



UKaid
from the Department for
International Development

Natural Resource Governance, Empowerment and Poverty Reduction

Learning from practice
Jordi Surkin





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List of Acronyms

Acronyms from languages other than English are spelled out in their English translation for this list.

CBO	Community-based Organization
CIHR	Conservation Initiative on Human Rights
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
GTF	Global Transparency Fund
HQ	(IUCN) Headquarters
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KPMG	Accounting firm that manages the Global Transparency for DFID
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSP	Multi-stakeholder Platform
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NR	Natural Resource
PA	Protected Area
PAP	Project Advisory Panel (Sri Lanka)
PCG	Project Consultative Group (Sri Lanka)
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
RBA	Rights Based Approach
SADC	South African Development Community
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound

1. Introduction

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) views effective governance as essential for protection biodiversity and sustainable development. Unclear or poor governance can lead to illegal and unsustainable use of natural resources. Without adequate governance mechanisms, conflicts over natural resource are often accentuated, as different sets of actors seek to utilize resources based on their specific needs or priorities (Oviedo 2010).

To begin to address these challenges, in 2009, the IUCN Social Policy Unit, together with IUCN regional offices and partners, began implementing the “Improving Natural Resource Governance for Rural Poverty Reduction” project financed by UKaid from the Department for International Development’s (DFID) Global Transparency Fund (GTF). This project included a portfolio of 10 sub-projects in Africa (3), Asia (3), South America (1), West Asia (1), with one cross-cutting component on protected areas and one coordinating component based at IUCN headquarters in Switzerland. More specifically, the project focused on:

- Building capacities to engage in governance processes
- Strengthening voice through multistakeholder dialogue
- Increasing participation of all stakeholders in governance of natural resources
- Improvements in income generation and livelihood arrangements
- Helping to preserve traditional systems of resource tenure that secure livelihoods and contribute to nature conservation
- Expanding the understanding of human well-being
- Promoting policy improvement from the local to global level

The project has been implemented in a diversity of ecosystems, social, cultural and political contexts and scales. This diversity included work with protected areas, community lands, watersheds and landscapes. Each sub project addressed governance and liveli-

hoods in different ways. All but two (Bangladesh and Kenya) of the project’s ten sub projects concluded by December 2011 or earlier. Thus, this is an appropriate moment to examine lessons learned.

This document was developed through a review of existing project learning and other documents. Some of these documents (i.e. in Sri Lanka) incorporated learning and reflection by IUCN and partners. Unfortunately, there was not enough time or resources to engage in more in-depth reflection with IUCN staff and partners on lessons, although this would have been extremely useful.

This document is divided into three sections. The first examines learning on various aspects of natural resources governance. This is followed by a section focusing more specifically on project implementation, planning and management lessons. Finally, we conclude with some suggestions on possible future niches for IUCN in the natural resources (NR) governance arena. We expect this document can contribute to strengthening the natural resource governance work of IUCN and partners and provide valuable learning for DFID, GTF grantees and other institutions involved in governance.

1.1. A Governance Framework Based on Learning

As part of this project, we reviewed the existing IUCN governance principles and literature on the topic. We also took into account reflections and learning from various sub projects. For example, the Bolivia/Peru project brought to the forefront the importance of cultural practices, reciprocity and spirituality in natural resource governance. With all these inputs we developed new framework of governance principles, which we view as a work in progress and guidance for those interested in natural resource governance. A summarized version of this framework is presented in the table below.

Principle	Elements of the Principle
1. Inclusion	<p>Participation and voice of all stakeholders.</p> <p>Respect and Trust between all stakeholders.</p>
2. Legitimacy	<p>Integrity and commitment of all stakeholders.</p> <p>Authority and Representativity: The governing body and its members have legitimate, democratically mandated authority.</p> <p>Legitimacy: The governing body and/or its members have a long-standing cultural attachment to the area. The governing body follows its mandate.</p>
3. Direction	<p>Strategic vision: Broad and long-term perspectives on good governance.</p> <p>Coherence and Contextualization: Integration into local contexts and compatibility with plans and policies of other levels and sectors.</p>
4. Performance	<p>Responsiveness: Needs of all stakeholders are taken into account.</p> <p>Effectiveness and efficiency: Needs are met while making best use of resources available.</p> <p>Capacities: all stakeholders have capacities to engage in governance.</p> <p>Financial sustainability of processes and results.</p> <p>Subsidiarity: Power and decisions rest at the lowest level.</p> <p>Resilience: The governing body can be flexible, learn and adapt.</p>
5. Accountability	<p>Accountability of all decision makers to the public.</p> <p>Transparency: Processes, institutions and information are clear and directly accessible.</p>
6. Fairness	<p>Equity: Costs and benefits are equitably shared.</p> <p>Rule of law: Legal frameworks are fair and enforced impartially.</p> <p>Human rights and cultural practices are respected.</p> <p>Do no harm: Local livelihoods are not adversely affected.</p> <p>Effective and appropriate conflict resolution: There is recourse to impartial judgment in the case of conflict.</p> <p>Access to justice: Legal assistance is available to all stakeholders.</p>

Adapted from Surkin and Oviedo 2011. Sources: Graham et al. 2003 and Lockwood 2010.

2. Lessons on Natural Resource Governance

In general, we found that there tends to be confusion and misunderstanding with respect to meanings of governance and how to implement it in natural resource use contexts. Sub projects which invested in clarifying this and developing a common approach (Asia region) tended to be more successful. This, in turn, contributed to having a more effective project design and implementation. Consequently, **development of a common understanding and definition of governance is a key step for implementation of natural resource governance projects to be more successful.**

In the following sub-sections we explore lessons that have emerged in specific thematic areas. At the end of this section, we have also included a sub section of best practices and success factors that have emerged from our project.

2.1. Community Empowerment and Voice in Natural Resource Governance

Awareness of their rights empowers local people to engage in governance. It is unfortunately quite common that communities are not aware of their rights as defined in laws and regulations. In such contexts, efforts to raise their awareness of these issues have been extremely empowering and vital for them to be able to participate in NR governance.

Multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) can empower marginalized people and promote NR governance. In Bangladesh, Benin and Nepal, MSPs have enabled marginalized groups to have voice and different sectors to engage in dialogue (civil society and government). MSPs can also enable improved coordination among government agencies which in turn leads to more effective and responsive NR governance. It is important that MSPs involve real and effective participation that goes beyond limited processes of consultation and includes different stakeholders in decision-making.

Participatory, gender and poverty tools can support empowerment. Almost all sub projects had

success utilizing various types of participatory methods to empower local people, increase their voice and ensure that natural resource governance more effectively reflected their needs. In some cases, we have found that gender and poverty sensitive tools can be very effective for breaking down barriers.

2.2. Social and Gender Equity in Natural Resource Governance

Sustainable natural resource use requires more democratic and equitable governance processes. This is especially true in areas of high poverty such as those where our project was implemented. Without tangible livelihood benefits, governance can be abstract for local communities. Consequently, people lose interest in governance and it is hard to build trust. Greater democratization, including respect for human right, participation, and accountability, is another prerequisite for sustainable natural resource that benefits local people.

In some cases, we have seen that **women can be empowered through MSPs.** In Bangladesh, 40% of MSP participants are women who are increasingly active participants. Before this project women had little representation in their communities and didn't leave their homes. Other sub projects were much less successful in empowering women. For example, in Lebanon participation targets for women in MSP processes and empowerment related activities were largely missed or only marginally met (Garstecki 2011).

Natural resource governance can improve the lives of women. In Bangladesh, Bulu Rani Bishash a 40 year old woman, as a result of project support, now owns her own fish sanctuary and nursery, a high-tech water pump and wants to start a fruit orchard. In fact she is doing so well she has a substantial savings account and can now sustain both her and her son's family.

Natural resource governance can be a mechanism to address sensitive political and social issues. In various countries, governance has proven to be a useful means to address sensitive

issues in contexts of socio-political conservatism and conflict. For example, it has been possible to address gender and ethnic equality in traditionally conservative societies (Syria, Bangladesh, and Lebanon). It has also provided an opportunity to bring together different actors who had historically been entrenched in violent conflict (Sri Lanka).

Governance processes can produce improvements in livelihood and natural resource use. In Bangladesh, fishing communities have been able to utilize increased voice to bring about policy changes including increased access to and control over natural resources as well as increased income from government.

2.3. Rights and Culture in Natural Resource Governance

Our project worked extensively with the Conservation Initiative on Human Rights (CIHR) is made up of the 8 largest environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and is a unique platform in which these organizations explore ways to integrate and promote good of natural resources and protected areas (PAs) as well as rights based approaches (RBAs). This initiative has the potential to be a powerful mechanism to scale up governance and rights based work in the field of conservation and sustainable management. Through reflection and learning, in its scoping paper on key issues at the intersection of conservation and human rights (Springer et al. 2011) CIHR has identified a step wise approach for rights based conservation, which can be a valuable tool for guiding action throughout the world. The key steps to this approach are:

1. Undertake a situation analysis
 - 1.1. Identify actions, stakeholders and roles
 - 1.2. Identify applicable legal rights, claims, and duties
 - 1.3. Identify potential impacts of the proposed activity or project
 - 1.4. Identify potential conflict resolution mechanisms
2. Provide information
 - 2.1. Compile, publish and otherwise disseminate information in an understandable and easily accessible way

- 2.2. Disseminate general information regarding the action
- 2.3. Disseminate specific information regarding legal rights, claims and duties of potentially affected persons
3. Ensure participation
 - 3.1. Undertake consultations
 - 3.2. Seek and promote free, prior and informed consent
 - 3.3. Provide and use conflict resolution mechanisms to secure rights
4. Take reasoned decisions
5. Monitor and evaluate application of the RBA
6. Enforce rights

Governance principles should reflect local cultural practices and values. The Bolivia sub project worked on linking good governance concepts and principles to a rapidly changing political context in which indigenous forms of self government are of increasing importance. They also focused on development of culturally based indicators of well being. This work brought to the forefront the need to integrate different world views and practice in governance processes as well as to develop a better understanding of how to apply good governance in different political and cultural contexts.

Revival of traditional resource use systems may not always be effective. In Lebanon and Syria, IUCN and project partners sought to support the revival of himas.¹ However, in Syria, a “Hima revival” was precluded by the overall political, legal and institutional framework. In Lebanon, our partner SPNL has had a limited number of positive experiences with Hima in recent years, but it is unclear whether such actions constitute a viable means for promoting community natural resource governance and use in the current context (Garstecki 2011).

2.4. Legal Frameworks and Institutional Structures for Better Governance

To implement natural resource governance actions it is necessary to fully **understand how rights, land tenure and resource use are defined in legislation and policy.** Across the countries where our project was implemented there are differences in

¹ In the Arabian Peninsula, himas have existed for more than 1400 years. They are traditional resource use systems that in the past were widespread. In Arabic, the term means “protected place or area” (see Kilani et al. 2007).

the way these principles and policy approaches are translated into legislation, particularly with respect to community rights. Among developing countries, Latin America tends to have the highest level of recognition of community land and political rights.

Legal frameworks for land use and conservation need to be respectfully designed to enable governance. Many countries lack appropriate legal recognition for diverse forms of land use. Most legal frameworks do not adequately take into account different forms of protected area (PA) governance. Such measures are needed to ensure support for, rather than undermine, community institutions and NR governance (Madzwamuse 2010).

A combination of statutory and customary law can be an effective means of enabling natural resource governance. The Kenya sub project has worked to combine statutory mechanisms and traditional pastoralist norms in rangeland planning and governance. To date this has proven to be an effective means for ensuring equitable natural resources governance, because it enables participation in decision making without marginalizing cultural practices.

2.5. Building Capacity for Better Natural Resource Governance

All stakeholders involved in natural resource governance require some form of capacity building and training, but the needs vary. Building civil society's capacity to effectively engage in and contribute to governance processes is fundamentally important. Community based and civil society organizations need to be able to develop alliances, participate in decision making and influence policy. However, these are capacities that they often lack or are weak. Capacity building needs to be both technical and political. It is important to pay attention to political capacity because in many rural contexts the state is absent or unable to effectively fulfill its roles.

Capacity building can be more effective when focused on socially and economically marginalized groups, such as women and indigenous peoples who tend to have the greatest need for greater capacity.

Awareness raising, outreach and information dissemination are vital. In some countries, proj-

ect awareness raising and sensitization efforts have produced a substantial change in the attitude about natural resource governance among communities and government officers. For example, in Sri Lanka, community leaders state that they now understand governance issues and are better able to engage.

Capacity building can create opportunities for implementing and promoting natural resource governance. The training of trainers approach to capacity building implemented in Sri Lanka targeted government officials and has positively changed the overall thinking about governance. Senior government officers are now more receptive to the subject, although before the project, it was a very sensitive subject and viewed negatively (Miththapala 2011). It has also created interest within the government to continue capacity building and to further promote NR governance.

Governance projects need to include more time for building the capacities of NGOs and partners. This is particularly the case in developing countries where NGOs may lack the necessary in-house capacity on governance. They often also need to acquire new capacities such as participatory approaches, which are of particular importance for empowerment.

2.6. Policy Influencing to Enable Better Governance

There is a need for an enabling environment for governance. Community based natural resources governance, especially innovative approaches such as Himas, need a strong political support at all levels and an enabling policy, legislative and institutional framework.

MSPs can enable poor and excluded sectors to influence policy. In Bangladesh, through MSPs set up by our project CBOs were able obtain access to canals that had traditionally been controlled by elites as well as an increase from 500/head to 3500-5000/head (approximately from 5GBP to 50GBP/head) in the amount of compensation fishermen receive in the fishing ban season. In Periyakalapu lagoon, Sri Lanka, as a result of the influence of the MSP two bridges were built instead of causeways. This has minimized damage to the lagoon because unlike causeway bridges allow water flows (Miththapala 2011).

It is hard to achieve policy impacts but important to remain engaged in policy processes. Our global project supported development of standards and tools linked to rights and governance in international policy for a such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, climate change and biofuels. These actions have not yet produced a concrete impact but the potential impact on NR governance across the globe is enormous. In Nepal, as a results of project actions the current draft of the National Constitution now contains positive changes related to access and benefit sharing, community and environmental rights, natural resources governance, and watershed management. Once the new Constitution is approved these changes could have major impacts on NR governance in the country. Had there not been an effort to engage in this policy influencing these positive changes may not have happened.

Technical support for government institutions can be a vehicle for enabling policy influencing. Our global sub-project was able to influence the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) protected area governance work, by providing technical support with our regional office for Eastern and Southern Africa. First, we supported the implementation of a workshop on PA and transboundary governance. Subsequently, we provided technical and financial support for development a concept note and position paper on governance and natural resource use. This has led to SADC countries being more interested in working on PA governance as well as in having IUCN engaged as a partner in this process.

2.7. Communications and Learning in Natural Resource Governance

Develop a communications and advocacy strategy early on. Most sub projects included a policy influencing outcome but did not develop a clear communications and advocacy strategy. This led to policy influencing processes being either weak or unsuccessful, which could have been avoided had this been addressed early on. Development of communications strategies for each sub project would have provided a clear framework for knowledge dissemination and helped identify specific messages for different audiences.

The media can be a valuable partner but not always. In Nepal, after project completion, the media still aired programs on issues of environmental rights and good governance that we had developed. In other cases, however, there was no clear evidence that the media can enable the local people to push for their rights, greater transparency and better governance.

Emphasize on communications and outreach on NR governance. Some sub projects did engage in awareness raising but overall there was little to no allocation of investment in public communications and outreach. This weakened capacity to articulate project results, influence policy and fund raise.

Need for better documentation and dissemination of lessons, methods and tools. NR governance processes need to be documented in order to allow for learning and replication. Government personnel, partners and communities have limited access to information of relevance for NR governance such as tools, monitoring systems and frameworks for equitable benefit sharing, community engagement and auditing livelihood impacts. Guidelines for the use and application of rights based approaches are also scarce (Madzwamuse 2010). While the project addressed this is some ways, for various reasons, we were unable to do more.

2.8. Steps for Enhancing IUCN's Own Implementation of Governance Principles

From the perspective of the Social Policy unit, this project has produced important lessons on steps that are needed to enhance IUCN's own implementation of governance principles, in order to be better placed to promote natural governance across the globe. IUCN must be able to demonstrate that internally it upholds the governance principles that it promotes in natural resource projects and policy actions in countries around the world.

In particular, **IUCN needs to make a greater effort to enhance its own accountability and transparency.** For one, it does not have a rigorous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place, including a

tool for follow up on the extent to which governance principles are applied and respected throughout the union. IUCN needs to be able to provide donors, regions, members, staff and others with transparent access to financial information and a financial accounting system is in place at all levels that is in line with governance principles, including responsible and efficient use of resources. Reporting standards at all levels could also be significantly improved.

Project design should be more transparent and participatory. Members and partners need to be more involved in project design and implementation, to ensure they have full access to relevant information and can contribute to improving the process. An effort needs to be made to improve IUCN's capacity to implement project with and through member organizations and partners.

While there is a growing focus globally and within IUCN on governance and rights based approaches, **many, especially field staff, lack an adequate understanding of what governance principles are and how to apply them in practice.** Across the union there is no common approach to NR governance. Consequently, IUCN needs engage its staff in training on governance issues, principles and practices as well as RBAs.

2.9. Success Factors and Best Practices in Natural Resource Governance

To date project implementation in has produced valuable insights in terms of best practices in NR governance and factors that can ensure greater success. These are:

Political will is a critical factor for NR governance. Poor communities are major constituents in the policy making process, making it difficult for them to influence policies. Government authorities tend to resist change. As such, unless there is greater political will improvements in natural resource governance are unlikely or very difficult to achieve.

Communities need to participate and feel involved. Change in NR governance is more likely to occur when local communities are able to identify the interventions they need through their existing

governance structures. Communities need to feel that the process of governance is theirs and not imposed from outside. Active involvement of all stakeholders in decision making is also fundamentally important.

It is critical to understand and respect community and indigenous governance structures and identify their weak links. It is vital to have a clear idea of how competing resource users interact with each other in the context of management of common property resources, especially in the case of pastoral groups.

Build bridges between legal and traditional frameworks. In Kenya, a strategy that combines statutory law and regulations with an effort to recover and document customary use practices and a culture of collaboration has shown to be an effective means for ensuring equitable natural resources governance.

Work with the media to scale up impacts. In Nepal, radio programs proved to be an especially good vehicle for informing poor rural communities and illiterate groups on NR governance and rights. In this country, training of journalists on natural resource governance has enabled them to integrate this new knowledge in their reports or articles, increasing the potential scale of project impact.

Capacity building and awareness raising are vital for natural resource governance. Communities, government personnel and NGOs often lack the capacities needed to implement and engage in NR governance. Communities often do not know their rights and under such circumstances are ill placed to engage in governance. Similarly, government actors themselves are often unaware of local rights. When communities gain knowledge of what their rights are, they are better able to defend them and hold government accountable (Springer et al. 2010). Awareness raising has proven to be a best practice for making local government representatives are more cooperative, responsive and accountable. Political elites have to be continually sensitized in order to induce the will for change and enable effective participatory decision-making and knowledge-sharing.

Political standing and credibility of IUCN and partners can help open doors. IUCN's involve-

ment as a trusted international organization was instrumental in opening possibilities for NR governance work in Syria. In a number of countries our partners had high degree of national and local respect, which enhanced their ability to promote governance. This illustrates that political standing and credibility can be of great importance.

MSPs have been a best practice for providing voice and influencing policy. For one, they can provide poor people, women and ethnic minorities with a voice to influence decision making processes, in particular at the local and regional level. As a result of MSPs, poor people have even been able to influence policy, at least in Asian countries such as Bangladesh. They can produce improvements in coordination between government actors, responsiveness and accountability.

Involvement of government actors at all levels is vitally important for NR governance. Direct involvement of government stakeholders at all levels is vital, because they have a mandate over natural resource use planning and processes. If they are involved in governance processes, they can gain a better understanding of and be more responsive to local communities needs.

Work through partnerships and build on previous experience. The most successful projects were those that built on previous experience and included project partners with a strong presence and experience in these areas. This helps build trust, ownership and buy-in of local communities and partners. This in turn lowers risk and produces better results. Often no one partner has the capacities needed for project implementation and working with multiple partners with complementary skills can be a useful means to overcome this challenge.

2.10. Innovations to Improve Natural Resource Governance

Application of the Hima concept to new types of natural resource use is an innovative area of work that builds on traditional resource use systems. It is a bit early to tell, but if our partner in Lebanon continues to increase the focus on governance processes that can lead to replacement

of unsustainable natural resource use patterns by more sustainable ones, then this approach could be more successfully replicated throughout the region (Garstecki 2011).

IUCN-SUR and its partners have developed an **innovative method for design of cultural indicators of human well being**, which was applied in peasant and indigenous communities in the highlands of Bolivia and Peru. This methodology incorporates qualitative and ethnographic techniques, to capture local voices through their perceptions, conceptions and criteria of well being. It could be adapted and utilized to broaden the understanding of human well being and its links to natural resource governance in other countries.

In Kenya, IUCN and the local community organization are implementing an **innovative approach that builds on indigenous knowledge and institutions of resource management**. This approach is in stark contrast to the traditional paradigm of resource management in Kenya which has excluded communities and overlooked local knowledge systems. This bottom-up approach, if successful, could be a model to be replicated in other parts of Kenya and Eastern Africa.

A unique approach to payment for ecosystem services (PES). In Saradu Watershed in Nepal, our project has set up a PES like scheme conservation fund which is both participatory and could be financially self-sustainable (see IUCN 2011 for a more in depth description). The poorest families in upland forest areas receive funds to engage in alternative economic activities such as ginger production instead of unsustainable extraction of forest resources. The idea is that the fund could be replenished and sustained with funding from local water company in Dharan municipality, which has an approximate population of 150,000 who will benefit from better watershed management upstream. The process is highly participatory as the watershed scale MSP is responsible for making decision related to the PES mechanism. This scheme is still in nascent stages, but it appears to be viable and offers some innovative ideas for Nepal and other countries and regions.

3. Lessons on Project Design, Planning and Management

We now turn our attention to specific project related lessons on design and planning, management, risk, sustainability and monitoring and evaluation.

3.1. Project Design and Planning

A “one size fits all” approach does not work.

Different social, political and cultural context require differentiated approaches to NR governance. This was particularly true in multi country sub projects such as in Drylands (Kenya, Tunisia, Mali, and Burkina Faso), Bolivia/Peru, and Lebanon and Syria which had a common log frame but, due to big differences in political and operating environments, should have had approaches tailored for each country. In other cases, there were substantial differences in environmental and socio-economic settings that would have required nationally and locally adapted interventions.

Project implementation should be focused and streamlined to ensure greater impact. In retrospect, it is clear that the project would have been more effective and sustainable had there been fewer countries and sub-projects. Under such circumstances it would have been possible to have higher levels of investment in each project, making them more likely to meet their goals and targets.

Greater attention should be paid to livelihood improvements. While governance is a vital issue for local livelihoods, communities tend to be more interested in livelihood issues. This is why the projects that had greater impact were those that produced some improvement in local livelihoods (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Kenya). Other sub projects were not able to address livelihood issues either because of poor planning or the failure to include specific actions of this type (Garstecki 2011).

Collaboration with government should take into account their needs and is vital for governance and policy influencing. Those projects where there was a stronger coordination with government (Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka)

at various levels were generally most successful in delivering policy impacts. Such collaboration is more likely to be successful when project design takes into account the needs of government institutions, and they are involved in some way in the implementation process (Swennenhuis 2011).

Partners need to be actively involved in transparent project design process. In Sri Lanka all stakeholders felt that the project design was not transparent. This was also the case in some other sub projects such as Mozambique/South Africa. Had project design been more transparent and partners more involved in the process, sub projects might have had greater impact and success.

Discussion and reflection on planning during the early stages is essential for project success. It is clear that all parties involved in implementation did not have the same expectations about what the project was trying to achieve, what was need to achieve these objectives, purpose and outputs, and who was responsible for what. More discussion and reflection during the early stages of the project would have made it possible to largely overcome these issues.

The theory of change and assumptions should be clearly developed at the beginning. Since this was not done early on, a clear thread or threads that connected all subprojects was not articulated, which in turn had negatively affected IUCN’s ability to communicate the overall project logic, results and impacts to the donor.

Develop thorough baseline studies and problem analysis. Sub project baseline studies were weak in terms of analysis of the situation of beneficiaries and natural resources governance challenges at the local and national level. A failure of some sub projects to address livelihood needs can be partly linked to these deficiencies in baseline studies (Garstecki 2011). Weak baselines also led to interventions that did not necessarily address the on the ground needs and challenges of governance.

3.2. Project Management

IUCN needs to strengthen its coordinating role in this type of project, to ensure quality control, promote joint learning, and ensure that lessons from field influence natural resource use policies at the national, regional and international levels (Swennenhuis 2011).

The project implementation structure should be simple and sustainable. The project had an excessively complicated implementing structure, which involved multiple layers from DFID to KPMG (the fund manager) to IUCN headquarters (HQ) to regional offices and local partners. Within IUCN there were multiple layers, due in part to our organizational structure and politics. Due to the large number of sub projects, management in HQ was at times remote and unable to have a stronger on the ground presence (Johnson and van Dam 2011).

Intra project communications are needed to ensure effective learning and implementation. Within the project information flows bottom-upwards and top-downwards were flawed. This slowed and acted as a barrier to learning as well as project implementation.

Greater attention needs to be paid to the identification of appropriate partners for NR governance work in each country and region. In many sub projects, for distinct reasons, it was evident that partnerships were weak. In other cases the implementing arrangements, including partners selected, were not the most appropriate for a NR governance project.

3.3. Risk Management

Carry out an exhaustive risk analysis, including identification of mitigation measures. As was stated in the project midterm review, overall the analysis and management of risk was quite weak (Johnson and van Damm 2011). Sub project failed to identify some critical risks or did not adequately qualify the level of risk or identify effective mitigation measures. More time should have been devoted at the beginning of the project to working on these issues with regional offices and partners.

It is important to understand the risks associated with rights based work. While many sub projects, to some extent, addressed rights issues, this work did not always reflect a detailed and nuanced understanding of the risks involved and their potential impact on project implementation (Garstecki 2011).

Assess the risks associated with political divides, power struggles and territoriality at the community level. These risks are hard to assess a priori and become apparent over the course of project implementation. In several sites in Sri Lanka, such community tensions created barriers for representation on community fora and MSPs, which in turn negatively impacted on project results (Miththapala 2011).

Projects should be designed to be viable on their own. Some sub projects were designed to be implemented together with complementary projects, which unfortunately never materialized. This resulted in difficulties delivering on the project results and impacts.

3.4. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework

The logframe needs to be clearly defined and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound). The initial project logframe contained overly optimistic outcomes, particularly with respect to capacity to deliver policy changes at the national and global levels. This reduced its effectiveness as a tool for communication within the implementing team, as well as for detailed activity planning, monitoring and reporting. The main lesson here is that a logframe should be as SMART as possible and serves as an effective planning/M&E tool (Garstecki 2011).

Good baselines that are indicator specific are vital for enabling effective reporting and M&E. As the project logframe was adjusted and improved over time, it became clear that information collected initially was not presented concisely enough to make it possible to demonstrate progress. In other cases, the baselines developed did not sufficiently address actions of particular relevance for each sub project and expected outcomes.

3.5. Project and Impact Sustainability

Sustainability requires greater realism. In most cases, sub projects had an ambitious work plan that resulted in spreading resources too thin. The planned activities may have been insufficient to reach the desired impacts or changes and therefore ensure greater sustainability.

Sustainability and fundraising need to begin early on. Fundraising is particularly important for these types of projects because the achievement of NR governance impacts is a medium to long term process. Only the Kenya sub project had some success in raising additional and complementary funding for project activities. A number of steps could have been taken much earlier on in the project to address this need. A

communications strategy would have helped by identifying products and messages for donors as well as other actors. A fund raising strategy, including identification of funding needs and potential donors would have been equally useful.

Local ownership is important for sustainability. The commitment of partners to the project and building of ownership among local stakeholders is an important basis for sustainability.

Capacity building can contribute to sustainability. The training for trainers approach implemented in Sri Lanka trained government personnel and these individuals were able to promote greater interest in NR governance in their institutions. This has created opportunities to continue to work on NR governance beyond the life of the project.

Where we work

Globally: The Social Policy Unit, based at IUCN Headquarters in Switzerland, carries out work on cross-cutting issues related to governance such as protected area management and rights-based approaches to conservation. It also provides technical and coordination support to all components of the project.

Lebanon and Syria: Enabling conditions for the preservation of existing traditional systems of resource tenure that contribute to conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Nepal: Improving governance and equitable benefit sharing at the watershed level through multistakeholder dialogue, watershed level conservation planning and policy advocacy at the national level.

Bangladesh: Increasing the participation of local organizations and women in community-based management of natural resources and strengthening capacities to promote equal and legitimized participation of local authorities and communities in natural resource management.

Drylands of Africa (Kenya, Mali/Burkina Faso & Tunisia): Strengthening natural resource governance by reducing marginalization of ethnic groups in the drylands of Africa and improving policies and practices to ensure sustainable use of these resources and ecosystem conservation.

Benin: Improving livelihood security of poor communities neighbouring W National Park and sustainable and decentralized governance of natural resources.

Sri Lanka: Developing an integrated framework for sustainable natural resource management that improves well-being, equity and participation rooted in customary rights and people's ability to exercise them.

Bolivia and Peru: Promoting policy and institutional changes to secure indigenous peoples' rights and their governance of land and natural resources in highland communities.

Mozambique and South Africa: Putting in place the necessary arrangements and expertise for Mozambique's fisheries to be sustainably managed and for trade in products derived from these fisheries to be effectively regulated.

4. Conclusions and IUCN's Niche in Natural Resource Governance

Within the realm of natural resource governance improving accountability and ensuring respect for rights are two of the most critically challenging issues. As a general rule, conservation and environment organizations have not been accountable to local communities for their actions and policies. They have also tended to distance themselves from addressing rights based issues that are vitally important for rural populations whose livelihoods depend on natural resources. Our project's work with CIHR has demonstrated that conservation organizations are able to take steps to address both issues of accountability and rights. Project results to date have also demonstrated that **NR governance improvements can lead to positive impacts for livelihoods and conservation of biodiversity.**

Natural resource governance and the promotion of rights based approaches are central component on the IUCN program for 2013 to 2016. As such this is an area in which it will increasingly be engaged. IUCN is particularly well placed to take a leading role in some specific areas of governance such as:

Policy Influencing based on lessons from the field. Implementation and improvement of natural resource governance requires an enabling policy environment at all levels. Policy influencing is an area of particular strength for IUCN. These processes should take into account its ability to capture learning from the field and utilize this to inform policy making.

Promote RBAs as part of natural resource governance. As one the only global organization that views human rights as a principle of governance and an important member of CIHR, IUCN is well

placed to be leader in continuing to promote the inclusion of RBA within governance processes. Better NR governance is not possible without respect for the rights of local communities and stakeholders.

Develop knowledge products for NR governance. IUCN should also take a leading role in tool development for NR governance, including assessment tools, RBA frameworks and others.

Support for implementation of MSPs to provide voice. MSPs have proven to be a powerful mechanism for improving governance. Since it is often viewed as a neutral actor and its membership includes governments, NGOs and community organizations, IUCN is well placed to continue to play a role in promoting MSPs processes at all levels.

Emphasize the importance of natural resource governance. Most governance work is not particularly focused on natural resources, although governance issues are of particular importance for natural resource management and conservation. As such and given its institutional mission, IUCN should act to promote greater focus on natural resource governance, particularly for poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Strengthen IUCN's accountability and governance capacities. In order to be positioned to be an active promoter of natural resource governance processes, IUCN needs to build capacity to understand, implement and measure governance within its three strands (secretariat, members and commissions). This should include, among other things, steps to increase both internal and external financial and technical accountability.

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About IUCN

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges.

IUCN works on biodiversity, climate change, energy, human livelihoods and greening the world economy by supporting scientific research, managing field projects all over the world, and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,000 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world.

www.iucn.org

About IUCN Social Policy

IUCN Social Policy works to better manage nature for human well-being and promote an understanding that conservation and livelihoods are inextricably linked. It does this by developing policies and strategies to help natural resource-dependent people, especially women, to sustainably manage ecosystems to improve their livelihoods; and by helping to implement sustainable and equitable environmental management.

IUCN Social Policy promotes recognition and respect of indigenous peoples and local communities' rights and institutions, and supports conservation practices based on traditional knowledge and cultural values.

http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/social_policy/



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