IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL ANALYSIS SYSTEM TOOLS

Reflective Final Report

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Table of Contents

Reflective Report on 'Implementation of Social Analysis System' Tools by ForestAction Nepal

1. Background

ForestAction Nepal in collaboration with Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Indonesia and New ERA Nepal with financial support from IDRC is implementing a research project entitled *'Improving Livelihoods and Equity in Community Forestry in Nepal: The Role of Adaptive Collaborative Management'* since March 2004 and will end in February 2007. The main objective of the project is to enhance the livelihoods and livelihood security of rural people, especially the poorest and most marginalized ones, through the enhancement of productive, sustainable, and socially just community forestry management and governance. The research combines traditional and participatory action research methodologies. In both the methodologies we use a number of participatory tools and techniques. As a strategy of facilitating ACM approach in the CFUGs we trained, mentored and provided backstopping support to the locally selected facilitators which we call 'Change Agents'.

In the mean time, researchers from ForestAction had the opportunity to participate in a number training events on Social Analysis System (SAS) tools. Social Analysis System (SAS) is a collection of participatory techniques and software tools that show how to integrate social and cultural analysis, and continuous planning, in project activities. It also uses a flexible scale approach to understand systems of knowledge and dynamic learning. SAS techniques and tools offer a unique opportunity to address the problem of analyzing the participatory social data through process-based action leaning approach. SAS is a flexible approach and uses a wide range of methods and tools for social analysis that are tested and adapted in local conditions. Since SAS has potential to help understand and reflect the socio-cultural aspects to transform towards positive direction, we selected few tools to use in the project.

With some technical and financial support from the SAS project implemented by LI-BIRD, we used a number of SAS tools in six community forest user groups (CFUGs) of five districts on Nepal. In other words, LI-BIRD and ForestAction agree to collaborate in SAS project field testing of SAS tools and techniques within the SAS project framework. This is a reflective report on capturing processes and insights of applying these tools in real world scenario of CFUGs.

2. Summary of the tools used

2.1. Collaboration, Legitimacy, Interest and Power (CLIP) Analysis

The tool provides opportunity to identify the stakeholders and the beneficiaries of the concerned party and a program to organize in partnerships or to avoid risk of inclusion/exclusion of stakeholders (in this case Community Forests for effective

management and utilization of the forest and community development). While applying the tool for analysis, respective participants (stakeholders) should first understand and define the terms and their scales of measurement. Identification of stakeholders starts with a resource or a program in focus. First participants in CLIP analysis would list the potential stakeholders for the resource or program and assess their legitimacy, interest and power in relation to the mobilization/ management of resource or program (details of process and outcomes are given in separate reports prepared by Paudel et al 2006).

2.2. Information Dynamics

This tool is important to understand, analyze and improve the communication between the stakeholders working in a common field (in our case in the field of the community forestry management in Nepal). The identified stakeholders through CLIP analysis were used for the purpose. Participants define the scale of information flow between the stakeholders and prepare a matrix on 'which stakeholder' provides 'how much' information to a particular stakeholder. This is done for each stakeholder (for details refer to Paudel et al 2006).

2.3. Perception Analysis: Problem Ranking

There is likely that different stakeholder group perceive a problem differently and when given a set of problems they might prioritize them differently. By ignoring this aspect few powerful stakeholders could impose their priorities to others, in some cases with purpose or in some other cases unknowingly (considering that they could sense others priorities as well - which is not the case). This perception analysis or problem ranking tool provides stakeholders to understand each others' priorities among the different categories of stakeholders (rich-poor, women-men, leaders-normal users, etc) and come to a more realistic priorities among the different problems. In addition, this tool also helps to know whether there is disagreement and misunderstanding between the perception of different stakeholders (for e.g., men and women) on these problems. For the purpose, stakeholders list the common problems/issues of the area to be resolve and ask each stakeholder group to prioritize the problems/issues from their perspective and also list assuming what other stakeholders groups' priorities might be (see details of process and outcomes in separate reports by Paudel et al 2006).

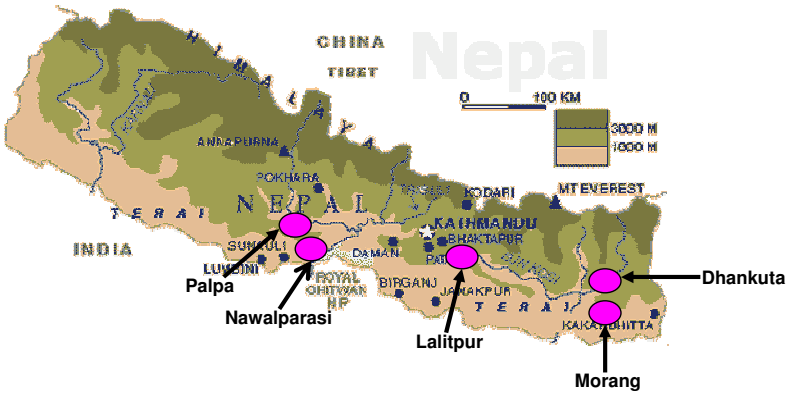
2.4. Trust Analysis

One of the important SAS tools to understand, analyze and improve the relationship among the stakeholders is Trust Analysis. Trust between two stakeholders is important dimension for the success of a collaborative initiative. While applying this tool, participants follow the process as in 'information dynamics' above and prepared a matrix and analyzed accordingly on how much they trust to each other (see Paudel et al 2006 for details).

3. Sites

SAS was applied in six CFUGs of five districts (see the map for selected districts). They represent the context of the hills and Terai as well as the Eastern, Central and Western regions of Nepal. To capture the context specific differences, we selected sites within both hills and Terai of different three regions. Key features of these sites are presented in Table 1.

Figure 1: The sites



Among the six CFUGs selected to apply SAS tools within ACM research, three of them are located in the eastern region of Nepal, two from the eastern hill district of Dhankuta and one from the Terai district of Morang. Patle CFUG lies in Lalitpur District and belongs to the mid-hills of central region. Chautari CFUG Nawalparasi and Kajipauwa CFUG Palpa are from the western region.

Table 1: Key Features of the Sites

SN	Name of CFUG	Address	CF Area (ha)	Households	Ethnic Composition	Key Characteristics
1.	Khanyubas	Dhankuta Municipality-5, Dhankuta	135.66	141	Rai, Brahmin, Chhetri, Limbu, Newar, Tamang, Gurung, Nepali/ Pariyar, Magar	Conflict between fuelwood sellers and leadership
2.	Handikharka	Dhankuta Municipality-3, Dhankuta	201.07	237	Rai, Brahmin, Chhetri, Bhujel Limbu, Newar, Tamang, Gurung, Pariyar, Magar, Kami	CFUG with the worst governance system
3.	Patle	Lamatar-1, Lalitpur	104.6	158	Brahmin, Chhetri, Bhujel, Chand , Nepali, Newar abd Tamang	Near to capital city; highly potential area for eco-tourism
4.	Chautari	Pathari –9, Morang	128.75	421	Atha Pahariya Rai, Brahmin, Chhetri, Bhujel, Limbu, Newar, Tamang,Gurung,Pariyar, Kami, Nepali, Magar	Higher social and economic diversity
5.	Chautari	Rajahar-8, Nawalparasi	354.72	763	Brahmin, Chhetri, Tamang, Magar, Gurung, Tharu/Chaudhari, Bote/Majhi and Dalits (B.K./Sunar, Pariyar, Nepali)	Elites domination in the CFUG processes; highly heterogeneous and large no. of users;
6.	Kajipauwa	Tansen – 11, Palpa	24.03	111	Brahmin, Chhetri, Magar, Newar and Gandarva	Near to the district headquarters; limited exposure with external stakeholders

4. Key Activities

Major focus of the project was to test some of the SAS tools in the field and provide insights and feedback on the tools themselves. The project also aimed at improving the capacity of the personnel and collaborating stakeholders, who are involved in the action research in the country, through training and action-based learning.

a. Orientation of ForestAction Team

One day interaction between facilitators from LIBIRD and ForestAction Researchers engaged in ACM project was organized. Prior to this meeting a senior researcher from ForestAction shared some SAS tools to the rest of the members of ForestAction of the project. He participated in the earlier two SAS training facilitated by D Buckles and J Chevalier of Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Canada.

Similarly, four researchers participated in two days advance level SAS training held on November 30-December 1, 2006. at Kathmandu. It was facilitated by D Buckles of Carleton University. This training was focused review on SAS tool, experience sharing and orientation towards the advance use of SAS tools.

b. Selection of Facilitators

Existing change agents from the ACM project were basically selected for SAS facilitation also and provided the training to them. Usually respective CFUGs selected their facilitators. District or sub-district level (we call the level as Meso) facilitators were selected by the respective institutions/forums they represented. Though we provided training to the facilitators from both the levels, facilitators from the CFUGs were the mainly engaged in testing the SAS tools in their CFUGs.

c. Training to Facilitators

Two training events, three days each, were organized in June12-14 in Dhankuta (East) and June 16-18 in Chitwan (Center). Total of 54 participants including 17 female and 37 male attended the training (see Table 2). Overall facilitation of the training was done by the facilitators from ForestAction, LIBIRD and New ERA. The training included reflection and reorientation of ACM approach being applied in the sites as well as some tools of SAS included.

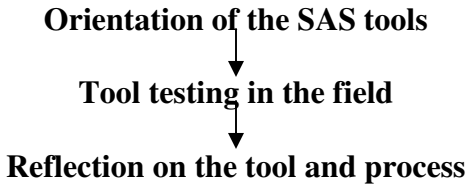
Table 2: Participants of training by sex

District	Participants		
	Female	Male	Total
Sankhuwasabha	-	7	7
Dhankuta	8	7	15
Morang	3	7	10
Lalitpur	1	5	6
Nawalparasi	5	4	9
Palpa	-	7	7

Total	17	37	54

d. Field Testing of the tools

The field testing of tools after training to the facilitators followed three steps:



Orientation of the SAS tools

Initially, half-day all the participants (facilitators) were oriented on the SAS tools with providing the practical examples. ForestAction, Li-Bird and few Meso stakeholders facilitated the SAS tools orientation training for practicing at CFUG level.

Table 3 The total no of participants engaged for field level SAS tool testing.

District	Name of the CFUG	Participants			Remarks
		Female	Male	Total	
Dhankuta	Khanyubas	5	2	7	
	Handikharka	3	2	5	
	District level organizations (Meso)	4	-	4	Present during orientation
Morang	Chautari	4	3	7	
Lalitpur	Patle	4	6	10	
	Sub-district level organization (Meso)	-	1	1	
Nawalparasi	Chautari	4	9	13	
Palpa	Kajipauwa	6	9	15	
Total		28	32	62	

SAS tool testing at CFUG level

Out of four tools oriented initially, participants from each site choose 3 tools to test on their CFUG. Major focus and interest of the participants were stakeholder analysis, Information flow analysis and Perception analysis. After having the basic ideas on the tools and techniques of their use, the facilitators were divided into groups. Each single group tested a single tool in their CFUG.

The group consulted with different stakeholders (male-female, internal stakeholders, different socio-economic group) for tools testing. Later they analyzed them in their smaller groups. Similarly, all the SAS tools were used for information collection and triangulation as well. Researchers used the information collected by the local facilitators by using the tools for their research purpose with triangulation in plenary and through other methods. In Patle CFUG of Lalitpur, however, participants of the orientation acted as informants to provide the information.

Finally they shared the experiences and reflected the strength and weakness of the tools within the facilitators and other groups. During the reflection participants also discussed on the potential use of these tools as part of their decision support system. In general, participants get ignited by the use of these tools as they helped them reflect their practices and find out potential areas of improvement.

5. Reflection on SAS Tools

General:

- SAS tools combine qualitative and quantitative analysis of social processes and institutions.
- The overall reflection on the SAS tool was that these tools are very useful in the local context. However, analysis part of them needs some understanding of mathematics which local facilitators felt difficulties to understand and use at the local level.
- To gather the 'real' information, the person who has some knowledge regarding the context should be present there. Otherwise it could be misleading without subsidiary queries on the provided information and analysis.
- At the local level, among the diverse facilitators who have ideas on CFUG processes and issues, already involved (directly or indirectly) in CFUG facilitation and are literate implemented the SAS tools more effectively.

Stakeholder Analysis

- The objective of the Stakeholder Analysis is to identify the potential stakeholders. The participants of the trainings find it very useful to identify the stakeholders and their categories.
- While accessing the stakeholders, the scale for legitimacy, interest and power are very important. Thus, before analyzing the 3 dimensions, scale should be prepared or agreed for them. Otherwise participants found confusing while accessing them. Researchers asked participants to prepare them according to the context.
- This tool indicates clearly on which of the stakeholders are very prominent for the issue/ resource/ program but it is sometime confusing with the stakeholders in transition of non-stakeholders and stakeholders (with lower medium level of legitimacy, interest and power). Stakeholders had hard time in interpreting according

to the criteria - with some stakeholders whom they felt as very important ones were analyzed as non-stakeholders by use of the tools.

Information Flow Analysis

- It is a reflective tool on testing stakeholders' relationship. When stakeholders are allowed to discuss on how much information do they provide to each other, they not only reflect on the deficits on information flow but also forces them to make strategies to increase sharing of information.
- However, when the concerned stakeholders are together for the analysis, powerful stakeholders can pretend that they provided more information than they actually did. When facilitation is weak, there is likely that powerful stakeholders dominate the discussion.

Perception Analysis

- Participants reflected that it would be easy to analyze the perception if there are only two groups but it might be difficult to compare if there are many groups for the perception analysis.
- Perception analysis was found very useful and reflective tool for the local leaders to understand that user have different perception on what program is of their focus.

Trust Analysis

- Looking at the experience of Patle CFUG, Lalitpur, it is better to have 2 to 3 people to assess trust. One individual might bring more hypothetical information because he/she does not want to take personal risk assessing stakeholders when there are many participants and influential stakeholders. Looking at the Nepalese culture there is less likely that anybody would claim for lack of trust to any stakeholders especially when there are other parties present in the assessment.
- It should be done separately with the concerned stakeholders on how much do they trust with other stakeholder (s). If we try to assess the trust in a group of the concerned SHs, that cannot bring the true information. It is difficult to assess in a group since power, knowledge and position of different stakeholders play role while assessing the level of trust.

Annex 1: Training Contents and Flow

SN	Session	Methodology
1.	Introduction	Individual name, institution by district and expression of understanding to given particular keyword
2.	Expectation collection	Few minutes brainstorming and individual collection through meta card
3.	Objectives	• Reflection on ACM activities • Some facilitation tools/methods including SAS tools • Use and focus of the ACM elements
4.	Norm setting	• Time schedule • Logistic and management support
5.	Reflection on ACM activities conducted so far	• Three district wise group work – what has been conducted in CFUG and meso levels {Activities status, Process, learning (what worked better, what did not,)} • Group presentation • Discussion
6.	ACM conceptual refreshment	Presentation on 'What is ACM, its process and elements'
7.	Gap analysis (most focused element and least focused elements)? Why?	Plenary discussion based on earlier group presentation and ACM concepts
8.	CAs' role, achievements/benefits vs costs/burdens	What CAs gained and what they missed being involved as ACM facilitator
9.	Strategies and tools	
	a. System analysis	• One specific example presentation • District wise group discussion on CFUG specific case • Discussion on how to use the tool in CFUG/ Meso? • Reflection on tool
	b. Heterogeneity analysis (Position, opportunities, benefits , costs, representation)	Presentation by facilitator and plenary discussion Presentation on position, opportunities, benefit, cost, representation with specific examples – eg assessment of participation by position, by representation, by caste/ethnicity
	c. Stakeholder Analysis (CLIP)	Presentation by facilitator, group work and plenary discussion
	d. Communication and information flow analysis	Presentation by facilitator, group work and plenary discussion

	e. Perception analysis	Presentation by facilitator, group work and plenary discussion
	f. Trust Analysis	Presentation by facilitator, group work and plenary discussion
	g. Risk and uncertainties analysis	Presentation by facilitator and plenary discussion
	h. Conflict management	Presentation by facilitator and plenary discussion
10	Connecting people to policy	Presentation and plenary discussion
11	Discussion on CAs' Roles, benefits and costs	Individual works, group works, plenary discussion
12	Achievable action plan for forthcoming three months	Group works and plenary discussion

Annex 2: Reflection on SAS tool from Chautari CFUG, Morang

S.N.	Tools	Involvement	Steps / Process	Learning
1.	Stakeholders Analysis	Facilitators (2) Secretary	▪ List preparation of the potential Stakeholders ▪ Interview with key informant ▪ Discussion within facilitators ▪ Presented during reflection meeting	▪ Presentation of SHs representatives would be beneficial ▪ Well-defined indicators of power, interest and legitimacy should be prepared. ▪ Identification of SHs to be prioritized
2.	Information flow Analysis	Facilitators Users	▪ Interview with few internal stakeholders ▪ SHs listing ▪ Tabulation of the SHs in the matrix. ▪ Discussion on the scoring	▪ Its provide information regarding mutual sharing of messages among the SHs ▪ Difficult to understand the means of information sharing with this tool ▪ It is very supportive for effective communication. ▪ It provides the glimpse of relationship among the SHs
3.	Perception Analysis	Users from Ga and Gha i.e poor catagories (5 female and 7 male with 3 facilitators	▪ List preparation of problems/ activities through group discussion ▪ Group division (Male and female) ▪ Small Group work (Prioritization of prepared problems/ activities) ▪ Analysis in Group	▪ It is very effective tool for understanding the opinion of different group. ▪ It is difficult to use if there are many groups for consultation ▪ While discussing the problems for analyzing perception , it gives clarity on it and also their reason for supporting it.