Community forestry participatory assessment

RECOFTC

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Community forestry participatory assessment: A guide for practitioners

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A guide for practitioners

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Foreword

Community forestry has progressed rapidly in ASEAN countries since 2010. Over nine years, the total hectares of forests managed by communities across ASEAN has more than doubled from 6.67 million hectares in 2010 to 13.89 in 2019. Despite this achievement, there is a growing need to assess the quality of community forests to better understand the benefits community forestry can provide at the local, national and regional level.

By assessing community forestry in a participatory way with community forestry user groups (CF user groups), practitioners can better help these groups increase the effectiveness of their community forests and identify areas for improvement. The guide will also provide useful information to support the revision of community forestry programs in ASEAN.

This guide was prepared in direct response to a request from the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) and addresses the needs of government and civil society organizations working on community forestry in ASEAN. It will help practitioners design, conduct and improve participatory assessments of community forestry at the field level. The guide is based on the five community forestry principles that have been identified by RECOFTC. These principles form the basis for the development of criteria and indicators in the guide.

This practitioner's guide was developed under the ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC) project. Designed in consultation with ASEAN member states, ASFCC develops and integrates social forestry approaches into the climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies of ASEAN and its member states. The project also enhances the inclusion of communities, women and vulnerable groups in social forestry and climate change measures. ASFCC achieves this through the development of social forestry policy frameworks, sharing knowledge, building capacity and establishing networks, and conducting learning interventions, research and assessments.

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Glossary

Bundle of rights: a collection of single rights that together provide a forest user with strong legal or customary privilege. The bundle includes access rights, duration, exclusion, management, alienation, withdrawal, and due process and compensation[1].

- **Access:** access rights allow a community and its members to enter a forest area
- **Duration:** duration measures the permanence of allocated rights
- **Exclusion:** exclusion is the ability to refuse another individual, group, or entity access to and use of a particular resource
- **Management:** management can be defined by the legal limits of other rights and it can also be used to empower a community to articulate its rights to alienation or the exclusion of particular resources
- **Alienation:** the right to alienate one's property is the right to transfer one's right to another entity
- **Withdrawal:** withdrawal rights are the right to benefit from forest products, for subsistence or commercial purposes
- **Due Process and Compensation:** the right to due process and compensation in cases of eminent domain

Community forestry (CF): models of forest management that give local people the majority say in making decisions

Community forests: forests that are owned and managed by local communities, either communally or individually

Community forestry principles: RECOFTC's five principles that are necessary for developing and implementing social forestry:

- Availability of natural resources
- Effective governance and participation
- Rights and institutional settings
- Addressing community needs
- Adaptive management and learning

Community Forest User Group (CF user group or CFUG): a group of individuals with common goals and the responsibility to manage a particular area of forest; A single forest area may be managed by multiple CF user groups whose practices interact with each other

Facilitator: the person responsible for setting up, implementing and monitoring social forestry assessments in the field. The practitioner might take this role themselves or assign it to someone with more relevant local competencies and knowledge

Grievance redress mechanisms: systems and resources created by government agencies, at different scales, to receive and address concerns about the potential and actual impact of their policies, programs and operations on stakeholders, such as local communities[2]

Participants: CF user group members, other community members, or related stakeholders who participate in the field assessments introduced in this guide

Practitioner: a person responsible for organizing and facilitating social forestry and designing assessments at the landscape or national level

Products and services: forest products include timber and non-timber products such as medicinal plants, animals, seeds and berries. Forest services include intangible elements of a forest, such as climate regulation, watershed and biodiversity conservation, and recreation

Acronyms

ASOF	ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry
CF	Community Forestry / Community Forest
CF user group or CFUG	Community Forestry User Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FGD	Focus group discussion
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
PC&I	Principles, Criteria and Indicators
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis
TFPs	Timber Forest Products

Chapter 1: How to use this guide

Rationale

Community forestry has the potential to help achieve multiple socio-economic and environmental objectives at national and landscape levels. Governments in Southeast Asia are recognizing that ambitious social forestry programs can do much more than protect forest areas. They can also address poverty, livelihood development, equality issues and biodiversity conservation. Nevertheless, while significant progress has been made implementing these programs, questions still remain on the effectiveness of social forestry.

FAO and ClientEarth have developed an approach for assessing the legal framework for social forestry at the national level[3]. However, there are few tools to assess the effectiveness of social forestry at the local level, especially for community forest members themselves leading the assessment. This is vital if we are to truly understand the effectiveness of social forestry.

This assessment guide was prepared in direct response to a request from the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF). The guide also responds to the needs of government and civil society organizations (CSOs) working to develop social forestry. The guide will help practitioners design, conduct and improve participatory assessments of social forestry at the field level. By assessing community forests together with Community Forest User Group (CF user group) members, practitioners can better help CF user groups increase the effectiveness of their work and identify areas for improvement. The guide may also provide useful information supporting the revision of national social forestry programs.

The guide is based on the five social forestry principles that have been identified by RECOFTC, using participatory practices. These principles form the basis for the development of criteria and indicators in the guide.

Objective and scope

The objective of the guide is to help practitioners conducting a participatory assessment of a community forest understand its effectiveness. It assesses the economic, environmental and social needs of the community. The assessment can be used to highlight key areas of social forestry management that can be improved. The guide can be applied to different types of community forests that exist in Southeast Asia. It helps practitioners assess the success of existing schemes under formal tenure regimes. It could also be used to test customary social forestry practices in their own right or in their potential to be incorporated into formalized or statutory systems.

Who will find this guide useful?

Primary target groups

The primary target groups of this guide are social forestry practitioners from:

- Government departments, such as forest departments and other relevant agencies, responsible for establishing and implementing social forestry
- CSOs, research institutes and other agencies that support social forestry

The following key skills are recommended for practitioners conducting the assessments:

- Understanding the national context of social forestry[4]
- Theoretical and practical understanding of social forestry and natural resource management[5]
- A proven ability to facilitate participatory activities at the local community level

Beneficiaries

The social forestry assessment is designed to help:

- CF user group members identify areas that need improvement, including updating community forest management plans; identifying potential partners for collaboration, such as private sector, government agencies outside of forest sector; and providing information to facilitate partnership building
- National and subnational level government departments and agencies gain an increased understanding of social forestry; support the development of systematic plans to address challenges and opportunities identified in the assessments; and develop the capacity of practitioners to conduct participatory assessments
- NGOs, researchers and other actors with an interest in social forestry develop and implement strategies with a strong understanding of community needs and in accordance to official social forestry policy lines

Notes for practitioners

This guide helps practitioners prepare, design and implement an assessment of an existing formalized community forest with the ways it is governed. It is possible that the assessment could be used to assess the informal, customary management of a forest outside of any formal or state scheme. An assessment can be implemented only after sufficient preparation. The guide provides both conceptual and practical details on how to conduct an assessment. Practitioners are walked through the process of making initial contact with CF user groups; setting up a representative assessment group; and designing appropriate assessment sessions to satisfy the needs of the community.

Structure of the guide

Figure 1: Assessment plan flowchart

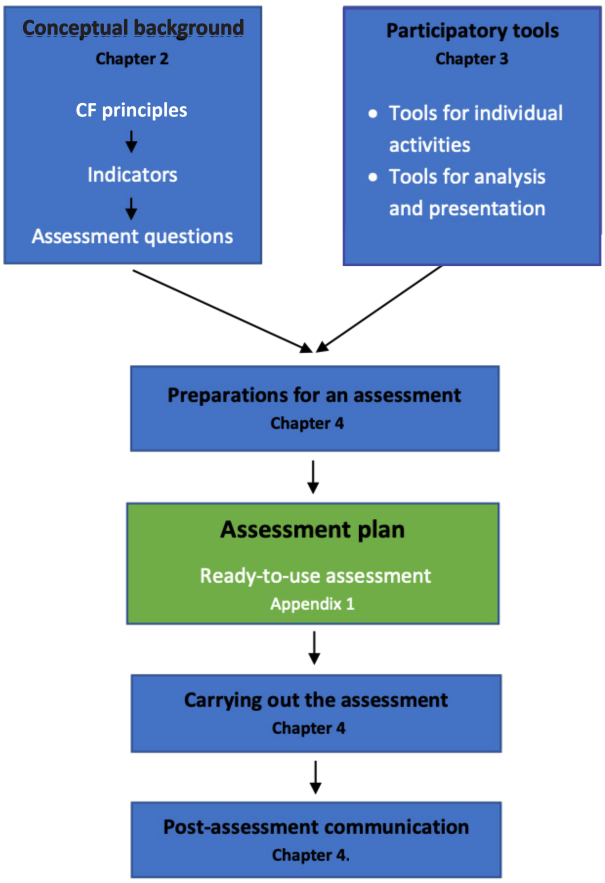


Figure 1 shows how the guide is structured to take the practitioner through the assessment process.

Chapter 2 provides the conceptual frame of social forestry principles and explains how they are used to build up social forestry criteria. It includes assessment questions to measure these criteria. This chapter is not vital for the practical design and performance of the assessment itself, but it does offer a deeper understanding of social forestry processes that can support the knowledge set of the practitioner.

Chapter 3 offers various participatory tools that can be used during an assessment. It includes tips on how to guide participants through each tool, which materials are needed, and how to deal with participants' responses.

Chapter 4 explains the assessment process in clear practical steps, from preparation to implementation, and then post-assessment needs.

The appendices provide the following supporting documents:

- A complete ready-to-use assessment plan, which has been tested in Myanmar and Thailand
- A template for reporting on each session in the assessment and overall outcomes
- A template for a complete assessment scorecard
- Links to further online resources that can support the practitioner

Chapter 2: Conceptual framework to assess social forestry

Community forestry principles

Since it was established in 1987, RECOFTC has been working to strengthen social forestry in the Asia-Pacific region. As part of its vision, RECOFTC has produced social forestry principles (Table 1), developed through participatory processes. These interlinked principles are the foundation of this practitioners' guide.

Table 1: Community forestry principles

Principle 1: Availability of natural resources Natural resources are defined as the natural assets or raw materials, such as water, timber and non-timber forest products, that are available within a community forest. Sufficient high-quality natural resources are vital to support the sustainable management of forested landscapes and to enhance community livelihoods.
Principle 2: Effective governance and participation Participation is an important characteristic of effective governance. To achieve effective governance, all relevant groups, especially marginalized groups, including women, youth and ethnic minorities, should participate in decision-making processes.
Principle 3: Rights and institutional settings To be effective, CF user groups must have their rights to land and natural resources recognized. Statutory and customary laws are the basis for rights that can frame forest institutions and processes. They establish the basic principles for how people interact with each other and use their forest resources. This includes the right to access, withdraw, manage, include or exclude other users, and inherit.
Principle 4: Addressing community needs CF user groups can develop their livelihoods by benefiting from products and services from community forests. Success can be determined by access to physical and financial facilities within and outside the community. Equitable benefit-sharing among CF user group members is an essential component to successfully meet these needs.
Principle 5: Adaptive management and learning CF user groups should be able to develop their own capacities to identify challenges and opportunities; design plans to manage their natural resources; and implement collective actions as a response. They should also be able to learn from the process and increase their adaptive capacity to respond to subsequent challenges and opportunities.

If the principles are not in place or are poorly represented in present CF user group circumstances, then the promise of social forestry is fundamentally undermined. For example:

- If natural resources are lacking or of poor quality, such as highly degraded community forests, CF user groups have limited raw material from which to benefit.
- If rights are unclear or weak, or if institutions, such as local forest departments, have limited capacity or commitment, CF user groups are unlikely to invest in forest management. They may instead strive for short-term benefits over long-term sustainability. This can lead to a depletion of natural resources, and CF user groups may seek forest products from areas beyond their own forest.
- Weak participation and unfair sharing of benefits will likely lead to internal conflicts. Consequences include the depletion of natural resources, inefficient institutions and continued marginalization of the poorest members of the community.

- If CF user groups cannot add value to forest products, they are unlikely to set long-term business goals that ensure healthy forest management.
- If CF user groups lack the ability to make management adjustments to respond to unexpected events, they will be unable to properly manage the forest. Unexpected events include those resulting from climate change, decreased private sector engagement and seasonal variations in market demands.

The five principles directly link to each other. If one principle is weak, the conditions for satisfying the other four principles are undermined.

The assessment framework

Criteria and indicators (Table 2) were developed to quantify and qualify the principles. These criteria and indicators are not exhaustive. They can be further elaborated as the practitioner works with the CF user group to determine the objectives and focus of the assessment.

Table 2: Community forestry principles, criteria and indicators

Criteria	Indicators
Principle 1: Availability of natural resources	
For a CF to function effectively, it requires adequate natural resources on site	1.1 Diversity of resource type, amount and seasonal availability by type
Principle 2: Effective governance and participation	
A CF must be accountable, transparent and inclusive to all user groups	2.1 Frequency and importance of elections (turnout, number of male/female candidates, participation) 2.2 Perceptions of the value of participation in elections 2.3 Perceptions of the efficiency and effectiveness of grievance redress mechanisms
Principle 3: Rights and institutional settings	
For a CF to effectively manage its forests, statutory and customary arrangements must be in place	3.1 Type of customary practices employed by CF user groups 3.2 Type and strength of legal rights employed by CF user groups
Institutions are in place to secure and exercise rights for CF	3.3 Type of institutions that support CF rights (in awareness and action)
Principle 4: Addressing community needs	
CFUG members can enhance their livelihoods by using natural resources, including those from their community forest, in a sustainable manner	4.1 Uses of natural resources (builds on principle 1) 4.2 Perceived community needs for improving livelihoods 4.3 Type of products and services to respond to these needs
CFUGs can use physical (e.g. electricity, sealed roads) and financial (e.g. access to credit) facilities to enhance social forestry livelihood development	4.4 Access to physical and financial facilities
Benefit sharing is conducted in a transparent and equitable manner	4.5 Type of benefits received by different CFUG members (e.g. women/men, youth and disadvantaged groups) 4.6 Characteristics of process to ensure equitable benefit sharing (e.g. transparency)

Criteria	Indicators
Principle 5: Adaptive management and learning	
CFUG is able to identify opportunities and threats when managing their community forest	5.1 Opinions of CFUG members on opportunities and threats, including how they were identified
CFUG has the capacity to respond to opportunities and threats according to their needs	5.2 Opinion of CFUG members of responses to opportunities and challenges over the past 12 months
CFUG has the capacity to learn from the experience of identifying and responding to opportunities and threats	5.3 Opinion of key lessons and measures that CFUG has developed over the past 12 months

Assessment questions

The indicators highlighted in Table 2 act as a frame to develop participatory assessment questions. Table 3 provides example questions to address each indicator, and participatory tools to facilitate the answering of these questions. Chapter 3 has more information on the suggested tools. Not all questions will be significant for each specific social forestry assessment. Chapter 4 provides advice on how to select the most relevant questions.

Table 3: Questions to use in an assessment

Indicators	Relevant questions	Suggested tools
Principle 1: Availability of natural resources		
1.1 Diversity of resource type, amount and seasonal availability by type	▪ What is the total area of community forest? • Have there been recent changes to the forest area? ▪ What kind of natural resources are available in the community forest? • Make a list of products and services • What is the amount of each product and service, taken from a CFUG's inventory or forest management plan (m3/ha or observations of people)? ▪ What is the seasonal availability for each product and service? • What is the availability and quality of water in the community forest? • Quantify/qualify with changes over an extended time period • Quantify/qualify with changes over an extended time period in relation to relevant products and services ▪ What are the perceptions of forest health and vitality? Has this changed in recent years? **Note:** Inventory list, forest management plans and other documentation will be helpful when discussing these questions with CFUGs.	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ Participatory resource mapping ▪ Seasonal calendar

Principle 2: Effective governance and participation		
Indicators	**Relevant questions**	**Suggested tools**
2.1 Frequency and importance of elections (turnout, number of male/ female candidates, participation) 2.2 Perceptions of the value of participation in elections 2.3 Perceptions of the efficiency and effectiveness of grievance redress mechanisms	How often does the leadership/decision-making body governing the community forest change? ▪ How are members of the body selected? ▪ Who can be a candidate? • In the most recent election, how many candidates were running for each position? • Who is eligible to vote? How many eligible voters voted at the last election? • How many of the leadership body are women (% of total committee)? • How many of the leadership body are under 30 years old? Is this a fair reflection of the village age structure? • To what extent do leaders respond to questions from CFUG members? ▪ How are decisions made in your CFUG? (e.g. by a vote) • What is the procedure for input, feedback or questions from CF members? • Does the procedure follow rules and regulations regarding time, laid out steps, and feedback? • How often are meetings organized and decisions communicated to all community members and relevant stakeholders? ▪ Who can participate in decision-making processes? • Are there any costs for individuals to participate? • Is the procedure clear and simple to understand for all CF members? • What grievance redress mechanisms exist and how often are they used? • For what reasons is a grievance redress mechanism used? • Is the grievance redress mechanism established in CFUG policies and procedures? • How are rules and regulations in benefit-sharing formulated? Are there penalties? Rewards? **Note:** Some CFUGs will keep records of elections (e.g. candidates, voter turnout).	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Principle 3: Rights and institutional settings</th></tr>
<tr><th>Indicators</th><th>Relevant questions</th><th>Suggested tools</th></tr>
<tr><td>3.1 Type of customary practices employed by CFUGs

3.2 Type and strength of legal rights employed by CFUGs</td><td>▪ What customary and/or legal rights does the CFUG enjoy in forest management?
• Access to forest:
– Are CFUG members allowed by customary and/or statutory rights to enter the forest? Are there any restrictions on entering?
• Withdrawal:
– Can CFUG members withdraw/harvest products from the forest?
– If yes, what timber and non-timber forest products can members harvest for subsistence or commercial uses?
• Management:
– What changes can CFUGs make in the CF management plan concerning forest management activities (e.g. crops planted/used, conservation, protection)?
• Exclusion:
– If needed, can CFUG prevent non-members from using resources in the forest?
• Alienation:
– Can CFUGs transfer the community forest rights to members/non-members?
– Can CFUGs use forests as collateral to access loans and credit?
• Compensation:
– If the government withdraws the community's CF rights, would members receive any compensation?
– If yes, how is the compensation calculated, and how would it be shared?
▪ To what extent do members exercise the above mentioned rights?
• What is the duration of these rights?
• Which official documents or references does the CFUG possess? Where are they written down? Who has approved and signed the documents?
• Have any customary rights been formalized into statutory law?</td><td>▪ Focus group discussion
▪ Rights mapping</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.3 Type of institutions that support CF rights in awareness and action</td><td>▪ What customary, governmental and non-governmental institutions support the exercise of the CFUG's rights?
▪ How efficient and effective are these institutions in their support?</td><td>▪ Focus group discussion
▪ Institutional analysis</td></tr>
</table>

Principle 4: Addressing community needs

Indicators	Relevant questions	Suggested tools
4.1 Uses of natural resources (builds on principle 1) 4.2 Perceived community needs for livelihood development 4.3 Type of products and services to respond to these needs	▪ How is a 'healthy forest' defined? • Is the CFUG's forest healthy? Why or why not? ▪ What are the main objectives for establishing CF? • Why were these objectives chosen? • How were these objectives selected? By whom and when? Have these objectives changed over time? ▪ What are the livelihood development priorities for CFUG members? • How were these needs identified? By whom? Were any members excluded from the decision-making process? ▪ In what ways and for what reasons are CF products and services used by the CFUG? Provide an answer for each product or service. ▪ Is the sustainability of forest resources controlled and maintained by the CFUG? If so, how is this monitored? ▪ What products and services have CFUG members managed based on prioritized needs? • For what form of business or non-business activity are they used? • What is the main purpose of developing this business activity? • How have the business activities benefited CFUG members? Do all members benefit? Do non-members benefit? • Does the CFUG have a finance manager? Does he/she keep financial records? • Did the development and usage of products and services meet the CFUG priority needs?	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis
4.4 Access to physical and financial facilities	▪ What physical and financial facilities (e.g. technology, infrastructure, access to credit) are available and can be accessed by CFUG members? • How have these facilities been accessed? • Who is allowed to access? • With what conditions can these people access the facilities? ▪ Have these facilities been used to address CFUG member needs over the past 12 months? How?	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis
4.5 Type of benefits received by CFUG members (e.g. women/ men, youth and disadvantaged groups) 4.6. Characteristics of process to ensure equitable benefit sharing (e.g. transparency)	▪ What is the practice for allocating benefits to CFUG members? • Who makes the decisions on benefit sharing? • How has this practice been implemented? By whom? If benefits are not shared equally, on what basis was this decision made? • Are all CFUG members satisfied with this practice? If not, what is the mechanism to address dissatisfaction? ▪ Are all CFUG members aware of the level of benefit distribution? • If not, who knows more, who knows less? • What is the process of sharing information?	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis

Principle 5: Adaptive management and learning		
Indicators	**Relevant questions**	**Suggested tools**
5.1 Opinions of CFUG members on opportunities and threats, including how they were identified	▪ What opportunities and threats have been observed relating to community forest management in the last 12 months? ▪ How were these opportunities and threats prioritized and addressed?	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis
5.2 Opinions of CFUG members on responses to opportunities and threats over the past 12 months	▪ What are the responses to the identified opportunities and threats? With what results? ▪ To which challenges and opportunities has CFUG been unable to respond? Why? ▪ Subsequently, have CF objectives, forest management and governance practices changed? • Why? • Instigated by whom? • With what impacts?	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis
5.3 Opinion of key lessons and measures that CFUG has developed over the past 12 months	▪ Is there a platform (e.g. specified body and/or regular meetings) to identify common opportunities and threats within a CFUG and with neighboring CFUGs? • If so, what were the key characteristics of this platform? • Who participated in the identification process of opportunities and threats? • Was anyone excluded from this process?	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis

Chapter 3: Participatory assessment tools

Participatory tools for individual activities

Participatory tools can be used to engage people directly in active, rather than passive, learning. This approach is the foundation for implementing an assessment as put forward in this guide. The emphasis lies on the participants freely sharing and discussing their experiences and views. By doing so, practitioners can better facilitate collective group learning, and identify inclusive, sustainable actions for social forestry.

When using participatory tools, several rules should be followed to ensure effective participation. For example, in some situations a few participants may dominate discussions, with some sub-groups, such as women, less able to contribute. Ideally, the group should take collective ownership over the assessment process and its outputs. Additionally, it should be made clear to the participants at the beginning of each session how the findings will be used. This includes getting agreement from the participants on the use of their names, as well as that of their village. In general, practitioners using participatory facilitation tools should:

- Introduce the objectives of the tool and how the findings will be used, and seek consent from the participants
- Clearly communicate their roles to participants, including creating a safe environment where all opinions are listened to and respected
- Adopt a neutral approach by not educating or sharing their personal views
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Establish an equal status among participants to the greatest extent possible
- Encourage participants to share their personal experiences

During facilitation, various resource materials are useful:

- **Flipcharts and markers** should be used for collective recording of the process and resulting action points
- **Post-it notes or metacards** are a great way of noting individual points, which can then be arranged together and easily rearranged to find the best structure for the resulting information
- **Masking tape** will hold flipcharts or large sheets of paper in place, and attach additional notes
- **A video camera, voice recorder, smartphone or tablet** to record the sessions allows the practitioner to check back on any unclear information, such as when there is a lively debate with multiple voices speaking at once

Separate note taking by an assistant might be needed to support final reporting. When using recording equipment, it is vital to explain how the information will be used. Discuss any potential sensitive issues regarding the use of village name and names of individuals. It is important to ensure that the participants have a good understanding of the process and how the information will be used, and provide their consent.

In this chapter, a number of participatory tools are introduced. These relate to the assessment questions as put forward in Chapter 2, Table 3. Further information on how to select the relevant tools can be found in Chapter 4.

Focus group discussion (FGD)

FGDs bring together several people to talk about a specified theme or topic. They are used to capture a wide array of views and to develop a shared group understanding of an issue.

Step-by-step guide

1. Prepare guiding questions for the FGD, making sure they are non-leading.
2. If there is no assistant, ask participants to select a reporter to document the FGD's findings.
3. Begin by introducing team members and clarifying the process, including its aims and rules (for example, do not interrupt or talk too much), and expected duration.
4. Ask questions in a logical order. Promote an open atmosphere for sharing. Allow discussion to run freely so that participants have the space to introduce new, unexpected questions.
5. Upon completion of the FGD, the reporter should walk through key discussion points in the session. This allows validation of information and collective understanding by all participants. The practitioner should not contribute to the summary.

Practitioner's note

- The crucial element of an FGD is the facilitation. The facilitator should at all times maintain a neutral approach, avoid leading questions, and encourage group discussion and equal participation. If the facilitator favors some participants, others might lose interest in sharing their views.
- Participant identification and the group constellation are also important to an FGD. The group should reflect a balanced representation of the community in gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and their role with the CF user group. This should already have been considered in selecting participants for the assessment as a whole.
- In FGDs, note-taking is normally used to capture verbal and nonverbal observations. See Section 4.2.3 for instructions on how to record data. For example, interruptions, or the ignoring of certain participants, may be important as indicators of conflict or consensus. The use of video or audio recording equipment is useful for checking FGD details. However, do ask permission first, emphasize how information will be used, and address any potentially sensitive issues, such as use of names.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Video or audio recording equipment

Resource mapping

Participatory resource mapping allows communities to articulate their forest knowledge by mapping the forest resources they use and depend on. Maps can help visualize:

- The diversity of forest and tree types
- Inventory of types, positioning and amount of timber and non-timber forest products and forest services
- Formal or informal administrative boundaries

The tool is useful for mapping the availability and abundance of natural resources within the community forest site (principle 1). Depending on the prioritized objectives of the assessment, the facilitator can implement the tool in different ways. For example, two maps can be drawn to compare changes in resources over time.

Figure 2: Natural resource map from Tone Taw community forest, Rakhine, Myanmar

(photo courtesy of Oikos)

Note: The legend from top to bottom reads: main stream; seasonable stream; village; main road; route/footpath; fire protection road; CF boundary; bamboo forest; natural regeneration; gap plantation; horticulture land; paddy field.

Step-by-step guide

1. Allow participants to agree on symbols for natural resources and landmarks such as boundaries, roads, vegetation, settlement areas, streams and non-timber resources. Standardized symbols make maps comparable.
2. Divide the participants into two or more groups. Assign one group to draw the community forest the way it looked at the time it was established. The other group will draw it in its present-day state.
3. The maps should be drawn either on flipcharts or in the soil on the ground. Provide guidelines for the scope and the size of the maps.
4. Once the maps are completed, arrange them next to each other and allow participants to:
   - Verify each other's map
   - Discuss and estimate the changes in quality and quantity of each identified resource
   - During the discussion, write keywords that arise on post-it notes and attach them to the maps.
5. Photograph resulting maps to ensure a digital record is maintained.

Practitioner’s note

- If a community forest inventory or other lists are available, participants should use them as helpful reference points while drawing the maps.
- Participants might disagree regarding when a community forest was established. If this happens, let the participants define their own time reference point. It is likely that the CF user group members carried out forest management activities before their community forest was officially established.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Video or audio equipment

Seasonal calendar

A seasonal calendar is a participatory tool that helps participants explore the natural distribution of, and seasonal changes to, forest resources. It helps them understand the use of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and timber forest products (TFPs) in a community forest. It is useful for examining forest health and the conditions needed for this health to be maintained. It can also be used to monitor water quality during specified years, and the interaction between products and services derived from the community forest and other livelihood activities, such as farming.

Seasonal calendars are relevant for assessing principle 1, the availability of natural resources. Together with resource maps, a seasonal calendar can effectively capture the quantity and quality of forest resources over the period of a year. It is a key tool for use in Session 2 of the ready-to-use assessment plan provided in Appendix 1.

Step-by-step guide

1. Together with participants, prepare a seasonal calendar matrix on a flipchart. See Table 4 on the next page for an example. The seasons visualized in the calendar should reflect the CF user group's preferences. This may depend, for example, on agricultural activities or temperature changes. Seasons chosen could be winter, spring, summer and autumn, or rainy season, dry season and cold season. Months should also be noted to make the calendar easy to review and compare with other calendars.
2. Ask participants to note on their calendar what forest resources they harvest or collect in each season or month. Discuss and note the quantity and quality of these resources.
3. Upon completion, discuss the contents of each calendar, including the reasons for variations.

Practitioner's note

- Seasonal maps can become messy if the codes and symbols are not referenced carefully. Facilitators can avoid this problem by taking notes on a separate piece of paper.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Video or audio recording equipment

Table 4: Example seasonal calendar template

Topics	Winter / cool season		Summer / hot season				Rainy season				Winter / cool season	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Timber products management and harvesting												
Pruning												
Weeding												
Timber harvesting												
Non-timber products management and harvesting												
Mushroom collection												
Bamboo harvesting												
Forest services												
Water quantity												
Forest health and exposure (e.g. due to droughts or fires)												
Agriculture activities												
Paddy planting												

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis

A SWOT analysis is a useful tool to observe the effectiveness of a community forest scheme. It evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the CF user group itself (internal dynamics), and explores opportunities and threats to the CF user group from the wider environment (external dynamics). Please note that for this assessment, the word 'challenges' is preferred to 'threats'. A SWOT analysis is particularly relevant for assessing principle 4, addressing community needs, and principle 5, adaptive management and learning. Indicators from these principles as outlined in Chapter 2 can be framed within the SWOT analysis as follows:

Strengths and weaknesses (Internal)

- Uses of natural resources
- Perceived community needs for livelihoods improvement
- Products and services developed to respond to these needs
- Availability of, and accessibility to, physical and financial facilities
- Type of benefits received by different CF user group members, such as women, youth and disadvantaged groups
- Transparency in the allocation of benefits

Opportunities and threats (External)

- Identification of external opportunities and threats by CF user groups
- Views on response to identified opportunities and threats over past 12 months
- Views on new strategies that CF user groups have developed over past 12 months

The use of a SWOT analysis is recommended in two sessions of the ready-to-use assessment plan, as provided in Appendix 1. Session 5 explores strengths and weaknesses when identifying internal community needs in relation to social forestry. Session 6 looks at opportunities and threats to adaptive management and learning when considering external factors impacting social forestry.

Step-by-step guide

1. Introduce the concept of the SWOT analysis. Explain how it helps generate collective learning among participants about strengths and weaknesses within the CF user group (internal dynamics), opportunities and threats (external dynamics), and how they are all connected to each other.
2. Draw a SWOT matrix on a flipchart. (Table 5.) Title the four quadrants: strengths, weaknesses,opportunities and threats.
3. Start with a discussion on Strengths. Beginning with a positive topic will help foster a friendly atmosphere. Note key topics discussed on post-it notes or metacards and attach to the corresponding quadrant.
4. Next discuss Weaknesses, using the same logic as above. In what areas are CF user groups lacking skills and capacities?
5. Then discuss Opportunities. What are the specific opportunities that the community forest can provide? How can they be achieved?
6. Now move on to Challenges. Are there any external challenges to the community or the community forest?
7. At the end of the session, facilitate a list of the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Discuss key issues emerging from the exercise.

Table 5: SWOT matrix template

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Challenges

Table 6 presents example questions that are relevant to filling in the matrix when assessing the social forestry principles, criteria and indicator (PC&I) framework. The matrix will start empty. During the session, it will be filled in with the answers to the questions.

Table 6: Example questions for a SWOT matrix

Example questions to identify strengths and weaknesses within the community

- In what ways and for what reasons are available forest resources being used?
- Is the sustainability of forest resources controlled and managed?
- Are CFUG members satisfied with their management practices?

Example questions to identify opportunities and threats external to the community

- What opportunities or challenges have been observed relating to forest landscape management in the past 12 months?
- How were these opportunities or challenges addressed?
  - How were these challenges prioritized?
  - What were the reasons behind this priority order?

Practitioner's note

- The step-by-step guide above indicates that facilitators move from one quadrant to the next. But in practice, the practitioner might actually go back and forth between quadrants as the discussion develops. While analyzing one quadrant, participants are likely to bring up topics for other quadrants too. Be sure to allow participants to discuss freely, and ensure all points are represented throughout the SWOT matrix.
- It is important to note that the placement of information in quadrants is not always clear cut. For example, some participants might consider something as a strength, while others consider it a weakness. Use metacards in facilitation so that they can be relocated if necessary.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video recording equipment

Rights mapping and bundle of rights

Rights mapping can be used to assess what rights a CF user group possesses. Rights mapping identifies the statutory and customary rights that provide both formal legal and informal parameters for a CF user group to manage a forest. Rights mapping is useful for assessing principle 3 on rights and institutional settings.

Step-by-step guide

1. Prepare a bundle of rights matrix (Table 7) on a flipchart. The matrix helps participants to visualize and identify the rights they possess to manage their forest.
2. Explain each right and ensure that differences between rights are understood.
3. Discuss each type of rights, starting with 'access' and working downwards.

Table 7: Template for mapping bundle of rights

Type of rights [6]		Is the right customary? (Yes or No)	Is the right formal/legal? (Yes or No)	When yes [7], to what extent can the right be exercised?	Duration of the right	How are the rights documented?
Access						
Withdrawal	TFPs					
	NTFPs					
Management						
Exclusion						
Alienation						
Due Process and Compensation						

Practitioner's note

- Participants will not always be aware of the rights they possess. However, the perception of their rights is equally important to discuss, and can be compared to clearer data obtained either prior to or after the assessment.
- Rights are usually a sensitive topic and participants may be uncomfortable to speak in a way that could be interpreted as a critique of authorities. Practitioners should work hard to establish a line of trust, emphasizing the confidentiality of individual opinions expressed during the assessment process. Because of the hesitation around discussing rights, it is helpful to come to this session in the middle to latter stages of an assessment. Our ready-to-use assessment plan (Appendix 1) places the rights mapping during Session 4.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it or metacards

Institutional analysis

An institutional analysis can be used to provide an understanding of the institutions, both formal and informal, that directly engage with, or have an indirect impact on, social forestry. Formal institutions include government agencies, formally registered CF user groups, and private sector enterprises. All typically possess a legal status, clear organizational structure, and in some cases, a set of procedures. Informal institutions include informally gathered CF user groups, and institutional practices such as the social norms and beliefs guiding a community. The analysis is useful to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of institutions, particularly those that support social forestry rights (principle 3, second criteria).

Step-by-step guide

1. Provide participants with an opportunity to discuss the term ‘institution.’ Brainstorm on formal and informal institutions that have an impact on their daily life and social forestry management practices.
2. Ask participants to list institutions on post-it notes or metacards using one note or card per institution. Facilitators should then tape the cards onto a flipchart or a wall, so that the full list of institutions are visible for all participants.
3. Ask participants about the effectiveness and efficiency of the named institutions. Write keywords on metacards and place the cards next to each institution.

Practitioner’s note

- Practitioners may have to define a scope to save time, by instructing participants to focus on particular institutions, such as those that most clearly impact their ownership rights of resources. If participants are not limited, the results may be more interesting, but more time is required. However, a process of ranking institutions in terms of importance to community forest management is in itself a useful exercise.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video recording equipment

Tools for analysis and presentation

Individual scorecards

Setting up an assessment scoring system provides participants with a clear sense of whether each assessment criteria has been viewed in a positive or negative light.

An example scoring system uses scorecards, which allow participants to rank their own or others' performances. Appendix 3 provides a scorecard for a complete assessment. This corresponds to the ready-to-use assessment (Appendix 1), where an example scorecard is provided at the end of each session for participants to fill in. These collect scores for all criteria of the social forestry framework. Scoring criteria rather than principles allows for a wider perspective within the assessment. For instance, a CF user group might have limited rights but still have access to strong supporting institutions.

The example template has four scoring options. By using an even number of options, participants cannot choose a neutral midway point. This forces them to evaluate whether the state of affairs has improved or worsened. The title for each scorecard can either be a statement or a question. For instance: "All community forest members benefit equally from community forest management." Options: strongly disagree/partially disagree/ partially agree/strongly agree. Section 3 introduces the spidergram as a tool to present and analyze all scores together during field assessments.

Step-by-step guide

1. At the end of each session during the assessment, let all participants choose a score for each criteria on a post-it note or use the templates as presented in the ready-to-use assessment. See scorecard in Appendix 3. Calculate the mean score[8] immediately for each criterion and note on a flipchart. The interest is in user groups and not individuals here. Also make a visual note of the range of scoring for potential discussion. For example, do participants roughly give the same scores, or are there significant variations? Keep the flipchart visible throughout the assessment.
2. Once the results for each criteria are calculated at the end of each session, immediately facilitate a discussion. Ask participants why they did not score themselves higher or lower.
3. In the final session, feed the average scores for each criteria into a spidergram to visualize linkages between principles. Section 3 describes how to use a spidergram.

Scoring options:

1 Low (performance, support, satisfaction, amount or other)
2 Marginally weak (performance, support, satisfaction, amount or other)
3 Good (performance, support, satisfaction, amount or other)
4 Excellent (performance, support, satisfaction, amount or other)

Scoring options must be adapted (performance, support, satisfaction, amount or other) to fit to each specific question or statement.

Other scoring alternatives

Using scorecards will ensure that all participants are involved in quantifying reactions to the assessment criteria. Scoring ideally should be conducted and discussed after each session in the assessment to build an accumulative reaction. However, there are alternative scoring options:

- Facilitators collect all scores at the end of the entire assessment, rather than after each criterion, allowing for quicker facilitation. Use metacards with different colors.
- The collective scores can be agreed upon through consensus discussions for each criterion allowing for quicker facilitation. The drawback of this approach is that dominant participants might unduly influence the overall score.

- Facilitators collect the average and median scores for each criterion throughout the assessment, but keep the results secret until the final session. The benefit of this approach is that participants will not adapt scoring levels from one session to another. The drawback is that participants do not have the opportunity to ask follow-up questions for each criterion in reaction to the scoring.

Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Video or audio recording equipment

Spidergram presentation

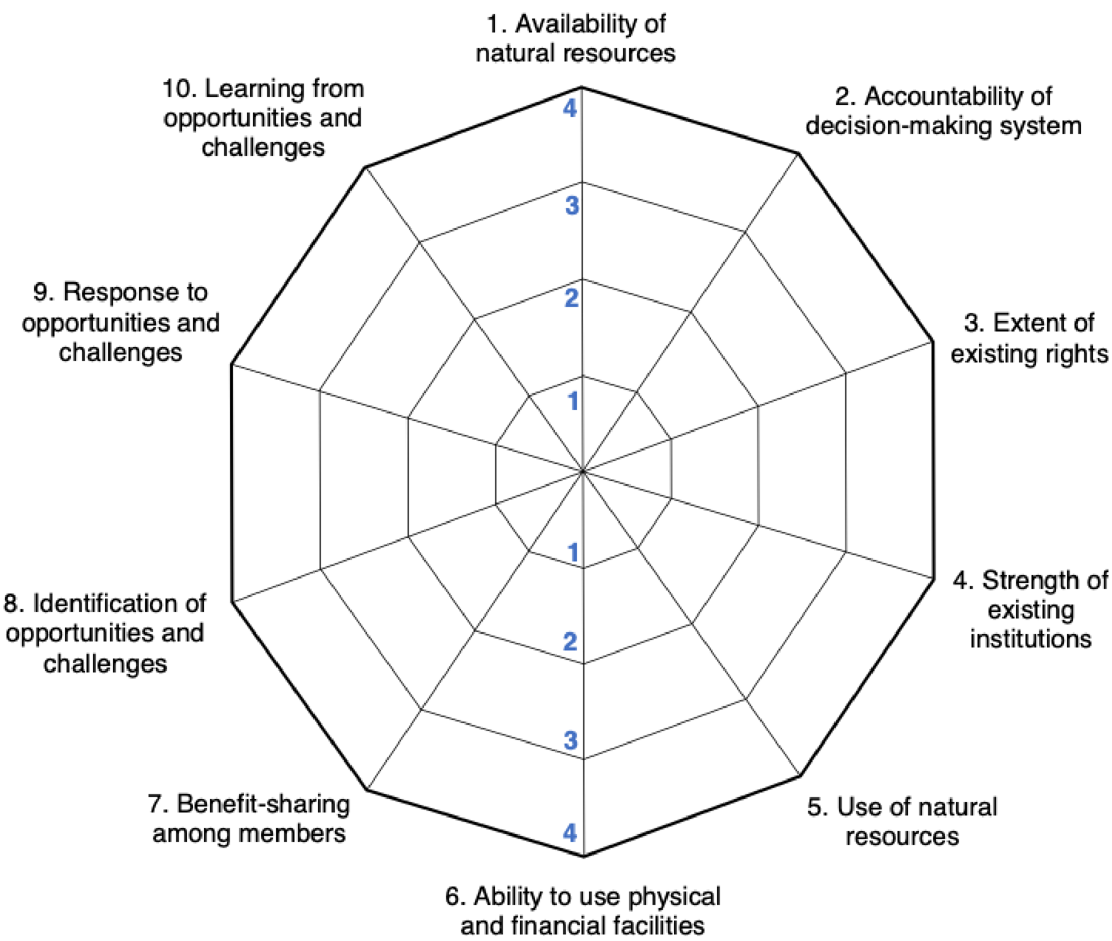
A spidergram is a tool to collate a series of scores and allow for a consideration of interlinkages and impacts. In the ready-to-use assessment plan presented in the appendix, the spidergram is used in the final stages to convey linkages between social forestry principles, initiate discussions on areas needing improvement, and provide a wrap-up of the assessment.

How to use

1. Hang a flipchart with a spidergram on the wall. Use the average scores for each criterion of the PC&I framework and connect with lines, or string and pins.
2. Once the lines have been drawn, initiate a discussion about the whole picture. For example, ask:
    - Why are some scores higher than others?
    - What are the linkages between the criteria and principles, considering their corresponding scores?
    - What are the key conclusions that participants take away?
    - What can be done to get a higher score in the future (for all or individual criteria/principles)?

The example spidergram in Figure 3 incorporates the 10 criteria that underline the social forestry principles (Table 2). Concentric lines represent scoring levels between 1 and 4. The practitioner can mark the score for each of the 10 criteria within this range on the spidergram.

Figure 3: Example of a spidergram



Practitioner's note

- Spidergrams place together and allow comparison between the scores for different social forestry principles. They show how the principles themselves are related to each other in each particular assessment case. Spidergrams can also play a role in partial assessments by including scoring for a limited number of principles.

Resources

- String, pins
- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Video or audio recording equipment

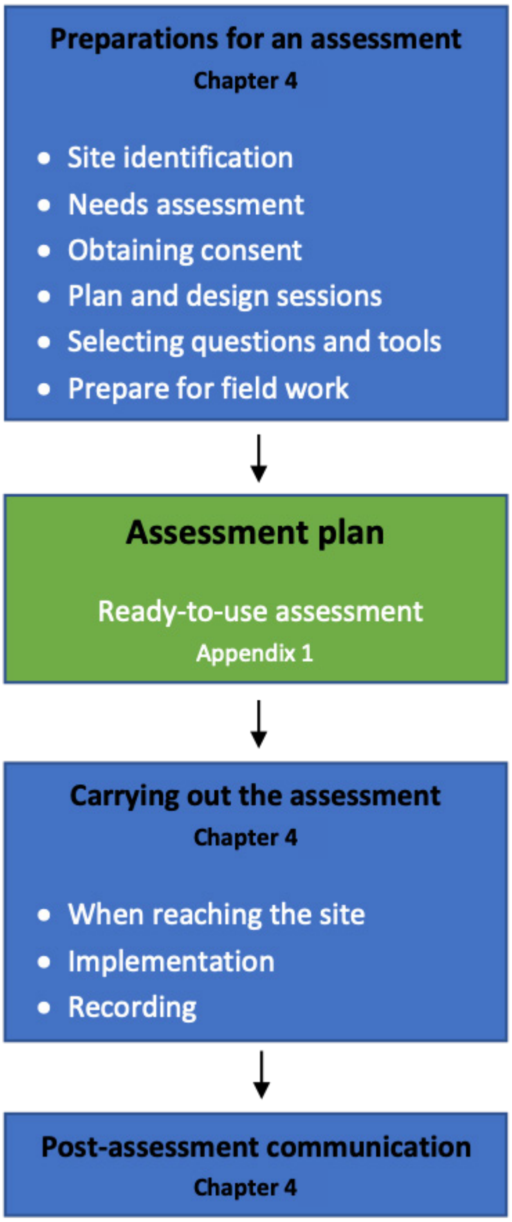
Chapter 4: Practical guidelines to implement an assessment

Chapter 2 offered a conceptual frame to a social forestry assessment and how assessment questions are derived from social forestry principles and their corresponding criteria. Chapter 3 introduced a series of participatory tools with which to ask these questions and analyze the overall results. The aim in Chapter 4 is to use this information and provide a clear step-by-step process for the practitioner to design and conduct a social forestry assessment in an efficient manner. There are three main components to this process:

1. Preparation
2. Carrying out the assessment
3. Reporting and post-assessment needs

Figure 4 is a flowchart for structuring each step of the assessment process. It builds upon and acts as an accompaniment to Figure 1 in Section 1. The following sections walk the practitioner through these steps.

Figure 4: Assessment plan implementation flowchart



Preparation

Site identification

There are various reasons why a community forest assessment may take place. For example:

- The community forest may be part of a state scheme, and the national or provincial government wants to monitor this project.
- The CF user group itself may ask its partner (NGO or government body) to assess the success of the community forest.
- An NGO may be involved in the project and want an assessment to highlight the next steps or present it as a case study.

It is possible that the request for a community forest assessment, whether from government, NGO or community, arrives with a specified site. If not, the first task for the practitioner might be to locate a suitable community forest to evaluate, and contact the corresponding CF user group or community to start the assessment preparations. Likely any selection will take place in collaboration with the main instigator of the assessment.

Needs assessment

Once the assessment site has been identified, the practitioner should conduct a needs assessment with the core stakeholder groups, such as CF user groups, governments or NGOs. For government and NGO stakeholders, it is important to find out what they want to learn about the community forest, preferably with priorities highlighted, and what they would like the assessment to accomplish. For CF user groups, find out what they see as core issues surrounding the community forest.

A possible approach for conducting a needs assessment could be to frame very open questions around the social forestry principles. (Chapter 2, Table 2.) For example, what are the available resources in the community forest (principle 1)? Or what are the existing practices, rights and institutional settings for the CF user group (principle 3)? It is important that the moment of initial contact between practitioner and CF user group is used well to build a productive relationship. The CF user group should be allowed to define the conversation as much as possible. The practitioner may travel direct to visit the community forest and its CF user group, or communication may take place by telephone or a video service such as Skype. Either way, contact from the outset requires a participatory approach, sensitive to the needs of the CF user group and giving them the space to help set the agenda. This will help to ensure that CF user group members take ownership of the assessment results.

To further help identify community needs, it is important at this stage to **explore what information the community can share.** Facilitation of session plans will benefit from knowledge of what the CF user group has already accomplished in terms of community forest management activities. Possible information sources include:

- Sketches
- GIS or satellite maps
- Household census (formal/informal data)
- Forest resource inventories (stock of resources)
- Financial value surveys of forest products (TFPs and NTFPs if applicable)
- Community forest management plans and annual performance reports

Initial conversations with the CF user group should make clear what information is available, and the practitioner should consult them about this.

Once the needs of each stakeholder group have been compiled, a quick comparison can be made to the social forestry principles and their corresponding criteria (Chapter 2, Table 2). This allows the practitioner to start framing needs through a conceptual framework. Which social forestry principles and criteria are more relevant to the highlighted community needs? This will help select questions and tools at a later moment in the assessment design.

Obtaining consent

Once an initial needs assessment has been conducted, and the responses measured against social forestry principles, it is important to report back to the community with provisional plans to conduct the assessment. As the priority group of focus for the assessment, it is vital to obtain consent from the CF user group before proceeding to plan and specify sessions. Although certain social forestry principles will be emphasized in order to address their needs, bear in mind that an assessment to some extent should involve all five principles in order to produce a rounded evaluation. There are also various organizational needs to clarify with the CF user group. See Section 4, preparing for field work. The more clarity gained here, the more efficient the implementation of the assessment plan when visiting the community later on.

Planning and designing your sessions

Structured around the social forestry principles and their corresponding criteria and questions in Chapter 2, a series of sessions can be designed to accumulate information for a durable assessment. Each session is organized around a particular set of questions facilitated through one or more participatory tools within a given time. While it is possible that an assessment prioritizes a selection of principles for scrutiny, this guide proposes that all principles should be engaged in some way. An initial session plan must be drawn, which is likely to follow the structure of Table 8. This structure is the foundation of the ready-to-use assessment plan (Appendix 1). Practitioners should regularly consult this plan when making their own design. The plan provides a template for which tools to use, which assessment questions they link to, what supporting materials are needed, a concise step-by-step guide through each session, and tips on how to engage with the participants. Please note that this plan is a suggestion, and the practitioner may wish to change certain details to fix their own design. For example, the practitioner may shift the timing to prioritize community needs and lengthen a particular session. It will likely be a challenge to ask every single question as put forward in Chapter 2 within the suggested eight-hour period, so prioritizing topics will be an important action at this stage. Session 7 uses the spidergram method (Section 3) to collate all scores and let CF user group members conduct an analysis of the results. This results in an overview of all principles, highlighting areas in need of improvement.

Table 8: Session plan template

Title	Objective(s)	Principle (number)	Duration
Overall assessment	Full assessment (covering all 5 principles)	All	8 hours
Session 1	Explain the purpose of the assessment		30 min
Session 2	Explore availability and use of natural resources	Principle 1 + criteria 4.1 from principle 4	60 min
Session 3	Reflect on governance and community participation	2	45 min
Session 4	Examine CF rights and institutional settings	3	30 min
Session 5	Look at community needs, access to physical and financial facilities, and benefit sharing	4	45 min
Session 6	Explore how CFUG reacts to opportunities and threats in CF management	5	45 min
Session 7	Make preliminary evaluation and recommendations	-	30 min

Notes: Principle refers to the CF principle engaged in the session (Chapter 2). Duration offers a suggested time frame to complete each session, based on the aim of conducting the full assessment in a single day.

Selecting questions and tools

The session plan template is the base from which the practitioner can start to specify questions to be asked during the assessment; the participatory tools as an effective medium to ask the questions; the means of instruction and interaction with participants; and the use of time. Chapter 2 provides an extensive list of questions to be asked, derived from social forestry principles and their corresponding criteria. The practitioner must now measure their needs assessment against this list and decide:

- Which questions are needed to prioritize to cater to community needs
- Which subsequent questions are needed to provide a balanced overview of the community forest in the assessment

Of course, it is possible that certain needs may not be effectively represented in the question list, in which case practitioners must create their own questions to address the issue.

Once the question list is completed, appropriate participatory assessment tools must be placed to introduce and ask them in each session. Chapter 3 provides details on how to implement each specific participatory tool, such as SWOT analysis. The ready-to-use assessment plan (Appendix 1) gives details on how to integrate tools and materials, which questions they apply to, and how to allocate time. In this preparation phase, remember that for each session:

- The facilitator clearly explains the activities and their methods at the beginning of each session to ensure that participants understand the process and will participate fully.
- Questions or subjects are facilitated in a logical, consequential manner through the chosen tools, to ensure understanding between facilitator and CF user group members, and opportunities to highlight all key issues needed for a full assessment.
- All information is recorded and displayed visibly and clearly for participants throughout each session.
- Equal opportunities are provided for participants to contribute their voice, opinions and perspectives, regardless of their background, sex or social ranking.
- Participants are allowed to contribute their voice without fear of criticism or reprisal. This is agreed upon at the outset of the assessment, with individual statements allowed under a mandate of confidentially.

Preparing for field work

Setting up an assessment can take a significant amount of time. The facilitator should understand that a number of administrative and practical preparations may be needed in advance to allow for a smooth process in the field. We recommend that facilitators:

- **Form a team.** Teams should consist of the practitioner and one assistant if possible, and one or more administrative or in-field assistants. Depending on the assistant's skills, they can be responsible for basic coordination and in-field note taking, audio or video recordings, photos and resource materials. Facilitation benefits from effective team coordination to ease the workload.
- **Select participants.** The preferred participants for an assessment should be determined by facilitators and CF user group, taking into account the needs of the assessment. General considerations include gender, their role within the CF user group, socio-economic status and age. Aim for six to 10 participants. It is better to recruit more rather than less participants, since there is always the chance that not everyone turns up on the day of the assessment.
- **Logistics and administration.** Following the needs assessment, basic logistical and administrative support should be clarified with the CF user group members before implementing the assessment plan. This includes the duration of the assessment, date, precise location, seating arrangement, meals and coffee breaks, budgeting and resource materials, such as flipcharts, markers and tables. However, be sure not to over-prepare. The CF user group can help in preparing logistics if they are asked in advance. Be sure to keep in mind that participating CF user group members will have to take time out of their daily work. To help them, adhere to their time preferences and clearly communicate how long the assessment will last. If circumstances allow, the assessment can be implemented over two days, thus allowing the facilitation team to meet the participants informally in the evening after the first day sessions have concluded to build more trust.

Carrying out the assessment

When reaching the site

Once the assessment team has reached the site:

- Be well-prepared. Make sure you reach the site early enough to prepare all relevant materials at the meeting venue.
- Introduce the team and the purpose of the assessment. This does not have to be in great detail since it will be repeated to all participants in Session 1 of the assessment plan. See Session 1 of the ready-to-use assessment plan in the appendix.
- Emphasize from the outset that the learning process is more important than the results of the assessment.
- Be mindful and respectful to the culture and wishes of the CF user groups.

Implementing the assessment plan

Once the participants have gathered at the assessment site, you are ready to implement the plan in the field. Follow the three key steps:

1. At all times work with the participants to maintain trust and full participation.
2. Implement your sessions step-by-step following the set order, trying not to rush each session in order to allow sufficient time for open discussion.
3. Leave enough time to discuss the overall results and their implications upon community forest management regimes.

Recording

It is very important that the assessment process and its findings are recorded. Not only does this catalogue the implementation of the plan, but the notes also provide a reference point should the practitioner wish to look back over discussions and individual participant comments. Note-takers should be clear on what data they should capture, such as quotes, emotions and body language, and whether to take notes physically or to use an audio or video recorder. Designing a note-taking template in advance will help ensure that key information is captured. A general note-taking template can consist of the key questions for each session in the order they will be facilitated, as well as a guide as to what the note-taker should capture. Before starting the assessment, it should be made clear to participants that the use of notes, audio files and video is done in confidentiality. The facilitator should also clarify how the findings will be used so participants feel open to contribute their opinions on a range of subjects.

Post-assessment communication

Strategies for how and to whom to report assessment findings depends on the needs and the role of different stakeholder groups. It will be necessary to report to government bodies or NGOs if they initially requested the assessment, or if they are involved in the social forestry scheme. The form of reporting might vary. If reporting to social forestry programs, a presentation with photos and data depicted in graphs could be the best approach. If reporting to an NGO or a civil society organization, strategies might include workshops or seminars. Practitioners should always report their findings to the CF user groups they worked with, either in a written report or, if possible, through a follow-up visit. For all stakeholders, be sure to clearly communicate when the findings will be reported.

A reporting template can help capture all relevant findings. It will also allow for comparison between different social forestry sites and changes over time at one site. Appendix 2 includes an optional template to use when reporting findings to CF user groups. The template is based on the social forestry framework (Chapter 2) and the spidergram outlined in Section 3.

Appendices

Appendix 1: A ready-to-use assessment plan

Figure 6: Assessment plan

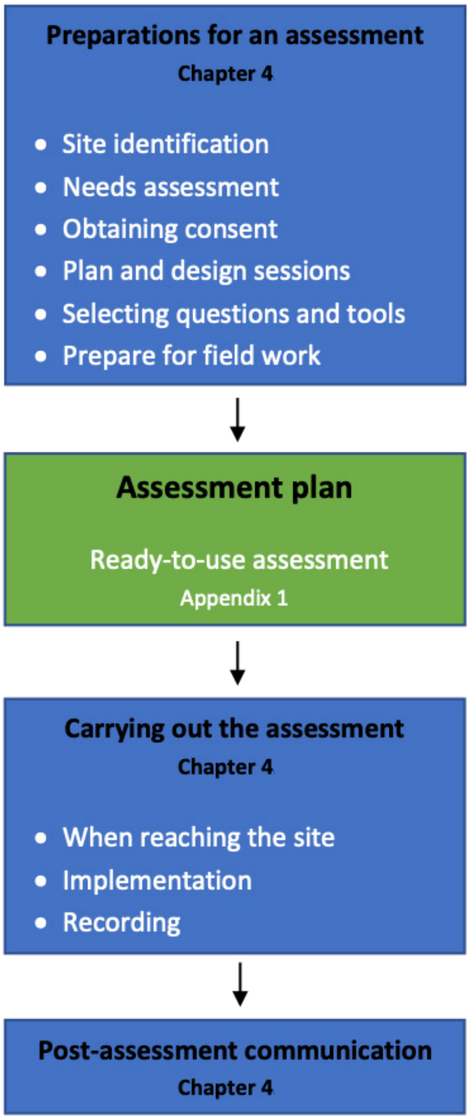


Figure 6 repeats the flow diagram in Figure 5, Chapter 4 to show where an assessment plan sits within the structure of preparing, conducting and reporting a full assessment. The ready-to-use assessment plan is a model for the practitioner to follow, offering instructions on implementation. Depending on the role of stakeholders involved, the objective of the assessment plan may be to identify areas of social forestry management needing improvement for user groups and to provide useful data for the revision of national social forestry programs. Each session tracks information on specific indicators linking to social forestry principles and their corresponding criteria. The source of questions is shown in each session description. The scoring system described in Section 3 allows participants to score their own performance. In the final session the total score is visualized by a spidergram. All of the sessions outlined here can be facilitated with basic equipment, such as flipcharts, post-it notes and masking tape. The aim is to carry out an assessment in eight hours using a team consisting of a facilitator and a field assistant.

Session 1: Introduction

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Understand the key objectives of this assessment and how they can benefit from it
- Understand the overall schedule of this assessment

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

Time

30 minutes

Steps

1. Introduce the facilitation team. Explain that the team will take a neutral role in the assessment process. This means that team members will not share their personal views or ask leading questions. They will treat the views of participants with confidentiality and respect.
2. Encourage participants to introduce themselves. Ask them to share their thoughts about what social forestry means for them.
3. Share the primary objectives of the assessment reflecting the results of the needs assessment.
4. Present the assessment chart based on the template illustrated in Table 9 using a flipchart. Introduce the themes and sessions of the assessment.
5. Inform participants that:
    - This is the sequence of subjects that will be discussed
    - The issues in each sequence will be scored by participants with no influence from the facilitation team
    - The resulting scores will be presented and discussed in the final session
6. Allow time for questions and clarification on the order and the process, including agreement on when there will be breaks.

Practitioner’s note:

- Ensure that participants take ownership of the assessment to the greatest extent possible.

Table 9: Session order template

Time	Sessions/activities
15 min	Set up the meeting
30 min	**Session 1: Introduction**
60 min	**Session 2: Natural resources in community forests**
15 min	Break
45 min	**Session 3: Effective governance and participation**
30 min	**Session 4: Rights and institutional setting**
60 min	Break
45 min	**Session 5: Addressing community needs**
45 min	**Session 6: Adaptive management and learning**
15 min	Break
30 min	**Session 7: Preliminary evaluation and recommendations**
15 min	Final thoughts

Session 2: Natural resources in community forests

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Identified the availability of resources in the community forest and the use of these resources in response to community needs

Indicators, guiding questions and tools

Table 10: Source of Session 2 questions[9]

CF principle	Indicators	Tools and methods
1: Availability of natural resources	1.1 Diversity of resource type, amount and seasonal availability by type	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ Participatory resource mapping ▪ Seasonal calendar
4: Addressing community's needs	4.1 Uses of natural resources	

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

Time

60 minutes

Steps

1. Ask participants to discuss the following questions and record their answers.
   - What are the main objectives of establishing the CF?
   - Why were these objectives chosen?
   - How were the objectives selected? By whom and when? Has this objective changed over time?
2. Divide participants into two groups in order to draw two separate resource maps. Agree with the group on the symbols that will be used to represent different resources, such as a triangle for water. Assign each group the following tasks:

   Group 1: Decide on a historical point in time that the resource map will represent, such as when the CF user group formed. Having data or group member recollection of the period is useful. It is helpful to include older participants in this group.

   Group 2: Draw a resource map of the community forest as it exists today.
3. Ask the following questions to guide the groups in drawing their maps and tell participants to depict or list the natural resources as a legend at an appropriate place on the map:
   - What is the total area of community forest?
   - What kind of natural resources are available in the community forest? Make a list of products and services.
4. When the two maps are complete, place them next to each other. Facilitate a group discussion of the two maps. Do the participants want to change anything? Have the maps brought them to any realizations? Have there been recent changes to the forest area?
5. Hang a flipchart with a seasonal calendar (Table 11) on a wall. Ask participants to define seasons: late winter, summer, rainy season and winter, as in the example below, and note the months these seasons take place.

Table 11: Seasonal calendar template

Topics	Winter / cool season		Summer / hot season				Rainy season				Winter / cool season	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
TFPs (list and amount)												
NTFPs collection (list and amount)												
Water (quality)												
Forest health												

6. To help populate the seasonal calendar, ask participants the following questions:
   - What is the amount of key products and services (can be taken from Inventory list, FMP m3/ha or observations of people)?
   - What is the seasonal availability?
     - Water availability and quality?
     - General forest health and vitality?
7. Ask the participants to define what makes a ‘healthy’ forest and record their answers on the seasonal calendar.
8. Allow time for clarifying questions and discussion.
9. At the end of session, distribute scorecards (Table 12) to all participants. Collect their cards once they have filled them out and calculate the group’s average score. With one criterion, this will also represent the overall score for principle 1.

Table 12: Scorecard for principle 1

Criteria	Add an X to the box best fitting your answer to the question				Sum	Mean
	1	2	3	4		
Principle 1: Availability of natural resources						
How would you assess the availability (quality and quantity) of natural resources in the CF?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		

Session 3: Effective governance and participation

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Reflected on the practices to elect or select current CF user group leaders
- Reflected on the participation of CF user group members in the election or selection

Indicators, guiding questions and tools

Table 13: Source of Session 3 questions

CF principle	Indicators	Tools and methods
2: Effective governance and participation	2.1 Frequency and importance of elections (turnout, number of male/ female candidates, participation) 2.2. Perceptions of the value of participation in elections 2.3 Perceptions of the efficiency and effectiveness of grievance redress mechanisms	▪ Focus group discussion

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

Time

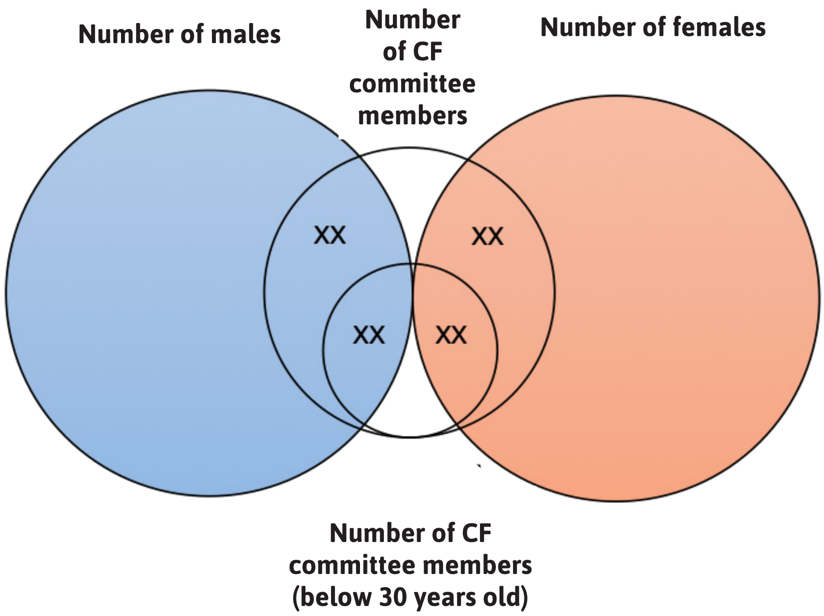
45 minutes

Steps

1. Ask participants the following question, writing answers on a blank flipchart:
    - How often does the leadership or decision-making body governing the community forest change?

2. Introduce the diagram in Figure 7 and lead a group discussion about representation of CF user group members and the social forestry committee. Ask the questions below and write the participants' answers on one side of a flipchart:
    - Who can be a candidate?
    - In the latest election, how many candidates were running for each position?
    - Who is eligible to vote?
    - How many eligible voters voted at the last election?
    - To what extent do leaders respond to input, feedback and questions from CF user group members?

Figure 6: Identification of CF User Group members



3. Ask the following questions and fill in the pie chart with the participants' answers:
   - How are committee members selected?
     - What is the gender breakdown among total CF user group members?
     - How many of the leadership body are women (% of total committee)?
     - How many committee members are under 30 years old?
     - How many total CF user group members are under 30?

On a blank flipchart, draw three quadrants, adding the titles as shown (Table 14):

Table 14: Decision-making, value of participation and grievance redress mechanisms with example questions

Decision-making	Value of participation
▪ How are decisions made in your CFUG? (e.g. by a vote) • What is the procedure for input, feedback or questions from CF members? • Does the procedure follow rules and regulations regarding time, laid out steps and feedback? • How often are meetings organized and decisions communicated to all community members and relevant stakeholders?	▪ Who can participate in decision-making processes? • Are there any costs for individuals to participate? • Is the process clear and simple to understand for all CFUG members?
Grievance redress mechanisms ▪ What grievance redress mechanisms exist and how often are they used? • For what reasons is a grievance redress mechanism used? • Is the grievance redress mechanism established in CFUG policies and procedures? • How are rules and regulations in benefit-sharing formulated? Are there penalties? Rewards?	

4. Ask participants the questions listed in Table 14 or those chosen as most relevant in relation to the needs assessment. Write their responses in the related quadrants.
5. Distribute scorecards. Collect and calculate the average score. With one criterion, this will also represent the overall score for principle 2. Allow time for discussion.

Table 15: Scorecard for principle 2

Criteria	Add an X to the box best fitting your answer to the question				Sum	Mean
	1	2	3	4		
Principle 2: Effective governance and participation						
To what extent would you say the decision-making system is accountable, transparent and inclusive to all CFUG members?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		

Session 4: Rights and institutional settings

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Reflected on existing customary practices and legal rights of their CF user group
- Reflected on the institutions currently in place to support CF user groups to exercise their rights

Indicators, guiding questions and tools

Table 16: Source of Session 4 questions

CF principle	Indicators	Tools and methods
3: Rights and institutional settings	3.1. Type of customary practices employed by CFUGs 3.2 Type and strength of legal rights employed by CFUGs	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ Rights mapping
	3.3. Type of institutions that support CF rights (in awareness and action)	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ Institutional analysis

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

Time

30 minutes

Steps

1. Inform participants that this session focuses on the rights and institutions that support the CF user group to exercise entitled rights. Introduce the rights mapping matrix (Table 17).
2. Facilitate a discussion among participants regarding what rights they possess. During the discussion, the note taker should fill in each row and column of the matrix.
3. Ask participants to prioritize their most essential rights.
4. Hang a blank flipchart on a wall and distribute metacards. Inform the participants that they will now note the institutions of which they are aware and the impact of these institutions on the community forest.
    - Inform the participants that three different colors of cards will be used. One will represent customary laws, the second governmental institutions and the third non-governmental institutions.
    - What customary, governmental and non-governmental institutions support the exercise of rights?

Table 17: Rights mapping matrix

Type of rights		Is the right customary? (Yes or No)	Is the right formal/legal? (Yes or No)	When yes[10], to what extent can the right be exercised?	Duration of the right	How are the rights documented?
Access						
Withdrawal	TFPs					
	NTFPs					
Management						
Exclusion						
Alienation						
Due Process and Compensation						

5. Facilitate a discussion among participants regarding what rights they possess. The terms in the left side of the table are defined in the glossary of this guide. They offer a typology of rights that can be discussed one by one. During the discussion, the note taker should fill in each row and column in the matrix depicted above as the conversation moves forward.
6. Ask participants what they would say are their most essential rights.
7. Hang a blank flipchart on a wall and distribute metacards. Inform the participants that they will now note the institutions they are aware of and impacted by.
   - Inform the participants that three cards of different colors will be used. One will represent customary laws, the second governmental institutions and the third non-governmental institutions.
   - What different types of customary, governmental and non-governmental institutions support the exercise of rights?
     Collect the metacards and organize them on the blank flipchart.
8. Ask the participants to draw star symbols or put stickers next to each institution in terms of their effectiveness and efficiency to support the community forest. Three stars or stickers represent the highest level of support, one represents the lowest.
9. Distribute scorecards. Collect and calculate the average score for each criterion. Calculate the average between these two scores, which will represent the overall score for principle 3. Allow time for discussion.

Table 18: Scorecard for principle 3

Criteria	Add an X to the box best fitting your answer to the question				Sum	Mean
	1	2	3	4		
Principle 3: Rights and institutional settings						
To what extent would you say the decision-making system is accountable, transparent and inclusive to all CFUG members?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		
How would you assess the strength of the institutions in place to protect your rights?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		

Session 5: Addressing community needs

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Reflected on the use of natural resources as well as physical and financial facilities to respond to priority needs of the community by developing products and services
- Reflected on the distribution of benefits to CF user group members

Table 19: Source of Session 5 questions

CF principle	Indicators	Tools and methods
4: Addressing community needs	4.1 Uses of natural resources (builds on principle 1) 4.2 Perceived community needs for livelihood development 4.3 Type of products and services to respond to these needs	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ Participatory resource mapping ▪ SWOT analysis
	4.4 Access to physical and financial facilities	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis
	4.5 Type of benefits received by CFUG members (e.g. women/men, youth and disadvantaged groups) 4.6. Characteristics of process to ensure equitable benefit sharing (e.g. transparency)	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

Time

45 minutes

Steps

1. Ask participants to revisit the main objectives behind the establishment of the community forest noted during Session 2, step 1. If this step was not followed earlier, then quickly ask them to list the main objectives.
2. Ask participants to share their community's most urgent needs, following the question given below. Distribute metacards and direct the participants to write one idea per card. The note taker can assist in writing the ideas on a flipchart.
   • What are the livelihood development priorities for CF user group members?
3. Ask the participants how these needs were identified and by whom. Write their answers on the flipchart.

4. Introduce the SWOT analysis matrix and ask participants to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their community forest and its management by the CF user group. Prepare a SWOT matrix naming only the top two quadrants, strengths and weaknesses – Table 20. For the moment, leave the other two quadrants blank. They will be addressed in Session 6.

Table 20: SWOT matrix strengths and weaknesses

Strengths (positive)	**Weaknesses (negative)**
Opportunities	**Threats**

5. Facilitate a discussion with participants around the questions listed in the box below. The questions listed are guiding, and depending on the needs assessment, it may not be necessary to ask them all. Discuss strengths first before moving on to weaknesses. The note taker should assist the facilitator in populating the flipchart during the session.

Table 21: Guiding questions to populate SWOT matrix strengths and weaknesses

Use of resources

- In what ways and for what reasons are CF products and services used by the CFUG? (answer per product or service)
- Is the sustainability of forest resources controlled or maintained by the CFUG? If so, how is this monitored?

Products and services development

- Which products and services have CFUG members managed based on prioritized needs?
  - For what form of business or non-business activity are they used?
  - What is the main purpose for developing this business activity?
  - How have the business activities benefited CFUG members? Do all members benefit? Do non-members benefit?
  - Does the CFUG have a finance manager?
  - Are financial records being kept?
  - Did the development and use of products and services meet the CFUG's priority needs?

Physical and financial facilities

- Which physical and financial facilities (e.g. technology, infrastructure, access to credit) are available and accessible by CFUG members?
  - How have these facilities been accessed?
  - Who is allowed access?
  - With what conditions can these people access the facilities?
- Have these facilities been used to address CFUG member needs over the past 12 months? How?

Benefit allocation and distribution

- What is the practice for allocating and distributing benefits to CFUG members?
  - Who makes the decision on benefit sharing?
  - How has this practice been implemented? By whom?
  - Are CF user groups satisfied with this practice? If not, what is the mechanism to address dissatisfaction?
- Are all CFUG members aware of the level of benefit distribution?
  - If not, who knows more or less?
  - What is the process of sharing information?

6. Once all questions have been asked, let the participants discuss the collected information on the SWOT matrix.
7. Distribute scorecards to all participants. Collect and calculate the average score for each criterion. Calculate the average between these three scores, which will represent the overall score for principle 4. Allow time for discussion.

Table 22: Scorecard for principle 4

Criteria	Add an X to the box best fitting your answer to the question				Sum	Mean
	1	2	3	4		
Principle 4: Addressing community needs						
To what extent are you able to use the available natural resources to sustain your daily needs?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		
To what extent is the CFUG able to enhance your livelihoods by maximizing collective facilities and/or collaborating with relevant agencies (e.g. banks, forest departments, NGOs, schools, others)?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		
To what extent do all CFUG members receive a fair share of benefits?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		

Session 6: Adaptive management and learning

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Reflected on the capacity of their CF user group to identify and respond to the challenges and opportunities in forest resource management.

Table 23: Source of Session 6 questions

CF principle	Indicators	Tools and methods
5: Adaptive management and learning	.1 Opinions of CFUG members on opportunities and threats, including how they were identified 5.2 Opinions of CFUG members of responses to opportunities and threats over the past 12 months 5.3 Opinion of key lessons and measures that CFUG have developed over the past 12 months	▪ Focus group discussion ▪ SWOT analysis

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

Time

45 minutes

Steps

1. This session continues the SWOT matrix started in Session 5. Display this matrix on a wall and inform participants that you will continue building on the same exercise.
2. Introduce the second half of the SWOT analysis matrix by drawing into the lower two quadrants opportunities and threats (Table 24).

Table 24: SWOT matrix opportunities and threats

Strengths (positive)	**Weaknesses (negative)**
Opportunities	**Threats**

3. Ask the questions listed in the box below. As with the SWOT analysis in Session 5, the questions listed are guiding, and depending on the needs assessment, it may not be necessary to ask them all. Discuss challenges first before moving on to opportunities. The goal of this exercise is to support participants in realizing what issues they may be exposed to and what opportunities may exist for them to overcome these issues.

Table 25: Guiding questions to populate SWOT matrix opportunities and threats

Past 12 months of observation

- Which opportunities and threats have been observed relating to forest landscape management in the past 12 months?

Identification and prioritization

- How were these opportunities and threats addressed?
  - How were they prioritized?
  - What were the reasons behind this priority order?
- Has there been a collective platform (e.g. specified body and/or regular meetings) to jointly identify common opportunities/challenges within and among CFUGs?
  - If so, what were the key characteristics of this platform?
  - Who participated in the identification process?
  - Was anyone excluded from this process?

Response/Unable to respond

- What are the responses to the identified opportunities/challenges? With what results?
- Which opportunities and threats have CFUGs been unable to respond to? Why?

New strategies developed

- Have the CF objectives, forest management and governance practices changed any time the last 12 months?
  - Why?
  - Instigated by whom?
  - With what impacts?

4. Let the participants discuss the information presented on the flipchart.
5. Distribute scorecards to all participants. Collect and calculate the average score for each criterion. Calculate the average between these three scores, which will represent the overall score for principle 5. Allow time for discussion.

Table 26: Scorecard for principle 5

Criteria	Add an X to the box best fitting your answer to the question				Sum	Mean
	1	2	3	4		
Principle 4: Addressing community needs						
To what extent are user groups able to identify opportunities and threats in forest management?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		
To what extent is the CFUG able to respond to opportunities and threats?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		
To what extent is the CFUG able to learn from opportunities and threats?	Low	Marginal	Good	Excellent		

Session 7: Preliminary evaluation and recommendations

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Discussed and understood the interlinkages between the social forestry principles and score results
- Discussed areas of their CF management needing improvement

Tool and method

Spidergram and focus group discussion

Materials:

- Flipchart and markers
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or metacards
- Audio or video equipment

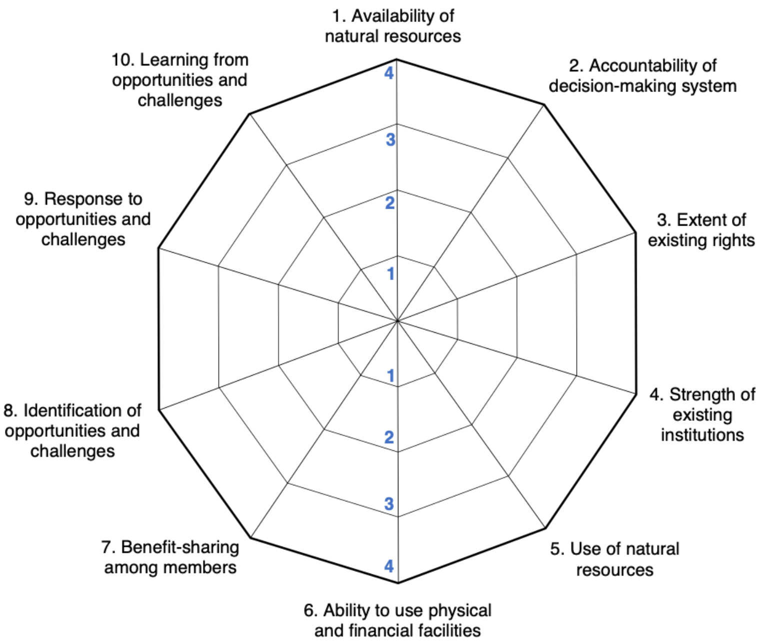
Time

30 minutes

Steps

1. Illustrate all average scores on the spidergram (Figure 8).
2. Mark the score on the number scale corresponding to each criterion. Draw lines between the scores for each criterion and explain that this diagram includes all key areas of the assessment. Allow time for discussion on interpreting the diagram and the results. For example, encourage discussion on how various subjects and scores have an impact on each other.

Figure 7: Spidergram



3. Let the participants discuss and add information on the areas of improvement for social forestry management they have identified over the course of the assessment. Use the spidergram as a reference.
4. Ask the following questions, with the note taker writing responses on a flipchart:
   - Are there any actions they will try to take in the future?
   - Has this assessment helped them decide to do so?
   - Have the participants determined any changes that would be beneficial but that they would need external support to implement?
   - Are there any activities that they have decided in the near future to:
     - Stop/decrease?
     - Start/increase?
5. At the end of session, discuss when and how the collected data will be reported to the CF user group.
6. Thank the participants for their time and energy.

Practitioner's note

The entire assessment culminates in the key questions listed under step 4 of this session: What are the participants realizations and what are the possible solutions? The answers to these questions are vital, so the practitioners should take particular care to ensure that they are noted down in as much detail as possible. The discussion and realizations made during steps 4 and 5 can be transferred to the reporting template outlined in the next section.

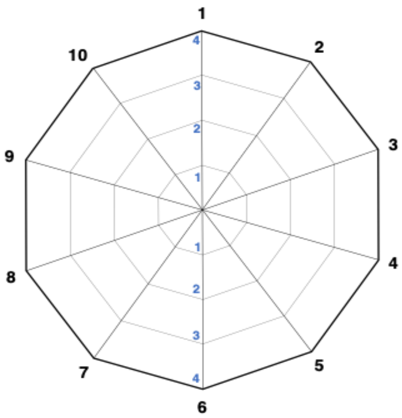
Appendix 2: Reporting template

The reporting template introduced on the following pages (Table 27) can be used together with the ready-to-use assessment plan. Where it states Insert spidergram result, add a copy of the spidergram drawn in Session 7. Key findings refers to the most relevant data collected relating to the stated criteria. Areas needing improvement refers to areas the participants consider they should or will improve. Recommendations refer to their ideas of how such improvements can be implemented.

Table 27: Reporting template

Summary of assessment:

Insert spidergram results



Criteria	Key findings/results from assessment	Areas needing improvement	Recommendations
CF 1: Availability of natural resources			
1.1 Diversity of resource type, amount and seasonal availability by type			

Criteria	Key findings/results from assessment	Areas needing improvement	Recommendations
CF 2: Effective governance and participation			
2.1 Frequency and importance of elections (turnout, number of male/female candidates, participation) 2.2. Perceptions of the value of participation in elections 2.3 Perceptions of the efficiency and effectiveness of grievance redress mechanisms			
CF 3: Rights and institutional settings			
3.1. Type of customary practices employed by CFUGs 3.2 Type and strength of legal rights employed by CFUGs			
3.3. Type of institutions that support CF rights (in awareness and action)			

Criteria	Key findings/results from assessment	Areas needing improvement	Recommendations
CF 4: Addressing community needs			
4.1 Uses of natural resources (builds on principle 1) 4.2 Perceived community needs for livelihood development 4.3 Type of products and services to respond to these needs			
4.4 Access to physical and financial facilities			
4.5 Type of benefits received by CFUG members (e.g. women/ men, youth and disadvantaged groups) 4.6. Characteristics of process to ensure equitable benefit sharing (e.g. transparency)			

Criteria	Key findings/results from assessment	Areas needing improvement	Recommendations
CF 5: Adaptive management and learning			
5.1 Opinions of CFUG members on opportunities and threats, including how they were identified 5.2 Opinions of CFUG members on responses to opportunities and threats over the past 12 months			
5.3 Opinion of key lessons and measures that CFUG have developed over the past 12 months			
Summary (key questions to the CFUGs)			
What will you continue to do?	What practices will you drop?	What do you want to improve?	General thoughts

Practitioner's comments

Appendix 3: Scorecard template

Criteria assessment question	Add an X to box best fitting your answer to the question				Mean[11]
	1 Low	2 Marginal	3 Good	4 Excellent	
Principle 1: Availability of natural resources					
How would you assess the availability (quality and quantity) of natural resources?					
Principle 2: Effective governance and participation					
To what extent would you say the decision-making system is accountable, transparent and inclusive to all CFUG members?					
Principle 3: Rights and institutional settings					
To what extent are existing rights (statutory and customary arrangements) in place to support your forest and natural resources management?					
How would you assess the strength of the institutions in place to protect your rights?					
Principle 4: Addressing community needs					
To what extent are you able to use the available natural resources to sustain your daily needs?					
To what extent is the CFUG able to enhance your livelihoods by maximizing collective facilities and collaborating with relevant agencies (e.g. banks, forest departments, NGOs, schools, others)?					
To what extent do all CFUG members receive a fair share of benefits?					
Principle 5: Adaptive management and learning					
To what extent are user groups able to identify opportunities and threats in forest management?					
To what extent is the CFUG able to respond to opportunities and threats?					
To what extent is the CFUG able to learn from opportunities and threats?					

Appendix 4: Online resources

Learning support on participatory tools

Focus group discussion. PRA tools. [Online]:
blog.socialcops.com/academy/resources/conduct-successful-focus-group-discussion/

Participatory mapping. PRA tools. [Online]:
mappingforrights.org/participatory_mapping

PRA tools. [Online]:
fao.org/docrep/003/x5996e/x5996e06.htm

RECOFTC (2018) Citizens' Monitoring in Forestry (Toolbox). [Online]:
recoftc.org/publications/0000314

Seasonal Calendars. [Online]:
betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/seasonalcalendars

Summary of several PCI frameworks for SFM. [Online]:
fao.org/forestry/ci/88506/en/

Conceptual background

Community forests. The conservation fund. [Online]:
conservationfund.org/projects/community-forests

RECOFTC (2013) Community forestry in Asia and the Pacific: Pathway to inclusive development. [Online]:
recoftc.org/research-papers/community-forestry-asia-and-pacific-pathway-inclusive-development

Sustainable Development Goals. [Online]:
sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs

Thwink. The three pillars of sustainability. [Online]:
thwink.org/sustain/glossary/ThreePillarsOfSustainability.htm

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participatorymethods.org/resource/art-building-facilitation-capacities-training-guide

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Evans, K. and M. Guariguata. (2008). Participatory monitoring in tropical forest management: A review of tools, concepts and lessons learned. CIFOR, Bogor, Indonesia:
cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/Books/BGuariguata0801.pdf

FAO. (2013). Strengthening forest tenure systems and governance: Training module for facilitators. Rome, Italy:
fao.org/docrep/019/i3521e/i3521e.pdf

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Gilmour, D. (2016). Forty years of community-based forestry: A review of its extent and effectiveness. FAO, Rome, Italy:
fao.org/3/a-i5415e.pdf

Greijmans, M., D. Gritten, C. Rivera, L., Thi Bui and S.L Lewis. (2015). Building blocks for viable social forestry enterprises. ETFRN News 57:
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Moore, P., X. Zhang and R. Triraganon. (2011). Natural Resource Governance Trainers' Guide. IUCN, RECOFTC, SNV, Bangkok, Thailand:
recoftc.org/training-manuals-and-guides/natural-resource-governance-trainers-guide

RECOFTC. (2013). Community forestry in Asia and the Pacific: Pathway to inclusive development. RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests, Bangkok:
recoftc.org/publications/0000192

Endnotes

1 Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and UN-REDD Programme, 2015. Establishing and strengthening grievance redress mechanisms. forestcarbonpartnership.org/system/files/documents/FCPF_UN_REDDWebReady.pdf.

2 FAO. 2019. Assessing Tenure and Governance for Improving Forests and Livelihoods: A tool informed by the Voluntary Guidelines on Governance of Tenure. Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.; ClientEarth. 2019. Communities at the heart of forest management: How can the law make a difference? Sharing lessons from Nepal, the Philippines and Tanzania. London, ClientEarth.

3 The online resources section of this guide (Appendix 4) provide links to national-level policy reviews that can support the practitioner in his/her understanding of CF in each country.

4 Links to supporting documents are provided in the online resources section (Appendix 4)

5 The terms in this table are explained in the glossary at the beginning of this guide.

6 An answer of yes here refers to either customary or statutory rights or both together.

7 The mean score is the sum of all the scores divided by the total number of participants who have given a score.

8 All sourcing of questions in this ready-to-use assessment plan is derived from the conceptual framework as laid out in Chapter 2.

9 An answer of yes here refers to either customary or statutory rights, or both together.

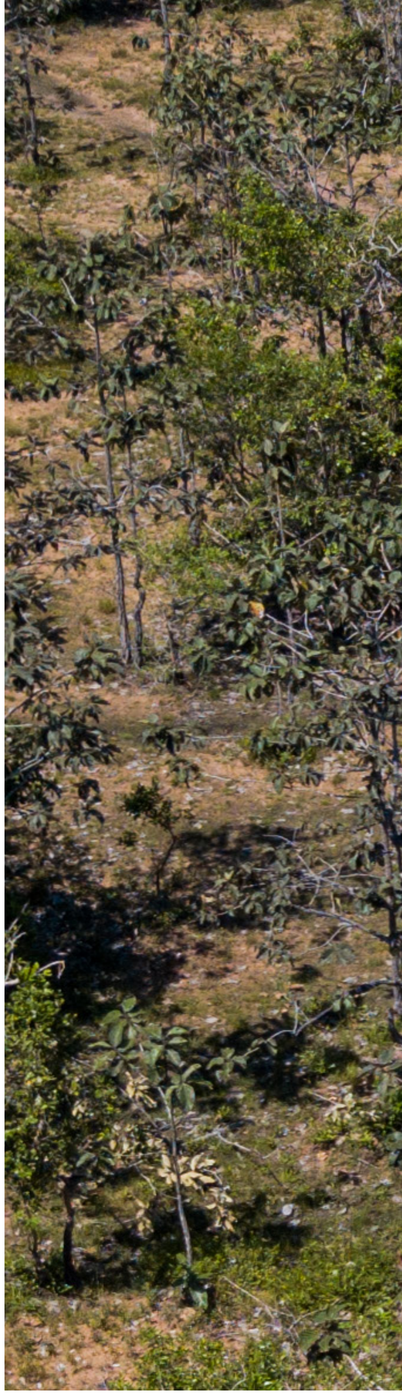
Please insert the mean for all criteria, but also for each principle as a whole. Where this involves more than one criterion, the practitioner should calculate the mean of these scores and insert it into the blue box aligned with the principle

10 An answer of yes here refers to either customary or statutory rights, or both together

11 Please insert the mean for all criteria, but also for each principle as a whole. Where this involves more than one criterion, the practitioner should calculate the mean of these scores and insert it into the blue box aligned with the principle.

RECOFTC

At RECOFTC, we believe in a future where people live equitably and sustainably in and beside healthy, resilient forests. We take a long-term, landscape-based and inclusive approach to supporting local communities to secure their land and resource rights, stop deforestation, find alternative livelihoods and foster gender equity. We are the only non-profit organization of our kind in Asia and the Pacific. We have more than 30 years of experience working with people and forests, and have built trusting relationships with partners at all levels. Our influence and partnerships extend from multilateral institutions to governments, private sector and local communities. Our innovations, knowledge and initiatives enable countries to foster good forest governance, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.



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