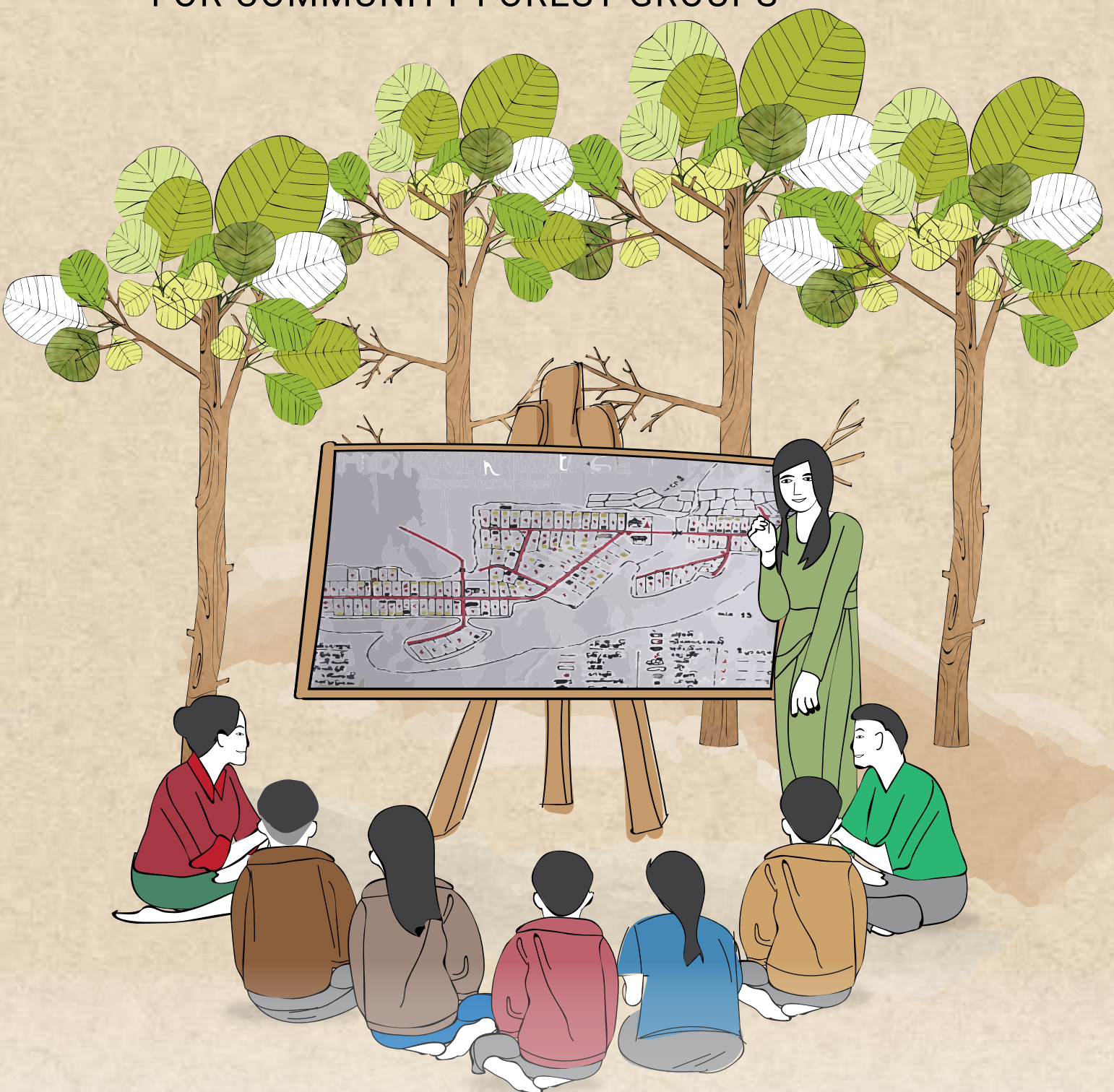


CITIZEN'S MONITORING IN FORESTRY-TOOLBOX

PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR COMMUNITY FOREST GROUPS



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



THE CENTER FOR
PEOPLE AND FORESTS

CITIZEN'S MONITORING IN FORESTRY - TOOLBOX: PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR COMMUNITY FOREST GROUPS

Copyright © RECOFTC May 2018
Bangkok, Thailand

Author: Binod Chapagain, PhD (RECOFTC)

ISBN : 978-616-8089-04-0

Reproduction of this publication for education or other noncommercial purposes is authorized without prior written permission from the copyright holders provided the source is fully acknowledged. Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without written permission of the copyright holder.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of RECOFTC and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Foreword

“Toolbox” is a word that reaches a mass audience through its simplicity; it does not utilize alienating jargon or overuse mundane terminology. For us at RECOFTC—The Center for People and Forests, it is simply a collection of tools that are designed to make an activity easier to implement. In essence, our Center aims to develop tools that are not overly complicated and thus make for an enjoyable professional experience.

The ‘citizen’s monitoring in forestry’ toolbox is a reflection of this principle. The toolbox is designed primarily to assist community forestry groups in the collection of information at the local level and is directed towards supporting those involved in the CF development process. There are ten tools in the toolbox, each directly reflecting participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E). The toolbox starts with the constant observation of both planned and implemented activities and the corresponding results. In addition, perpetual learning is included into the model, which allows for the adjustment of targets and approaches. It is important to note, however, the toolbox’s “participatory” nature. Because it is designed for people to create their own indicators and work plans, the toolbox reflects the local socio-economic context, the community’s priorities, and what they deem to be most relevant. This ultimately encapsulates what RECOFTC is built upon: communities hold the key to healthy forests through their innovative solutions in sustainable forest management. Therefore, this PM&E toolbox is meant to be firm in its purpose, but malleable in its implementation.

We at the Center sincerely hope that this toolbox can and will be used by local communities to sustainably manage their forests, monitor and evaluate relevant changes in livelihoods and resources, and generate lessons that can be used for future adjustments in community forest management. Furthermore, with the use of these tools to manage information, it is expected that many stakeholders – specifically governments, researchers, funders and supporters – will benefit through the open exchange of information generated by the local people involved in CF and natural resource management. With that in mind, the Center is proud to present this toolbox for the betterment of community forestry practices in the Asia-Pacific region.



David Ganz, PhD
Executive Director
RECOFTC—The Center for People and Forests

Acknowledgements

Thanks go first and foremost to the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) for providing funding assistance to RECOFTC—The Center for People and Forests. The funding from SDC has been instrumental to pilot, modify and develop various participatory tools for this toolbox. The tools are expected to be influential in encouraging the participation of local people in forestry processes and supporting them to practice ‘Citizen’s monitoring in forestry’.

The author would like to express sincere thanks to community forest (CF) groups in Cambodia and Myanmar. Without their support and willingness, the participatory toolbox development process would not have been possible. The local CF members who took time from their busy schedules to participate in trainings, pilot tools, contribute lessons learned, and share their insights added significant value crucial to the development of this toolbox.

The author is grateful to RECOFTC’s Country Directors Kalyan Hou and Maung Maung Than who played important roles facilitating the development process in Cambodia and Myanmar. Appreciation is extended to RECOFTC colleagues Tol Sokchea, Aung Kyaw Naing, Dy Vutheara and Khin Moe Kyi, who provided their unconditional support throughout the project. Local consultants Khin Thiri Htun and Tep Thavrin deserve special thanks for their hard work with the CF groups. The author was fortunate to go into field sites accompanied by RECOFTC’s Program Officers and local consultants, and their support in the training and piloting of the tools, organizing reflection workshops, and assisting with the writing and finalizing of the toolbox are much appreciated and acknowledged. The field piloting provided important opportunities to meet with rural stakeholders.

Finally, the author would like to acknowledge the support provided by the team members at RECOFTC, specifically David Ganz, Chandra Shekhar Silori, Julian Atkinson, and Monica S. Cheng. Furthermore, sincere appreciation goes to Sulma Warne for his professional copy-editing and to Rawaida Arbedeen and Rattep Autra for their support in publication design. Without their generous reviews and support, the development of the toolbox would not have been possible.

'Toolbox' Content

Introduction	4
Objectives of the toolbox	4
Monitoring and evaluation framework: livelihoods plus	4
Users of the toolbox	6
Tools	7
Baseline and progress monitoring tools	
Participatory resources mapping	9
Participatory social mapping	13
Participatory wellbeing ranking	19
Planning tools	
Participatory visioning	25
Long-term target-based planning	29
Progress monitoring tools	
Annual target-based planning and output monitoring	33
Activity monitoring timeline	39
Budget and expenditure tracking	43
Individual income accounts keeping	47
Self-assessment and reporting	51

Introduction

RECOFTC-The Center for People and Forests is committed to developing a participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) system that helps local people to plan and reflect upon their achievements and gaps. Conventionally, monitoring and evaluation has involved outside experts coming into communities to measure performance with preset indicators and standardized procedures. The PM&E differs from these traditional approaches in that it seeks to actively engage key actors in setting objectives and indicators, and assessing outcomes. This approach, known as 'Citizen's Monitoring', is designed to provide more targeted and appropriate benefits to local communities.

Furthermore, PM&E links the knowledge platforms – as well as broader development goals – of local, small-scale and indigenous groups with those at national and international level. It gives local communities access to micro and macro-information on changes and trends, as well as available resources. It also acknowledges and legitimizes the importance of local knowledge, and facilitates its integration into larger-scale initiatives.

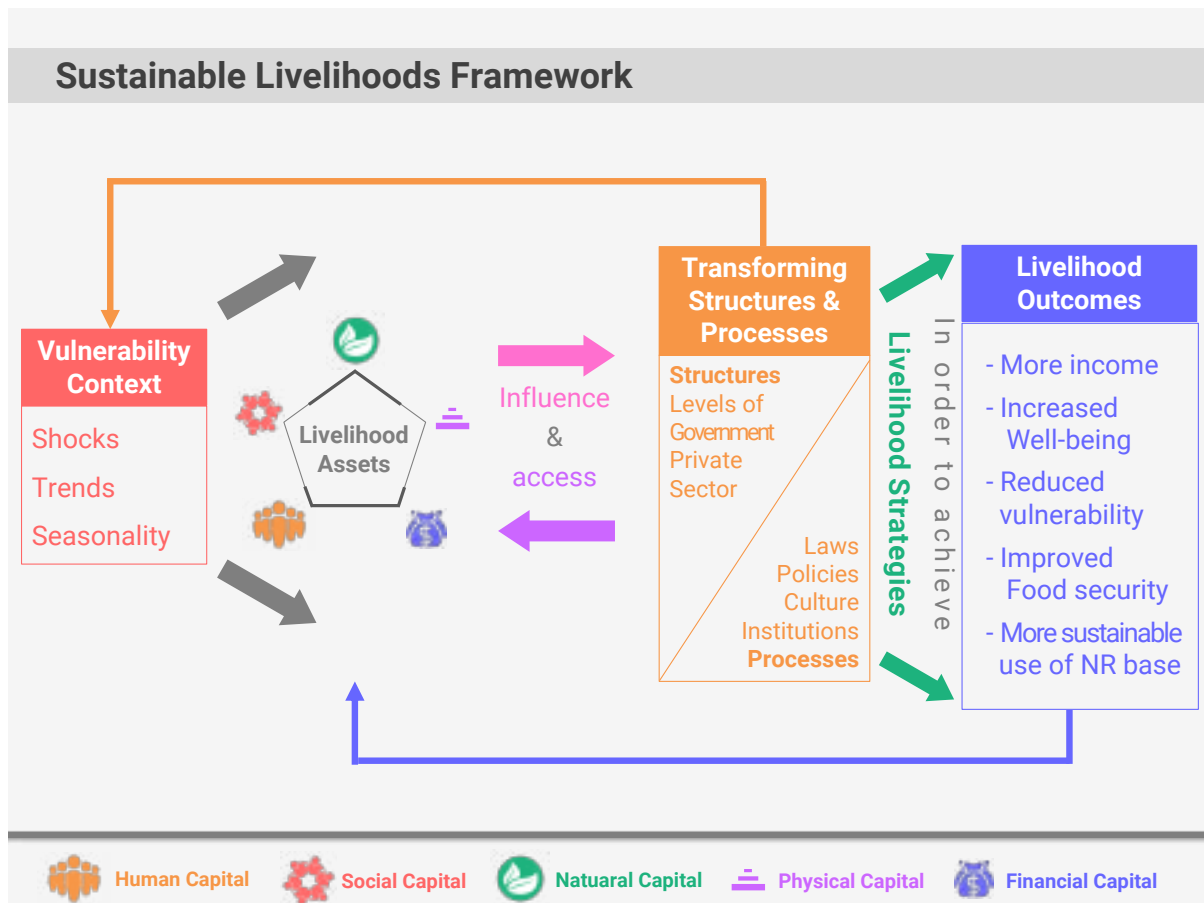
Objectives of the toolbox

This toolbox supports community forest (CF) groups monitor their baseline status, and the progress and outcomes they have achieved. The use of the toolbox depends on the specific needs of CF groups and is therefore designed to be adapted and tailored to the local context. In sum, the toolbox provides a variety of tools for planning, monitoring and reporting that is relevant to the CF group.

Monitoring and evaluation framework: livelihoods plus

This toolbox was developed using the livelihoods monitoring framework (Figure 1) due to its capacity in capturing CF group outcomes in a holistic manner. The information is categorized according to five livelihood capitals: natural, financial, physical, human and social. As PM&E is an evolving process, individual CF groups are encouraged to contextualize the tools, indicators and subsequent checklists based on their needs. This in turn helps build and refine existing CF management plans.

Figure 1: Livelihoods framework



Source: DFID, 2000¹

Within the framework of sustainable livelihoods, the way assets are conceptualized brings about a different view on the notion of prosperity. Sustainable livelihoods are no longer measured on just income alone, but a combination of multiple capitals defined by the community group themselves. This helps communities shape more positive livelihood outcomes based on the context of their own vulnerabilities and the steps they take to address them. The broader benefits of a CF include higher income levels, increased wellbeing, reduced vulnerability, and greater food security. On-going monitoring and systematic documentation of progress are important components to achieving desired outcomes. This framework is therefore designed to help plan and monitor outcomes under the five livelihood capitals or asset groups, which are described as follows:

1 http://www.glopp.ch/B7/en/multimedia/B7_1_pdf2.pdf

Human capital: human capacity which includes experience, skills, knowledge, the ability to work and good health.

Social capital: social resources such as establishing and building relationships with individuals, social groups and organizations. This social network is created both horizontally and vertically. Strong social capital where a person or community is well connected to a broad range of groups and individuals can be an effective means of achieving an outcome. Sometimes social capital alone can be powerful enough in bringing about a desired change.

Natural capital: access to a healthy base of natural resources including forest, air, water and land, which people can draw on to support sustainable livelihoods.

Physical capital: basic infrastructure required to manage forest resources in the context of a CF such as roads, fire lines, fences, transport and communication systems, shelter, water and sanitation systems, and energy.

Financial capital: individual income, savings, access to financial services, and regular inflows of money.

The greater the access CF group members have to these assets, the less vulnerable they are expected to be. It also helps mitigate the negative impacts of events such as natural disasters or seasonal adversities such as drought and fire. Moreover, the increase in one capital asset may lead to the increase in another. It is also important to recognize that a CF itself can be considered a form of social capital as it is designed to help local people achieve improved livelihood options.

In addition to these five livelihood capitals, this framework includes institutional development as an additional element to monitor the changes in a CF as an organization². A strong and well-managed CF is more likely to achieve effective outcomes. Institutional development involves the on-going monitoring and analysis of a CF's governance structure, bylaws, operational structure, decision making process and overall capacity to ensure that it is achieving its objectives and adapting to the needs of the community.

Users of the toolbox

Local CF management committees (CFMCs) are the primary users of this toolbox. The CF user groups will be able to plan, record, monitor, and manage information at the local level in order to reflect upon and improve CF practices and benefit sharing. Each CF entity has the liberty to use tools that best suit their needs for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation purposes. In CF, the CFMC is responsible for using the tools and sharing outputs with group members and other stakeholders such as relevant government authorities.

CFMCs are advised to follow the steps below when using a tool or set of tools from the toolbox.

- Preliminary step: Share processes and tools with forestry officials in advance, invite them to join the participatory monitoring and evaluation exercise, and observe the CF process as appropriate
- Step 1: Collect, record and analyze information as a team and discuss and reach consensus on the results and findings

² This includes institutional aspect of CF in addition to livelihoods capital. Therefore, the framework is named 'livelihoods plus'.

- Step 2: Present the draft results and findings to CF group members and integrate their feedback into the final product
- Step 3: Share the information with key stakeholders external to the CF, including forestry officials, local government agencies, NGOs and others as appropriate
- Step 4: Store all products developed through Step 1 and 2, safely; use information to develop a learning based livelihoods development plan
- Step 5: Review the findings regularly and keep track of changes on resources, people and institution, using the framework provided

Tools

The tools are broadly divided into three groups - baseline, planning and progress monitoring. However, select baseline tools – when used at regular intervals – can simultaneously support progress monitoring by providing data against which trends and changes can be tracked. Resources mapping, social mapping, and wellbeing ranking (Tools 1, 2 and 3), for example, serve this purpose and can be used for both baseline and progress monitoring.

A. Baseline tools

1. Resource mapping
2. Social mapping
3. Wellbeing ranking

B. Planning tools

4. Participatory Visioning
5. Long-term target-based planning

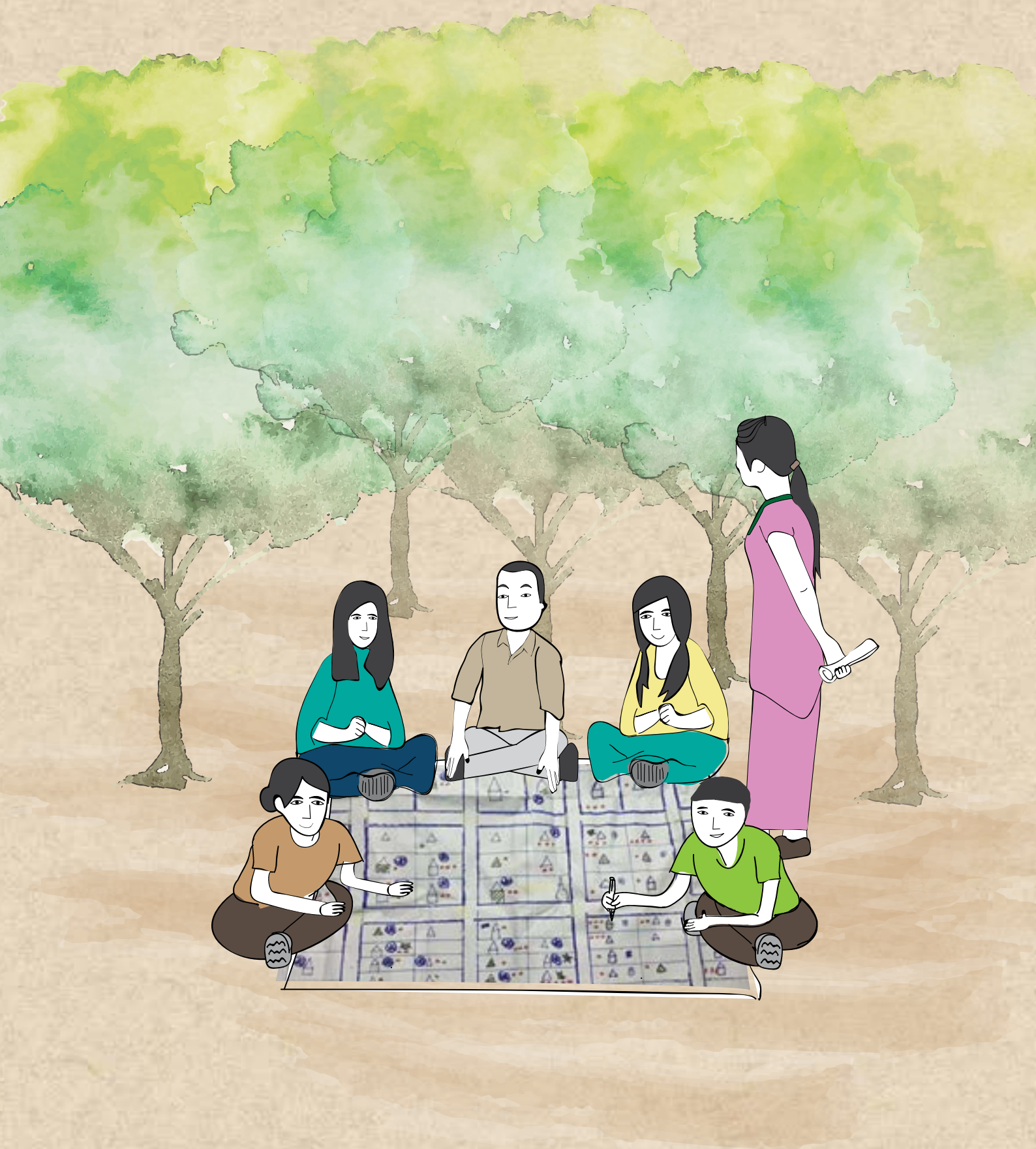
C. Progress monitoring tools

6. Annual target-output monitoring
7. Activity monitoring
8. Budget and expenditure tracking
9. Individual income account keeping
10. Self-assessment and reporting

Note: Although a forest inventory is often classified as a baseline and progress monitoring tool, the toolbox does not provide details on this tool as CF groups are expected to follow local government guidelines when undertaking forest inventories. However, information generated from the forest inventory is expected to feed into the CF self-assessment (Tool 10).

BASELINE AND PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 1: PARTICIPATORY RESOURCE MAPPING



Introduction

This is a participatory tool that visualizes the community forest and the resources (timber, non-timber forest resources, water, land and any other natural and physical resource) available in the area. The tool is designed to be applied by the community forest management committee (CFMC) together with community forest (CF) members, including men and women from a village. The resource map helps identify the resource baseline in a community forest area. The primary objective is not to develop an accurate map, but rather to get useful information about local perceptions of the available resources. The participants should populate the map according to what is important to them.

The participatory resource mapping tool should be created on a large flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper), and displayed where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

- To develop a participatory map highlighting the key resources available in the CF area
- To understand the baseline situation of the CF area, in particular the available timber and non-timber forest resources and other livelihoods capitals
- To understand how resources have changed in the CF area (if the tool is applied to visualize change)

Step-by-step guide

1. Prepare big vinyl flip charts, different colored pens, tapes, colored paper, etc.
2. Prepare draft agenda
3. Invite a group of social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss the draft agenda at a venue preferably inside the CF area (total of 5-8 people)
4. Assign a facilitator and note-taker
5. Share objectives of the mapping exercise with participants
6. Explain the process by presenting a sample map (Figure 1)
7. Request participants to develop a "resource map" presenting the status of resources in the CF area
8. Request participants to draw lines for roads, walking trails, fire lines, etc.
9. Request participants to mark other infrastructure on the map (eg buildings, dams, wells, etc.)
10. Include a legend and a north reference on the map
11. Include the date the map was prepared and, when applicable, the names of the participants involved
12. Finalize map and make copies for the villagers and other stakeholders as needed
13. Discuss quantity of resources (if records available) in CF area and take note of them using Table 1

Discussion

Once the map is complete, discuss the questions outlined in Table 1 and note responses on a flip chart. Please write down your own collective findings and add them to the list. It is important to note that this is an indicative list only, and you are encouraged to modify and add items based on your context and the information you need.

Table 1: Information about CF resources

Questions	Status (both quantitative and qualitative)
What are the major species of wildlife, including estimated population sizes?	
What is the total number of trees as defined in the forest management plan (cubic feet or number of trees), and what are the major species?	
What is the total number of posts as defined in the forest management plan (cubic feet or number of posts), and what are the major species?	
What is the total number of poles and what are the major species?	
What is the total number of seedlings?	
What other non-timber forest products are present (list major groups and amounts available)?	
What is the total area of community forests (eg hectare, acre, or rai as appropriate)?	
What % of the total area represents healthy community forests as defined in the forest management plan or by the community (as appropriate)?	
What % of the total area represents degraded community forests?	
What % of the total area represents barren land?	
What other types of land exist within the area (eg religious, grasslands, grazing lands, fish pond, welfare land, unplanned, etc.)?	
Are there any nurseries in the area? If so, what are the species and number of seedlings?	
Are there any other resources in the area (such as water bodies, mineral deposits, etc.)?	
Are there any decisions (bylaws) governing illegal harvesting? If so, list and describe them.	
Any additional comments:	

Strengths

- Provides a clear visual baseline representation of the CF area and is easy for stakeholders to understand
- Information about the forest condition at the time of mapping can be used as a baseline for subsequent mapping exercises
- Trends in resource use can be tracked to help inform sustainable management practices

Limitations

- The map will not be to scale and will only provide a general overview of the area
- Quantitative data captured will only be approximate, so caution is advised when decisions are based solely on such estimates

Time required

- 1-2 hours, depending on the size of the area and diversity of land use within and around the CF area

Frequency

- Every three years or at suitable intervals deemed necessary by the CF group
- Subsequent mapping should follow the same steps, format and process to ensure that data captured can be compared to previous findings and provide a basis to track changes and trends.

Figure 1: Example of a resource map, War Kong, Myanmar



BASELINE AND PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 2: PARTICIPATORY SOCIAL MAPPING



Introduction

This is a participatory tool designed for community forest (CF) members, including men and women from a village. The social map helps generate information about a community or village that is managing forest resources. The primary purpose is to help local people better understand and update information on the condition and structure of their social context, such as number of houses families, ethnic groups, and availability of services. The participants are expected to agree on the content of the map according to what is important to them.

The selection of participants for social mapping is crucial. The facilitator needs to ensure the participation of key stakeholders such as village leaders, social workers, women leaders, CF group chairpersons, and other individuals as appropriate. Usually, between five and eight people ensures that all community social groups are adequately represented.

It is advised CF group leaders prepare the tool on a big flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper), and display where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

- To develop a participatory village map highlighting the names and locations of families in the village
- To better understand the diversity of services, capacity, skills, and ethnic groups available in a village
- To examine the physical and social changes in the village (only if the exercise is repeated for progress monitoring purposes)

Step-by-step guide

1. Prepare big vinyl flip charts, different colored pens, tapes, colored paper etc.
2. Prepare draft agenda
3. Invite a group of social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss the draft agenda at a venue inside the village (total of 5-8 people)
4. Assign a facilitator and a note-taker
5. Share the objectives of the mapping exercise with the participants
6. Explain the process by presenting a sample map (Figure 1 and 2)
7. Invite participants to draw their village map (using a major landmark such as a temple, school or village hall can be a helpful way to start the process)
8. Request participants to draw colored lines representing roads, walking trails, pathways, fire lines, bridges, etc.
9. Request participants to mark houses on the map and to include names of family heads and total number of family members (disaggregated by sex on a separate sheet of paper if needed (Table 2)
10. Ask participants to include major services such as schools, health centers, range posts, drinking wells, industry, agricultural land, forest boundary, river, etc.
11. Request participants to mark any other resources available in the village or to include other information they feel is important to the map
12. Mark the families associated with the CF group and update using Table 1 below
13. Include the date the map was prepared and, where applicable, the names of the participants involved
14. Include a legend and a north reference on the map
15. Finalize the map and make copies for the community forest management committee and other stakeholders as needed

Table 1: Example of how to provide additional village household information

Name of family head	Total number of family members including children

Discussion

Once the social map is complete, additional information about the community should be collected using the questions provided in Table 2 below. It is important to note that this is an indicative list only, and you are encouraged to modify and add items based on your context and the information you need. The information collected will form the baseline that the results of further participatory social mapping can be compared against.

Table 2: Information about social aspects of the CF community

Questions	Status when CF started
1. How many households are in the village?	
2. How many households are in the CF group?	
3. How many women headed households are in the village?	
4. How many women headed households are in the CF group?	
5. What key facilities are available in the village?	
6. What key services are available in the village?	
7. What other key resources are available in the village?	
8. Where do the villagers go to access services such as health, education and those from the forest that are not available in the village? What is the average time spent on accessing these services?	
9. How many people are literate in the village (literacy rate)?	
10. How many people have completed high school in the village?	
11. How many girls and women have completed high school?	
12. How many people have full-time employment in and outside of the village?	
13. How many women have full-time employment in and outside of the village?	
14. How many households have members who are employed as migrant workers?	
15. What is the total number of people from the village that are employed as migrant workers?	
16. What are the major destinations of the migrant workers?	
17. What are the major jobs that these migrant workers have been taking?	
18. What forest-based enterprises are there in the village? Please list them.	
19. What major ethnic groups are in the village? Preferably number of households by each ethnic group.	

Strengths

- Provides a clear visual baseline representation of the social aspects of the community within the area, and is easy for stakeholders to understand
- The information captured can be used to measure against subsequent social mapping exercises, and changes over time can be tracked to help inform decisions that have bearing on the social condition and structure of the community

Limitations

- The map will not be to scale and will only provide a general overview of how the community is organized within the CF. Any quantitative data captured is likely to be approximate so caution is advised when decisions are based solely on such estimates.

Time required

- 1-2 hours, depending on the number of families present in the CF area

Frequency

- Every three to five years or at an interval deemed suitable by the CF group
- Subsequent mapping should follow the same steps, format and process to ensure that the data captured can be compared to previous findings and provide a basis to track changes and trends.

Figure 1: Example of a participatory social map, Myo Kwin village, Myanmar

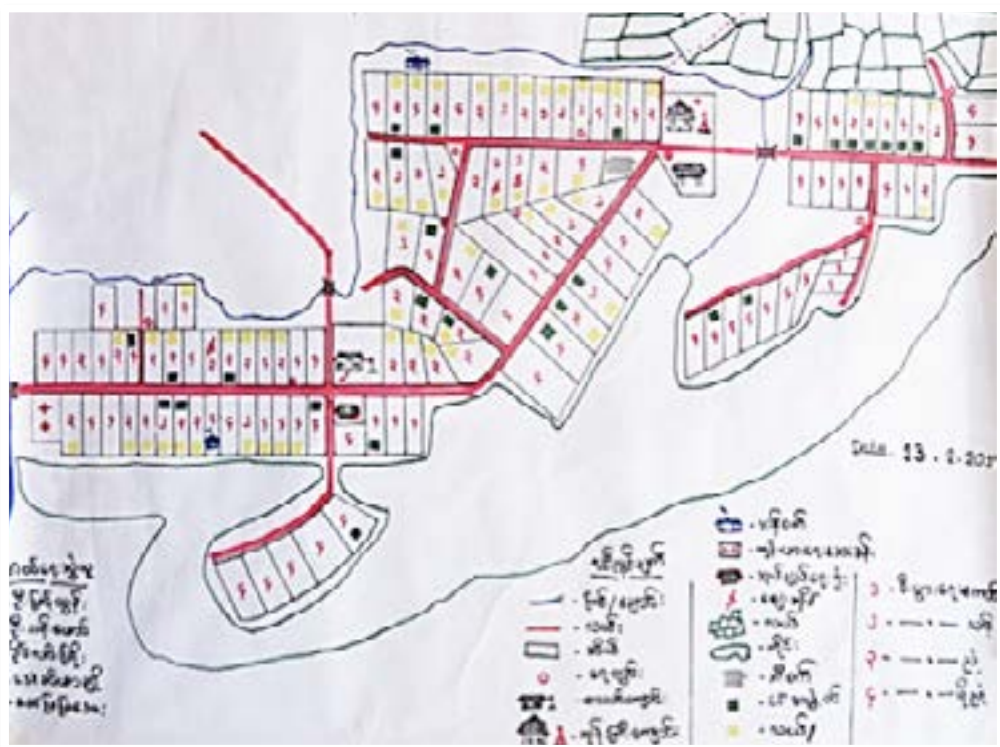

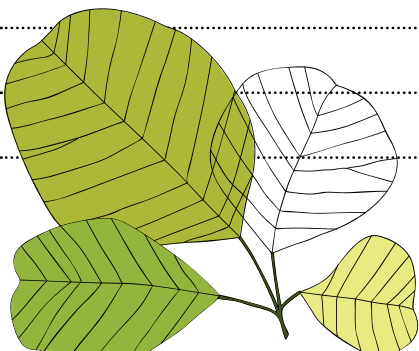


Figure 2: Example of a participatory social map, Kan Be village, Myanmar




 Two stylized leaves are positioned in the bottom-left corner. The leaf on the left is solid green with a black outline and internal vein lines. The leaf on the right is white with a black outline and internal vein lines, partially overlapping the green leaf.

BASELINE AND PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 3: PARTICIPATORY WELLBEING RANKING



Introduction

This tool helps identify the economic wellbeing of families in a village using a participatory method, in which the wellbeing criteria is defined by community forest (CF) user group members themselves. Once the wellbeing status is defined, it facilitates the CF group and stakeholders to prioritize services to marginalized families. This tool also helps the CF group understand the participation of different types of families in CF processes.

Objectives

- To identify different socioeconomic groups in a village, based on locally defined criteria
- To identify how families (including each member of that family) from different socioeconomic groups participate in CF processes, the management committee, and benefit sharing more broadly

This exercise deals with delicate, sensitive, and often private issues, and therefore, requires a high degree of trust between CF leaders and the participants involved. It is recommended that this exercise takes place after the social mapping as access to the list of family heads will be required.

Steps

1. Prepare big vinyl flip charts, different colored pens, tapes, colored paper, etc.
2. Prepare draft agenda
3. Invite a group of social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss the draft agenda at a venue preferably inside the village area (total of 5-8 people, preferably the same group from the social mapping exercise of Tool 2)
4. Assign a facilitator and a note-taker
5. Explain the objective of the exercise, and agree on the process of categorizing families according to their socio-economic status (Figures 1 and 2)
6. Discuss and agree on the number of socio-economic categories to use for the exercise (eg very poor, poor, medium, and wealthy). This will be used in Step 10 to fill in the socio-economic group.
7. Discuss and agree on the criteria of the socio-economic groups (eg number of livestock, food sufficiency, land holding, regular source of income, equipment, vehicle etc.)
8. Use the "card method"
 - a. List names of family heads (derived from social map) on separate cards (eg if a village has 50 families, prepare 50 cards, one card for each family)
 - b. Pick one card at a time and ask participants to assign the family to a socio-economic group label. Allow participants to discuss and agree for each family (handover the cards to participants)
 - c. Once the cards are completed, review each one and reach consensus
9. Identify and mark economically "poor" and "very poor" families on the social map (Tool 2)
10. Complete the table below using the list of family heads generated from the social mapping exercise to populate the first column and make sure to share copies with the participants

Name of family head (Refer to list from the social mapping exercise)	M/F	Socio-economic Group	Forest group member (yes/no)	Forest management committee position (if any)

11. Conduct a simple analysis of socio-economic status relative within the village by using the tables provided below

a. Number of families in village

Total	Very poor	Poor	Average	Above Average/ Wealthy

b. Number of families involved in CF

Total	Very poor	Poor	Average	Above Average/ Wealthy

c. Number of women headed families in the CF

Total	Very poor	Poor	Average	Above Average/ Wealthy

d. Number of families represented in management committee

Total	Very poor	Poor	Average	Above Average/ Wealthy

e. Number of women in management committee

Total	Very poor	Poor	Average	Above Average/ Wealthy

Strengths

- Provides a quick and simple way to classify families and their corresponding level of wellbeing in a village
- Helps ensure that programs are developed to target commonly marginalized groups, such as women and the economically poorest families
- Provides a baseline against which changes in wellbeing of the village can be monitored and compared over time.



Limitations

- Criteria is only based on local perceptions of wellbeing and does not take into account any form of bias that might exist
- Obtaining accurate information about income and other assets is often challenging and difficult which may result in data that does not reflect actual conditions
- The use of the tool may be constrained unless good rapport is established between the facilitator and the participants

Time required

- 1-2 hours, depending on the number of families in the village

Frequency

- Every three to five years or at an interval deemed suitable by the CF group
- Subsequent mapping should follow the same steps, format and process to ensure the data captured can be compared to previous findings and provide a basis to track changes and trends.

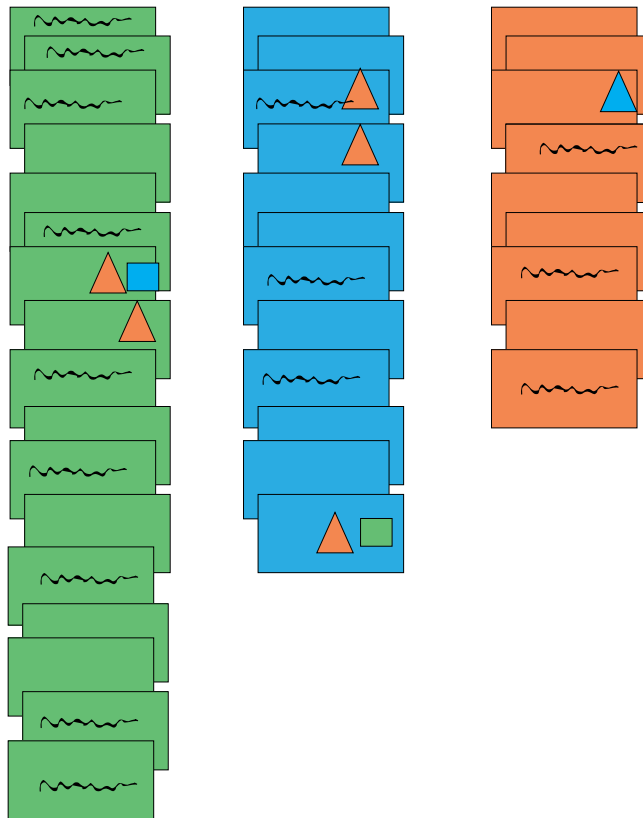
Figure 1: Example of wellbeing ranking in Thailand

The family number on the cards is based on the list generated from the social mapping exercise. The families are grouped into three categories of wellbeing status (very poor, poor and others).



Figure 2: Example of well-being ranking in Myanmar

The name of each family head is written on each the card, and families are grouped according to their wellbeing status (very poor, poor and others). The criteria used to define wellbeing is in Burmese language.

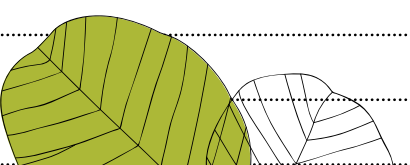
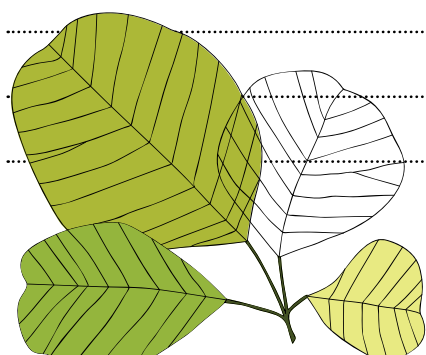


Criteria :

.....

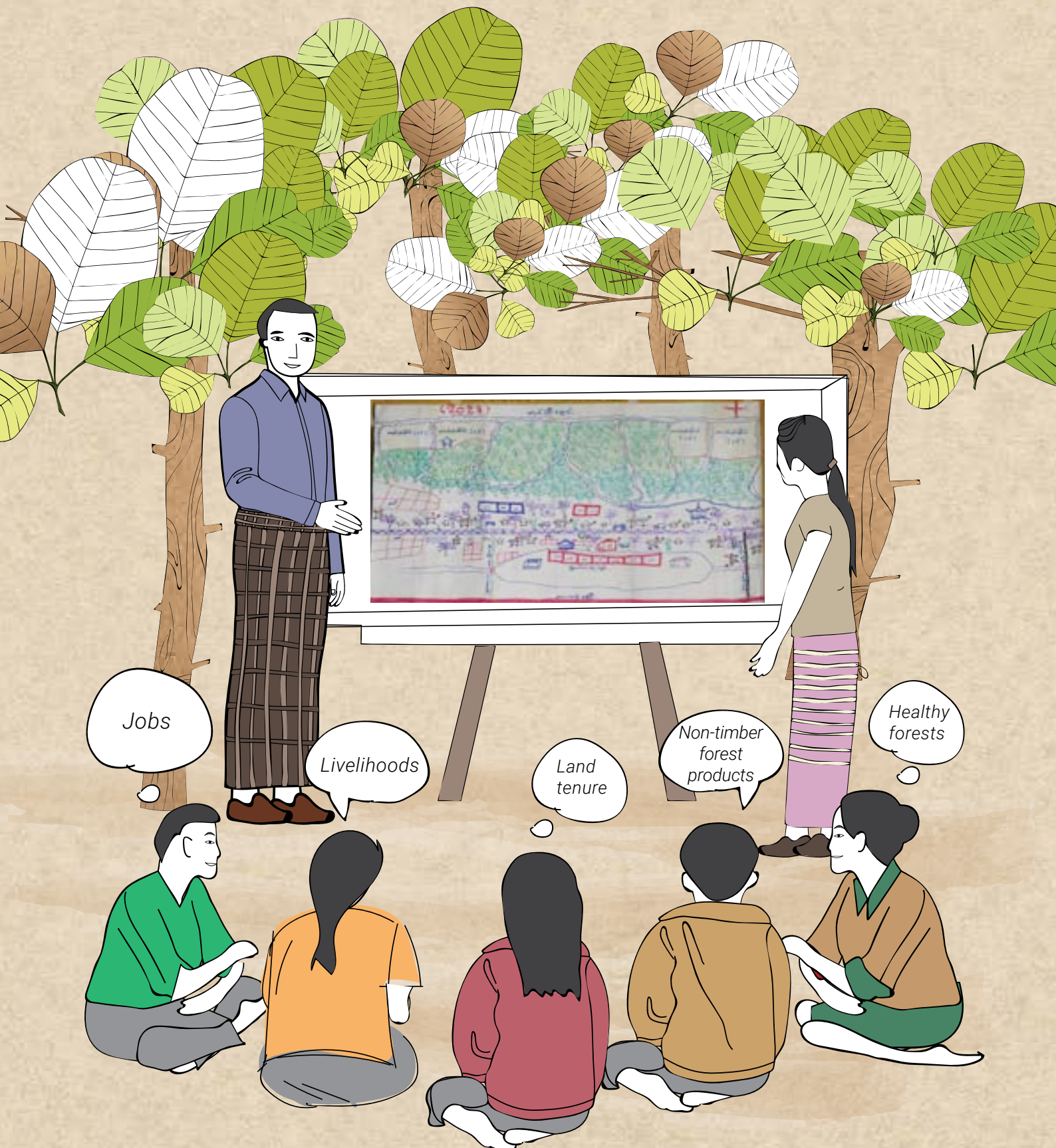
.....



A decorative illustration of two leaves in the bottom-left corner. The larger leaf is green with a yellow outline and prominent veins. The smaller leaf is white with a yellow outline and veins, partially overlapping the green leaf.

PLANNING TOOL

TOOL 4: PARTICIPATORY VISIONING



Introduction

This is a participatory tool designed for community forest (CF) members, including men and women from a village. The mapping of their CF vision helps forest group members to envisage their future resources after a specific number of years. Group members are expected to agree to a point of time in the future (e.g. vision for 10, 15, or 20 years) before starting the exercise.

The visioning process is expected to start after a group completes the resource mapping exercise (Tool 1). While resource mapping provides the current status of existing resources, the visioning exercise is aimed at helping local communities imagine a desired future state of the resources that are meaningful to them.

The participants are expected to develop a map which captures what they hope to achieve in terms of a future state of the resources (eg trees, grasslands, fish ponds, water sources, eco-tourism spots, non-timber forest products, etc.) that are important to them. They are then to plan actions designed to achieve their vision.

The visioning tool should be created on a large flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper) and displayed where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

- To establish a shared vision of the desired state of resources within the CF area and to conceptualize this visually
- To use the vision to guide and inform annual planning processes

Step-by-step guide

1. Prepare big vinyl flip charts, different colored pens, tapes, colored paper, etc.
2. Prepare draft agenda
3. Invite community forest group leaders, social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss the draft agenda at a venue preferably inside the CF area (5 to 8 people)
4. Assign a facilitator and a note-taker
5. Bring the map generated by the participatory resource mapping exercise (Tool 1)
6. Share the objectives of the exercise with the participants
7. Explain the process by presenting a sample map (Figure 1)
8. Agree on visioning period (eg 5 or 10 or 15 years) for the CF
9. Ask participants to draw the vision of their CF
10. Request participants to visualize the type of infrastructure they would like (eg trails, fish ponds, bird sanctuary, children's park, drinking water, irrigation system etc.)
11. Share the draft vision map with other community members (as a larger group) and invite their comments
12. Include a legend and a north reference on the map
13. Display a copy of the map at a public place where it can continue to be updated and improved as needed

Discussion

After the resource mapping and visioning maps (Tool 1 and 4) are done, ask the following questions and take note of responses on a flip chart using the table below as a guide.

Questions	Vision
1. What major trees species would the group like to see in the CF? Consider using the CF management plan as a reference if appropriate.	
2. What type of non-timber forest products would the group like to grow?	
3. What other types of infrastructure would the group like to see in the CF area?	
4. What types of facilities would the group like to develop in the CF area?	
5. What key benefits would the group like to get the CF?	
6. What roles are envisaged for young people living in the CF area? How does the group hope to engage young people in these roles?	
7. What types of enterprises would the group want to have in order to process available and potential forest resources?	
8. What might be potential barriers in achieving the vision?	
9. How does the group plan to address these potential barriers?	

Strengths

- The visual representation of the CF vision using a participatory approach helps the community unite and work towards a common goal
- The process helps positively reshape how the community collectively perceives the future of their CF, and provides specific measurable outcomes that they can work towards

Limitations

- Changes in the local context may make the vision less relevant unless it is updated regularly
- Holding meetings to update the vision every time the context changes may become burdensome

Time required

- 1-2 hours, depending on the size of forest area

Frequency

- Every year or at an interval deemed suitable by the CF group to adjust the vision and ensure ongoing relevance to the community

Figure 1: CF vision of a village in Myanmar



PLANNING TOOL

TOOL 5: LONG-TERM TARGET-BASED PLANNING



Introduction

Planning is a prerequisite to monitoring and evaluation. It is therefore important for community forest (CF) groups to prepare a CF management plan and other similar plans, and set targets for activities and expected results. The targets should be realistic, time-bound and subject to the availability of human and financial resources, technical guidance, and other resources required to achieve the desired results.

This tool is designed to summarize all CF targets and activities for multiple years. It is not meant to be detailed, but instead offers a concise yet comprehensive overview of a CF plan.

The tool should be created on a large flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper) and displayed where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

- To develop a long-term plan with specific targets focusing on desired improvements to forest resources and socio-economic status
- To support tracking of outputs during a planned year

Step-by-step guide

1. Prepare big vinyl flip charts, markers, tapes, colored paper, etc.
2. Prepare draft agenda
3. Invite group of social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss the draft agenda at a venue preferably inside the village area (5 to 8 people)
4. Assign a facilitator and note taker
5. Agree, as a group, on key activities and targets. Use targets from the forest management plan or other plans the group has already developed (key areas may include but are not limited to: forest management, extraction and use of resources, enterprise development, livelihood development of poor and marginalized families, employment of women, and CF capacity development)
6. Identify the baseline for each activity, and outline its status (refer to the CF inventory and any other relevant documents when developing the baseline)
7. Identify the annual target for each activity (refer to the CF management plan and any other existing plans to set the targets)
8. Present the completed information to CF members and invite their inputs and revisions
9. Display the summary plan (where feasible and appropriate) where CF members and other stakeholder can see and read it. This helps ensure that the planning process is seen to be open and transparent, and will increase buy-in and ownership from the community

Table 1: Long-term target-based plan

Areas	Unit	Base-line	Target					
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Plantation area	Hectare							
Fire line	Meter							
Thinning/weeding area	Hectare							
Seedling production	Number							
Nursery	Number							
Timber harvest	Cubic ft							
Firewood harvest	Backload or Kg							
Forage/fodder harvest	Backload or Kg							
Bamboo harvest	Number							
Mushroom harvest	Kg							
Fish/crabs/honey harvest (as relevant)	Kg							
Bamboo shoot harvest	Kg/ number							
Timber enterprise support	Number							
Non-timber enterprise support	Number							
Training of group members on.... (specify topic here)	Number							
Forest based employment	Men Women							
CF management committee meeting	Number							
CF meeting	Number							

Strengths

- Summarizes and consolidates all the plans a CF group has developed for forest management and socio-economic development
- Shows annual breakdown of planned target at the end of the planning cycle and provides a basis for monitoring

Limitations

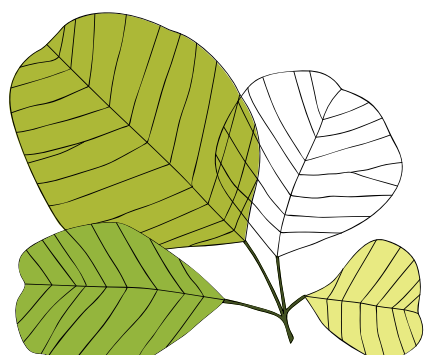
- The tool is just a summary and not a detailed plan
- The tool does not provide the budget details needed for the implementation of activities

Time required

- 1-2 hours, depending on the size of the CF area

Frequency

- The plan should be updated once a year or at an interval deemed suitable by the CF group
- The revised plan should be presented to CF members and other relevant stakeholders to obtain their inputs



PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 6: ANNUAL TARGET-BASED PLANNING AND OUTPUT MONITORING



Introduction

This tool is designed to help community forest (CF) groups develop target-based plans that can be used to monitor the progress of activities and outputs. The targets, which are broken down monthly, allow CF groups to effectively track activities, record changes over time, and document findings which can then be shared with local government agencies and other stakeholders.

Tracking and maintaining a record of progress should be the responsibility of an appointed member of the CF management committee (CFMC) (eg committee secretary). This person will report their findings during monthly or bi-monthly committee meetings. To ensure that the CFMC gets these updates, 'target-based monitoring' should be included as a permanent meeting agenda item.

The target-based planning and output monitoring tool should be created on a large flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper) and displayed where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders. The plan should be updated after every CFMC meeting as needed.

Objectives

- To develop a tool that monitors progress to determine whether activities are contributing to CF targets
- To use findings of the monitoring tool to make necessary adjustments to management plans
- To prepare progress reports which can be shared with forestry authorities and other relevant stakeholders

Step-by-step guide

1. Assign an individual from the CFMC (eg committee secretary) responsible for regular record keeping and to provide updates to the group
2. Agree, among CFMC group members, on monthly targets for activities planned throughout the year and complete the template provided (Table 1). This process should be undertaken during the first month of every year, with annual targets brought forward (and improved as needed) from long-term target-based planning (Tool 5)
3. Prepare draft agenda
4. Invite CF members, group of social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss the draft agenda (total of 5-8 people)
5. Present the draft plan at a CF meeting for member inputs, and improve accordingly
6. Use the template at each committee meeting to review the plan and record the actual progress of the group. Add any non-planned activities undertaken, and record under 'actual'
7. Continue process every month, until the 12th month of the year
8. Review progress and compare with targets. Identify the reasons for under or over achievements at the end of year
9. Present the targets and actual progress to CF group members and get their inputs. This is also an opportunity to reflect on past experience and to integrate lessons learned into new plans
10. Share the progress report with forest authorities and relevant stakeholders
11. Develop a target-based plan for the new year

Strengths

- Helps the CF maintain a record of how activities are progressing and meeting targets
- Allows information to be collected and compiled into periodic progress and annual reports for sharing with forestry authorities and other stakeholders
- Provides a basis for taking corrective action when planned activities are not adequately meeting set targets
- Builds institutional memory of activities and progress made by a CF

Limitations

- This tool provides output level information, but not the details about the outcome of an action or activity. For example, it provides information about the number of seedlings planted, but does not go into any detail regarding their condition or survival rate

Time required

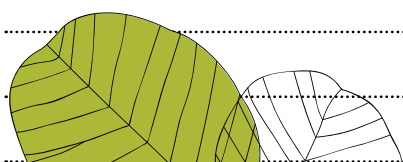
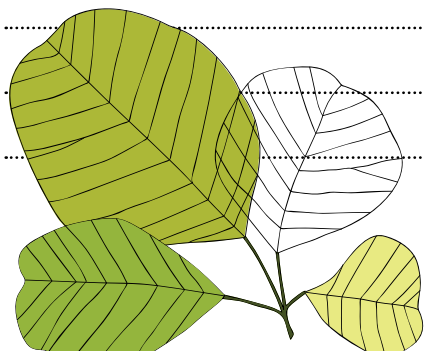
- Yearly planning exercise should take approximately two-three hours
- Updates provided to CFMC members at their regular meetings should take no longer than 15-20 minutes

Frequency

- Planning should take place once at the beginning of every year
- Review of progress and presentation of findings to the CFMC should take place monthly until the end of the year

Table 1: Sample template for annual target-based planning and output monitoring

[illegible]

A decorative illustration of two leaves in the bottom-left corner. One leaf is solid green, and the other is white with green veins.

PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 7: ACTIVITY MONITORING TIMELINE



Introduction

This tool facilitates a visual representation of the plan and actual activities of a community forest management committee (CFMC) on a timeline. The tool is recommended for use in conjunction with the annual target-based planning and output monitoring tool (Tool 6). The CFMC is expected to review the plan vs progress at their meetings and update the visual representation of their activities as needed. The visual representation of activities will help illiterate group members or those with very basic reading skills to understand the CF plans and the monthly schedule of activities.

The tool should be created on a large flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper), updated monthly and displayed where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders. If there is no place to permanently display the chart, it can be brought to meetings and either shared or displayed during these events.

Objectives

- To support and improve CF planning practices and to create a tool that assists with activity monitoring
- To create a visual representation of planned CF activities and implementation schedule that is more accessible to illiterate and semi-illiterate group members

Step-by-step guide

1. Assign a regular record-keeping person from CFMC (eg committee secretary) to keep the timeline updated for the group
2. Prepare a timeline based on the annual plan and set targets that visually represent the planned CF activities (Table 1). This should be undertaken during the first month of the year
3. Review the timeline and record the actual implementation of activities at every CFMC meeting
4. Continue this review process each month, until the 12th month of the year
5. Review and compare the plan vs. actual timeline, and identify and discuss reasons for deviations
6. Share the report with CF members, forestry authorities and relevant stakeholders

Strengths

- Provides a visual representation of the CF plan and compares against the actual implementation of activities
- Shows progress visually on timeline of monthly CF activities in the annual plan
- Helps develop realistic time-plan for the forthcoming year
- Allows illiterate and semi-illiterate group members to easily access and understand the plan and schedule of activities for the year

Limitations

- This tool does not capture quantitative progress during the implementation of CF activities

Time required

- Approximately 30 minutes if reviewed monthly at CFMC meetings

[illegible]

TOOL 8: BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE TRACKING



Introduction

This tool supplements the annual target-based planning and output monitoring tool (Tool 6) and the activity monitoring timeline tool (Tool 7). The community forest management committee (CFMC), specifically treasurers and accountants, are advised to take lead in recording and updating budgets and expenditures and providing status reports to CFMC meetings. The tool is designed to help capture and report finance related information to a wider audience of community forest (CF) members and government officials.

Objectives

- To provide CF groups with a tool to track expenditures and manage their budget during the implementation of their activities
- To support the reporting of financial information to CF users, government officials and other stakeholders as appropriate
- To build a more robust governance structure of a CF through enhancing the transparency of budget and accounts

Step-by-step guide

1. Assign a record keeping person from the CFMC (eg accountant or treasurer) to maintain and manage budget and expenditure information for the group
2. Record annual budget allocations for different activities under the annual budget column using the template provided (Table 1)
3. Enter monthly breakdowns of allocated amounts for each activity by month, from the first month to end of the year
4. Enter incurred expenditure under each respective activity at the end of every month
5. Present budget and expenditure information at CFMC meetings
6. Present budget and expenditure information at meetings with CF users, stakeholders and government officials, as appropriate
7. Prepare the budget and expenditure information on a big flip chart (preferably vinyl, as it is more durable than paper) and display where it can be easily seen by CF members

Strengths

- Provides monthly updates about the status of the budget and expenditures which CF groups can track and use to support decision making
- Helps ensure financial transparency, accountability and trust within a CF group
- Facilitates the reporting of budget and expenditures to groups such as government officials and the wider CF community

Limitations

- Requires the commitment of accountant or treasurer from the CFMF to update budget information on regular basis
- Only provides program-related budget and expenditure, and does not include on-going operational and personnel associated costs. While the inclusion of these additional costs is possible, the CFMC would need to consider how to manage sensitive information such as personnel salaries and benefits

- The tool is not an income and expenditure account, and therefore does not track or provide information on potential income or advance payments
- The tool is only appropriate for supporting accounts with small number of activities, and does not substitute a double-entry bookkeeping system

Time required

- 15 – 30 minutes (depending on the size of budget) for presenting and discussing the budget at monthly meetings

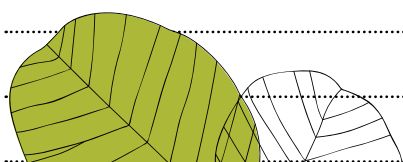
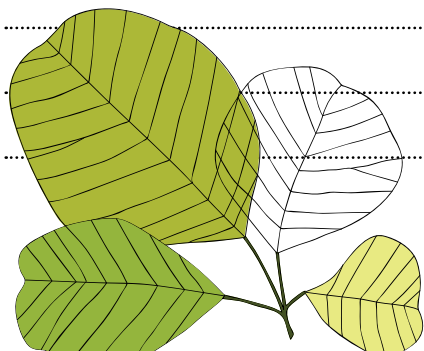
Frequency

- The tool should be updated monthly, and finalized at the end of each year

Table 1: Example template for budget and expenditure summary

Currency:

[illegible]

A decorative illustration of two leaves in the bottom-left corner. One leaf is solid green, and the other is white with green veins.

PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 9: INDIVIDUAL INCOME ACCOUNT KEEPING



Introduction

Information about harvest timber, non-timber forest products and subsequent income by forest users is important in order to identify how a community forest (CF) can provide direct benefits to local people. This tool assists CF members maintain a log of their income generated by CF related activities, products and services.

Objectives

- To obtain and consolidate information about the level of income that community members receive from CF products and services
- To develop an understanding of how funds generated from various CF products and services contribute cumulatively to the incomes of local people

Step-by-step guide

1. Agree (as a group) on the benefits of maintaining a ledger which captures the income generated from harvesting forest products by forest user group members
2. Assign a record keeping person from the CFMC (eg accountant or treasurer) to maintain accounts and manage the information for the group
3. Prepare and print copies of the record book template (Table 1)
4. Guide community members on how to maintain records using the template and provide one copy per family
5. Request group members to share their individual account with the forest group treasurer or accountant as appropriate (usually after each harvest cycle)
6. Maintain a summary of records using Table 2 and present the total income at monthly meetings
7. Summarize information, and share with CF group members, government officials and other stakeholders, as appropriate
8. Analyze the extent to which the CF contributes to the annual income of local people, and integrate learned lessons aimed at improving income generating potential into new planning cycles

Strengths

- Provides consolidated information about the total income derived from CF resources and services by individual families and by community forest user groups
- Helps identify high and low-income products from a CF area which can then inform the development of new annual management plans

Limitations

- Requires writing and numeracy skills which some family members may not have
- Requires commitment of family members to provide accurate and timely information

Time required

- 10-15 minutes per harvest cycle for a family involved in harvesting and selling forest products
- 10-15 minutes at community forest group meetings to update and share information collected by the treasurer or accountant

Table 1: Account of income from forest products (sample template)

Name of member:					Currency:
Name of CF:					
Address:					
Date	Product/material from CF (timber, firewood, crab, fish, bamboo, bamboo shoot, others as appropriate)	Unit	Home use (quantity)	Sold (quantity)	Income amount
			X		
				X	

Note: Information in this template is recorded by individual families generating income from timber and/or NTFPs in the CF area

Table 2: Recording of forest product use by CF members (sample template)

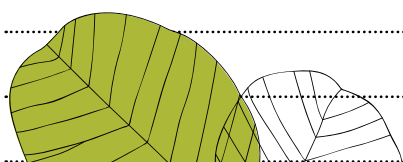
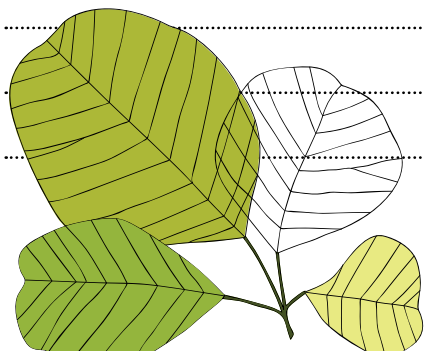
Name of community forest:

Village District Province

Date: from..... to

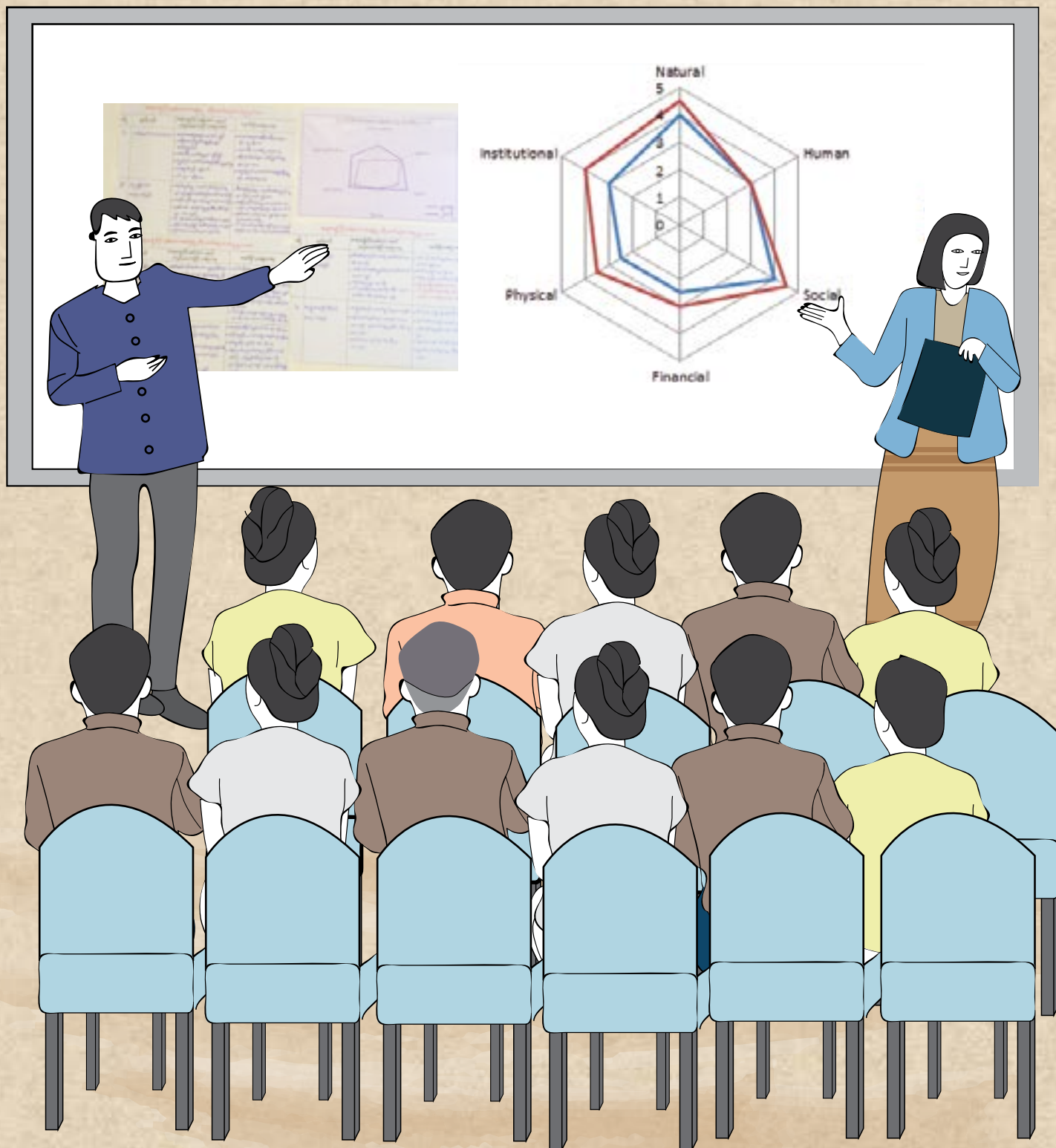
No.	Date	Name of CF members	Sex	Community forest product and/or NTFP	Unit	Home use quantity	Sold quantity	Income from sale

Note: This template should be updated monthly and tallied at the end of each year

A decorative illustration of two leaves in the bottom-left corner. One leaf is solid green, and the other is white with green veins.

PROGRESS MONITORING

TOOL 10: SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING



Introduction

This tool uses the livelihoods framework to assess overall change and achievement in resources and people's livelihoods resulting from community forest (CF) processes. This is illustrated across five livelihoods capitals (natural, human, social, physical, and financial), and further outlines how a change was specifically derived from the adoption of the CF process and the collective effort of the CF management committee (CFMC) and local community. The tool also helps the CFMC and the broader CF community track institutional change of the CF group.

The tool should be created on a large flip chart (preferably vinyl as it is more durable than paper), updated regularly and displayed where it can be easily seen by relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

1. To provide a tool that helps measure and assess changes in livelihoods capitals at local level and also to track the effectiveness of the CF as an institution
2. To develop a visual representation of the status of these changes which can be tracked annually, and compared to and used in conjunction with improvement plans
3. To develop and share reports with CF group members, government and other stakeholders

Step-by-step guide

1. CF leaders to bring their forest inventory record, resources map, forest management plan, meeting minutes, accounts and other documents as needed to the meeting
2. Prepare draft agenda
3. Invite a group of social and religious leaders, women and other key stakeholders to discuss progress monitoring at a meeting venue preferably inside the CF area (total of 8-10 people)
4. Assign a facilitator and a note-taker
5. Introduce the CF self-assessment tool and six categories (five livelihoods assets and institutional development) proposed to assess change (Table 1, Figures 1 and 2)
6. Agree, as a group, on key areas of change for various livelihoods capitals using Table 1 that provides sample indicators which groups can modify or add to as needed
7. Define and write the criteria for the scoring status (recommended to keep from 1 to 5)
8. Write the current status for each indicator, using existing documents and maps that the CF has already produced. Record the status on the day the assessment is conducted
 - o Natural resources: refer to Tool 1 (resources map)
 - o Financial capital: refer to Tool 3 (wellbeing ranking) and Tool 9 (individual income account)
 - o Physical capital: refer to Tool 1 (resources map) and participant observations
 - o Human capital: refer to CF documents, records, meeting minutes and progress monitoring tools (Tools 6 to 9)
 - o Social capital: refer to CF documents, records, meeting minutes and progress monitoring tools (Tools 6 to 9)
 - o Institutional changes: refer to CF documents, records, meeting minutes and progress monitoring tools (Tools 6 to 9)
9. Define current status for each indicator and score each of them (eg 1 being nothing achieved and 5 fully achieved). This process is repeated for each indicator using group discussion to reach consensus.
10. List supporting evidence and documents for the defined current status. If groups do not have the necessary supporting documents on the day of the review, additional time will need to be allocated to collect the relevant materials and to continue the process at the next meeting
11. Once analysis and scoring is completed for one capital (eg natural resources), make a total of the score and calculate the average. Repeat the same process for all 6 areas

12. Prepare spider-web diagram (Figure 1), name each spider spoke and mark the average score accordingly
13. Draw lines connecting spider spokes to the average score under each of them
14. Review information given in Table 1 and in the spider-web diagram, and discuss if they represent a true picture
15. Identify key action points to maintain areas of strengths, and to improve those with a lower average score

Within a village, changes that occur may or not be the result of a CF process. While it is important to take note of all change, participants are advised to evaluate scores based only on changes which are directly due to the CF process. This will ensure that the snapshot developed will specifically reflect the changes which result from implementing CF processes.

Strengths

- Provides summary information of CF performance based on various livelihoods assets
- Guides the CFMC and members to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and improvement opportunities
- Summarizes the overall changes within a community, the status of its resources, and the effectiveness of the CF as an institution
- Provide a basis for reporting, reflection and learning for the CF and its associated stakeholders including forestry officials, local authorities, and NGOs

Limitations

- This exercise only provides a quick snapshot and may not deliver in-depth information on various livelihoods development
- The scoring is subjective, and relies on the understanding of the participants about the issue

Time required

- About 30 minutes for each livelihood capital (about 3 hours in total), depending on the discussion and size of the group

Frequency

- Ideally once a year. Repeating the same exercise every year will help user group track changes in the status of their livelihoods capitals and the CF more broadly

Table 1: Self-Assessment of CF group

Some examples of indicator (area of change)	Target	Current status (this section gives reason for the score)	Current score					Supporting documents and other evidence
			1	2	3	4	5	
Forest resource			1	2	3	4	5	
Increase in forest cover	100%							
Level of timber products harvest by CF members	100% members							
Increase in the quantity and level of protection of wildlife								
Number of firebreaks								
Area of new plantation/ or regeneration								
Diversity of NTFPs in the forest area								
Maintenance level of boundary poles and signboards								
Level and extent of external threats (illegal logging etc.) reduced	None							
Area available for grazing								
Degree to which harvesting of NTFPs is sufficient to meet the needs of local people								
Others.....								
Total								
Average (added to spider- web diagram)								
Human aspect			1	2	3	4	5	
CFMC capacity for forest management								
CF member capacity for conflict resolution, and combatting illegal activities								
CF member capacity to document and write reports, and prepare meeting minutes								
CF member understanding of their rights and responsibilities								
Women's ability to participate in CF processes and key leadership roles								
Others...								

Some examples of indicator (area of change)	Target	Current status (this section gives reason for the score)	Current score					Supporting documents and other evidence
			1	2	3	4	5	
Total								
Average (added to spider- web diagram)								
Social aspect			1	2	3	4	5	
CF association with relevant and strategic networks								
CF member participation in all CF group meeting and activities	100%							
Women participation in CF management and decision making	50%							
CF has legal status and is certified to manage/use forest resources								
Villagers registered as CF members	100%							
CF in policy forums or platforms								
Others...								
Total								
Average (added to spider- web diagram)								
Economic aspect								
CF members benefit from CF products (including NTFPs) for household consumption	100%							
CF members making income from CF products								
CF members obtaining agricultural supplies directly from the CF to support cost saving								
Forest based enterprises at village level and employment to local people available								
Women participation in forest-based income generating activities and benefit sharing								

Some examples of indicator (area of change)	Target	Current status (this section gives reason for the score)	Current score					Supporting documents and other evidence
			1	2	3	4	5	
Family level income generating activities supported by CF group								
Local people have access to CF credit or CF guaranteed credit								
Others...								
Total								
Average (added to spider- web diagram)								
Physical capital			1	2	3	4	5	
CF members receive timber products from CF when constructing their houses	100%							
CF contributes to develop basic services such as health and education								
CF contributes to improve roads								
CF supplies safe drinking water to its members	100% house							
CF supports its members to have their own toilets	100% house							
CF constructs a safe place (or house) to organize meetings and store documents	1 meeting place							
Others...								
Total								
Average (added to spider-web diagram)								
Institution			1	2	3	4	5	
CFMC organizes regular meetings at agreed intervals	Once a month							
CF agreement is signed and implemented	100%							
CF regulation is fully enforced	100%							
CFMC bylaw is fully implemented	100%							

Some examples of indicator (area of change)	Target	Current status (this section gives reason for the score)	Current score					Supporting documents and other evidence
			1	2	3	4	5	
CF group organizes regular general meetings at agreed intervals and undertakes social audit	Once a year							
CF maintains records of meetings, financial accounts, progress, and other documentation	100%							
CF has an agreed and functional system to control illegal activities in forest area (hunting, logging, forest fire, etc.)								
CF documents are stored safely and can be retrieved when needed								
Others								
Total								
Average (added to spider-web diagram)								



Figure 1: An example of CF status using a spider-web diagram

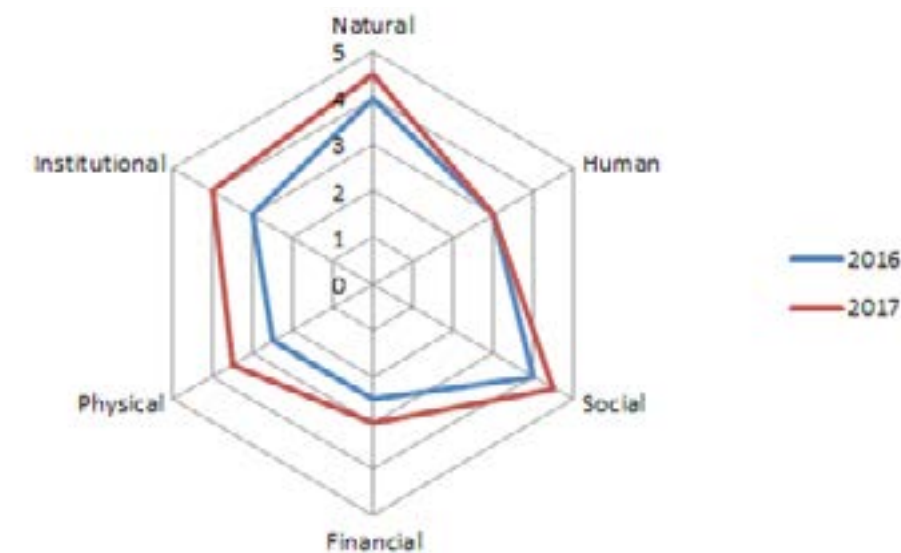
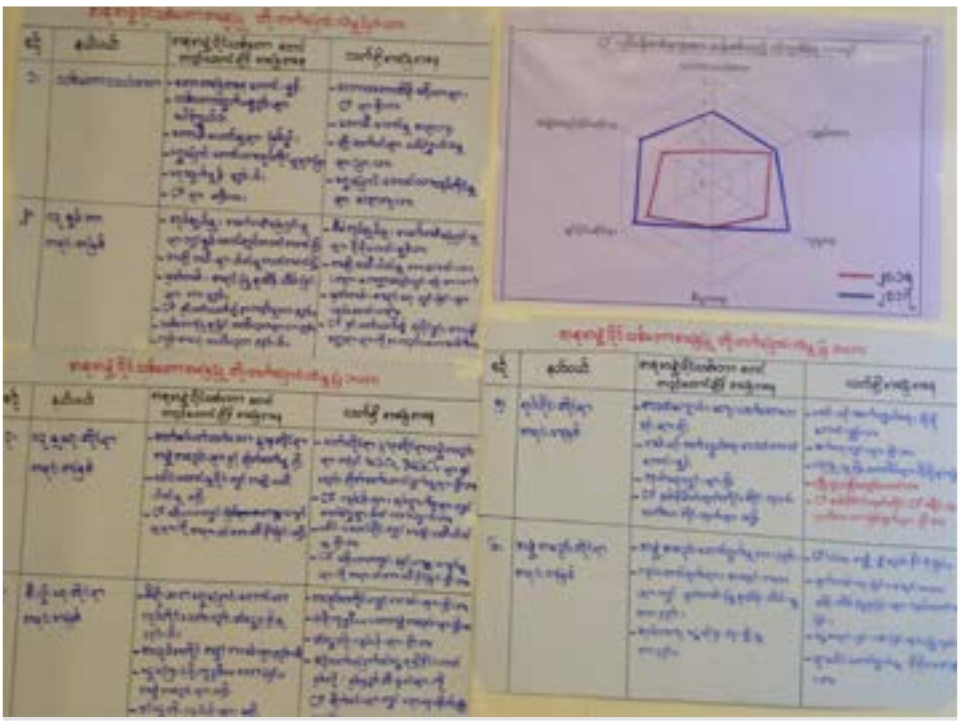


Figure 2: An Example from Bago region, Myanmar







RECOFTC's mission is to enhance capacities for stronger rights, improved governance and fairer benefits for local people in sustainable forested landscapes in the Asia and the Pacific region.

RECOFTC holds a unique and important place in the world of forestry. It is the only international not-for-profit organization that specializes in capacity development for community forestry. RECOFTC engages in strategic networks and effective partnerships with governments, nongovernmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, local people and research and educational institutes throughout the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. With over 30 years of international experience and a dynamic approach to capacity development – involving research and analysis, demonstration sites and training products – RECOFTC delivers innovative solutions for people and forests.

RECOFTC — The Center for People and Forests

P.O. Box 1111
Kasetsart Post Office
Bangkok 10903, Thailand
Tel (66-2) 940-5700
Fax (66-2) 561-4880
info@recoftc.org
www.recoftc.org



Printed on recycled paper

