dimension (e.g. job quality, protection of traditional activities, social redistribution of benefits, creation of mechanism and spaces for discussion and decision making).

The consequent phase was the evaluation of the alternatives through the application of an evaluation algorithm (in this case the NAIADÉ aggregation procedure was used). In this method, quantitative and qualitative information can be entered, with different degree of uncertainty. Also equity and distributional issues are introduced in the NAIADÉ by means of conflict analysis procedure (Matrix of equity).

At the end the following information are given by the NAIADÉ aggregation procedure:

- a ranking of the alternatives according to the set of evaluation criteria,
- an indication of the distance of the positions of the various interests groups (e. g. possibility of convergence of interests or veto) and,
- a ranking of the alternatives according to actors impacts or preferences.

Being conscious of the subjective and sometimes even arbitrary components inherent in the study, a widespread information campaign was planned on the assumptions and conclusions of the study including local people, regional and national authorities, international scientists and even children at school.

Sources: Munda, G. (2002). Social Multi-Criteria Evaluation" (SMCE): Methodological Foundations and Operational Consequences. European Journal of operational research.

http://einstein.uab.es/c_ceambientals/Diafanis/an%E0lisiinst.html

Willingness to initiate a dialogue

At first, actors could voice some scepticism about the objectives and conditions for participation into an open dialogue and negotiation. Many times, people are engaged in relatively passive position, observing their own participation. However the actors' willingness to participate is also related to their perceptions and experiences of the obstacles and limitations of such a process.

Nevertheless, participatory processes should provide a forum for joint decision-making, hence all stakeholders own the decision and are therefore more committed. Commitment and ownership as we know are keys to success. For this reason from the beginning it is important to verify and / or encourage the willingness to enter into the dialogue and to stimulate the understanding of benefits achieved by participation.

Many times the consultation processes at local, regional, national level start without the awareness of people about their role and motivation to participate. It is easier to defend and support a process

of building dialogue and trust to solve critical situations (economically, socially, and environmentally) when:

- there is proximity or networking relationships between the actors (social capital)
- a social or technical (cultural) innovation appears and permits to motivate different actors to collaborate with each other
- the facilitator shows the actors how a win-win solution could be achieved by the negotiation and what the benefits obtained could be.

In order to involve all the actors, to assure the ownership of the process, the sustainability of the dialogue and the continuous renegotiation on different issues and at different levels, it might be necessary to put in evidence the possible direct and indirect benefits (private or collective) the actors (both weak and powerful) will receive, in terms of:

- reinforcement of social capital and changes in power relationships (and other local hidden agenda);
- involvement in decision-making;
- reconnaissance and realization of rights (e.g. cultural rights, health and environmental security, land tenure security);
- improvement of the productive and economic local situation.

How can powerful actors be convinced to share part of their power?

One of the key for the success of dialogue process is to find ways to counteract the astaticism of elites and their defence of maintenance of the status quo, which means the protection of an historical privileged position, and to motivate them towards a change. For instance, in the Lempira Sur project economic benefits seem to have been essential to the establishment of trust among actors and to the success of policy change. All actors ultimately saw benefits arising from a change in the production system, as an entry point of dialogue, which meant that the project did also ensure the success of the rich and powerful landowners, to convince them to cease power.

In Angola FAO has been able to open dialogue at local level between private entrepreneurs - among which high government officials - and local communities, who had overlapping claims over land (actual control vs. traditional rights). Realizing that trust and tenure security were interests of both sides, the project managed to show the actors the advantages of giving up on some of their claims over land.

Indeed, benefits can be seen in terms of products, services, income, power or other stakes. The identification and communication of immediate benefits for all the actors must be based on an adequate understanding of their interests. These interests are clearly both in the substance under discussion and in the relation with the other actors involved. It should never be forgotten that the most powerful interests are basic human needs such as “security, economic well-being, a sense of belonging, recognition, and control over one’s life” (Fisher and Ury, 1997).

For the actors participation in dialogue presumes costs: individual investment in labour or financial capital and transaction costs; opportunity costs of foregone opportunities or of restraining from using a resource; community investment in social capital. Such involvement and participation of concerned local populations depends on the analysis, feeling and knowledge of the actors about possible short term costs with the hope of future benefits and with some degree of uncertainty or risks⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ According to R. Chambers “poor people's ability to take a long-term view depends on how secure they judge their future rights and gains to be. This aspect of their rationality has been persistently overlooked, perpetuating the myth that the poor are somehow negligently incapable of taking a long view or making long-term investments.”

Why would politicians choose to take active part in dialogue and share power? Motivations include: (1) improving their reputation at local level, with international donors, and the national electorate, hence responding to the will of their constituency; (2) increasing their sphere of influence or decreasing their competitor's sphere of influence; (3) finding allies at local level to face constraints in time, budget and capacities; (4) believing in democratic, participatory processes as an approach to achieve the harmonization of interests, the management of conflictive situations, the inclusiveness of decision-making process; (5) interest in a specific policy area⁴⁸.

The main purpose of the PNTD process is to re-establish the dialogue between the different actors and between the actors and the institutions and renew social ties that are often strained by relationships of power and inequality.

Ideally, decentralized institutions (whether local or municipal) represent the main entry level in a concerted attempt to influence social, cultural and political change and to improve the design of and coordination between the interventions at the different decision levels (from civil society and related organizations to the state and its decentralized bodies). Local government might enter as an actor in negotiation processes directed to re-establish trust and promote joint decision-making process for local development.

A capacity building programs will facilitate these tasks supporting technical capacities of politicians and administrations and creating committed and legitimized leadership (see [Capacity Building: What is it? Whose capacities is it?](#)).

At higher levels governments should progressively become facilitators of the process, providing a platform for the actors to achieve concerted decisions and a legal framework to support people rights and participation or facilitate negotiations table at local level. Key figures or champions will help to articulate spaces of dialogue (see [Who can stimulate participation? Key figures, local animators, the facilitator](#)).

It is important point out that, at all levels, governments might have strong interests and hidden agendas. Transparency and an active involvement of institutions and civil society in the dialogue process will help to control corruption and avoid making power by groups of interest.

Ability to enter into dialogue

One of the preconditions to enter in dialogue is the strengthening of the bargaining power of marginalized and less powerful actors (e. g. women). It is clear that the dialogue as a bargaining process could be complicated or even impossible due to the existent asymmetries in power relationships.

Case studies show that often the participation to negotiations among several parties is not desirable for groups that have no power. Weak and marginalized actors have much more to lose in a negotiation process where the differences in power are too big to allow for collaboration: the risk being to be manipulated and controlled by the dominant groups (it can also apply in the household dimension). Sometimes also the dominant position of scientific and technical discourses has been used as justification of power control.

The process has to be flexible and iterative to consider the existing power disparities before, during, and after the negotiation. Nevertheless, weaker groups might “be able to find “countervailing power” to attract other, more powerful parties to negotiation⁴⁹. The challenge for weaker,

⁴⁸ Grindle (2000)

⁴⁹ Gray (1989)

disenfranchised stakeholders is to find sources of power that they can tap into in order to gain legitimacy and access to mainstream discussion”⁵⁰.

For this reason, all the methods and tools to accompany a participatory process will have to be used facing the inequalities of power, supporting weak actors to enter into the dialogue process, opening their possibility of negotiation (see [Accompanying the participatory process and supporting social dialogue](#)).

In many cases, the conditions for the strengthening of the ability to enter dialogue are the redefinition of the legal and institutional environment and the definition of legitimate rules recognizing rights and means to defend them. All the parties can be part of the process when the rules are clear, the decision to get involved is founded on reliable information⁵¹.

Attempts to grant equal power can take place both outside the direct interaction between parties (e.g. during a pre-negotiations phase) or during the process itself.

Some examples include:

- modifying the procedures used to manage the process, e.g. ensuring that what is at stake for the weaker party is better heard by others;
- willingness to meet in settings in which the weaker party feels comfortable; adoption of the discussion style of the weaker party⁵² ;
- and adoption of aspects of customary procedures which are familiar to the weaker party⁵³ ;
- legal advocacy or action, or political action to change the legal framework of rights to resources, e.g. in Nicaragua, through legal advocacy the people of Awas Tingni secured territorial rights to their land according to traditional rules of land tenure⁵⁴ ;
- mobilizing and organizing strategies – by forming associations or other local organizations to press claims and defend interests, forming alliances with external organizations which provide support and resources - this can take various forms, including legal advice, technical assistance, and training⁵⁵.

Identification of common ground

The first step to open negotiation should be a synthesis of common point for discussion, of desirable objectives and of proposal to evaluate.

Through the actors’ analysis, the positions and interests of each actor, their distance and relationships are visualized, in order to explore conflictive situations and possible alliances. First of all, the aim of this analysis is to develop a common understanding of constraints and problems (social, economic, ecological), their origin and dynamics.

The facilitator may assist the actors in discussing their divergences and convergences, drawing some specific tools and methods in order to develop common goals as an effective way of helping parties to focus on their interests, rather than their positions, and to explore similarities instead of differences. According to the basic principles of the PNTD approach this should happen well before the formal gathering around the negotiation table. Furthermore, the negotiation is possible only establishing points of dialogue between values and world views of the actors: civic, economic (commercial, industrial etc.), cultural or spiritual, ecological.

An example of common interests’ exploration is provided by a case study in the Brazilian Amazon, where the project opened the dialogue starting with a discussion over the less conflicting elements.

⁵⁰ FAO (2002)

⁵¹ Ramirez (2001)

⁵² Adapted from Ross (1995) cited by Ben Cousins (1996)

⁵³ Moore, Santosa, (1995)

⁵⁴ Anaya, MacDonald (1995)

⁵⁵ Ross (1995) *Op. cit.*

In this example, in order to protect forest biodiversity from the spreading of fire, it was recognized a common interest of women in the communities for the protection of children's health. The project organized a health campaign, with the main objectives of opening the dialogue, re-establishing confidence between the communities and public actor, reducing power asymmetries and limiting the impacts on peoples' livelihoods. Reaching agreement on how to achieve the common goal then became the focus of the negotiation.

Accompanying the participatory process and supporting social dialogue

As highlighted before, a key issue in the proposed process is the understanding of existent asymmetries of power. The lack or weakness of social and human capital constitutes the bottleneck for the sustainable use of local resources and for the establishment of a constructive dialogue and debate among the different actors. The role of capacity building, constant communication at all levels, the use of participatory methods and tools, the integration between scientific and local knowledge, are means to raise awareness of weak groups and socialize knowledge and information, i.e. empowering them. These means are also keys to stimulating actors' effective involvement in the setting-up and functioning of the negotiation table.

First of all, these methods and tools aim at creating an enabling environment to ensure equal participation in the negotiation process and to avoid powerful actors taking over the control over the process. To this regard, the organization of participation has to be transformed into participation in the organization through a learning process, and thus moving from "action to involve and give responsibility, to identifying the conditions for creating the will and power to participate"

Secondly, the strengthening (or creation) of trust and social capital between the actors involved at different levels aims at stimulating the willingness to dialogue and at pursuing and realizing the visible, long-term and sustainable benefits of collaborative or agreed planning of interventions.

"Social capital" refers to the ability of a particular society to achieve the effective co-ordination needed for complex, interconnected activities to be undertaken successfully (Coleman⁵⁶, 1988 ; Ostrom⁵⁷, 1992). Social capital includes shared learning, mechanisms of decision, and rules specifying (a) how one person has the legitimate responsibility to command others, (b) how particular activities are to be undertaken, and (c), how monitoring, enforcement and sanctions mechanisms will increase rule compliance.

To promote the sensitisation of and joint analysis by the actors of local issues networking and cooperation between FAO and other international agencies of development, governments, national NGO's and/ or Civil Society Organizations should be established (see [Partnerships and strategic alliances: presence/role of civil society organizations, NGOs](#)) This collaboration and networking at different level is necessary to carry out the needed awareness raising, empowerment and capacity building activities.

The following questions, key along the overall PNTD process, arise:

- How to face the inequalities of power, defend human rights and reinforce the weakest actors?
- How can information on the territory and the demand be shared and made public?
- How can a sensitisation process be carried out to create awareness and ownership?
- How to activate a capacity building process?
- Who carries out the different activities that accompany the territorial development process?

⁵⁶ Coleman (1988)

⁵⁷ Ostrom (1992)

Adoption of an action-research strategy

The way to organize participation should be adapted to each context involving the actors actively in each stage of the training-action process, through the adoption of an action-research strategy.

Some of the methods for applied study in action-research and participatory research were formulated already in the 50s-60s and they are based on the concept of awareness-raising, introduced by researchers and activists engaged in the grassroots movement and built on a very strong link between participation, knowledge and power.

The main objectives of participatory action-research are the following:

- To generate social awareness of existing territorial problems and dynamics. In this sense the action-research strategy is the means to support a learning process based on the sharing of information for a joint understanding of the complexity of the territorial systems, including all the actors involved, their interests and livelihood strategies
- To promote and highlight the value of local know-how and traditions. This approach allows the integration between different expert knowledge on natural and social sciences and of these with local knowledge. This should allow a “co-building of sustainable knowledge” based on the diversity of the actors’ culture system (epistemology, values, etc.)
- To support the contribution of local knowledge systems to the process of social and political change, which is initiated by the local populations based on their own perception of reality⁵⁸. The action-research approach is a means to improve the efficacy and equity of the interventions.

The main methodological features of the participatory action-research strategy are the following:

- Knowledge is combined with practice (‘learning by doing’);
- The use of comprehensible methods of research and analysis, accepted and easy to adopt and utilize again by the community to promote joint decision-making, action and effective ownership of the process;
- A new role for the experts who are called not merely to extract information, but to facilitate the achievement of the necessary know-how by the actors. The researcher’s knowledge is different from that of the actors involved, and it is not the only possible understanding;
- Collective knowledge is the outcome of the mutual recognition of social actors’ different knowledge. The valorisation of indigenous worldviews and knowledge are key issues;
- A continuous collaboration, communication and exchange of information between the technical assistance and the actors, in order to promote sensitisation, joint analysis and learning (certain authors call it “learning to learn”);
- The promotion of training activities for the technicians⁵⁹, the actors, local leaders and representatives;
- Time and resources for the analysis are adapted to the situations. It is not as in-depth as with conventional academic studies, nor it is too simplified as are certain rapid participatory diagnostics that go no further than describing locally available goods and services;
- The facilitation activities are carried out with a view to building relationships of collaboration/partnership between the actors and the institutions.

Technical, financial and social sustainability of the final agreement depends on the successful implementation of participatory action-research, the effective sharing of knowledge and the demonstration that each actor can win.

⁵⁸ Fals Borda (1988)

⁵⁹ Cernea (1991)

Access to, and exchange (share) of information

The lack of access to reliable information is profoundly disempowering. It undermines people's capacity to take decisions and defend their own interests, and it leaves them as easy prey to deliberate manipulation.

Assuring the transparency and sharing of the information throughout the process is a basic principle to guarantee its quality. Indeed, all the data and information collected, as well as all the studies elaborated should be accountable⁶⁰ to the public involved for peer-reviewing.

Transparent communication and good relationships are also keys to the actors' comfort in sharing their worries and their interests, and give them the courage to explore possible options on how their goals can be met at the same time with the goals of others. An atmosphere of mutual trust is the basis for constructive co-operation and the reaching of a compromise. Transparency will help to avoid hidden agendas and suspicion amongst the different parties and thus to prevent situations in which all the actors try to protect solely their own interests rather than finding the most suitable compromise for all the parties involved.

The key point in the organization of an information and communication program is the choice of methods and tools to collect and manage the information (see [Box: Management of the information in the "Promacizo" programme in Colombia.](#)).

Furthermore, in order to facilitate the information flow between the actors and select adequate vehicles for divulgation especially to the marginalized actors, several communication strategies can be used (see Communication strategies).

⁶⁰ Accountability is a concept recently proposed by the European Commission in the White paper on Governance and here applied to scientific studies over global changes to stress the responsibility of the community to assess their results.

Box: Management of the information in the “Promacizo” programme in Colombia.

In the Promacizo project efforts and resources were coordinated to help the socio-environmental institutions and organizations on the access, management and sharing information of the Macizo Colombiano. For this reason, it was decided that the program should focus on the consolidation of a Network for the management of environmental information (“REGIA” *Red de Gestión de Información Ambiental*), which built on the existing methodologies, systems, information and technologies in the eco-region.

The following criteria guided their implementation: (i) Allow the generation of knowledge and the appropriation of the information by its users; (ii) facilitate the interpretation of the different languages used in the transmission of knowledge; (iii) allow complementarily and compatibility with other information systems; (iv) contribute to strengthening social and institutional processes, which should be socially legitimized by the participants, dynamic and allowing information dissemination.

At the same time, an agreement was signed for the exchange and constant transmission of information about the environment, with the Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Territorial Development, the Natural National Parks, the Governments of Nariño, Cauca y Huila, CRC, CAM, Corponariño, Cortolima y Fundecima.

The consolidation of initiatives and mechanisms, through which the communities and institutions of Macizo intervene directly reinforcing and maintaining the REGIA, is obtained by:

- Construction of an inventory of all the existing geo-referenced information about the environment of the Macizo, held by the majority of the institutions at regional level and of a system for accessing the cartographic material through the internet;
- Development of a portal *macizocolombiano.net* that provides general information about the Macizo Colombiano (e.g. general descriptions and details about the program, key information about all the processes and a calendar of main events), facilitates the creation of spaces for the dissemination of information and communication on socio-environmental processes (which is attained through an autonomous administration of the site webs), makes available information from the REGIA and allows the access to different software.
- Creation of a software that allows the adequate organization and management of cartographic and thematic information for each region; through the use and adaptation of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the access to the information and the zoning of the areas based on a prioritization of the variables shown in the available maps.
- Design of a methodology for the “Analysis of the Effectiveness in the Management of Protected Areas through Social Participation” (AEMAPPS);
- Creation of software to support the organization and management of the environmental and productive information at the level of transhumant corridors. It was concerted and validated by the Councils Association of Indigenous of North Cauca “CXAB WALA KIWE”, that contributed with their knowledge and experience for the construction of the basic methodological framework known as SIPSEP, “Participatory Information, Planning Monitoring and Evaluation System” for the construction of the Indigenous Plans and the Territorial Development Plans.
- Design and development of applications to integrate the information about agricultural products and for the inventory and diffusion of the knowledge and technical expertise of the communities of the Macizo Colombiano. The system, identified with the term *maciceñ@*, allows the dissemination and exchange of information in the following three areas of interest: Wisdoms (knowledge from ancestors, knowledge about technologies, agriculture and livestock, farmer-to-farmer trainings, agro environmental services and product transformation), Organization (spaces for the capacity building of entrepreneurial communities through information dissemination) and Expression (the thinking and feelings of the community about specific proposals, through local artistic expression).

Source: Documents of the programme on environmental preservation and rehabilitation in the Macizo Colombiano within the Alternative Development framework “Promacizo”.

Soft ways and hard ways methods and tools

A combination of sources of information and the integration between “softways” and “hard ways” for data collection, treatment, analysis and visualization is necessary for establishing a dialogue between different forms of knowledge and epistemologies, optimising available resources and creating ownership of the process. The principle of triangulation is central in the field work to continuously cross –check the data collected and assess their coherence with one another.

There is no blueprint on how to facilitate participatory processes. Methods and tools should not be used mechanically and their selection should also be determined by the specific characteristics of the concerned society/community/group.

There are many qualitative methods (e. g. participant observation, unstructured, focused observations, participatory methods, and focus groups) commonly used, referred to as soft ways (for an exhaustive list and description see [FAO Participation website, http://www.fao.org/participation](http://www.fao.org/participation)).

The qualitative methods are process oriented. They can be crucial for understanding systems and evolutions, as opposed to simply measuring impacts, focusing on the actors’ views and aiming to the communities’ mobilization.

While in quantitative research, the researcher is ideally an objective observer that neither participates in nor influences what is being studied. In qualitative research, however, it is thought that the researcher can learn the most about a situation by participating and/or being immersed in it. Moreover, he (she) feels that human behaviour is always bound to the context in which it occurs; therefore, behaviour must be studied holistically, in context, rather than being manipulated.

The main limits are methodologically and ethically, e.g. the difficult to extend considerations and observations, the management of uncertainties, the reliability of data, the subjectivity and implication of researchers, the appropriation of information.

Several approaches for participatory researches have been used since the 1970s-80s (from Rapid Rural Appraisal and Participatory Rural Appraisal to Participatory Learning and Action and Linked Local Learning), which represented various and progressive attempts to support active involvement, commitment and control by the actors over the process and the tools . Also these methods aimed at creating opportunities for the actors to learn how to use the information tools⁶¹ for planning and action In moving from PLA to (LLL), the actors leading the process form a multidisciplinary team, representing different sectors and technical expertise, to learn how to join forces for action. The knowledge and know-how gained at local level is shared with local administrators and all the actors who operate at this and higher levels⁶².

With the term hard-ways we refer to the use of quantitative (technical and natural scientific) methods and tools to manage the information collected. Obviously, the methods used and the organization of the information will be specific of each context depending on the existing databases and available technology (e.g. statistics, actualised maps).

GIS is a technique that facilitates the organization, understanding, and spatial representation of the information and synthesis of the results. The GIS serves mainly to map the changes occurring on the territory and to measure their impacts in terms of risks and trends, while highlighting the intensity and magnitude of natural phenomena and extrapolating the observations to others areas. GIS integrates a great amount of data from different sources and grants rapid and easy access to profiles for each of the required thematic situations.

⁶¹ Chambers (1999)

⁶² Lightfoot, Ramirez, Noble (1999)

This technology could be used in participatory ways, on the one side by including information about the visions of the various actors, and by analysing the areas of tension (e.g. illegal appropriation) and other types of information, to see whether a negotiation process needs to be activated or strengthened. On the other side, administrative staff and promoters of local development should receive specific training to assure the effective appropriation of the technology.

The most important limitations in using IT are referred to the risk that the most powerful control the technology and manipulate the information. The possibility of a concrete use of these tools for a real empowerment of the most marginalized groups (socially or geographically) remains an open question. The question is: "How to make possible the effective transfer of technology?"

There are many examples showing the negative effects that the adoption of technologies may have on group cohesion, such as the creation of new disparities with regard to access to information and related management tools.

In addition its use has costs that define its opportune application depending on the context. It should be noted that some of these considerations also concern other technologies, such as the use of GPS, the participatory use of satellite images and the software for multiple criteria analysis, etc.

FAO and several NGOs tested and implemented in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau participatory delimitation of land using the Participatory Rural Appraisal method. The project integrated the use of GPS and other formal surveying techniques for geo-referring participatory maps and information elaborated with local communities (e.g. evolution of traditional practices and of the systems for the access and use land and natural resource, history of conflicts, population dynamics, social organization and the legal framework). The proposed methodology needed to support the identification of the local community in a topographic map, prove the acquisition of land rights by then local community through occupation according to customary norms and practices; identify the borders of these rights.⁶³

Communication strategies ⁶⁴

Communication between the actors at all levels is a fundamental factor in the promotion of community participation, through sensitisation and the building of confidence and skills, in order to promote the active involvement and commitment of actors to participate in the negotiation table. For this reason communication for development is the planned and systematic use of communication approaches, methods and tools for participatory planning and implementation of communication in support of development initiatives.

The aim is to use multiple channels and tools of communication to create effective and open-ended links between communicators.

The communicators can be the PNTD team, but more importantly the communicators are actors involved in the process. The communication needs one can address with a Communication for Development approach range from merely information sharing and awareness raising to participatory decision making, conflict management and negotiation. Communication is obviously

⁶³ In the three countries, virtually no land ownership records from the pre-Independence periods are usable. Very little if any evidence of property boundaries was visible on the ground during the fieldwork. On the positive side, a high level of progressive thinking is evident in recent legal arrangements about land rights. Although no longer referring to socialism, the three governments continue to own all the land, but grants land-use rights to individuals and entities after consultation with communities in the area. Any person (community) who has occupied land for several years (at least ten in the case of Mozambique), without any needed paperwork, automatically has rights to continue to use that land.

⁶⁴ There are many texts on the subject of Participatory Communication and Education/Training, e.g.: FAO, 1995: *La comunicación: clave para el desarrollo humano*, FAO, Rome; FAO, 2001: *Participatory Communication and Adult Learning for Rural Development*, FAO, Rome; Project GCP/TUN/028/ITA *Op. Cit.*; Borrini-Feyerabend, 1997: *Op. Cit.*

central in the fulfilment of the basic principles for PNTD and in the phase-to-phase practical implementation, to ensure pertinence, interactivity and effective learning throughout the process.

The external support (FAO, NGO's, etc.) includes assistance and advice at different levels on:

- identifying communication needs and innovative, successful and cost-effective communication approaches and messages for specific audience (of groups or subgroups of actors, e.g. communication specific canals for women);
- reviewing appropriate awareness raising methodologies and strategies;
- designing and applying awareness raising modules and material used to target authorities and institutions at local, regional and national level;
- monitoring and evaluating communication interventions and impacts.

By applying a Communication for Development approach the effectiveness, appropriateness and measurability of both these aspect is largely enhanced. Existing communication for Development experiences clearly illustrates the potential value of the use of for example video, radio and photography, to just mention a few:

In Mexico the Program of Integrated Rural Development in the Tropical Wetlands (PRODERITH) was actively using video recording and playback to facilitate participatory diagnosis, planning and institutional information and coordination. The communities would analyse their situation, articulate their collective perception and propose solutions through the use of video. Due to this success the video-based methodology became an integrated part of planning in the water sector in Mexico.

In Pakistan the Project for Participatory Upland Conservation and Development (PUCD) used photography and slides based tools for women to participate, express and illustrate their views in participatory appraisals and as tools for fostering discussion. Photo albums and exhibitions were used to monitor and collaboratively measure the conservation of natural resources and share experiences among women's associations and communities; and slide confrontation was helpful to identify problems and suggest action to be taken.

Rural radio is an important tool for a variety of purposes. Radio programs made with multidisciplinary and mobile teams can foster dialogue with many people and record and share information on a wide variety of important subjects. Besides spreading information it also fulfils other important functions such as stimulate a regular discussion and debate among the people involved in development; provide a forum where rural communities can express their views and their cultural heritage; and it can even be a powerful means of investigation for decision-makers, helping them to appreciate better rural people and their world. In Chad radio was used in a campaign to stop intentionally lit bushfires. Radio broadcasts were used to encourage villagers to voice their opinions and propose solutions to the problem. The result was that within one year, forest fires were reduced by 90 percent, 22 villages had active bushfire control committees and firebreaks protected 10 000 hectares of forest.

More recently FAO has recognized the potential of combining radio with the new internet-based information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Also, traditional mean of communication, as drama, traditional dancing, narrators, popular music etc, are often used. These means are cheap and cultural adapted forms of communication from traditional art. Theatre is widely used, especially in Asia and Africa as an instrument for awareness raising and empowerment. It is especially adopted to raise consciousness about discrimination on the basis of gender, religion or disability and for HIV/AIDS education and prevention. Theatre is a powerful means for expression, communication and reflection on social problems where local groups play a mayor role in identifying and portraying all relevant dimensions of local issues and in involving the community. The role-play and the drama are thus key aspects in a complex multi-stakeholder process that can also be used in conflict management as in the case of the Kachahari

Theater in Nepal. In the Nepali language, the word “Kachahari” means a village gathering or a place to seek justice. It refers to a traditional kind of people’s court where villagers gather to hear and resolve conflicts in their own community. Kachahari Theater attempts to create this kind of forum using drama. They already know the broad basis of the conflicts, but through informal discussions with people they learn how such conflicts are seen and experienced locally. Based on the reality, they put together few scenes of a play. Consciously or subconsciously the audience knows that the play is really about themselves, but the world of drama creates a space where it is legal to see one’s imagination acted out. As the performance develops, the play and reality can no longer be separated. People speak freely about their own lives. They watch their struggles acted out before them on the stage, and at times join and act them out themselves.

http://www.msnepal.org/reports_pubs/conflict_theatre/2.htm.

Capacity Building: What is it? Whose capacities?

The capacity building program will be organized looking at which capacities are needed, by whom, to do what. Specific objectives depending on the target actors and scale or level of intervention will be formulated.

The capacity building program should be principally oriented to the less influencing or excluded actors, strengthening their ability to become conscious of their basic rights and to overcome the causes of exclusion. The capacity building program should offer training on technology and practical skills, with due attention to revalorise traditional technologies and practices (e. g. farmer to farmer programmes).

In some cases the basic skills of weak actors need to be developed (e.g. literacy courses) to strengthen the ability of the actors to enter dialogue.

Nevertheless, also governmental institutions (from local to the national level) and political, economical, social organizations (e.g. associations, cooperatives) should take active role in the design and implementation of specific activities of support.

Resuming among other strategies, capacity building includes:

- Creating opportunities for legitimised, committed and informed leadership;
- Strengthening local organizations (local communities, local Civil Society Organizations) in conceptual, socio-political, practical, financial and entrepreneurial issues;
- Supporting technical administration of local/regional/national governments;
- Transferring knowledge on available legal and institutional resources (to the local actors but also local governments and technical agencies);
- Building people awareness about their rights, responsibilities, obligations, limitations and accountability;
- Reinforcing networking and mutual trust.

Capacity building is also an important precondition for the successful use of Communication for Development. Training of technicians, specialists, and facilitators will enable critical assessment and analysis of communication needs and opportunities.

Capacity building approach does not automatically privilege one kind of activity over another. Its implementation should be flexible, patient and continuous.

The following points illustrate some warnings:

- Capacity building should not create dependency,
- Capacity building does not mean weakening the state functions;
- Capacity building is not a separate activity but a part of the process;
- Capacity building should not be solely concerned with financial sustainability.

No group is entirely homogeneous. The specific dynamics within a household or a community for instance need to be continually assessed to see how the actors fit into a wider pattern of behaviour. For instance if women are reluctant or unable to participate openly in community decision making processes, it may be harmful to strengthen an organizational structure without first exploring these inequalities. Sometimes health and education projects are assumed to provide an entry point for improving women's position in society and even allow them to take up wider public roles.

The box below illustrates the cornerstones of the capacity building strategy of the Community Based Regional Development Program in Yemen which included institutional capacity building, human capacity building and training and support to community income generating activities.

Box: Building organizational capacities of Community Development Organizations in Yemen

In the Community Based Regional Development Program in Yemen more than 50 Community-based Development Organisation (CDOs) have been established to assist Local Councils created in the context of Yemen's decentralization policy in local planning and empowerment. In each CDO Community Loan Fund (CLF) were established to finance community income generating activities. Pro-active linkages were initiated with a wide range of other development partners and projects, to complement local development initiatives and mobilize additional resources, particularly for social services and infrastructure.

The process of change from individual to institutional-based leadership resulted in a broader coverage of issues of communal concerns to include various human development elements- such as vocational training, literacy education (especially for women), health education, awareness raising, etc- instead of previous situation when it merely focuses on tribal matters and disputes resolutions. Moreover, some CDO's expanded their mandate to include other non-developmental tasks such as: collection of zakat from individual/private firms from outside the area and its distribution to eligible families regardless to the membership status of those families in the CDOs, conflict resolutions, collection of contributions from community members to support some national/international humanitarian issues.

The CDOs enhanced the utilization of local endowments, especially human resources. In this regard, some members of the CDO Executive Board showed apparent leadership talents and emerged as new leaders with participatory development-oriented attitudes.

The above-described processes seem relevant to the program's context since:

- Pre-specified credit ceiling facilitates focus planning at the CDO and program levels,
- The applied targeting procedure implies high level of transparency and ensures targeting of the poor households,
- The simplicity of the adopted collateral system encourages poor households to apply for credit.

By limiting individual loans to women, these processes enhance group work, which carries value-added to other program's themes of interventions; and, simultaneously, encourage women participation, and

The processes build CDO's capacities in SIGs formulation, project appraisal, procurement, loan management, accounting, monitoring and others

The increased financial awareness resulted in new positive entrepreneurial behaviours. For examples, onion producers within the coverage of the CDO met last year and agreed on sound marketing strategy of their product. They specified and adopted minimum price below which none of them marketed his product.

Sources: Interview with Stephan Baas, SDA Officer, December 2003

Build organizational capacity

An organization may offer cultural (social) or occupational identity and peer support. Or, it may be a channel for action in social and economic issues (e.g. forestry schemes, savings funds).

The most common Civil Society Organizations are: traditional or informal associations (because many times they are not formalized and recognized by the State and the positive law); membership-based models, which include among others labour union, political parties, research networks, producers' and consumers' cooperatives; and those associations that are sponsored by third parties (such as government or NGOs) and NGOs⁶⁵.

During the whole process, particular attention will be set, on the one hand, on strengthening people's ability to create and maintain organizations that represent them and are accountable. These organizations will be in charge of directing future actions and assure that the process of dialogue remains open even after the external support has ended.

An organizational capacity building focuses on strengthening practical, analytical, and managerial skills which are essential if organizations are to function effectively and democratically. Among others, the program should include the strengthening of self appraisal and assessment capacities as well as the planning, monitoring, evaluation and financial management skills, in addition to developing networking abilities. (see [Box Cooperatives and the development of entrepreneurial skills](#)). Special consideration should be given to the most vulnerable groups and their organizations.

The social and political organization of people is not a pre-condition but influences the speed of the process of changes towards concerted interventions in a given context. For instance in the case of the Lempira Sur after 5 years of activities the project was scaled up towards an indigenous area, where people already had a territorial organization. As in the case of settlers' area, the key entry of project was a production program, but the process of territorial dialogue was quicker due to a stronger organizational history. In the area the farmers manage 1 ha of land of maize and beans for their livelihood and the project helped the building of airtight towers for storing in order to profit from the local production. These towers started to spread amongst farmers where the project had not directly intervened. Because of the limited budget, the indigenous mayor recollected local funds and contributions in exchange for the provision of services. Three years later the local contributions exceeded the national transfer to the local administration.

In this case the legitimisation of recognized local leaders and the strong religious and cultural identity have been the components of success.

⁶⁵ Eade (1997)

Cooperatives and the development of entrepreneurial skills

Viable farmer self-help organizations are an indispensable precondition for sustainable agriculture and rural development. Farmers' co-operatives perform economic functions and have a number of obvious advantages for farmers. Economies of scale, reduced transaction costs, increased business safety and the provision of (new) services are, by all means, among them.

Co-operatives are participatory self-help organizations and as such represent an important institutional component of equal participation in the PNTD process. As they are traditionally present in rural areas, they can also be seen as "schools" for negotiated development. Cooperatives follow the "principle of identity": the owners, decision-makers and users are identical, the members. In accordance with this principle, members have both the rights and obligations of participating in goal-setting, decision-making and control or evaluation processes of their co-operative. Members should decide upon the services to be provided and benefit from what is produced or obtained by the co-operative. There are usually incentives for them to contribute their own resources (capital, labour, produce) to the development of the co-operative. It is extremely important that members act as both users and owners in the development of co-operative organizations through participation at three levels:

- participation in provision of resources (input participation) e.g. contribution of capital, labour, delivery of produce.
- participation in the decision-making processes of the co-operative organization as a member in the general assembly, section meetings, work groups, committees or as an elected leader on the board, and
- participation in the produced benefits (output participation), by sharing the surplus earned during the year by the co-operative enterprise, in the form of a patronage refund, interest on share capital, or the use of joint facilities and services.

An important precondition for continued successful operation is the need for the co-operative to produce visible and tangible (economic and social) benefits for members. Co-operatives can only develop as autonomous self-help organizations when they are able and allowed to operate as business institutions geared to succeed in market competition. Continued success also requires that the co-operative has motivated, experienced and dynamic managers who are able to plan and implement business policies. They must be able to provide the services and goods required by the members, taking into account the interests and needs of members as well as the entrepreneurial goals of the co-operative enterprise. Managers are hired by the members of cooperatives.

Source: Janos Juhasz, SDAR, Rural Organizations Officer

Capacity building of leaders and/or local government representatives

Capacity building should be interpreted as a means to enable institutions to perform specified activities, but also as a process of awareness, attitudinal change, creation of leadership, fostering communication and as end in itself, (e. g. strengthening the quality of representation and decision making within local organizations and their involvement in socio-political processes).

Two specific areas of capacity building can be leadership (managing culture, setting direction, supporting resource development, ensuring tasks are done) and strategic planning, (scanning environment, developing tactics to attain objectives and goals)⁶⁶.

⁶⁶ Adapted from Lusthaus et al. (2002)

In the Lempira Sur project a capacity building and training program of elected and aspirant mayors was carried out in order to bet towards a change in the local power control system (independence of political capital).

The political (legitimation, participation of people, empowerment and ownership of decision making processes), administrative (management capacity, corruption control, participation and ownership of the administration of investments and budgets) and financial dimensions of institutions were considered in the program.

In detail this project accompanied the people on the ground by:

- Training their leaders by diversifying their expertise to become more open to dialogue;
- Creating conditions so that more local leaders are trained and become development agents of their communities.

It has to be noted that the project presence contributed to the different results registered in local and national elections and to a loss of power of the local political group of interest. This can be interpreted as a request of change in the political style at local level - education and flexibility of the mayor became more important than his/her party affiliation - yet people still voted "their" parties at the national elections.

Technical support and capacity building of entrepreneurial skills (financial/ planning/ management) Small businesses and micro enterprises are a major source of employment for poor people worldwide, producing goods and services for local consumption and markets or for export. Capacity building in this area is needed to help people to escape from insecurity and the cycle of low productivity and low income, to deepen the poor producers' and workers' understanding of economic forces and to defend their social and economic rights. Assistance includes the provision of vocational and other forms of training, organizational support, help in marketing and access to credit and other type of micro-finance assistance.

In Asian countries women rice farmers in non-irrigated areas, often need out of season alternative income. Mango pickle women groups were provided with marketing and organizational skills to organize the provision of mango from different areas during and out of season, the transformation and selling of mango pickles. They needed negotiation, entrepreneurial and business planning skills throughout the year.

The creation of income generating activities through training and the provision of credit has been the most significant contribution of the SDA Participatory Rural Development Project (PRD) in Pakistan to achieve the sustainability of self-help groups' activities at village level.

This project is operational since 1989 and aims at employing a small, homogeneous self-help group approach to reach small farmers and the rural poor. The PRD self-help groups (membership varies from 5-15 members per group) operate at the sub-village level and each is organized around common income-generating activities. Through specific training activities the project has achieved good results in the areas of savings, loan repayment, acquisition of knowledge, generation of additional income through Income Generating Activities (IGAs), marginal increase of health status of the groups, leadership and self confidence etc. Indeed, one of the most important achievements of the project has been the creation of a savings/loan and "banking culture" in the project area. Prior to the project there was no custom of group cash savings at banks by the rural poor. This project has opened the doors of the Bank to the poor. All groups now are engaged in IGAs, such as cattle fattening, goat raising, milk selling, and poultry production⁶⁷.

In the case of the Lempira Sur the project's training activities in natural resources management, water management and agriculture has been oriented to stimulate the awareness of the

⁶⁷ Dixon Nilaweera, FAO consultant, SDA, 1996 <http://www.fao.org/sd/PPdirect/PPre0016.htm>

environmental problems, their causes and magnitude in the area. Also, it evidences, through a participatory and negotiated validation of technologies, the existence of traditional knowledge and the possibility of integration with new technologies. For instance, different interventions have achieved to improve productive situation and food sovereignty of local people, guaranteeing the social, cultural and environmental sustainability of the changes introduced and improving at the same time the situation of land and social degradation risks, i.e. the use of traditional agroforestry and indigenous system of Quesungual, the use of natural regeneration practices (no burn and slash), the implementation of the micro-projects for irrigation, the elimination of grazing and burn practices in the areas of recharge and damping, the valorisation of traditional biogenetic capital y la diversification of culture and agricultural practices.

The capacity building program was directed to local promoters and farmers, representatives of CODECOs and CODEMs, mancomunidades, local leaders, Juntas de agua, to facilitate the wider sharing of knowledge. Also a program aimed to reinforce local institutions of high education for sustainable natural resources management has been implemented.

Normally these interventions have been accompanied by activating of support for the creation and capacity building on financial administration, planning and management of projects and investment programs in the Bancos comunales, cooperatives and local associations.

Building technical skills of government administration

Following decentralization processes local governments are progressively made responsible for designing and carrying out development interventions, yet, their decision-making powers, their capacity to assume new responsibilities and to propose and conduct actions on the territory, as well as their financial autonomy, remain very limited. Thus their technical, financial and human resources need to be strengthened.

Institutions not only face financial constraints for staff and equipment, they also often lack the expertise to anticipate conflicts, or to handle conflicts that arise in the course of their activities related to land and natural resource management.

At higher political and administrative levels appropriate institutional mechanisms are required to establish user rights and facilitate the access to rural resources (land, water, trees and wild fauna), which are a necessary precondition for agricultural development and food security.

Many countries have requested FAO for specific advice on such issues as property rights, more equitable access to natural resources for women and men, the functioning of markets and of the administration of land property rights in order to benefit from the granting of credit for investment and good management of land and natural resources.⁶⁸ In this issue FAO is supporting government institutions at all levels from local to national.

For instance, in Angola, in a post-conflict situation, FAO has helped the national government in the revision of the land law and the identification of proper institutions for land administration (e.g. cadastre and central or decentralized land registry). Secondly, a reorganization of mid-level administration has been seen as essential for allowing them to fulfil their roles of harmonizing local level demands and interests and influence national policy decisions (e.g. Agrarian Reform Law). At local level FAO plays a key role in helping the recognition of the role of traditional institutions in land management. The initiation of horizontal and vertical dialogue in Angola at different government levels will help reconstruct trust and credibility as precondition for collaboration between the social actors for long-term development.

⁶⁸ Extract from: Rural Development Division, *Strengthening institutions and ensuring access to land and associated resources*.
http://www.fao.org/sd/SDA_en.htm

Who can stimulate participation? Key figures, local animators, the facilitator

In order to stimulate the active participation of relevant actors, a key issue is to involve some social forces (powerful actors) in the dialogue or negotiation process, with a partial renounce of their power control. In this sense it should be important to find the key figures or champions, at national or regional or local level, with deep knowledge of the reality and access to available information, but also openness view and sensibility for listening to understand and communicate with the different actors.

In many cases the key figures will possess traditional mediation skills. Natural leaders might already exist who are committed with the issues at play, and, overcoat, he/she will be recognized, respected, known for a good reputation of independence of judgement, and legitimised by the actors as a figure of confidence able to assume the role of information channel between the actors and possible “engine” of the participation and “articulator” for the creation of territorial spaces for dialogue (see [Box The role of a key figure in Angola](#)). In contrast, other cases show the need to capacitate local animators to assume this role.

Box: The role of a key figure in Angola

Recent experiences in Angola have prompted the reflection about the possible role of key persons in government as “articulators” of social dialogue. In some cases at national level, government staff can play this role and stimulate the opening of spaces for territorial dialogue. These new arenas for debate would support future joint interventions that allow switching from a conflictive to a negotiated territorial development situation.

This experience can be illustrated with the case of the rural suburban area of Luanda, in North Quenguela. The region is poor in water resources and the soils are not suitable for agriculture. During the long period of armed conflict, however, people from different provinces had settled down there looking for less risky locations. Later on, peasants’ and small entrepreneurs’ families as well as some powerful actors had moved to this area, given the gradual improvement of the security conditions and the urban expansion of the capital (20 km) that was occurring in the area. This people had later build up their political and economical influence, accumulating parcels of lands during the unstable conflict situation, without following any process for legitimization of their alleged rights. As a matter of fact, there were no titles demonstrating the legality of their occupation and use of the land in the area.

By the end of nineties, peace became a likely hypothesis. As a consequence, several conflicts around land issues started emerging. The first signals that problems were increasing in the area were sent to Government institutions. With FAO support, the DNOR (National Territorial Planning Direction) organised a sequence of field trips and meetings in order to verify legal status of all requests (or complaints) made by different social actors. These visits also aimed at verifying the historical reasons and legitimacy of complainants and to encourage a joint effort to pursue possible solutions that could stimulate development dynamics preferably more oriented to less powerful groups.

Particularly the role of facilitator of dialogue performed by the national Director of DNOR was crucial. He had an excellent reputation in the country both for his technical capacities and for his known independent judgment position. For this reason it was possible in such hostile scenario (land issue was still a taboo subject in Angola) to find out ways to support development actions addressed to needy communities.

The following observations stem from the reflections about ‘key persons’ in this case:

1. Commitment and known reputation of independence: these characteristics allowed this key person to assume and defend a “neutral” position even when dealing with extremely unbalanced power relations and strong political influences. Certainly, part of FAO’s task is also to support this person and his/her team.

2. In this concrete case, given the strong tradition of central administration, it was fundamental to have someone from the political stage to support the whole process, trying to respond to the lack of trust between institutions and citizens. In this context, his commitment and the political recognition was essential to enforce the agreement.
3. Professional capacities and availability of restricted information; his formal and informal legitimisation arising from his possibility to access documents about the different actors, his deep knowledge of country legal situation and familiarity with field work and local communities.

Finally, his good pragmatic abilities; given the strong political power of some involved actors and international community's low interest in interfering in the critical land issue in Angola, the decision taken was to proceed gradually. Firstly, it was necessary to encourage a dialogue and a change in the way important actors (government, farmers, and entrepreneurs) used to look at local communities and their rights to land. During an initial phase of the project, activities were concentrated in less conflictive parts of the territory, where the influence of external actors were not overwhelming. Thanks to the presence of this key figure and to FAO support, the reflections about the land issues in Angola, stimulated in this pilot case, were scaled up at national level (see [Box: example of multiple arenas of dialogue](#)).

Source: Interview with Paolo Groppo, SDA Officer, December 2003

During the capacity building phase the facilitator will have the role of coordination and supervision of activities. She/he identifies the organizations (CSOs, national and international NGOs, governmental agencies) that will be in charge of implementing the different components of the program and stimulating the creation of possible alliances and partnerships. For more information about her/his attitudes and roles (see [Box: The new role of the professional: the facilitator](#)). Her or his role at this stage is to articulate the dialogue and coordinate activities occurring at various territorial scales with the involvement of public and private actors, NGOs and Civil Society and to ensure that the diagnostic, the dialogue and the negotiations are carried on in a sustainable, flexible and iterative way and as an open process that never really ends.

Training will be provided both to local actors and the facilitators who, after the initial diagnostic, should provide technical assistance to the intervention and later support in the prospective reformulation of the options to be renegotiated. Finally, also local governments should receive training, as they will have to guarantee permanent dialogue between the different interests involved as well as the support and implementation of the interventions agreed upon.

Partnerships and strategic alliances: presence/role of civil society organizations, NGOs

In order to encourage broad participation, to accompany communication and training programs along the process and to reinforce horizontal and vertical trust, it is essential to stimulate the creation of alliances among agencies of cooperation, governmental institutions, civil society and their representatives – farmers' organizations, research institutes, trade unions,⁶⁹ etc.

Sometimes local organizations, as in the example of the Uw'a people in Colombia, and other indigenous organization in Latin America, in conflict areas where mining or oil interests are at play, have all the skills and capacities they need, but what they lack are national alliances or even international relations to oppose projects that threaten their land, culture and livelihoods. They were unable to force national government and elites, who were determined to gain access over oil, gold and hardwoods, to negotiate. Through the creation of alliances with other indigenous peoples they gained significant international profile and even lobbied the UN to denounce their situation. As a result these organizations were able to force the national governments to negotiate.

⁶⁹ Examples of possible links and strengthened concertation between representatives of the United Nations, governments, civil society and NGOs (e.g. National Thematic Working Groups on Rural Development and Food Security) can be found in "Building Partnerships for Food Security", FAO, Rome, 2002

Synergies between FAO and NGO/CSO will permit making better use of existing resources and mobilize additional ones. Furthermore, as a result of the synergies, the cooperation between FAO and NGOs will have the following advantages:

- The provision of technical and institutional support for civil society actors;
- The replication of NGOs experiences elsewhere;
- Increased civil society access to information;
- Increased decision-making capacities of public officials and project managers⁷⁰.

Thanks to their direct field experience and results achieved during field work, NGOs can put into action capacity building programmes targeted to specific population groups, especially the weak and marginalized.

Finally, all through the implementation of the participatory approach proposed here, it is necessary to invest in reinforcing cooperation as a means for strengthening information flows and communication both vertically (ascending and descending, among professionals, authorities/institutions and civil society), and horizontally (among the different civil society representatives or directly among the different actors concerned).

In this regard, the NGOs play the major role in information analysis, dissemination and exchange, while FAO, as an institution, is called to facilitate and act as a mediator in the dialogue with governments (national, but also regional as well as local institutions) and in inter-governmental arenas.

Given the experiences of FAO, particularly in specific regions (e.g. South Asia) the organization could be responsible for the provision of technical assistance to NGOs/CSOs and their capacity building in the field of communication and education. The involvement of local NGOs (CSOs) helps ensure the feasibility and sustainability of the interventions. In its interventions, FAO main attitude should be that of the 'honest broker'.

It should be noted that a continuous effort of sensitization is very important in order to consolidate the relationships between the expert, the diagnostic implementing team and the project counterpart. This effort is also needed in order to improve the acceptance of the project team by local actors and support good relations between the team and the actors, and, finally, to promote the creation of bridges of communication among the actors themselves (within and among groups).

Box: 1989-1990 FAO TCP project formulation for people's participation in rural development activities, Tagaytay, Philippines.

The project represented a framework for turning development rhetoric on the need for "a policy dialogue and partnership" between government, NGO's and Peoples Organizations (PO's), into a flexible and well defined development tool for GO/NGO/PO equal partnership in participatory project planning, implementation and evaluation for joint GO/NGO/PO rural development projects based upon shared principles. The financial and technical support from this TCP project, facilitated GO/NGO/PO project collaboration at local, municipal, regional levels, guided by a national project team composed of representatives from the Asian Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (a regional network NGO, based in Manila) with the Departments for Agriculture, Agrarian Reform, Environment, NEDA and Cooperative Development. The TCP activities resulted in 19 major rural development projects, which were funded, from available government funds and donor ODA funds, with an estimated total value, at that time, of 50 million dollars.

The history of this TCP dates back to the 1979 WCCARD Conference that mandated the FAO Human Resources Division to promote participatory approaches in rural development. In the period 1979-1989, the ESH Division organized regular program funded network activities in collaboration with ANGOC and its Asian national member

⁷⁰ FAO (1999a),

organizations. In Asia a series of national policy dialogue workshops were held on topics related to People's Participation in Rural Development, technically coordinated by Wim Polman Rural Institutions Officer.

In 1989, as a follow up a national workshop on this topic in the Philippines and with the support of the government of the Philippines, ANGOC asked FAO to provide (a first time) TCP funding for technical and financial assistance to facilitate the development of a practical framework for GO/NGO/PO participatory decision making in project formulation, implementation and evaluation covering agriculture, agrarian reform, environment and local poverty reduction and cooperative development activities. The TCP project proposal was supported by UNDP and interested donors, which were looking for practical frameworks, mechanisms & tools for funding local participatory rural development projects. The TCP project implementation started in February 1990 and was efficiently implemented by the national project team within a year period.

The TCP outcome includes a well-defined step by step (differentiated by agency and development area) trust building process, based upon 11 principles on which to build a consensus for joint GO/NGO/PO objectives. These objectives include a consensus that the project activities should contribute to social justice and equity, to people's empowerment and solidarity, enhance transparency and effective governance, sustainable and self-reliant development and the need for structural changes within the constitutional, legal and institutional framework for decision-making on development fields, based upon the principle of subsidiarity. Furthermore all development partners are accountable to the people.

Networking of NGO/s and PO's needed to be strengthened horizontally and vertically. Yet the roles of NGO's/PO's at grassroots level are to be complementary in character, and not in competition with the government. It was agreed that the concepts, framework and outcome of the joint project activities should be shared widely among stakeholders at all levels. The GO/NGO/PO partners developed a joint framework for participatory project formulation or reformulation, which identified eight steps in the project phase: from concept generation to assessment of opportunities for collaboration and partnership development at various stages of development, covering technical, financial, social-economic, environmental institutional development components, well defined activities, focal points for information exchange with project team members. Every step in this participatory project formulation framework composed of eight phases - covering project formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation - is well defined and each step is consolidated in an agreement based upon a common understanding of the underlying principles and agreed activities, resource mobilization and responsibilities.

In the process of formulating the 19 major projects the project team members had each their own responsibility to guarantee local grassroots participation. NGO focal points within line ministries were established and ANGOC linked with local communities and stakeholders, through national, regional and local NGO's and PO's. Regional government of Region XI played a major role in facilitating GO/NGO/PO project activities. The project framework and principles for trust building and partnership development are still today the most relevant practical tools for interdisciplinary project formulation activities. Its terms are negotiable and flexible in adaptation to level of collaboration and technical topic, area, local target groups etc, while clearly defined in terms of who is responsible for what and which resources are available, etc.

What happened next? In 1991 The Local Government Code a major legal framework for decentralized participatory decision-making was adopted, providing a legal basis for the application of the TCP framework and tools on a continued basis. Yet local resources mobilization remains a major constraint. DA became decentralized, lost its extension to Local Government Unit's without proper guarantees for its functioning, which affected the whole of farmer's communities in the country. Interagency collaboration as such has become a major constraint and the NGO community cannot provide a coherent counterweight at policy level. ANGOC became an international advising NGO agency for FAO, IFAD, and UNDP and gained much respect among the regional and international NGO and Government community. The Human Resources, Institutions and Agrarian Reform Division (ESH) became the Rural Development Division (SDA) and discontinued in 1996 regular networking HQ activities with ANGOC, which was continued at regional level by Wim Polman as Rural Development Officer in the FAO Regional Office in Asia and the Pacific until 2000.

Source: Wim Polman, Rural Development Officer in the FAO Regional Office in Asia and the Pacific.

Phase 3: Negotiation process: seeking consensus for the development of the territory

“Dialogue is an essential method of government and programming in the pursuit of sustainable territorial development, able to respond to actual needs and visions of the actors that operate and interact on the territory.

The negotiation table represents here the main leading institution and forum in which the largest possible local partnerships will materialize (among local communities, public officials, local representatives of various categories, private individuals, etc.) as well as the arena where local actors, in a spirit of participation and cooperation, can jointly examine the problems and potentials of the territory.”

Recognizing local resource users as promoters of territorial development entails putting efforts and resources in setting up a multi-level process of dialogue – as well as concrete actions - around development issues with parallel investment in the increase of people’s capacities, both in the Government and in Civil Society, through the opening of fora of discussion.

Articulating a continuous multi-level multi-actors dialogue on territorial issues

In the PNTD approach, investing in confidence building is rightly one of the main objectives of the process. The building of trust both among the actors involved and in collaborative decision-making processes, will influence the willingness by them to participate in dialogue. Trust is both a means to open dialogue and an end to it.

The alternative approach to development proposed in this document is not project oriented. Furthermore, the PNTD does not only apply to rural or urban areas, nor it is only local or national in scope. In fact this approach integrates the multiple dimensions of development processes: dealing with various issues and involving different government levels in the attempt of establishing conducive environment for bottom-up and negotiated territorial development. The focus of the PNTD approach is primarily on women and men and their lack of trust in the institutions in charge of fostering “development”. As a result the PNTD process can translate into projects and programmes but this is only one of its possible outcomes, the major being a situation in which the different actors, playing on a more levelled field, resort to dialogue and foster informed participation when facing development challenges.

Dialogue among the actors might be opened on preliminary and relatively minor issues over which an agreement can be reached relatively easier. The first round of negotiations will not necessarily endeavour to address actors’ core interests or the most critical issues at stake. A common ground for dialogue among the actors might be found on the base of any of the many interests they share. Nevertheless, the mutual trust created or re-established among the actors during the process of preparing this first agreement, and thanks to the consensus achieved, might represent the catalytic force for a continuation of dialogue which gradually creates the space for addressing deeper social fractures. Trust in the facilitator is another important precondition for the negotiation process to continue to be chosen by the actors involved as a decision making instrument, towards addressing more critical interests.

To guarantee continuity to the process of dialogue involves nourishing wider processes of democratization of local and national institutions to allow broad and active participation, especially by the side of the weaker actors and wide ownership and commitment. This will likely entail setting

up and coordinating several tables at various scales and around different issues towards the achievement of the objective of negotiated territorial development.

As highlighted in the previous chapters, balancing power disparities, increasing actors' ability and willingness to participate in the dialogue and developing and socializing the knowledge about the territorial system, are the necessary preconditions for activating processes of collaborative decision-making of territorial development interventions. The preparation and maintenance of favourable conditions for the negotiation process are the result of a lengthy process of sensitisation, communication, participation and empowerment and of coordinated efforts at local and higher levels (see [Phase 2](#)).

During the negotiation phase stage actors will confront their view and proposals in a collaborative and consensual process towards a socially legitimised agreement. The proposals for territorial development highlight the common ground on which negotiation can start. It is essential in this phase that a wide array of actors is represented to assess the proposals for negotiation. All the actors should be convinced that negotiation is the best way to pursue their interests.

To accommodate or combine different proposals in a win-win solution, appropriate ground rules should be set up for neutralizing as much as possible the asymmetries in bargaining power, capacities and skills which the previous stages of the PNTD process could not completely balance.

The following questions arise:

- How to establish dialogue at multiple levels and around different issues?
- What are the basic principles of the negotiation?
- How to set up ground rules to facilitate the participation of all concerned actors in the negotiation process?
- How to initiate the creation of a consensus?

Negotiation at different levels and around various themes

As highlighted in the PNTD scheme the very heart of the process is its iterative and systemic nature by which different and various tables of discussion are set up on specific issues or themes and at different levels and scales, in the search for appropriate solutions defined through consensus. A clear connection must be established between local actors who express their views and concerns and provide information about the territorial system, and the meso and macro levels of the governance system in order to find viable solutions and define appropriate regional and national strategies.

The experiences in Angola show an example of multiple arenas of dialogue (government institutions, NGOs, international agencies and donors), highlighting issues of coordination and interconnection towards a strategic goal.

Box: example of multiple arenas of dialogue

In Angola FAO has been able to open dialogue at the local level between powerful private entrepreneurs and local communities on access to land. As an outcome of this dialogue agreements were reached through negotiation that guarantee both sides a minimal level of tenure security and thus allow them co-exist on the same territory.

The growing awareness of the strategic importance of tenure security in Angola for all the actors and at all levels, is an outcome of several changes which are occurring at national and local level, among which are: privatization; sub-urbanization; increasing awareness by farmers, entrepreneurs and communities of their rights; mounting conflicts between communities and external actors.

New variables were to be included in the land equation given the predictable end of the war and the increase in the number of returning internally displaced people resulting in the need to find resettlement areas for them. Also, there was need to mediate conflict between the returnees and those people who had cultivated their land during the war.

The best lands in sub-urban areas were in the hands of the political elites that wanted to secure control over such territories because of their strategic economic importance to attract both foreign capital and international funds to finance for rural development through modern and highly productive agriculture.

At the end of 1999 the government showed interest in reopening the land issue and a series of actions were undertaken through a participatory process, which involved government institutions, NGOs, international agencies and donors. Adding to this growing critical mass for dialogue, new actors and institutions started showing a clear interest to enter the discussion (among which was the inter-ministerial group activated by the ministry of public works dealing with the issue of urban land). The complexity of the land issue clearly could not be addressed and managed by the government alone without active participation and involvement of other actors, such as the communities, the entrepreneurs, civil society organizations, religious leaders, donors and the international financial community.

The dialogue in Angola on land has to be facilitated to include and harmonize the various sectoral interests in government, which is a precondition for any dialogue with civil society. Solving the land issue is not merely a government task. Because land is an issue for which a general consensus has to be found between all the actors of civil society. Parallel to those efforts directed to opening the dialogue at national level, at local level civil society organizations have to coordinate their work with local communities to stimulate local discussion.

At central government level the dialogue and negotiation will support the elaboration of a land policy framework, revising the land law, identifying proper institutions for land administration and capacitating juridical bodies to assume their functions with regard to conflict resolution.

The Angolan government has asked the international community support for initiating the examination of the land issue with its different dimensions and with appropriate mechanisms for articulating the dialogue among the different actors and around the different themes in an effective and constructive way.

The Angolan process of dialogue and action around the land issue must be guarantee continuity, in addition to the efforts at increasing people's capacities, both in the Government and in Civil Society, through the opening of fora of discussion such as those that are already in place. The guarantee of such continuity to the process of searching for a solution to the land tenure security issue involves nourishing wider processes of democratization of the Angolan institutions to allow marginalized actors to be active players in the process.

Similar to the case of Angola, in the case of Mozambique, participatory delimitation of community land rights at local level was taking place parallel to discussion at national level about the legislation on land tenure security and the risks of mandatory demarcation as a legal precondition for the recognition of community rights. (see [Phase 2 Soft ways and hard ways tools](#)).

Parallel to the processes of dialogue further negotiations between international agencies might be needed to coordinate external interventions in the area and guarantee that projects are responsive and remain consistent with domestically-driven processes.

Dialogue should be opened and articulated at the proper administrative level. This is necessary to ensure that territorial institutions (governmental and non-governmental) take active part in the process and that outcomes in terms of capacity building, empowerment and commitment are capitalized upon for effective implementation, ownership and institutionalization of dialogue.

The concerns of participants' representativity and legitimacy at the negotiation table will be faced depending on the context, the scale and the issues under discussion. Whether all concerned actors will sit at the negotiation table or only their (also legal) representatives will depend upon the nature of actors' discussion and the actors involved (e.g. privates, an indigenous community, central or local government).

Regardless of the administrative level or territorial scale, each negotiation table will follow rules the actors have agreed upon and that define mechanisms, roles and responsibilities. Still, the key element of the PNTD approach is an accurate analysis of the territorial system stimulating the discussion around territorial development issues and feeding it with the main concerns and information arising from the territorial diagnostics, to provide a bottom-up flow of information and proposals also functional for policy formulation.

Basic principles of interest-based negotiation

The new negotiation approaches centred on problem resolution have, in recent years, received much attention from the side of the theoreticians of collective negotiation. This is because such approaches abandon the obsession for a 'win-win' solution result, emphasizing more on the process than on the outcome.

In interest-based negotiation, the first principle is to deal separately with the demands of the individuals and the issues debated by the parties. The process requires mutual respect and confidence by the participants to the negotiation, i.e. frank and open discussions and recognition of the legitimacy of each party to defend their interests.

The second principle that constitutes the cornerstone of interest based negotiation processes consists in focusing on the interests at stake instead of concentrating on the positions. Multiple interests lie behind each of the actors' positions. It is the actors' interests that define the problem and open the way for its solution.

The third basic principle of interest-based negotiations consists in formulating a vast range of options prior to making a decision. It is necessary to have brainstorming sessions, which implies that the parties have previously expressed and discussed their respective points of view on the problem, and thus possess all the information needed to elaborate different scenarios of possible solutions, while taking into account the interests of each of the parties.

Finally, the fourth principle relates to the evaluation of options feasibility based on objective criteria defined by the parties (laws, regulations, costs, etc.) in order to avoid conflicts in the implementation of the agreed solutions⁷¹.

In summary, an interest-based negotiation process for conflict management has three main stages:

- The identification and discussion of the issues at stake;
- The examination of the identified possible solutions;
- The elaboration of a comprehensive set of decisions that may materialize in the form of a Social Territorial Agreement.

The whole process is accompanied and facilitated in a climate of respect and confidence. A transparent and continuous exchange of information among all participants is fundamental in developing individual and collective capacities to design strategies of territorial development and jointly assess resource needs and solve common issues.

⁷¹ Fisher and Ury, cited by Bourque (1994)

The process is intended to channel community activities so that participation, commitment, negotiation and ownership, interact toward an effective solution of the problem.

Focusing on interests instead of positions

External interventions must necessarily start by choosing an issue or subject to focus project work on. This subject area should be viewed as the entry point for an intervention that looks beyond the sectoral implications, and takes a systemic view of the social, economic and political dimensions surrounding it. It may happen that the solution to an issue is found in another issue area⁷².

As highlighted in Phase 1 of this document, this systemic view of the territory is acquired through a diagnostic which supports the facilitating team in gaining a coherent understanding of the territorial system. This analysis will assist the team in the identification of the multiple interests lying behind actors' stated positions. Furthermore, applying a historical perspective to analysing a territorial system, will help the team assess whether the actions taken to realize actors' interests would produce sustainable results.

It is the interests that define the problem. On the opposite, framing a negotiation as a contest of will over positions aggravate the entangling process; it is likely to make the negotiation a lengthy procedure and puts at serious risk its effectiveness in addressing actor's needs, desires, concerns and fears. Furthermore, the tactics of coercion and manipulation of information that often accompany the expression by the actors of their positions work at the detriment of a transparent information exchange and a dialogue based on the interests.

Actors have multiple interests. This diversity is at the heart of any opportunity for the facilitating team to find a common interest over which dialogue among the actors can start.

As in the example of fire in the Amazon (see [Phase 2: Identification of common ground](#)) this common ground might be established around issues which are sensitive for the actors involved but only after changing the angle from which the problem is looked at. It is even more likely that very critical and basic interests are not addressed during the first round of negotiation (e. g. access to land by the landless).

Actors' interests are assessed for coherence with regard to the economic, social, cultural, environmental and political components of the territorial system as well as the territorial trends and dynamics identified.

⁷² Adapted from Dohrn (2004)

The consensus building process

As an outcome of the diagnostics, and the parallel efforts in reducing the asymmetries in actors' bargaining power, a common ground might have been identified from where the negotiation can start.

It is essential at this point that all relevant actors take active part in the consensus building process. This means that the process should be opened to include all those actors whose involvement is key for reaching a sustainable agreement or any agreement at all. This includes those actors who might not yet be organized or empowered, or those who might not reside in the area but whose involvement and consent is a precondition for the enactment of any agreement on territorial development (see [Phase 1: The actors of the territory](#)). Empowerment is a long term process where the opportunity of learning by doing is a precondition of success. Thus, when negotiations starts actors might not be playing on a levelled plain field, yet they will have recognized the legitimate interests of the all other actors and accept to abide to jointly agreed ground rules for multiparty decision making.

Stakeholders who have mutually authorized each others to reach a decision eventually make decision together. This does not mean that stronger parties must relinquish power, or that all resources are distributed equally. However, underlying collaboration is an agreement among stakeholders that they have approved one another's legitimacy and power to define problems and propose solutions. In particular it is essential that the actors are persuaded that:

- Collaboration will produce positive outcomes,
- Other options (including violence) for achieving solutions will not serve their interests,
- It is possible to reach fair agreements among multiple stakeholders,
- There is an ability among the stakeholders to participate,
- Other key stakeholders will agree to collaborate⁷³.

Identification of immediate benefits for all actors

As already highlighted in [Phase 2](#), it is important to clearly translate the potential positive outcomes of a negotiated solution into immediate benefits (economic benefits, mobilization of funds for development projects, improvement of the peace and order situation as a precondition for a good business environment and general well-being, security of tenure rights, etc.) and costs that the achievement of a negotiated solution would spare. Key questions that can be asked are: what would likely be the cost of achieving your interest in an unilateral way? (financial, trust, reputation...). For how long and paying what price can your interest be achieved without the cooperation of the other actors? Which are the risks of a unilateral solution (short-term and long-term)?

When an agreement satisfies the interests of all parties upholding it will be the parties' direct concern. In the example of Algeria, the motivation for maintaining the process lied mostly in the direct economic benefits accruing to the group involved in the project. This as many other examples in different countries, show that to continue fulfilling their tasks beyond the project scope and period, groups have to be built on the interests and motivations of their members. Groups have to be based on a voluntary membership that attracts its members because they have compatible interests, because of potential synergies or because it helps actors to position themselves better on the market. Reason for joining a groups and contributing to its work include: better market prices (buying and selling), substitution of state institutions (inexistent or weak) for the provision of services or the

⁷³ Adapted from Gray (1989) cited in FAO (2002)

aggregation of local demands. Is this the case additional benefits can arise and the original scope of the group might be widened opening new grounds of work.

Negotiating and implementing territorial development projects

The actors involved, with the help of the facilitator, will agree on the appropriate type of negotiation process to adopt. Appropriate rules, agreed upon by all parties will define the process of dialogue and procedures for reaching an agreement (assisted or unassisted process), the role of the third party and the meeting format.

The availability of alternative options to all parties is essential to maintain dialogue. The negotiation table should become a sustainable platform for territorial dialogue to promote the replication of the process and the sustainability of negotiated territorial development. The outcomes of the decision making process might be various depending on the issues at stake and the areas where a common ground can be found among the actors. The final compromise not only contains the activities to be undertaken but also has to assess the resources needed for the enactment of the agreement and outline clear roles and responsibilities for its implementation.

The following questions arise:

- How to facilitate the creation of a consensus?
- What are the roles of the different actors?
- What are the possible outcomes of the negotiation process?
- What are the requirements to implement the agreement?

Facilitating consensus building

The external support to the process play a key role in building the capacity at all levels of the governance system for transforming conflicts into forces that promote positive social change towards the achievement of socially legitimized agreements. This implies activating a continued process of communication and information sharing among social actors, building trust and credibility as preconditions for collaboration and increasing the capacity of the weaker actors to take active role in decision making processes.

Resuming what has been presented in the previous sections, the main steps for activating a constructive process of dialogue are presented below:

- The deontology of the 'honest broker' that leads the multi-stakeholder process toward a dialogue among the actors present on the territory and between civil society and local authorities;
- The orientation of the actors' different interests towards a common ground;
- The prevention of gaps when facilitating the formulation of proposals of strategic interventions on the territory and analyzing options' feasibility (economic, financial, social, environmental, cultural);

The decision making process might take different forms in practise depending on the issue at stake and the actors involved (negotiation table, forum of discussion, etc.). The role and functions of the third party might vary accordingly.

In general, the third party will guide the meeting and keep participants focused on the agenda items. It is his or her role to assist the participants in meeting their objectives; help them to reach decisions on their agenda items; moderate the sharing of information. He or she periodically introduces

collaborative activities to assist the participants in defining their issues and developing possible solutions⁷⁴.

The facilitator has to identify and work side by side with a mediator for the negotiation phase, if arbitration between the actors is needed.

The role of the mediator

In cases where the third party's neutrality is a key prerequisite for any agreement to be reached, a legitimate mediator who is credible to all parties and has sufficient knowledge of the local sociology will be appointed. This is most likely the case of conflicts, where the dispute is characterized by a sustained intensity, a long duration at the time of intervention, and powerful interests as well as basic human needs at the heart of the dispute⁷⁵.

Mediation is a process of assisted negotiation. The mediator assures that the different stakeholders agree on the process and logistics and support the participants to establish adequate ground rules. Key ground rules are those that neutralize the effect of power asymmetries during the course of the negotiation process to support actors' active participation towards the reaching of an agreement which truly satisfies the interests of all the parties involved. The mediator will make sure such ground rules are accepted by all participants at the start of the process and applied at every stage. The role and tasks of the mediator will ultimately be determined by the parties involved and will change depending on the context, local situation, values and norms as well as the issues at stake. In some cases the mediator can have considerable influence in bringing the disputing groups to negotiations and putting forward possible solutions.

The facilitator provides technical and logistic support to the mediator. The latter will enter the process in an early stage - that is well before the actors a getting together at a negotiation table - so that he or she knows the dynamics and problems that might be arising during the process.

Key figures might emerge (key persons in government, respected community members, kinship-based leaders) as natural mediators in conflicts at various levels, holding the perfect position and endowed with the right attitudes to play such role, in addition to being legitimized by the parties.

In the case of mediation in local conflicts the training of mediators for the negotiation table might be necessary (see for example, the course for paralegals in Ecuador "[Community paralegals for Land Tenure conflicts in Ecuador](#)", CARE-SUBIR Project)⁷⁶. The mediator should be familiar with the local context, knowledgeable about the local conditions and neutral towards the individual stakes. In the following box the role of mediation in the PNTD process is addressed, with insights from SDAA experience with mediation in land tenure conflicts.

⁷⁴ Adapted from Means K., et al. in FAO (2002)

⁷⁵ Ramírez, FAO 2002 http://www.fao.org/sd/2002/IN0301a3_en.htm

⁷⁶ "Paralélales Comunitarios y la Tenencia de la Tierra" by Manuel M. Feijóo, (Ecuador), 2001

Box: the role of mediation in the PNTD

If we consider that the practice of dialogue and mediation should exist all along the participatory negotiated territorial development process, the function and the significance of the mediation process, as well as the role and skills needed by the mediator, become particularly relevant.

The discipline of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR⁷⁷) has worked during the last decades to free the concept of mediation of the one of violent conflict. This re-defined and more dynamic notion of mediation seems to be the most appropriate focus for the PNTD. In fact, it does not exclude the possibility of a negotiation table, but may as well simply be the channel employed to gather and share information among the actors, help them express their interests and needs and, if needed, capacitate them for dialogue.

Moreover, the mediation process for PNTD will have to be sufficiently flexible to adjust to the multiple dimensions of the issues at stake, to be useful at several institutional levels and to be suitable for a wide range of different actors. In this context, different types of actions will be undertaken from the ground level (community), up to the highest levels (government and institutions), to successfully combine the interests and needs of the actors and make possible the reaching of an agreement.

The required tools and actions will change from one level to another and the intervention of the mediator will be flexible as well. Therefore, it seems more realistic to think about a team of mediators in charge of working co-ordinately to follow the process, instead of imagining a single mediator.

SDAA experience with mediation and relevance for PNTD local mediators

The many years work done by SDAA on land Tenure conflict management has gone through different phases. After a first investigation of the field of formal and informal Land Tenure mediation, a Needs Assessment Survey⁷⁸ was completed to evaluate the requests of practitioners that operate in this field. The Service has later produced some Issue Papers⁷⁹ in which important concepts, useful to the Land Tenure Conflict Management practice, are elaborated extensively. Subsequently, the Service financed the elaboration of some Case Studies⁸⁰, based on mediation experiences carried out by other organizations in thirteen different countries around the world, and useful to analyze the uses and applications of conflict management techniques. Finally, the Service has recently progressed creating its own training material for Land Tenure conflict mediators at the local level.

Between the different lessons learned and systematized to help the preparation of the training material, the example, of the course for paralegals in Ecuador ("[Community paralegals for Land Tenure conflicts in Ecuador](#)", [CARE-SUBIR Project](#)), can be mentioned, as a case where people trained in mediation and formed in legal matters, were able to bring about the composition of different interests and, by informing and capacitating the actors, help them reach an agreement.

We understood that the main strength of a mediator working at local level is in his/her capacity to interact with the network of the social capital and, by doing so, capacitate the community for its own institutional consolidation and empowerment. This kind of mediation would not be possible without a deep knowledge and understanding of the context.

Focusing on the relevance of mediation at local level in the PNTD process, a training program for mediators would, on one side, involve some local key-figures to appraise their own experience and, on the other, integrate their skills with some ADR tools.

⁷⁷ The Alternative Dispute Resolution methods include all the consensual or joint decision-making practices that, by bringing all affected stakeholders into the process as early as possible, puts them in charge of establishing how to manage their conflicts

⁷⁸ "Land and Natural Resources Conflict Management Survey", FAO, Rome, November 2002

⁷⁹ Such as: "A conceptual map of Land Conflict Management: organizing the parts of two puzzles", Ricardo Ramirez; "Scoping paper on Land Rights and Legal framework Issues in Dispute Resolution", Renée Giovarelli; "Alternative Dispute Resolution in Land Conflict, a tentative assessment", Jean Daudelin.

⁸⁰ A number of Case Studies was commissioned by SDAA between 2001 and 2003, many of them were presented in the "2002 South Pacific Land Tenure Conflict Symposium" from April 10 to 12, 2002 in Suva, Fiji, and in the seminar "Resolución de Conflictos de Tierras en América Latina", held in Quito, Ecuador from July 24 to 26, 2003

The idea of PNTD is to bring into play local/natural mediators to help local stakeholders set up a sustainable decision-making process and assist them while trying to integrate local culture and tradition in complex multi-level development process.

The PNTD grass-root mediators' training program should include some basic training on legal matters, but not exclusively. To respect the multi-discipline holistic approach, the course should also include social, economical, political and institutional aspects analyzed from the point of view of ADR.

The training program for local mediators in Land Tenure conflict resolution that the Service is currently producing and testing could be easily adapted to the needs of local PNTD mediators.

Source:

Adriana Herrera, Agrarian Analysis Officer (SDAA).

Maria Guglielma da Passano, SDAA Volunteer.

Roles of religious leaders and other influential figures (local notables)

Religious leaders or other influential figures at local level are key actors in bridging between the project and the local community and in opening the way for dialogue between external and local expertise. Without the guidance and mediation of these local key figures no external support would be effective both in carrying out a systemic analysis of the local setting (local leaders as key informants) and in winning credibility in the eyes of the local community.

Because of their deep understanding of the local setting and because they are depository of historical knowledge local influential people might play a key role in decision-making. They might also act as mediators in conflicts at local level, because of their charisma or because of a customary conflict management role they play.

When conflicts arise involving both the community and external actors, the community often need to work out a common understanding of the issues at stake and agree on the actions to be undertaken. The role of local key features might be crucial in assuring that the local community members are able to meet on a common ground and find common interests when facing external actors.

The role of teachers in Myanmar goes well beyond the education of the young generations and the transmission of community values and norms. Several groups of farmers' in Myanmar were given inputs, seeds, tools and this had resulted in an overall increase in farm productivity and farmers' entrepreneurship. Yet the management of problems and conflicts was an every day challenge. To solve these cases there was no point in appealing to the public authorities who were corrupt. At this point, the local teachers, old wise women recognized by the community as leaders, were called in. A rule, consistent with the customary system, was established that local teachers would have the last word in case of conflicts and the group would have to follow.

Ground rules to guarantee a fair negotiation process

The ground rules define roles, tasks, competencies and responsibilities, the negotiation objectives, mechanisms to ensure the participation by all parties and an agreement on the rules for communication. In particular, parties will have to find an agreement over the type of process they want to set up (whether a direct person-to-person or a third party), the preferred status of the third party (whether partial or impartial and whether an outsider or an insider), the meeting format (individual and/or joint negotiations), the process of dialogue (defining who is allowed to speak, how, style of communication, and participation) and the process of reaching an agreement, including decision format and enforcement.

To level out persistent asymmetries in actors' capacities and bargaining power, it is essential to agree upon ground rules to guarantee a fair negotiation process. Weaker groups risk losing much from negotiations in which power differences are very acute and powerful groups often take unilateral actions refusing to negotiate or collaborate.

A risk of conflict management procedures is that they may allow a powerful stakeholder to capture the process and use it to coerce the other stakeholders to accept its position, under the guise of a democratic-looking procedure. This can only be prevented by creating conditions that are favourable to fair settlement as a precondition of the conflict management process. In particular, it is essential that stakeholders involved in a conflict resolution/consensus building processes:

- agree on the mandate of the group,
- identify issues that are on the table for discussion and those that are not,
- set clear ground rules - especially on the kinds of unilateral action that stakeholders can take away from the table during the process and related to communication and information - and
- set clear decision rules (what happens if the group cannot reach consensus on an issue)⁸¹

To find ways for the disadvantaged people to speak or be represented where this is not permitted by tradition, the Project for Participatory Upland Conservation and Development (PUCD) in Pakistan used photography and slide language to allow women to participate in the identification of solutions and in negotiating common actions to overcome problems related to the conservation of natural resources.

In some cases norms and values which govern the consensus building process are based on customary procedures and mechanisms. In fact, the choice of the method for reaching an agreement should be made according to principles of "use, familiarity, cultural appropriateness and local acceptability". For instance, in Mexican indigenous communities authority structures are built around elders and the cargo system where the *regidor* holds traditional conflict management role⁸².

Customary decision-making and conflict management systems are historically and socially constructed. Customary systems regulating access to territorial resources and managing conflicts reflect, in a historical perspective, the multiple and dynamic relations existing between the actors living in an area and the territorial resources and within territories and social groups.

Another example in Masai territories, where other users (other ethnic groups, including agriculturists and hunter-gatherers) are allowed to live and use resources in the area "which is beneficial for the exchange of goods and services between social groups and livelihood systems, but this is also a potential source of conflict in times of scarcity. (...) The many and complex exchanges of cattle taking place provide not only for a rich genetic diversity of cattle in each herd, but serve also as a social strategy to deal with hardship"⁸³. Such tenure arrangements are highly relevant as they are flexible approaches mankind has invented to solve complex problems as the ones related to multiple access to natural resources. They are part of the management system which regulates social relations and ecological strategies.

The fact that - in processes tailored according to local customary procedures - the actors concerned can better control the meetings and anticipate their outcomes, it is likely to positively affect their willingness and ability to participate. However, in traditional meetings local inequities might enter the picture and be more difficult to counterbalance.

Sometimes the predefined rules might not be sufficient to guide the decision-making process. During this process the third party might instead find support in symbolism with subjective,

⁸¹ Adapted from: Rijsberman, ND in FAO (2002)

⁸² For more details about the Mexican cargo system see <http://www.prodiversitas.bioetica.org/nota26.htm>

⁸³ Case study no. 12. Globally important ingenious agricultural heritage systems (AGLL), FAO Rome, 2002
<http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y4586E/y4586e13.htm>

emotional, cultural dimensions which may still facilitate a consensual identification of solutions and the joint formulation of an agreement.

Outputs of the process: the Social Territorial Agreement

As underlined several times in this document, the outcomes of the decision making process might be manifold. When we refer to the idea of a Social Territorial Agreement is not the contractual outcome we want to stress about, but the fact that the decision taken by the actors together is socially legitimized thus is an open door for the process to be reactivated on new and broader issues. That is why when supporting the dialogue process the centre of the attention is not on the extent the decision taken by the actors directly addresses the deep rooted social fractures, but on the finding of a common ground for an agreement among the actors and the trust building during the process. This can form the basis for a renewed and constructive dialogue on territorial development issues. Briefly reviewing the various outcomes of the PNTD process, these include the following:

- Firstly, the actors might agree on joint activities, a development plan or strategy, or they might decide on new rules to manage their territory as a whole or aspects of it, e.g. its water resources.
- Secondly, the process results in an increased social cohesion; it has strengthened the bargaining power especially of disadvantaged or marginalized actors, and thus leads to a reduction of their vulnerability.
- Thirdly, the process generates institutional outputs as it clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the actors, clarifies or establishes new rules of the game, and strengthens local institutions and organizations.

On the other hand, the PNTD process might not have been successful in setting off any negotiation process because no common ground could be found as a base for dialogue among the actors or because key actors could not be part of the process given weak capacities or lack of legitimization. The need to coordinate the various components of the process might force the facilitating team to slow down some of the activities while concentrating the effort on others. In the case of Angola, for example, this meant that at the discussions occurring at national level for the approval of the land law were continuously nurtured but the legislative process was “slowed down”, while increasing the work at community level and the efforts to inform and capacitate CSOs to participate in the dialogue. One of the key questions the PNTD approach faces is how to make sure that the awareness raising and capacity building activities bear the expected fruits in good timing with the opening of the dialogue among the actors and on key development issues.

Furthermore, it might be the case that even though the actors have entered dialogue, an agreement among them on the specific issues at stake could not be reached at that present point in time. In all of the above cases, the standstill of the process might depend on contingent as well as structural problems. Yet, if the actors are able to maintain the direction of the process towards their commonly agreed objective these obstacles might slow down the process but should be eventually overcome.

While keeping all the above said in mind the Social Territorial Agreement can result, among other things, in a conflict resolution, a territorial development plan, the delimitation of territorial boundaries taking into account customary rights, a new land tenure law. In addition, it can result in strengthened and reformed rural institutions with the creation of local organizations and local funds for income generating activities.

The agreement reached as a result of the negotiation process should define all the prerequisites (e.g. human, physical, social, and financial resources), the instruments and the roles and responsibilities required for the implementation of a Social Territorial Agreement.

Adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be put in place to guarantee the actor's ownership on the projects and the sustainability of the negotiated territorial development process.

The agreement should establish mechanisms to maximize the use of local resources (human, natural, financial, social, and physical) before mobilizing external resources

Assessment of the needs to implement the agreement (time, financial, human, social)

The proposals formulated by the actors for the negotiation outlined the needed financial and human resources for their implementation and requests for external assistance. Once an agreement is found on the kind of activity or projects to carry on, the discussion between the actors moves on to cover all the aspects of the implementation phase: this includes a verification of the requirements, the resources but also the technical capacities (fund management, community banks, etc...) the actors need for carrying out all the components of the plan. This assessment is followed by the identification of the source of needed resources and technical assistance and by a clear definition of the roles (revenues, responsibilities, rights, relations) of each of the actors. All these aspects will form part of the final agreement.

When conjugating different forms of organization (new introduced forms of association and based on local institutions), the conformity of the agreement to the local leadership and social codes of reference, allow to better integrate the different systems.

In the community Based Regional Development Program in Yemen, the process of change from individual to institutional-based leadership was, in most of the cases, pretty smooth and without harming the already existing social setting. Thus, the assessment's hypothesis of having negative competitive relationship between the Community Development Organisations' Executive Boards on one hand and the traditional leader, local politicians and social codes of reference, on the other hand, did not show evidence and proved to be invalid. This can be attributed to the following factors:

- Tribal leaders and social codes of reference were the entry point of the program in the local communities. This maintained the honourable socio-cultural position of those leaders, proved the program's goodwill and won the leaders confidence and support,
- Tribal leaders are represented in the Executive Boards in about 45% of the Community Development Organisations;
- According to the tied extended-family relations, tribal leaders considered EBs' members as their sons to whom they owe encouragement, support and transfer of experiences, and credit delivery where tribal leaders act as collaterals for credit recipients. Tribal leaders also provide EB's members ongoing advisory support on certain issues.

As already detailed in [Phase 2](#), in implementing the agreement local actors as well as government administrations need to develop organizational capacity and technical and entrepreneurial skills (financial planning management). The building or strengthening of technical capacities of all the actors in development is a necessary precondition to make sure that decentralization does not give rise to diminishing support services, and that, in view of the growing responsibilities of local administrations, decentralized functions can be carried out.

At the same time, decentralization and disengagement of the state, determine the redefinition of the roles of higher government levels. For example in Morocco, the technical support role government

officials had previously been substituted by a guidance and leading role. Activities to accustom them to their new duties included mainly awareness raising and sensitization activities by which a learning-by-doing approach. The aim was to sensitize them on the consequences of change processes and to the need to adopt more participatory approaches in planning and strategic decision-making.

Mobilization of external resources (resource, provider)

At all stage of the formulation and enactment of the agreement the actors should look for and develop adequate instruments and mechanisms to maximize the use of local resources. This means that local resources, practices, capacities should have been identified and valorised before attempts are made towards the mobilization of external resources.

When external resources need to be tapped, the identification of the resources needed and the potential provider should be done with an eye to encouraging forms of collaboration within the international community (donors, agencies, international NGOs, ...) and promote synergies.

The implementation of the agreement should be flexible and open to redirect programming and action in order to take advantage of new opportunities arising and of the lessons learnt. The precondition for this ability to adjust the direction of the implementation process is a monitoring system that focuses as much on outputs as on process indicators.

In many cases traditional project set-up does not allow to finance additional activities not foreseen by the project document. This limitation does not consent traditional projects for instance to:

- learn from each other,
- analyze the indirect and the intangible impact they had,
- establish links with higher (or lower) government levels than the one they are embedded in.

The way the work was conducted in traditional projects did not allow the project personnel to look beyond the defined project outputs, as they are often over-ambitious. In addition success of project management is often only measured by their visible results rather than the process outcomes.

In addition to maximizing the use of local resources and mobilizing additional ones, supplementary resources might be made available through the creation and management of credit funds for income generating activities.

Finally, appropriate actions must be set up both in terms of capacity building and definition of adequate rules, for levelling the asymmetries in the organizational capacities of the various actors so that the better organized ones do not gain control over the actions agreed upon by the groups for implementing the agreement.

The RED-IFO model⁸⁴ points the attention to the risk of local elites taking over the process. This risk is more likely where the typical form of resource allocation in centralized policy nourishes clients of the state who are in turn in a perfect position to exert control over development activities. These elites are the most capable of clearly communicating their needs in terms of projects and programs, and have a level of organization enabling them to put pressure on the state to obtain the lion's share of public expenditure set aside for rural development. Clientelism gives rise to attempts at capturing institutional income and de facto solidarity between central governments and large producers, who being the sole interlocutors of the state, are the only beneficiaries of its interventions. This asymmetry in levels of organization in rural populations can translate into the

⁸⁴ Bonnal (1997)

capture of functions and resources transferred under decentralization, by local elite, municipalities, and the most organized and richest organizations.

The boxes at the end of this section illustrate several cases in which platforms of negotiation were established, creating opportunity of vertical and horizontal dialogue ([Box: Brazil: Pacto Novo Cariri, Paraíba](#)) and for concerted formulation and implementation of the socially legitimized agreements ([Box: Negotiation tables in the PROMACIZO project: arenas for dialogue, concerted formulation of projects and their implementation](#)). Examples are also provided about the San Carlo sub-watershed (Bolivia) agreement over the management of territorial resources. The [Box Bolivia: San Carlo sub-watershed, definition of short and medium term planning and management proposals](#), illustrates an example of agreements for the management of territorial resources. Timeframe, resources and responsibilities and the scope of social territorial pacts in Italy are described below ([Box: Case Study: Illustration of the scope of social territorial pacts in Italy](#)).

[Box: Brazil: Pacto Novo Cariri, Paraíba](#)

The Cariri region is located in the Brazilian state of Paraíba in the northeast of the country. The development of a Development Plan in this area is an MDA-INCRA initiative and was approved in 2001 by the Provincial Rural Development Council and by 14 mayors of the Cariri region. The work was carried out by a technical team of regional specialists from different local institutions: INCRA, IBAMA, SEPLAN, SICTCT, EMPASA, EMATER and FETAG and also with the active participation of local social actors (municipal administrations, union representatives, associations, rural producers, etc)

Cariri is one of the most disadvantaged areas of Paraíba province and the plan's main objective is to provide subsidies for public policy elaboration. To achieve this territorial approach was chosen. In the planning stage, the adopted strategy was to identify 4 municipalities (Cabaceiras, Coxixola, Camalaú e São Sebastião do Umbuzeiro) in which participatory diagnostics were carried out. Through this diagnostics it was intended to formulate an initial regional vision and to mobilize social actors and build the capacities of the technical team. After that, a participatory rural appraisal was carried out in the other municipalities in order to improve the overall regional vision. At the same time, municipal planning groups were established to work based on the results of these different diagnostics with the aim of creating the basis for regional planning.

Subsequent to this first intervention and under general supervision of SEBRAE a New Cariri Pact was elaborated with the following objectives:

- Strengthen local production activities that promote income and occupation;
- Organise different production segments in associative structures;
- Capacitate local entrepreneurs with managerial and technical skills;
- Disseminate and implement production techniques and organisation of work in accordance with climatic conditions (semi arid) and the organization of producers;
- Evaluate, strengthen and support the efficiency of traditional production chains, especially those that have potentialities and represent opportunities;
- Modernize the management of municipal public services and reinforce their presence as local development agents;
- Accomplish evaluations and monitor actions oriented to preservation, conservation and environmental management;
- Promote cultural, handcraft, tourist and educational activities within the region, mainly education and commercial culture.

Source: Interview with Paolo Groppo, SDAA officer.

Box Bolivia: San Carlo sub-watershed, definition of short and medium term planning and management proposals

Through the implementation of a diagnostic of the territory and the actors, the Searpi/FAO Project proceeded to the formulation of a set of preliminary hypotheses of territorial development plan for San Carlos sub-watershed in the Santa Cruz Department (Bolivia). These hypotheses were examined at the negotiation table. They included three main medium term planning issues:

- 1) Measures of prevention and management of the hydro-geological risks, through the maps of conflicts in which the territory was divided into four areas according to the level of risk: (i) *forested areas to be preserved under a regime of ecological services*; (ii) *areas affected by unsustainable uses that require interventions of conservation (mainly related to agriculture and livestock production)*; (iii) *areas used in a sustainable way*; (iv) *reserves*.
- 2) Support to conservative agricultural and livestock activities in areas of inadequate land uses, mainly agro-forestry interventions such as: transformation of deforested lands planted with annual crops into improved *fruit tree orchards* (through the planting of suitable varieties and the use of improved techniques of cultivation and land management), and planting of wood trees and fodder in grazing land for the attainment of improved forages through agro-forestry. Thus, the introduction in the area of *conservative agricultural and livestock production systems*, as recommended by the technicians, depends on necessary investments in: *basic infrastructures* (for example, the installation of a three phase electric power transmission system to have refrigerators work); in *extension and technical assistance services* (needed to help producers gain the necessary technical and organizational knowledge to adopt new production and marketing techniques); and in the creation of a micro-credit system for the provision of a small amount of credit for micro-enterprise (essential for families with an average or low income to make the necessary investments to participate in the change process).
- 3) Diversification of livelihood strategies or source of income through the strengthening of already existing activities in the area (e.g. medium scale poultry production, silkworm production), or opening new opportunities (e.g. apiculture, forest nursery, training on mechanics or carpentry). Furthermore, this diversification process would stimulate the local labour market, creating new opportunities for those sectors that do not avail of the necessary resources for starting their own activity (the “humble”). Finally, it was assumed that the increase in the availability of infrastructures, technical assistance and credit, would contribute to limit the out-migration of young people to the periphery of Santa Cruz.

In order to guarantee a continuity of the activities and the social mobilization, a set of short term activities were also identified, whose implementation could start immediately, and for which resources could be easily mobilized through the municipality, the Searpi/FAO Project, the farmers’ organization and the interested farmers.

Box: Negotiation tables in the PROMACIZO project: arenas for dialogue, concerted formulation of projects and their implementation.

Through meetings and workshops organized by the PROMACIZO project with various territorial actors, a joint reconstruction was made of the history of actors' social organizations, of the transformation of the environment, of the changes occurred in the territorial systems and of the conflicts. With the actors involved an assessment was made about their resources, strengths and weaknesses. During the 6 meetings held, where the actors worked together and where ONGs, GOs and Indigenous and farmer organizations' representatives were also present, dialogue was opened around the desired and possible scenarios of territorial development each of the actors put forward. Strategies were designed for the prevention, mitigation and compensation of the social and environmental adverse impacts of the unsustainable production systems in the region (e.g. illicit cultivations, extensive pasture in fallow lands, among others) and agreements were reached about strategies implementation.

During these meetings a continuous exercise of dialogue, consultation and exchange of information took place. The PROMACIZO technical team assisted the work through the provision of cartographic and photographic material and of the results of a diagnostic of the situation in the area of the Macizo and in the articulation of dialogue among community organizations and institutions.

In the same way, an agreement was reached about the following areas for the articulation of dialogue on Actions and Processes:

- Specific strategic areas as target of investments and support;
- Articulation of the dialogue at regional level associated with the management of the territory, the land and the vegetation in order to guarantee water provision and regulate the demand (geographic – biophysical – thematic – operational and inter-institutional coordination);
- Articulation of territorial dialogue around productive chains and local marketing of products obtained through sustainable production systems (thematic and programmatic articulation)
- Articulation of territorial dialogue associated with a concerted environmental zoning (ecological articulation – ecosystems connectivity and continuity);
- Integrated units of management of the environment through socio-environmental processes (operational articulation);
- Self-development as the viewpoint on community participation and objective of the program.

Source:

Documents of the programme on environmental preservation and rehabilitation in the Macizo Colombiano within the Alternative Development framework "Promacizo".

Box: Case Study: Illustration of the scope of social territorial pacts in Italy

Following the formulation of the principle of subsidiarity in the European Charter of Local Autonomy, Europe saw the emergence of several examples of natural, human and financial resources planning and management, produced at grassroots level and agreed upon among the different actors, both public and private, more or less directly interested in the problems of a given territory. In this respect, the territorial charters in France and social territorial pacts in Italy are examples of social partnerships for sustainable local development, taking into account the diversity of the territory, as well as the expectations and visions of the different actors. Promoted by local-level bodies and communities, public actors operating at local level, representatives of contractors, workers and other concerned categories, as well as private individuals, the pact represents a final agreement between the different actors on the territory for the formulation and adoption of development options in a coherent, comprehensive framework, included the programming at higher administrative levels.

The scope of the social territorial pacts, as conceived in Italy, is presented hereunder, for the purpose of gaining an understanding of their purpose, potentials and limits. (The considerations hereunder refer to a case study on the pacts in the autonomous region of Trento in Northwest Italy).

What are the objectives of the social territorial pacts? They are the ideal way of realizing:

1. Decentralized programming

These pacts show that the top-down approach is inadequate for achieving a sustainable territorial planning/management. They allow initiate a campaign in order to sensitise and increase the sense of responsibility and self-esteem of local communities, which were rather used to a culture of requests than of local proposals. In this way, greater cohesion in the community and a joint selection of the interventions on the territory have been promoted, allowing also for the emergence of new classes of local leaders who are more sensitive to local development needs and who formulate demands.

2. Negotiated programming

When the pact is the expression of a local-level partnership it becomes, initially through a process of conflict resolution, confrontation and negotiation, an opportunity to strengthen and/or create 'relational goods' and relationships based on trust. Social cohesion will thus be the final outcome of the creation of alliances between groups of actors and of the process of dialogue.

3. Integrated programming of interventions (socio-economic, environmental, good and service allocation):

The territorial pacts require, together with new normative instruments (e. g. provincial norms have today turned from sectoral laws into inter-sectoral instruments) a new rationale of programming and a systemic approach.

Which are the characteristics of social territorial pacts?

The social territorial pact is a programming tool provided to the existing instances of economic-financial and urban-environmental planning both at regional and national levels. It is therefore not an additional planning tool, but a way of improving and coordinating the functioning of existing norms. Thus, there are no ad hoc procedures or new financial interventions, but a revitalization and improvement of provincial level sectoral programming tools. In this way, the pacts are expected to save time and costs by avoiding lengthy bureaucratic and administrative procedures. This tool of local negotiation allows for the defining of provincial development policies more sensible to territories and their diversity, more capable of attracting and supporting projects by small communities and minor enterprises and of seizing the potential of the territory. All this in order to promote projects and provide support to enterprises in facing market globalisation, while searching for alliances and economic agreements with other regions.

Plurality of public and private entities that collaborate in solving local problems;

The territory is seen as a system that is socially, environmentally and economically integrated;

Feasibility studies are carried out within the pact;

There can be no pact unless all of the concerned parties are involved, at least in a declaration of intent regarding future concrete interventions. Therefore the pact means a "reciprocal commitment", sanctioned by a contract. Participation in development choices and therefore in the negotiation table is thus founded on the recognition of equal dignity of all the parties involved and interested in the territory.

Source: Interview with Architect Letizia Palagonia, Specialized in Local Development Planning, Trento Province, Italy, 2002.

VI. Conclusion

The objective of this document is not to give yet another answer to preconceived problems but to help insert technical assistance related to agricultural production, activities for local income generation or natural resource access and management into a wider framework of development. Hence, it proposes an inclusive methodology that combines technical interventions with a systemic vision of territorial development. It supports bottom-up and participatory decision-making processes and encourages social dialogue and partnerships between the actors within a territory.

Rural development is sustainable when it is ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just, culturally appropriate, humane and based on a proper understanding of the territorial system⁸⁵.

These dimensions of sustainability are setting the frame for any development activity. To be sustainable, development interventions need to address the issue of power asymmetries that are determined by unequal access to and control over resources and information, as well as that of unequal capacities.

Therefore, the purpose of the PNTD approach is to reduce these asymmetries in supporting a process that aims at the creation of socially legitimized agreements by involving all stakeholders and leads to actors' commitment and ownership over the development process.

Rebuilding trust between social actors is a means to and an end of the PNTD process and is achieved by reducing asymmetries between the actors, while leading them to negotiate territorial development activities.

The PNTD approach is the result of a dialogue started in the Land Tenure Service in FAO soon involved the Rural Institutions and Participation Service and is including more and more partners from within and outside FAO. Although many comments and suggestions have been already taken up and have been included in the present document, there are many areas relevant to the approach that is less touched upon. There is considerable expertise in FAO that could not be included so far on, for instance, communication for development, information systems, the gender dimension of development, conflict management, or land and water management and we believe that lessons from these areas (and others) can surely complement the ideas put forward here and add to them.

We want to emphasize that, in presenting this approach, our objective has been to enable anyone who can make use of the ideas, to adapt them to their needs, e.g. to specific themes or issues, to a regional or local context. We hope that in return you will share your experiences, lessons and conclusions with us and that we can initiate or continue discussions with you aiming to adapt and complement the PNTD approach in view of our different expertise.

In concluding this document, the following pages will revisit some of the more important points developed in detail in the previous chapters. Secondly, we will give another look at the requirements and challenges to be taken into account when operationalizing and implementing the approach, and finally we will point out several open questions to be further looked up.

⁸⁵ Adapted from: <http://www.fao.org/wssd/sard>

Revisiting the main points

Socially legitimized development: the Social Territorial Agreement

The Social Territorial Agreement (STA) can entail for instance income generation activities, a scheme for conflict resolution, a territorial development plan or a plan for natural resource use and management and is formulated jointly by various communities and private actors. Depending on the scale and level of the negotiation it can also lead to the formulation of a new law or an annex to an existing regulation about indigenous rights, recognition of customary tenure, environmental protection, land access, and so forth or in strengthened and reformed rural institutions (e. g. local organizations, local funds for income generating activities).

The issues at stake are managed through joint decision-making and the outcome of this process is therefore legitimated by the actors involved. However, it has to be clear that the process does not necessarily result in a formal agreement, and that consensus might only be reached among few actors. To be more precise, the negotiation process aims to support the actors in acquiring the knowledge and building the mechanisms needed to take joint decisions. Still, concrete activities to make an economic and financial difference in the livelihoods of the people are essential to create commitment to the process and ensure the sustainability of the achieved agreement and the decision-making process.

Renewing social ties and creating trust among the actors

The process aims at renewing social ties and rebuilding trust between the actors interacting in a specific territory as between government and the population. The various activities regarding capacity building described in Phase 2 of the process are essential to help actors strengthen their bargaining power and thus to reduce power asymmetries between them.

It was shown how these efforts, as part of a transparent and accountable process, can lead to increased social cohesion among all actors and thus reduce vulnerabilities of the disadvantaged and marginalized actors.

Trust between the adversaries is needed to open a negotiation process and becomes even more fundamental if the PNTD process is to stimulate a sustainable development process in a territory. This is so, because trust reduces the risk for investment and the costs of implementation control as actors are more likely to comply with a consensual agreement⁸⁶.

In addition to strengthened bargaining power, actors also need to be confident in their own rights and capabilities so that they do voice their needs and interests. Still, the level to which their voices can influence the decision-making processes also depends on the institutional environment that does (or does not) regulate whether these voices have to be taken into account.

Institutional environment conducive to bottom-up initiatives

Even in the absence of a final Social Territorial Agreement that involves all the actors, the process might have resulted in clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the single actors and there might be new rules of the game emerging. Also, the capacity building activities should have improved the performance of local organizations and strengthened local vis-à-vis higher level institutions.

Moreover, the process should have improved the capacities of the governance system to stimulate horizontal and vertical dialogue and developed or strengthened the institutional mechanisms needed therefore. Such processes and mechanisms enable government, private sector and civil society actors to work together over time to make policy changes and take action to promote bottom-up decision making processes.

Institutions can help formalize mutual expectation of cooperative behaviour, allow the exercise of sanctions for non-cooperation and thereby reduce costs of individual transactions. Social institutions

⁸⁶ This discussion has been summarized by Deininger, Feder, Gordillo de Anda, Munro-Faure (2003) for the issue of land tenure rights.

can be seen as clever solutions to the problems of trust and malfeasance in economic life as they can make cheating and free-riding too costly to engage in.

Systems theory

It is important to stress the contribution of systems theory to this approach. Analysing a territorial system means searching for coherence in the arrangement of and the relations between its elements. Applying a historical perspective to analysing a territory allows uncovering actions, strategies and trends that are not coherent with the evolution of the territorial system and thus help to understand whether the actions taken to realize actors' interests produce sustainable results.

Working on the challenges of rural development in an integrated and systemic manner means overcoming the goal oriented focus of classical interventions. It is also about linking local analysis processes (and their outputs, for instance the social territorial agreement) with higher level decision-making bodies in order to ensure the participation of all actors in the process, the effectiveness and sustainability of regional development initiatives and the strengthening of social dialogue.

The PNTD facilitator

A key element of the PNTD approach under discussion is the role of "facilitator" played by any external supporter who has a technical as well as a facilitating role. They should develop analytical skills and proper action-research attitudes in order to carry out a local analysis of critical issues to build a comprehensive understanding of problems, their relevance and impact as well as future risks connected to them. It is their task to open the discussion, support the organization of participation of social actors within and beyond the territory, and create linkages between the local community and other relevant key players in the area. Finally, the facilitators promote dialogue, partnership and concerted action, and support the different institutional levels for the implementation of the negotiated agreements.

Requirements for implementation

The major innovation of this approach to rural development is the focus on stimulating and supporting dialogue within a territory. Social dialogue, whether in the form of a conflict resolution or an agreement on territorial development projects, is essential to reconstruct the social fabric of a territory, to establish synergies within the territorial system and to recognize all the actors as promoters of territorial development, integrating the diversity of their strategies.

The main challenge is to stimulate a learning process supporting rural actors to find sustainable solutions to territorial development issues. It will then not be an easy task to ensure that they attain the capacities and the means to influence the political and institutional regulatory framework and thus, move towards good local governance.

Time and resources

An approach which wants to work in a multi-sector, multi-level and systemic way has clear limitations when it comes to pre-defining tangible outputs. Taking into account the inherent complexity of development processes rather means to aim for the intangible outcomes of dialogue and social change, and to stimulate them. The challenge of applying this approach in a project context, determining an appropriate timeframe and needed human and financial resources, implies to define qualitative indicators for the evaluation of interventions that show clear progress attributable to the PNTD process.

Capacitating the actors to negotiate

Facilitating a process that allows actors to negotiate with each other does not only require the transfer of skills and knowledge and the creation of a conducive environment. It also requires the establishment of a level playing field and thus the consideration of power relations. The PNTD approach can result in a change in the power balance giving weaker actors more possibilities to voice their needs and be heard.

Finding common ground

As an outcome of the diagnostics, and of the parallel efforts in reducing the asymmetries in actors' negotiation capacities, a common ground will be identified from where the negotiation can start. The multiplicity and diversity of actors' interests are at the basis of any possibility of finding a common ground for dialogue among the actors. This common ground can be found in areas where the actors hold basic interests and often only after looking at an issue from many different angles.

Institutional requirements

To guarantee the integration of territorial processes in the wider governance context, and as a precondition for joint planning, decision-making, management etc. at local levels, there is the need to build a favourable environment for bottom-up development initiatives. Social change and change in power relations cannot be achieved over night and are ongoing processes that can only be partly influenced and guided. Nonetheless, the PNTD process aims to and can play a catalytic role in influencing this conducive environment, elements of which include:

- a political system in which political, social, economic and cultural rights are widely respected and elections are competitive,
- a decentralized governance structure where resources and competencies are distributed according to subsidiary principle and local decision-makers have power over resources, yet guaranteeing accountability in financial and political terms;
- the definition of legitimate rules recognizing human rights and the means to defend them
- formal and informal rules that guarantee the transparent access to the information and knowledge needed to manage development processes;
- the recognition of civil society organizations and/ or social movements representing the interests of actors as partners in development theory and efforts;
- the existence of a "rights consciousness" and a minimal level of legal literacy;
- cultural and traditional norms are open to allow for the social inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalized actors;

Institutionalizing dialogue

Institutionalization is the process by which institutions and procedures "acquire value and stability". Theoretical and empirical analysis shows that whether institutional design and transfer of values and norms result in an ameliorative transformation of conflict depends not so much on establishing effective problem-solving mechanisms and arenas for bargaining but on setting up processes which are open, flexible and path-dependent in their evolution.

Formalizing the mechanisms for dialogue and negotiation undoubtedly can have its advantages. As already mentioned, reiterating the process will be less costly. The established rules can be left quite flexible to suit other issues and such a mechanism could eventually make way for dominance of democratic principles in territorial local decision-making.

Also, in some cases a formal recognition might provide the power to act as it attributes rights to local people, but also clarifies their roles and responsibilities with regards to local resource use and management.

The formalization of collective action, it is suggested in many participatory models, will clarify and make transparent local arrangements. Although recognizing the evolutionary character of institutions these models tend to blend out the historical and social context thus ignoring the complexity of institutional development, the change of importance and influence according to the circumstances, potential ad hoc use of different institutional arrangements as appropriate and not necessarily conform with the formal rules. An organizational model of participation (i.e. one based on formal institutions) ignores the fact that many interactions between people also take place outside formal organizations, that the interactions of daily life may be more important in shaping cooperation than public negotiations.

Institutionalizing the dialogue very often means bureaucratizing it. A flexible platform for dialogue has several advantages: It can be more easily adapted to a changing environment; it remains more inclusive to newcomers; and there is less danger of giving the label of inclusiveness to something that is not. Especially those informal arrangements grown historically have the advantages of being widely accepted and respected, and they provide a flexibility that formal organizations do not allow for. Instead, formalizing entails the risk of a homogenization of decision making procedures with corresponding loss of flexibility. The formal legal framework might not be flexible enough to allow enough space for norms and institutions not conform to this framework.

Socially embedded institutions are not necessarily 'better' than formalized ones, as they may uphold and reproduce locally specific configurations of inequity and exclusion. However, the mere setting up of formal institutions and the specification of their membership does not necessarily overcome exclusion, subordination or vulnerability⁸⁷.

Appropriation of the transferred knowledge and skills

Appropriation of the platform for dialogue and negotiation has occurred when actors can replicate the process, adapt it to a changing environment, apply it to different issues and find creative solutions to the problems encountered on the way.

To organize, be innovative, and create decentred autonomous space is not enough for the actors to appropriate themselves of the process – it must also make a material difference in livelihoods⁸⁸.

Among the incentives to stimulating the participation of actors is undoubtedly the capacity of the external support to provide the actors with capacities or knowledge that will make a material difference for them (i.e. increase in the available resources, and thus increase in monetary and in kind livelihood income). But stimulating or even obtaining the commitment of actors to negotiate and implement a consensus is only part of the picture. Because participating is very costly, people need a motivation, a "problem" they perceive important enough to get involved and participate, and finally own the process.

Questions that can help determining whether or not a project or programme is successful in changing the way things are done include:

- Does a shared, coherent vision emerge within the groups of actors?
- How confident and committed are the actors to overcome obstacles and hurdles, and to what extent do they try to overcome them?
- Do the recognised and representative leaders take the process in their own hands?
- What is the right fit between the size, scope, and structure of the platform for dialogue, so that territorial actors can still manage activities at different scale and levels and understand the impact of macro processes on their decision-making processes?
- Is the external support creating dependencies in terms of capacities, leadership, and financial resources?

⁸⁷ Adapted from Cleaver (2001)

⁸⁸ Adapted from Peets, Watts, eds. (2004)

- Does the process weaken the state or other functioning institutions and decision-making mechanisms or rather build on them?

Open questions

This document has tried to look at a broad range of issues fundamental to influencing social change in a territory yet not wanting to impose outside agendas and ideas.

It was outlined that the approach cannot be limited to one project if one wants to take it to the end, still there is need to use projects and programmes to make participatory and negotiated territorial development happen.

When translated into a project context, monitoring and evaluation indicators are needed. The team did not have the time to look into this important question in detail, but wants to give a brief overview why these indicators are needed:

- To improve project planning and management;
- To adapt the process leading it towards the specific objectives of the project or programme;
- To strengthen organizations and promote institutional learning;
- To give feedback to the involved actors;
- As an important dimension of accountability for any donor agency;
- To inform policy, i.e. the impact of projects and programmes on policies and the policy context⁸⁹.

Indicators that could be used to measure progress and success include:

- Changed attitudes, communication, relationships;
- Changes in people's behaviour;
- Participant satisfaction and demand for more related activities, i.e. seeking further involvement in the process;
- New or changed formal and informal agreements, covenants or declarations;
- Institutionalization i.e. creation of new institutions, or perhaps a more useful indicator would be the creation of effective institutions;
- Increased local capacity for planning, leadership, and decision-making (but even when such local capacities are utilized – what contribution is made to the overall policy context?)

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