FOREST LIVES

Lessons on sustaining communities and forests from the Small Grants Programme for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests (SGPPTF)

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Executive Summary

Over a period of five years (2002-2007), the Small Grants Program for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests (SGPPTF) provided support to 247 community-based and non-government organizations in eight countries (Thailand, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia), touching the lives of an estimated 125,000 households. With the goal of protecting tropical forests and contributing to poverty reduction, the SGPPTF supported activities that: demonstrated community-based forest management and resource use; facilitated dissemination of innovative community practices; and built grassroots capacity for localized management through partnerships and networks. The Program was financed by the European Commission (EC) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA).

The major message that emerged from the Program is that directly supporting community forest management through small grants is a wise investment that brings about significant social and environmental dividends. The program affirmed that rural communities entrusted with access and management rights, and supported to take advantage of wider governance systems, can contribute to achieving national goals of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The small grants approach has strengthened the capacities of community-based organizations and the people they represent to:

- contribute to forest protection and rehabilitation;
- cope with rapid social change;
- coordinate and support one another as well as form effective linkages with external actors; and
- address the fundamental needs and livelihoods of people who are typically marginalized because of their low asset and power base.

Many challenges have been faced in this process, and more remain. Nevertheless, these experiences, together with the SGPPTF's emphasis on knowledge management, create a unique opportunity for a wider audience to benefit from the lessons of SGPPTF grantees.

This regional synthesis paper is part of an overall effort to share the knowledge gained in five years of program implementation (2002-2007). The findings, lessons, and recommendations presented here emerged from the grantees' reflections, site visits, project documentation, and discussions and inputs from the eight in-country teams, as well as from the key staff in regional support organizations. These discussions, together with an analysis of the wider issues faced by community forest management initiatives in the region, brought out four common themes in the work of SGPPTF at a regional level.

The four cross-cutting themes describe the scope and focus of SGPPTF regionally, while country-level implementation targets the national priorities identified by the national steering committees in each of the participating countries.

The first theme, **coping with resource uncertainty and living with social change**, tracks how the SGPPTF grantees tackle issues of insecurity in resource access and rapid social transformation.

The second theme, **strengthening local forest governance**, considers processes for community forest management planning and implementation. It also looks at the growth in the governance capacities of local development institutions that contribute to forest protection and rehabilitation.

The third theme, **supporting practice through policy and collaboration**, looks at formal efforts to strengthen national policy, and at informal efforts through local networks and collaborative processes.

The fourth theme, **sustaining livelihoods**, deals with strategies to help communities access markets for forest products and services, as well as to strengthen non-forest based livelihood activities.

This summary briefly outlines the key challenges being addressed by SGPPTF grantees grouped according to the above themes, the key lessons emerging, and the recommendations for key actors. The lessons are distilled from a series of findings, which can be found in the body of the report.

Coping with Resource Uncertainty, Living with Social Change

Uncertainty in access to forest resources undermines the culture and livelihoods of indigenous communities and creates a disincentive for rural communities to invest in forest management. In Asia, there is a trend towards formalizing community management, but the security of resource access is jeopardized where countries have legal frameworks that are weakly implemented. This 'implementation gap' may occur for various reasons: 1) procedures are too complex or costly to implement; 2) stakeholders lack knowledge of the laws and the rights and responsibilities they entail; and 3) the government, at times, lacks commitment or capacity to implement the law. Promoting collaboration among communities has been one important approach to helping communities better understand and navigate these laws (Lesson 2).

Even though they are informally managing and using forests, communities face even greater insecurity when there is no legal framework that recognizes their access rights. Hence, resource access and management must be clarified despite the following challenges: 1) it is a long-term process; 2) the process is often conflict-ridden; and 3) it requires sufficient flexibility within government systems for the process to be equitable and workable. On the other hand, communities face pressing and immediate social and economic concerns. Experiences within the SGPPTF have highlighted the lesson that when management rights cannot be formally recognized under current laws, the security of resource access must be improved. While this cannot substitute for longer term policy and legal reform, it does provide an immediate means of improving the circumstances of communities and increasing their stake in forest management (Lesson 1).

Lesson 1: *Where community access rights cannot be formalized within the current legal framework, interim measures for communities to secure access to resources include:*

a. *Improving communication and interactions between communities and local authorities; and*
b. *Establishing para-legal arrangements backed by a contract or a Memorandum of Understanding to specify the rights and responsibilities of communities and other key actors.*

Lesson2: *When there are already laws that enable the communities to formally access and manage forests, collaboration between communities and strong local institutions helps communities reduce the cost of navigating complex laws and exercise their rights in practice.*

Recommendations on Coping with Resource Uncertainty

Regional organizations	1. Promote regional exchanges on enabling legal frameworks to recognize community rights and responsibilities in forests in Asia.
Environment and natural resource departments	2. Where there are legal frameworks for community forest management, simplify procedures with communities and local authorities (local government and line agencies) and invest in communicating legal rights and responsibilities. 3. Clarify the community's access to and management of forest resources through workable and equitable legal frameworks where these do not currently exist.
Field-level staff	4. Facilitate dialogue between communities and the government to secure the long-term community management of forests, together with governance systems. 5. In the short-term, facilitate agreements on specific access arrangements between communities and local authorities.

Rapid social transformation is eroding local institutions and practices, with detrimental impacts on forests, livelihoods, and identities. Securing resource rights through a formal agreement is necessary but not sufficient to address cultural and social erosion, and the communities' lack of capacity to plan for and manage change. In the SGPPTF, grantees have found that indigenous communities can be supported so that these communities can manage change using various strategies that strengthen their cultural identity, knowledge, and practices (Lesson 3).

Lesson 3: *Sustaining the identity and cultural integrity of indigenous and other rural communities can help them manage rapid social change if:*

a. *Their identities and cultural practices are recognized in processes for local forest governance and poverty reduction.*
b. *Local knowledge is kept alive through methods of sharing and exchange.*
c. *Local community institutions are encouraged to reflect on and manage change, aspirations, conflicts, and threats to resource access.*

Local Forest Governance

With the advent of decentralized forest management in Asia, some planning and implementation decisions have been transferred to state or local governments. Thus, local forest governance has become possible. However, the attitudinal change that recognizes the co-existence of people with forests, a precondition for community access and for formal recognition of community management, has been slower to follow. SGPPTF grantees have adopted diverse strategies to strengthen the equity and effectiveness of local planning and implementation processes (Lessons 4 and 5), and to nurture the linkages and attitudinal changes that are needed to create a conducive environment for community forest management in the long-term (Lesson 6). The benefits of these local forest governance measures go beyond sustainable forest management to capacity development needed for human development and economic stability.

Lesson 4*: When the planning process promotes transparency, equity, and organizational capacity, plans for community forest management promote sustainable forest management alongside rural development.*

Recommendations on Living with Social Change

Forest departments	1. Include reference to local terms and systems of forest classification (e.g., spirit forests, backyard forests) in national systems of forest classification. 2. Ensure that forest management programs complement and work with existing community organizations. 3. Link with other government agencies to promote active inclusion of forest
Practitioners	4. Assist indigenous communities in establishing mechanisms to protect their intellectual property rights. 5. Build social capital to strengthen community resilience and forest management. Strengthen the capacity of local institutions to deal with wider governance systems, with equity and representation within communities.
Researchers	6. Study how the expansion of infrastructure for cross-border transport in Asia affects transboundary dynamics in community-managed forests.

Lesson 5: *Local residents must be involved in effectively implementing plans to protect forests and to rehabilitate degraded areas. They can help achieve these aims, especially when planning and implementation are rooted in sustainable livelihoods. Strong support from local authorities and civil society is needed particularly when communities face powerful groups.*

Lesson 6: *Activities in community forest management can become tools for marginalized populations to effectively communicate with local authorities, civil society, and the private sector. These activities can contribute to changing attitudes within district and town centers.*

Recommendations on Local Forest Governance

Environment and natural resource departments	1. Support local governments and community networks engaged in local forest governance. 2. Reward local governments with policies and programs supportive of community forest management.
Donors	3. Support more small grants programs with longer project duration to build local capacities for organizational management, livelihood development, and community forest management.
Field-level staff	4. Start resource assessments from local knowledge and interests, not from external inputs found in literature on the area. 5. Use participatory methods for vulnerable groups within the community.
Researchers	6. Develop guidelines based on sharing of experiences and on the analysis of what makes effective and equitable local organizations.

Supporting Practice through Policy and Collaboration

As mentioned earlier, the environment for community forest management in Asia spans a spectrum – from the existence of supportive policies and laws on community access and management of forests on one end to the absence of the same on the other end. Local stakeholders often do not know their rights and responsibilities, although informal forest access and management continue. In this context, SGPPTF grantees have supported networking and collaboration between communities and peers to build a critical mass of community forest management practitioners who can lead by example.

Furthermore, since the rules on forest management at the national, provincial, district, sub-district, and community levels can be inconsistent and even contradictory, communities are looking for ways to have a voice in policy development at higher levels.

In essence, the SGPPTF grantees addressed inconsistencies in forest management rules, as well as challenges regarding access and management, indigenous rights and identity, and poverty reduction and rural development through: 1) stronger linkages among communities (Lesson 7) and between communities and the local government (Lesson 8); and 2) the creation of opportunities for the community and support organizations to forward these issues in wider policy discussions (Lesson 9).

Lesson 7: *Peer-to-peer learning and inter-community networks translate lessons into practice more immediately. Both also build trust, which can lead to more substantive collaboration to implement activities and to influence policies for forest management and local development.*

Lesson 8: *Local governments can mobilize resources for communities doing forest management if they have effective communication with community institutions.*

Lesson 9: *Opening national forest policy processes to inputs from the community and other government agencies would facilitate the acceptance and successful implementation of such policies.*

Recommendations on Supporting Practice through Policy and Collaboration

Natural resource and environment departments, legislative bodies	1. Open up policy processes to inputs from community and other government agencies (land, rural development, agriculture, agrarian reform, indigenous affairs, home affairs, etc.).
Donors	2. Continue requiring cost-sharing arrangements and recognize contributions provided in-kind to encourage cooperation.
Field-level staff	3. Tailor peer-to-peer learning process to stakeholders' needs, considering their understanding of issues and effective strategies to suit local contexts. 4. Inform local governments about community forest management and how this links with the objectives of rural development.
Local governments	5. Use community forest management plans in designing and budgeting for local development projects and activities.

Sustaining Livelihoods

Forest areas commonly coincide with indigenous populations and a high incidence of poverty. Forests are an important resource to these people, who typically lack social and political assets, and have a low capacity to take advantage of wider opportunities to improve their asset base and income. Although forest resources perhaps have the greatest significance for the poor, present forest management usually limits their access to forests, thus disrupting their livelihood flows.

Many of the SGPPTF grantees recognize that security in food, water, energy, and social and political capital are fundamental needs that must be met before people can capitalize on enterprise opportunities. The grantees supported livelihood activities beyond the forests, which helped reduce local pressure on forests while securing basic assets for the people (Lessons 10 and 11). Parallel with this, they worked to build entrepreneurial capacity and market linkages which, in turn, should help build the financial and human assets of those who harvest forest resources, especially as the raw resources they can legally access generally have low financial value (Lessons 12, 13, 14, and 15).

Lesson 10*: Small grants to generate capital for community forest management (e.g., micro-credit, village development funds) can allow people to expand their financial base and to invest in forest management and community development.*

Lesson 11*: Addressing food, water, and energy requirements through forest-linked methods and technologies helps communities plan beyond subsistence activities. This strengthens the viability of non-forest based livelihoods and allows communities to develop enterprises while managing the forests.*

Lesson 12*: External facilitators can play an important role in:*

a. *Strengthening the capacity of sellers to: 1) analyze market opportunities; 2) engage in value addition; 3) plan and manage enterprises transparently and effectively (especially financial aspects); and 4) negotiate for better prices with traders and companies; and*

b. *Facilitating marketing information and linkages, but not to permanently supplant the roles of different actors in the market chain.*

Lesson 13*: Small-scale enterprises that start from existing products, skills, and domestic markets allow communities to progressively build their capacity in enterprise management.*

Lesson 14*: The impact of enterprises on the poorest, most marginalized groups can be increased by knowing who they are and factoring in their skills, interests, and participation into enterprise planning and governance.*

Lesson 15*: If economic returns from forest-based resources are high enough, they can provide communities an incentive to shift from unsustainable to sustainable harvesting practices.*

Recommendations on Sustainable Livelihoods

Policymakers	1. Remove barriers to the development of small-scale enterprises (e.g., transport tariffs) and simplify permit systems.
Practitioners	2. Foster appropriate modes of livelihood development and resource management that take into account people's values and needs, instead of solely focusing on forest-based enterprises. 3. Link with organizations outside forest departments to bring in the capacities needed to support livelihoods and asset bases. 4. Target vulnerable groups based on social categories, such as gender, age, and means of livelihood (e.g., collection of non-forest timber products) to give them benefits from livelihood activities. 5. Work from existing resource use activities and products to build on existing skills, market information, and networks. 6. Support communities with market analysis and enterprise planning early in the process and follow up with mentoring to build local capacity. 7. Facilitate market linkages and the communities' capacities to negotiate with different market actors, including middlemen. 8. Facilitate coordination among neighboring communities on planning, production, and marketing, bearing in mind the landscape management unit that they share.
Researchers	9. Track benefits and outcomes of livelihood activities and factors that promote or hinder equity and how these benefits and factors are correlated with forest protection.

The above recommendations are reconfigured in the conclusion and recommendations for easy reference by target groups.

SGPPTF has added to the growing body of evidence that rural communities can and should play an active role in addressing the dual goals of environmental sustainability and poverty reduction. The program, in supporting innovative ways to promote Asia's forests, has confirmed and contributed important lessons on effective processes for sustainable forest management. Addressing these lessons in future policy and action will carry the momentum for local communities to manage forests and their own development.

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Preface

Over the last two centuries, processes of colonization and state formation brought most of Asia's forests under state ownership. Only in recent decades have governments and civil society started to recognize the significance of forests for communities that have used them for generations, and their critical role in forest management. We now see a growing interest in effectively engaging such communities to manage our fast-dwindling forest resources.

The Small Grants Program for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests (SGPPTF) is a landmark effort by the international community to strengthen the role of local actors in sustaining Asia's forests. It is financed by the European Commission (EC) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through SEAMEO Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA).

The SGPPTF started full operations in 2002 and has provided support to 247 grantees in 8 countries: Thailand, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia. SGPPTF aimed to: demonstrate community-based forest management and resource use; disseminate innovative community practices; and build the grassroots' capacity for localized management through partnerships and networks. The program, thus, contributes to a broader movement in the Asian region from state to community management of national forest areas.

This regional publication, together with the other materials and documents produced through the SGPPTF, is part of an overall effort to share the knowledge and lessons gained over the five years of program implementation. Country-level publications from the eight countries will likewise be accompanied by this regional publication synthesizing the cross-country lessons. This document has arisen from the contributions of the program's many partners, and from the incremental knowledge developed from past initiatives.

The lessons presented in this publication are gleaned from the experiences of communities and grantees in managing and implementing the program. Many actors contributed to this publication. First among them are the communities at the SGPPTF sites which brought in a vast wealth of knowledge and experience on community-based forest management (CBFM). SGPPTF grantees facilitated the communities' reflections on their knowledge and experiences, and helped take these reflections to other stakeholders beyond the local context.

Efforts of the communities and grantees were supported by the National Steering Committees (NSC) through the National Coordination Teams. The NSC provided linkages to policy processes, as well as guidance in documenting and taking the emergent issues and lessons to wider arenas. Many of the "lessons learned" are now being factored into policy-level discussions to support national sustainable forest management objectives.

The Asia Forest Network (AFN) and the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) facilitated the reflections on SGPPTF experiences in the wider context of community forestry in Asia.

The experiences generated through the program added to the incremental process of learning at project sites, as well as to the growing body of research and literature on community-based forest management in the region and beyond. By sharing the invaluable knowledge and lessons learned during the implementation of the program, this publication aims not only to contribute to the development of best community-based forest management practices but also to pay tribute to the forest communities in Asia and their crucial role in safeguarding Asia's forests.

Contents

BOXES

TABLES

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABE	Association of Buddhists for Environment
AFN	Asia Forest Network
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDA	Children's Development Association, Cambodia
CF	Community Forestry
CFM	Community Forest Management
CRDT	Cambodian Rural Development Team
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
EC	European Commission
EPF	Environment Protection Foundation, Sri Lanka
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility (United Nations Development Programme)
GPS	Global Positioning System
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HUJRA	Holistic Understanding for Justified Research and Actions, Pakistan
IUCN	World Conservation Union
KIDF	Kohistan Integrated Development Forum, Pakistan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Philippines
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
NWG	National Working Group on Community Forest Management, Vietnam
OPANT	*Lembaga Organisasi Perempuan Adat Ngata Toro* / Ngata Toro Women's Customary Organization
PACOS Trust	Partners of Community Organizations Trust, Malaysia
PDF	Proposal Development Facility of the SGPPTF
PM&E	Participatory monitoring and evaluation
PTF	See SGPPTF
RCO	Children's Development Association, Cambodia
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific

RMI	Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment
SCW	Save Cambodia Wildlife
SDO	Sonmiani Development Organization, Pakistan
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Education Ministers Organization
SEARCA	Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture
SGPPTF	Small Grants Programme for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests
SK	Children's Development Association, Cambodia
SPNS	Sinui Pai Nanek Sengik, Malaysia
SRSP	Sarhad Rural Sector Support Programme, Pakistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WACD	Women's Association for Community Development , Cambodia
WPA	World Pheasant Association, Pakistan
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Glossary of Terms

Access right	Authorized right to enter and remove resources from an area (usually guided by specific rules)[i]
Agro-forestry	Encompasses a wide range of multi-purpose agricultural systems that include trees, shrubs, perennial crops, annual crops, herbs, and climbers[ii]
Assets	The sustainable livelihood framework developed by DFID suggests that livelihoods are made up of five types of assets: human (e.g., education), social and political (e.g., family and government connections), financial (e.g., access to credit), natural (e.g., forests), and physical (e.g., equipment, buildings, roads) (The degree to which communities, families, and individuals can access these five assets and put them to productive use determines their ability to build sustainable livelihoods.)[iii]
Capacity	The overall ability of the individuals or groups to actually perform their responsibilities and exercise their rights (It depends not only on the capabilities of the people, but also on the overall size of the task and resources which are needed to perform them and the framework within which they are discharged.)[iv]
Capacity building	Externally or internally initiated processes designed to help individuals and groups to appreciate and manage their changing circumstances and to enhance their abilities to identify and meet development challenges in a sustainable manner[iv]
Community	A group of people residing in a hamlet, a village, or several villages using resources in a common area (A community is generally heterogeneous, including many sub-groups, often with diverse or opposing needs, capacities, and interests.)[v]
Community forest management	This refers broadly to community involvement in forest management. CFM in the countries covered in this paper varied in terms of specific rights and responsibilities of communities and government, the types of rights held by a community over a forest area, and the types of forests covered, potentially ranging from degraded to high-value forests.[vi]
Culture	The way that people live together, interact, and cooperate, and how they justify such interactions through a system of beliefs, values, and norms[vii]
Decentralization	The transfer of both decision-making authority and budgets to lower levels of government (Although still involving the government, it provides a stronger role for local bodies, which are presumed to have greater accountability to the local populace, including both users of the resource and others who live in the area.)[viii]
Governance	The processes, structures, rules, norms, and practices through which decisions about resource management are made (It specifically includes laws, rules about participation and representation, levels of authority, accountability, and rules on transparency, property rights, and markets.)[ix]

Indigenous peoples	According to the ILO definition, they include: (a) tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural, and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; (b) peoples in independent countries regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions.[x]
Knowledge Management	A systematic process of capturing lessons and experiences, and using these to achieve impact or change[xi]
Law	The system of rules which a particular country or community recognizes as regulating the actions of its members and which it may enforce by the imposition of penalties[xii]
Local authority	In this paper, this encompasses both local government and field offices of line agencies responsible for natural resource management.
Local knowledge	In this paper, this encompasses the knowledge held by indigenous peoples and other rural communities on agriculture, forestry, health, animals, and ecosystems, traditional classifications for living resources, learning systems and oral traditions, spirituality, symbols, and traditional arts and culture.[xiii]
Management rights	Authorized rights to regulate internal use patterns in a resource area (how, when, and where resources can be harvested), and to transform the resource by making improvements (e.g., through protection, replanting, etc.)[xiv]
Natural Resource Management	A broad term referring to initiatives (e.g., policies, programs, projects) to sustainably manage use of resources, such as land, water, sea, forests, and biodiversity
Policy	A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual[xv] (In this paper, the term generally refers to government policy.)
Poverty	A pronounced deprivation of well-being related to lack of material income or consumption, low levels of education and health, vulnerability and exposure to risk, lack of opportunity to be heard, and powerlessness[xvi]
Resource rights	In this paper, resource rights refer to the authorized rights to access and manage forest resources.
Practitioners	In this paper, these include people designing and implementing programs and projects to facilitate CFM at the field level (e.g., staff of community-based organizations and other non-government organizations, as well as field level staff of line agencies).
Social Capital	The networks, relationships, and interaction processes within communities, and between communities and other actors, that build the trust and communication necessary for collective action[xvii]

Stakeholders	People, groups, communities, and organizations who use and depend on a resource, whose activities affect the resource, or who have an interest or 'stake' in these activities (Stakeholders may include local users, government agencies, civil society, universities, and researchers.)[xviii]
Tenure	Commonly refers to the ownership arrangements applying to a resource, and may include private, communal or state ownership, and open access (the last of which describes a management regime rather than ownership arrangement) (Forest tenure determines who can use what forest resource, for how long, and under what conditions.)[xix]
Value chain or market chain	The set of activities involved from production of a commodity to its purchase by consumers (For example, a typical NTFP value chain involves production (often wild), collection, processing, storage, transport, marketing, and sale.)[xx]

Endnotes

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Introduction

Governments worldwide have committed themselves to protecting dwindling tropical forests and the biodiversity they contain, while addressing the pernicious issue of poverty[1]. As an approach that combines forest management with livelihood in forest-dependent communities, community forest management has captured the interest of governments, development organizations, and communities alike. In Asia, more forests are coming under such arrangements, yet important challenges remain. Firstly, communities more often gain rights to degraded forest lands rather than being entrusted with rich forests. Secondly, the complex and multi-faceted nature of poverty requires forestry programs and professionals to be serious about poverty reduction. Poverty reduction deals with less familiar issues such as political rights and securing of fundamental needs for food, water, shelter, health, and human dignity.

Over a period of five years (2002-2007), SGPPTF provided support to 247 community-based and non-government organizations in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam, touching the lives of an estimated 125,200 households. The program worked towards an overarching goal of protecting tropical forests and contributing to poverty reduction. While SGPPTF has focused on Asia, the lessons it has generated can be of wider interest to those working for the welfare of forests and forest-dependent communities.

8 countries
247 grants
125,000 households
EUR 15 million
project cost

The program adds to the growing body of evidence that communities are actively contributing to achieving the dual goals of forest protection and poverty reduction. Equally important is the fact the SGPPTF experience can help people understand under what conditions communities can more effectively manage this role, *how* they can be supported in this process, and what future actions would enable further progress. This paper is part of a wider set of activities and products that analyze and share the knowledge gained from the SGPPTF at the local, district, provincial, national, and regional (Asia) levels.

Poverty is a pronounced deprivation of well-being related to lack of material income or consumption, low levels of education and health, vulnerability and exposure to risk, and lack of opportunity to be heard and powerlessness (The World Bank 2002).

Additional resources for those interested in country specific knowledge are also available (Annex 1).

In discussing the lessons from SGPPTF, it is important to acknowledge that much is already known about the challenges and prospects for community forest management to improve the condition of communities and forests[2]. The SGPPTF experience builds on this knowledge in two ways. First, it adds to the evidences that rural communities entrusted with access and management rights, and supported to access wider governance systems, can contribute to achieving national goals of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. Some SGPPTF sites are showing evidences of positive impacts on patterns of forest use and forest conditions as well as on food security, income, and access to infrastructure. Forthcoming researches on livelihood impacts and forest impacts will quantify these in greater detail, but early insights are shared here.

Second, a unique contribution of SGPPTF to the knowledge base on community forest management and livelihoods comes from its focus on delivering many of its small grants directly to community-based organizations, which are crucial actors in community forest management and community development. Reflecting on project experiences, these grantees and other program staff have collectively identified four important areas in which they have worked to strengthen the capacity of communities and local organizations in resource management and development. These are captured in four themes around which this paper is organized:

- The first theme, **coping with resource uncertainty, living with social change**, tracks how issues of insecurity in resource access and rapid social transformation have been tackled by SGPPTF grantees.

- The second theme, **strengthening local forest governance**, considers processes for community forest management planning and implementation, and identifies growth in governance capacities of the local development institutions that contribute to forest protection and rehabilitation.

- The third theme, **supporting practice through policy and collaboration**, looks at formal efforts to strengthen national policy, as well as informal efforts through local networks and collaborative processes.

- The fourth theme, **sustaining livelihoods**, deals with strategies to address the fundamental needs and livelihoods of people who are typically marginalized because of their low asset and power base. These include strategies to help communities access markets for forest products and services, as well as to strengthen non-forest based livelihood activities.

The specific findings and lessons presented under these themes add to, as well as confirm, existing knowledge. They bring together experiences from more than one country, though these cannot represent what has happened in all countries or at all sites supported by SGPPTF. Where possible, the findings recognize the cultural, geographic, and political diversity of contexts where these experiences have emerged.

The lessons are expressed positively to guide future action by practitioners, forest administrators, local government officials, and other stakeholders. However, these lessons draw on successes, as well as mistakes. Critical reflection was facilitated in country-level workshops and cross visits among grantees. Regional workshops and cross visits made possible the comparison of national experiences. This was supplemented with information gleaned from site visits, project documentation, and discussions with the eight country teams, as well as the key staff in regional support organizations. Although field verification of all information was not possible, the lessons have nevertheless emerged from the critical analysis of both positive and negative experiences.

The paper starts with an overview of the SGPPTF and how it operated, then discusses the contexts in which SGPPTF was operating, and the key issues that grantees were trying to address. The lessons are discussed in relation to each of the four themes identified,, which lead to recommendations for specific actors in community forest management. Figure 1 maps the relationships between current issues facing community forest management and the themes identified in the work of SGPPTF country programs and grantees. The themes were not designed at the outset of the project, but have emerged through reflection on common strategies, approaches, and innovations. The figure highlights that helping communities to cope with uncertainty and change ran through many aspects of the SGPPTF grantees' work.

Figure 1. Context for community forest management and emerging themes within SGPPTF

1.1 Overview of the Small Grants Program for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests

The lessons and recommendations presented in this paper need to be understood in relation to the goals of SGPPTF, and the local contexts in which the program operated.

The program operated in eight countries in Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. It was financed by the European Commission (EC) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA). At the regional level, SGPPTF's goal was to support community involvement in forest management and poverty reduction through sustainable livelihoods and protection of tropical forests. The shared strategy to achieve this involved the following: 1) demonstrating approaches to community-based forest management and resource use; 2) disseminating innovative practices; 3) building grassroots capacity for localized management through partnerships and networks; and 4) promoting sustainable livelihoods.

Although operating within a common framework, the specific priorities of each country varied according to their social, institutional, and environmental circumstances (Table 1). For example, Cambodia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam prioritized capacity building of communities and CBOs. Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam emphasized knowledge management to impact on policy dialogues. Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand prioritized activities to strengthen and share indigenous knowledge . These differing emphases arose from national analyses of trends and issues within each country by multi-stakeholder National Steering Committees, which then determined the most useful priorities for the program and set these out in country guideline papers (Table 1).

Once the country guidelines were developed, a call for grants highlighted the country priority areas and the types of communities and organizations that were eligible to apply.

As shown in Table 1, the targeted communities varied in their characteristics, ranging from remote indigenous communities, to communities that were already organizing and networking for community forest management or had funding for related initiatives from other sources. By its nature, a small grants approach requires an enabling social environment where participants are free from extreme conflict and violence, and have either an initial capacity to coordinate for collective action or the support of an external facilitating organization. Communities facing extreme deprivation and vulnerability, as well as having very weak coordinating capacity, are less likely to put themselves forward as grant recipients. Small grants, however, can target vulnerable groups within recipient communities through specific activities.

Concept papers could be submitted in national languages. A proactive grant was provided to resource persons who supported the potential grantees in preparing their full proposals. Both of these factors enabled the more than 108 community-based organizations often lacking the prescribed project management capacities to apply for grants. Grantees were selected through a transparent process involving country staff and national steering committees. Selection was based on identified country priority areas and the merits of the country's grant applications (Annex 2). In this way, the capacity required for grant management by community-based organizations could be supported and developed over time.

Keeping this in mind, the SGPPTF has awarded grants to 247 grantees (including proactive grants to support organizations) in eight countries, reaching an estimated 1,050 villages and 125,200 households. Although not all of these households have directly participated in the SGPPTF activities, their areas could be regarded as 'livelihood influence' areas. It was presumed that the small grants program was able to indirectly influence the opportunities and capital needed for these households to strengthen their livelihoods in the long term. Table 2 gives details on the number of grants given to various SGPPTF-supported organizations.

The most common livelihood interventions within SGPPTF were related to NTFP enterprise development, followed by support with agroforestry, tree farming, water supplies, ecotourism, and revolving funds. The SGPPTF is currently analyzing the scale of livelihood impacts, but the range of livelihood interventions proposed in initial applications can be seen in Table 3.

Table 1. Country priorities

Country	Priorities	Type of Community Targeted / Projects Undertaken
Cambodia	› strengthening the capacity of local NGOs/CBOs/communities › disseminating lessons learned, innovative and best practices › raising awareness, networking, and policy dialogue › providing appropriate small livelihood initiatives	The poor and communities with livelihoods strongly dependent upon the goods and services provided by forests
Indonesia	› collaborative integrated community-based forest resource management › establishment of preconditions for and support for sustainable livelihoods	Followed up on previous project(s); established basic management structure
Malaysia	› restoration, conservation, and development of forests of high ecological value › alternative and sustainable livelihoods › capacity-building of community stakeholders to support efficient, community-friendly, and well-linked forest management › sustenance of indigenous knowledge for forest management and use	Indigenous communities, particularly those not involved in any on-going conflict over land tenure at the start of the project
Pakistan	› community-led sustainable forest management with multiple products orientation › capacity building at the individual and institutional levels › collaboration and networking › integrated approaches (rather than merely "scientific" approach) that can be scaled up and replicated › balancing entrepreneurship with social equity and carrying capacity	Highly forest- dependent communities with a good enabling environment in terms of motivated and supportive government agencies
Philippines	› sustainable livelihood initiatives that decrease the pressure on forest resources › community level capacity-building of community stakeholders to enable efficient and community-friendly management of initiatives › effective engagement with bureaucracy and linkages with support services › support to strengthen tenure security for land and natural resources	Projects community-led, respectful of gender balance, in line with prevailing government and donor policy towards forestry, and linked with existing funded initiatives
Sri Lanka	› community participation and multi-sectoral partnerships to support biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of forest services and goods › alternative livelihoods and enhanced skills of local communities › development of an alternative forest resource base	Not specified but primarily targeting forest-dependent communities
Thailand	› demonstrably community-led field-based projects to promote sustainable forest management › capacity development for local NGOs, CBOs, and communities › dissemination of innovations and best practices, networking, awareness building › policy dialogue efforts for a supportive policy environment for CBFM	Communities with: strong traditions in and knowledge of forest management; involvement with formal and informal networks; interest and commitment to collaborate with government agencies; NGOs and CBOs; and good potential for scaling up and replication
Vietnam	› pilot community-led projects and activities to disseminate innovations and best practices › relevant networking, enhanced awareness, and policy dialogue to promote supportive policy environment for community forestry › capacity development	Village level and professional organizations (Youth, Women, Farmer, Veteran Associations, etc.), charitable organizations, and other legally recognized civil society organizations

Table 2. Nature of the SGPPTF-supported organizations

Country	Total Grants	No. of CBOs	No. of NGOs	% CBO
Cambodia	17	0	17	0%
Indonesia	32	3	27	10%
Malaysia	24	Nd	Nd	Nd
Pakistan	29	20	9	69%
Philippines	43	24	19	56%
Sri Lanka	20	3	17	15%
Thailand	53	36	19	68%
Vietnam	29	22	7	76%
Total	247	108+	115+	44%+

+Excluding Malaysia for which data were not provided

A detailed research on the physical impacts of the SGPPTF on forest cover and quality is being commissioned by the program. The program coverage, the "forest influence area" for three SGPPTF countries (Cambodia, Pakistan, and Philippines), is provided here. Forest influence does not imply that the entire forest area cited is being fully managed at present. Rather, an indirect potential impact is being created by developing the capacities of communities and local authorities in forest governance, management techniques, and livelihoods compatible with forest sustainability. In Cambodia, over 420,000 hectares of forests are under community protection and almost 135,000 hectares of public forest lands are being rehabilitated through tree planting activities. In Pakistan, 674 hectares of plantations have been established, and 750 hectares of forests have come

Table 3. Common livelihood interventions proposed from SGPPTF sites

Livelihood Intervention	Examples	Country Frequency Rank *	Regional Rank +
Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP)	Processing and marketing of fruits (e.g., *chilgoza*, *melinjo*, *nelli*); handicraft fibers (e.g., *mazri*, *fuya*); resins	1: Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Pakistan, Malaysia 2: Cambodia	A
Agroforestry	Improving quality of staple crops; introducing new crops; intercropping fruit trees and vegetables; acquiring and managing livestock in forest areas	1: Cambodia 2: Philippines 3: Malaysia, Indonesia	B
Tree Farms	Community-level plantation or small- scale multipurpose tree farms (called home gardens in Sri Lanka) with scope for wood production	1: Vietnam, Pakistan 2: Sri Lanka, Indonesia	B
Ecotourism	Packaging sites of interest as ecotourism destinations	2: Malaysia, Pakistan	C
Forest watershed services	Improving water supply	3: Pakistan, Sri Lanka	C
Revolving funds; cow bank	Micro-credit schemes; other services	2: Vietnam, Thailand 3: Cambodia	D
Fisheries	Aquaculture, marine culture	3: Vietnam	D

* The numbers 1-3 indicate a country's frequency ranking for a specific livelihood intervention. A country ranking of 1 means that this livelihood intervention is most common; 2, it is the second most common; and 3, it is the least common intervention proposed by grantees in that country.
+ A-D is the regional ranking of the common livelihood interventions based on country rankings with (A) representing the most common.

under community protection. Interventions in the Philippines have the potential to influence at least 270,000 hectares of public forest lands and ancestral domains.

1.2 The Context for Community Forest Management in Asia and the SGPPTF

Local systems managing forest resources in Asia extend back thousands of years, even though governments have just recently formally recognized community-managed forest areas. Research covering 17 Asian countries estimates that currently around 18 per cent of forest lands are under some form of community management[3]. The concept of community management means different things to different countries (Box 1). However it is worth reflecting briefly on what drives and challenges community forest management in the region to better understand the context and issues under which the SGPPTF has operated.

Box 1. Community Forest Management: What's in a Name?[4]

The definition of community forest management depends on the socio-political context of a particular forest community, its historical background, and the economic structure under which it operates. Broadly, three types of community management systems can be defined:

1. Indigenous Community Forest Systems: traditional resource use practiced by communities that have a long history of residence and forest use in an area;
2. Responsive Community Forest Systems: often not based on a long history of use or ancestral claims to land and resources, but these emerge in rural communities whose shared dependence on forest resources drives them to establish regulations governing use; and
3. Sponsored Community Forest Systems: initiated by external NGOs or government agencies.

Other terms to describe community forest management (evolving from development agencies and national government programs for community engagement in state forest land management or local forest production) include: Agro-forestry; Ancestral Domain Management; Collaborative Forest Management or Co-Management; Community-based Forest Management (CBFM); Community Forestry (CF); Community Forest Management (CFM); Farm Forestry; Joint Forest Management (JFM); Local Forest Management (LFM); Participatory Forestry (PF) or Participatory Forest Management (PFM); Public Participation in Forestry; and Social Forestry.

The meanings often overlap, and many of these are used interchangeably. There are also strong national preferences. Following are some key issues that differentiate these practices.

- Level of authority a community holds over a forest area: Does it formally own the land? its resources? its products? To what extent can a community decide the future of the forest area and management practices? Are ownership or management rights supported by legal instruments? How long will these legal instruments be effective? How much involvement will the state have in the management of the forest area? What specific state agencies will have authority in the management?
- Stakeholder responsibility: How are benefits shared between the community and the state? What are the responsibilities of the community to the state in managing the forest area? What support mechanisms (financial, technical, infrastructure) are provided by the state?
- Cooperative arrangements: Is management shared by the community and the state? Is the community willing to have part of the land used by the state for its own purpose? Will the state assist in marketing community products?
- Social considerations: Is there a means to ensure the protection of the culture of a community (especially an indigenous community)? Can the community resort to legal mechanisms when the people's rights or culture is threatened?

The above questions highlight that the main difference among different community forest management arrangements lies in the balance between community expectations and needs, and the state's response to these. As communities gain the rights to manage forest areas, they also assume responsibilities to the state and to the wider society. The state, on the other hand, has an enabling role in granting management or ownership rights and in providing support to sustain CFM.

The growth of community-managed forests in Asia has been an incremental and slow process, based on years of pilot programs, policy development, and capacity building, together with shifts in awareness, attitudes, procedures, and financing at different levels[5]. Important drivers included: limitations with direct State management, such as continuing forest degradation and negative impacts on community livelihoods; pressure from civil society; greater recognition of indigenous culture and knowledge in laws and policies; decentralization trends; market transitions creating new revenue opportunities from forest resources; and support for participatory approaches from development agencies and international agreements.

Counterbalancing these have been real challenges. First, the devolution of control over forests has been partial or insecure in many cases. And second, devolution without effective and equitable local governance systems, supportive policies, and livelihood opportunities can undermine effective local forest management and its poverty reduction potential[6]. These broad issues are explained further below (and summarized in Figure 1 on page 3).

Insecure Resource Access and Management Rights

Clear and secure rights to forest resources, together with clearly defined responsibilities, management capacity and governance arrangements, are now seen as a fundamental basis for sustainable forest management[7]. Such rights foster good stewardship by providing reassurance to communities that they will reap the rewards of long-term investments[8]. In Asia there is a trend towards growing formalization of community forest management, ranging from recognition of access rights (the right to extract and use resources) to more substantive rights and responsibilities, such as engaging in management decisions, including the ability to protect resources from alternative use (referred to here as management rights).

In practice, communities face a range of challenges in realizing access and management rights. Governments have generally been quicker to recognize access rights than management rights for many reasons, particularly for higher value forest resources. In countries where there are legal frameworks in place for access to and management of forests by communities, the security of access can be jeopardized by weak implementation of such laws. This 'implementation gap' may occur for a range of reasons, such as procedures being too complex or costly to implement, lack of knowledge among stakeholders about the laws and the rights and responsibilities they entail, or even a lack of commitment or capacity within the government.

Communities face even greater insecurity where there is no legal framework for recognizing their access rights, even though they are informally managing and using forests. Access rights then become insecure, because they are vulnerable to changes of government and key personnel, and cannot be legally upheld[9].

These factors combine to make community rights to forests somewhat limited, fragile, and variable[10] because they lack:

- assurance that land or resource rights will be respected over time, for example, in the case of de-facto and traditional rights unrecognized by government (a particular issue in protected areas); and
- political power, so that more powerful, politically connected actors from government, corporations, and large landowners may make conflicting claims on the resources and undermine community access and management (especially in high–value production forests).[11]

These issues are familiar to many of the communities and grantees working with SGPPTF. Decisions on forest access and management mostly lie in the hands of national, state, and provincial governments, and the process of strengthening the security of such rights ultimately calls for long-term change processes. Meanwhile, communities face pressing and immediate social and economic concerns. Section 2.1 of this paper looks at how grantees supported practical interim measures to improve forest access for communities.

Although the rights to access and manage resources constitute a fundamental basis for community forest management, resource rights do not in themselves create a sufficient basis for sustainable forest management and poverty reduction; attention to cultural, social, economic, and governance conditions is also crucial.

Social Change and Disparity

It has often been said that the only certainty in life is change. Rapid change or extreme uncertainty, however, can challenge the viability of community forest management arrangements, and contribute to poverty by making communities more insecure and vulnerable to social and environmental risks[12]. In Asia, issues such as the interplay of globalization and marginalization, disruption of community relationships and institutions through rapid social change, loss of traditional knowledge, and social and political conflict are very real issues for most rural communities.

Indigenous communities[13] often face additional challenges in continuing their relationships, their rights, their knowledge and practices, given strong historical and political factors that have contributed to their marginalization[14]. For these communities, the rights to control and access resources form one important dimension of their quest for self-determination[15]. There are important ethical reasons for addressing the equity issues this raises, but the focus here is particularly on the importance of maintaining local institutions, culture, and knowledge as bases for forest management and community viability.

Understanding and managing rapid social change are an important aspect of community forest management. Previous efforts have demonstrated that community management is most effective where the existing capacities, relationships, and resources available to communities are harnessed, and effective links are made with strong or emergent leadership and effective local organizations[16]. Where they are functioning, communally-based resource management systems and the local and indigenous knowledge on which these are based are important foundations for community forest management.

The rapid social change described above, however, means that a program such as SGPPTF is dealing with communities where traditional institutions are undergoing change and, in many cases, eroding. Cambodia, where a history of civil war has weakened community institutions and social cohesion, is a case in point. Community-based initiatives in forestry and other sectors have to rebuild and strengthen community institutions and relationships as an integral facet of resource management. In these situations, intermediary organizations may play a crucial facilitating role. In other cases, the challenge may instead be to strengthen and/or gain formal recognition for functioning community institutions and community-based organizations.

Furthermore, it is a fact that rural communities, indigenous or otherwise, are not cohesive units that function for the benefit of all; but these can be complex and contested places where differences in power and assets marginalize groups and individuals according to their gender, caste, and position in the life cycle (age, widowhood, and so on). In strengthening community institutions, therefore, there is a need to understand the internal dynamics of communities, and the capacities and opportunities that are available to different groups. Support for a community-based organization without attention to equity and governance arrangements may inadvertently perpetuate inequities within communities[17].

In summary, community forest management arrangements necessarily engage with a complex set of resource and social conditions, often in a state of flux, and often involving diverse and socially disparate actors. In Section 2.1, this paper looks at the experiences of SGPPTF in strengthening the resilience and capacity of communities in this context, and how measures to more effectively cope with the uncertainties and manage change have been supported.

Governance involves the processes, structures, rules, norms, and practices through which we make decisions about resource management. It includes, for example, laws and rules about participation and representation, what levels of authority are held at different levels, accountability and transparency rules, property rights, and rules guiding markets.[18]

Building Local Forest Governance Capacity

Governance – 'who gets to decide what, and how'[19] locally and beyond – is a critical aspect of community forest management. A large proportion of Asia's land area is managed as state forest territory under government jurisdiction. Decisions on the function of these public forest lands to society – production, protection, conservation, special use – are generally made at the national level. Governments decide on who will be given the rights and responsibilities for large blocks of forest areas for commercial production or for national conservation.

Decentralization policies are transferring some planning and implementation decisions to state or local governments, especially for smaller-scale forest areas. The Philippines' *Local Government Code 1991*, Thailand's *Tambon Administrative Act 1994*, Indonesia's *Regional Autonomy Law 1999*, and Cambodia's *Commune Law 2001* are some of the national policies that provide openings for nurturing local forest governance.

Daily, however, people living in or near forests face decisions concerning the local resources on which they rely, whether or not there is a government policy recognizing their role. Community management hinges on rules and norms to facilitate community decision-making, interactions, and resource use. As such, local forest governance as discussed here covers who decides what happens on forest land - within or near a sub-village, a village, or a group of villages - and how these decisions are reached and implemented. Examples on how SGPPTF grantees are building local governance capacities are discussed in Section 2.2 of this paper.

The condition of forest resources shapes the opportunities that emerge from local forest governance. Community management in Asia has been formally recognized initially in degraded forest areas and barren lands. Accordingly, the contribution to sustainable forest management has been strong so far; with poor baseline conditions, the only way to go is 'up.' However, such lands -- being less wealthy in resources -- provide a reduced set of opportunities to communities and take time to provide returns. With reforestation, the opportunity for communities to benefit is greatly expanded. Reforestation can provide for a range of resources beyond timber, when it involves diverse planting rather than monoculture, as discussed in Section 2.2 and 2.4.

Conversely, where forests are already rich in diversity and quality, governments have found it more difficult to recognize community management for fear that forests will be degraded. By their nature, protected forests prioritize environmental goals, although there is an emergent body of efforts to engage communities in protected area management, particularly during planning and zoning, and in integrating community conservation areas in plans for national parks. SGPPTF has contributed to this body of work, as sites relating to protected areas represent between 29 per cent and 89 per cent of projects in a country (Table 4). Experiences of sustainable use from these sites have demonstrated that communities can play an important role in managing these higher value forests, and that collaborative management systems have also evolved. This is supported by other researches, which show the scope for compatible conservation and livelihood outcomes, particularly where the livelihood activities depend strongly on the continued protection of biodiversity.[20]

Unsupportive Policies and Weak Implementation

Local governance arrangements do not exist in isolation. These must interact with wider laws and policies and planning processes both within and beyond the forest sector, such as laws on timber or non-timber forest product extraction and revenue sharing. These are evolving at the national level but also and importantly, in a decentralized era at the

Table 4: Proportion of SGPPTF sites in protected areas

Country	Total Grants *	No. of Grants Relating to Protected Areas	% Grants Relating to Protected Areas (%)
Cambodia	16	9	56
Indonesia	27	10	37
Malaysia	20	Nd	Nd
Pakistan	24	7	29
Philippines	40	20	50
Sri Lanka	18	16	89
Thailand	49	Nd	Nd
Vietnam	24	12	50
Total	218	74+	34+

*Excluding 29 PDF and proactive grants
+Excluding Malaysia and Thailand (data not available)

provincial, district, and sub-district levels. The 'nesting' of local governance arrangements within these wider systems of governance, so that wider policies, laws, and plans include rather than contradict local perspectives and practices, has emerged as a key requirement for local forest governance to support sustainable forest management.

Practice - as used in this paper - refers to informal management systems of people whose lives are closely linked to natural resources. As described in Box 1 on community forest management, these informal systems could be indigenous, responsive, or sponsored. Indigenous systems often regard water catchments and graveyards or spirit forests as community conservation areas. Responsive or sponsored systems may manage home gardens, backyard forests, and agroforests to provide communities with a wide range of products for household consumption or as a source of cash. Although local rules and regulations may not be written, they can nevertheless guide practice at the hamlet or village level. In predominantly tribal populations that experience limited external pressure, the coverage of forest management practices may be more extensive in scope and scale. These agreed practices show that communities with informal systems of forest management have the basic means to arrive at common decisions and implement these. However, they are often too far from the seat of government to participate in the processes of national-level governance or else too weak to negotiate with other actors laying claim to the resources.

In recent times, an increasing number of nations have passed policies and programs that aim to formally recognize these informal practices of local communities in forest management. The increasing support is not solely coming from policies initiated by forest departments but also from decentralization policies, as well as from an improved global focus on human security and poverty reduction.

As noted in the discussion on access and management rights, there are two broad scenarios in the countries where SGPPTF has operated.

The first scenario is where, through processes of policy reform and decentralization, the current legal situation is broadly supportive of community management of forests. Examples of existing national policies that provide mechanisms for communities to formally secure some form of forest management agreement with governments are: 1) the Philippines' *Executive Order on Community-Based Forest Management* (1995) and the *Indigenous Peoples Rights Act* (1997); 2) Vietnam's *Law on Forest Protection and Development* (2004 revision); and 3) Cambodia's *Sub-Decree on Community Forestry* (2003) and *Guidelines for Community Forestry Implementation* (2006). However, often there remains an implementation gap. For instance, if communities are unaware of or unable to access laws to realize their rights in practice, execution in the field is weak. In countries where national governments provide space for dialogue on community forest management policies, SGPPTF facilitated the involvement of community-based and non-government organizations in national policy discussions.

A second scenario is where supportive legal and policy frameworks are still to come. National policy development is recognized as a long-term process that needs to be tackled step-by-step. In countries where a national policy is not forthcoming or taking time to be enacted, the SGPPTF facilitated horizontal networking among community-based organizations and vertical networking among communities, civil society groups, and local authorities.

Section 2.3 on Supporting Practice through Policy and Collaboration describes the strategies that SGPPTF used to work on within these two scenarios.

Reducing Poverty with Forest Management

Over the last decade, global thinking on poverty and livelihoods has shifted, taking poverty from what was, to some, an acceptable and inevitable outcome of markets and societal functioning, to a state that can and should be avoided. Governments around the world have signed on to the ambitious poverty reduction targets of the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals and are looking for ways to reduce poverty both within and outside the forest sector.

For forestry programs, poverty is a key issue since forest areas commonly coincide with indigenous populations and high incidence of poverty[21]. Forests are culturally significant; they are used for subsistence and commercial needs; and they provide important inputs to agriculture, and therefore, food security[22]. They also play a vital strategic role in helping the poor to meet fundamental subsistence needs and fulfill important "safety net" functions in times of difficulty, enabling families to avoid destitution[23]. Although community forest management was, initially, a way for governments to engage communities in meeting reforestation objectives, the agenda of community forest management now squarely incorporate poverty reduction. This comes from the recognition that communities cannot commit themselves to effective forest management if they are not free from want and fear, and if their basic needs are not secured.[24]

Although forest resources perhaps have the greatest significance for the poor who lack other assets, the current forest management regime generally limits their access to forests and disrupts their livelihood flows. Where access is allowed, the poor are often restricted to using non-timber forest resources to cope with poverty while the valuable forest resources, such as timber, can be harnessed by more powerful interests to accumulate wealth.[25]

Furthermore, it is known that there is not one strategy that is effective in addressing poverty because of the diverse conditions among the poor, who may be 'improving', 'coping', or 'declining.' These three groups may have a decreasing ability to access and effectively use key assets to improve their situation which, in turn, increases their vulnerability to asset deprivation (Box 2)[26]. Effective poverty reduction strategies need to work with an understanding of the local population's access to the different asset bases, their levels and causes of poverty, and how these impact on their resilience and vulnerability.

Box 2. Five Asset Bases and Livelihood Flows[27]

The sustainable livelihood framework, commonly used by development practitioners, recognizes that five asset bases are important to communities in achieving poverty reduction. These five asset bases are also important in the continued flow of essential processes that enable livelihoods to function.

1. Natural capital: access to land and resources
2. Social capital: relationships and networks
3. Human capital: people, including people's health, skills, and knowledge
4. Financial capital: money to invest in long-term developments and enterprises
5. Physical (built) capital: shelter, roads, and tools

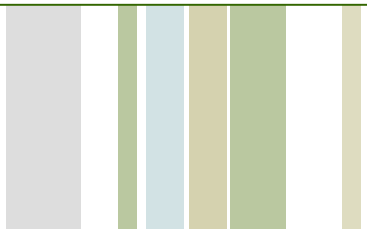
In addition to these assets, there are critical livelihood flows that meet basic human needs, including energy, food, and water.

Targeting these different assets requires that activities to sustain livelihoods operate across sectors and at many scales, from the individual level right through to national and international rules and policies that shape access to natural capital and markets. By implication, livelihood issues (Section 2.4) are closely knitted to the issues of governance (Section 2.2) which shape the equity of access to these asset bases and livelihood flows. Where such access is adequate and secure, people are more likely able to cope with changing

market conditions and engage in sustainable forest management and livelihood activities.

The changing dynamics of markets constitute a key area of uncertainty faced by forest-using communities. In the SGPPTF, as in many other livelihood-oriented programs, grants have worked to help communities better understand the ways in which markets function. These grants have also helped them plan for and manage their involvement in markets to meet people's needs while maintaining social and environmental integrity. In many countries, community forest management activities have already incorporated enterprise development and planning strategies, as well as strengthened market access through better information flow to communities and better linkages to key market players.

A key contribution of SGPPTF to this growing experience focuses on how the wider livelihood issues can be combined with enterprise activities to make an impact on poverty. This adds to the growing number of community forest management initiatives that take an integrated approach to community livelihoods, going beyond forests, to address the wider social and natural landscapes in which the poor operate[28]. The paper discusses in Section 2.4 how SGPPTF grantees worked to improve food, water, and energy security, as well as how they built the social and political capital needed to make the most of enterprise opportunities.



Endnotes

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and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries 1989 defines indigenous peoples as:
(a) Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations;
(b) Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

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26 Different approaches must be used to address the needs of the poor, depending on their level of deprivation:
1. the **declining** poor experience multiple vulnerabilities simultaneously (e.g. poor health, homelessness, very limited cash incomes, indebtedness, social exclusion), and have a limited capacity to pursue forest claims and gain access to and make effective use of forest resources and land.
2. the **coping** poor are just about able to meet basic needs but their livelihoods are precariously balanced. They may be vulnerable to seasonal fluctuations e.g. temporary food shortages, because buffers such as accessible markets, good crop storage facilities, safe housing, affordable services are lacking. They also may have a limited capacity to pursue forest claims and gain access to and make effective use of forest resources and land.
3. the **improving** poor have more social and political connections, and skills, education and assets, and can therefore pursue economic opportunities, access and benefit from development services and take positive actions to improve their situation, They also are more able to pursue forest claims and gain access to and make effective use of forest resources and land.
(Hobley, M. 2007. Where the World is there Pro-poor Forestry and Tenure Reform? Rights and Resources Initiative, Washington DC.)

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Findings and Lessons from the SGPPTF

This section presents the insights and lessons that emerged from the region-wide implementation of SGPPTF programs. Related lessons to inform future action are summarized in boxes. It is important to note that the lessons presented here have been selected for their resonance in a number of sites or countries or for their significance in addressing current issues in community forest management. However, they do not represent practice at all SGPPTF sites. Inevitably, the specificity of lessons is lost in distilling these to a regional level. Therefore, those who are more familiar with community forest management may find more useful the summary of country findings classified by subregion in Annex 3.

2.1 Coping with Resource Uncertainty, Living with Social Change

Improving Security of Resource Access

As explained in Section 1, uncertainty in rights to access resources poses a major risk both for community-based forest management and community livelihoods in the eight countries where the SGPPTF has operated. Findings add to or support existing knowledge on resource rights.

Clarifying the status of forest resources, particularly the delineation of access and management responsibilities, can be supported by skilled facilitation and participatory mapping processes, if there is acceptance of community processes by government.

Processes of resource assessment and mapping are discussed in greater detail under Section 2.2 (Local Forest Governance). Here, the focus is on examples that highlight the facilitation role of grantees in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Philippines, and Pakistan.
The Forest Department in Sri Lanka has undertaken a national program of forest boundary demarcation to address the degradation caused by forest encroachment for agriculture. After assessing the existing encroachments and how long these have been going on, the Forest Department agreed to either allow the family to continue cultivating the land within the agreed area (for land cultivated for over 15 years) or to discontinue cultivation. Forest boundaries were marked with concrete posts. In many cases, the process led to conflicts over boundaries and settlement of rights, which many of the SGPPTF grantees helped to mediate as part of their community forest management activities.

The lesson learned in this process is that a mediator without a direct stake in the forest area can play an important role in facilitating negotiations to define forest boundaries and use. Symbolic actions to recognize the accord, such as the planting of boundary fences by community members, have been important in signifying mutual agreement to boundaries, as well as in promoting planting of useful species for fuel wood and stakes to support pepper growing.

In Indonesia, participatory mapping has been used as an important tool to strengthen recognition of community rights in forest areas. In Watala, in Sumberjaya, Lampung, the grantee supported and strengthened organic farmers' groups to enable communities to assert their rights to forests, with participatory mapping as a key negotiation tool. Similarly, in Perkumpulan Karsa in Sulawesi and the Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment (RMI) in Cibedug, Halimun, participatory mapping was used as a key negotiation tool between communities and district authorities, and in the latter case, with the national park authority.

In participatory mapping, the process is as important as the output, providing a basis for learning and reflection on areas of customary use. In indigenous communities, customary use typically does not follow clearly marked boundaries. Participatory mapping can facilitate the location of key resources and sharing of local knowledge as a basis for land use planning; it can also support discussions on the use and management rights to specific areas. Many of the SGPPTF sites in the Philippines have also applied participatory mapping approaches to achieve these.

In Pakistan, participatory mapping was facilitated by the five grantees that formed the Malakand cluster as a basis for integrated resource management planning at the valley level (also discussed in Section 2.2 on Local Forest Governance). While the activity started with focus on village-level resource management, it also supported the clarification of valley level management issues.

Forest lives in West Java, Indonesia

Formalizing arrangements for community access and management in forest areas takes time. In the meantime, *informal access rights* can be improved in the short-term through building better communication and linkages between communities and local authorities. This may also be an important starting point towards formal recognition of rights.

Where there was no legal framework for recognizing community access to forest areas, grantees were starting to facilitate communication between communities and local authorities to enable agreed modalities of forest access to continue. This kind of interim strategy was used particularly to gain recognition for indigenous management and access rights to forests in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Since 2001, RMI has worked with indigenous communities in Halimun National Park to obtain recognition for the existence of customary management from local government and the National Park authorities so that the community can formally access resources within the park. RMI collected, documented, and studied the customary laws of Kasepuhan Cibedug and Citorek. It also trained communities in participatory mapping and documentation to increase the communities' capacity to negotiate with local authorities. As a result of the dialogue, communities strengthened their contacts with the local government, which eliminated illegal taxes and improved relationships with the National Park officials. Future challenges remain in securing legal recognition and in extending the rights held by the community to include authority in resource management, as well as resource use. Maintaining good relationships and networks between communities and local authorities must be pursued. An agreement with the local government unit (LGU) or a local forest or environment office of a line agency (i.e., local authority) is seen as the first step to gain legal backing for community access.

In Malaysia, a community supported by Partners of Community Organizations (PACOS) Trust in Upper Moyog district, Kota Kinabalu, holds informal rights to forests. The Kampong Head, Linus Lansama, reported:

> *"We have a gate to protect the village forest areas which we have earlier marked on the map as part of our proposal for an ecotourism project. I also visit the local forest department every three months to check if there are counterclaimants on our land."*

While the community gains vital information through regular communication, the informal mode of communication makes them vulnerable to competing claims on the resource. Hence, informal arrangements based on verbal agreements and personal relationships are best seen only as starting points in securing forest access and management rights.

A *legal arrangement* backed by a contract, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or lease, provides greater security than informal access rights, and is particularly relevant where there is no specific legal framework for community management of forests.

Unless the forest management plans developed by communities are recognized by the government and other actors, community rights to these areas remain weak and insecure. Where such legal arrangements are still developing, specific contracts were being used in Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Pakistan to define the rights and responsibilities of communities and other key actors (e.g., government or private forest owners).

A good example comes from Matara District, Sri Lanka. With facilitation from the Environment Protection Foundation (EPF), a community has gained a 30-year lease covering a 100-hectare pine plantation from the Forest Department. The project aims to convert the pine plantations into natural forest patches by inter-planting with indigenous species. It also enables community members to tap resin from about 50 hectares of isolated pine plantation which are untapped or partially-tapped for commercially traded pine resin, as well as for enrichment planting in home gardens using organic farming techniques. The lease allows 100 families to sustainably collect non-wood forest products, mainly those with medicinal purposes, to sell to drug manufacturing companies. The lease, which is the first of its kind in the history of the Sri Lanka Forest Department, may be renewed for 30 years. Initially a pilot activity for the Forest Department, the arrangement has been so successful that they are now willing to extend the lease to a 1000-hectare area.

This kind of lease agreement has the advantage of clearly outlining the rights and responsibilities of the community.. Lease can also be extended if the community has managed the area effectively during the initial lease period. .

In Cambodia and Pakistan, the legal mechanism used is a MOU between communities and the relevant agency. In Cambodia, MOUs have served as bases for agreements on managing protected area buffer zones between communities and the Ministry of Environment, thus enabling co-management of the area. In two of the Pakistan sites, MOUs have been used to guide forest management between communities and the government (Shakul Valley, facilitated by the local NGO Haashar) and between tenants and forest owners (in Chakwal District, facilitated by local NGO Majeed Malik Foundation). Such arrangements are particularly important when there is no wider legal framework for community management.

In the long-term, enabling and workable legal frameworks that recognize community rights and responsibilities, if implemented or practiced effectively, can provide the strongest basis for community forest management rather than the informal and context-specific agreements.

Although specific rights and obligations, as well as processes in obtaining rights, might vary, legal frameworks that enable community forest management and/or legal recognition of specific rights to forest lands exist in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak), Pakistan (former princely states in Northwest Frontier Province), Philippines, and Vietnam. These legal frameworks can provide bases for community forest management beyond the

informal or specific legal agreements mentioned above because these can connect community forest management with wider government processes. However, much depends on whether such laws are implemented well or practiced, an issue discussed further in Section 2.3 (Supporting Practice through Policy and Collaboration). If policy implementation is weak or tainted by political influence, access and management rights can also remain weak.

Grantees from Cambodia, for instance, cited the lack of proper implementation of the law as a key challenge to community forest management agreements. This was applicable when planning had been completed, but the final signing of community forestry plans was delayed and made more difficult by concession applications in overlapping areas. Such delays in the registration of community forest management arrangements, even though required procedures have been completed, demotivated communities, weakened their livelihoods, and diminished the incentive for sustainable forest management. As shown in Box 3, the same applies where there is weak implementation of laws recognizing indigenous resource rights.

Box 3. Uncertain rights to traditional lands can undermine community forest management: the story of Orang Asli in Perak State, West Malaysia.

A workshop of grantees in Malaysia gave rise to a key and pressing issue facing many of the communities working with the SGPPTF. That is, it is not just getting recognition of rights to forests, but it is also realizing this in practice in the face of wider threats to these forests. This is captured in the story of the Orang Asli from Perak state, who is working with the Grantee, Sinui Pai Nanek Sengik (SPNS).

The community and SPNS collaborated on ecotourism activities to a popular waterfall area, as well as the documentation of traditional knowledge and the resources and sites of significance in their customary lands. The community has proactively tackled illegal use of the area, and has engaged in activities to develop their capacity to manage and develop their traditional lands for present and future generations.

In early 2007, however, the community faced uncertainty over the lands it was actively managing, when the province identified a 109-hectare area of these forests to develop a botanical garden. This highlighted the fact that the practice of rights is fragile in the face of alternative uses. Tijah, a 39-year-old woman-leader, said in the discussions:

"We are not against any development, but please recognize our ancestral right to the land. We depend on the forest to live."

Communities and grantees have been attempting to fill these 'implementation gaps' by collaboration and direct action. In the long-run, however, regulations and legal procedures must be simplified, and the political will to implement laws must be strong. The issue is also discussed further in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.

Uncertain community rights weaken the ability of the Orang Asli to manage their traditional forests, and their plans for a community ecotourism enterprise.

Collaborating to navigate complex laws and bureaucratic systems helps reduce the cost and increase the negotiation capacity for communities to secure indigenous resource rights.

This finding particularly relates to the Philippines, where a legal framework exists for the recognition of substantial management rights for indigenous communities (*Indigenous Peoples Rights Act 1997* or IPRA). The Philippine experience is significant because it has shown that securing formal access and management rights to resources is a key goal of indigenous communities and their supporters in many of the SGPPTF countries. The Philippine case is instructive in the implementation challenges that can emerge.

Processing ancestral domain titles in Philippines is a long and costly process. Implementation of IPRA can be weakened by the government's lack of political will and by the indigenous communities' limited knowledge, skills, and resources. In Palawan province, indigenous communities supported by SGPPTF collaborated to expedite the processing of their ancestral domain titles by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). By combining voice and resources, five grantees were able to consolidate their efforts and use their meager funds as leverage for negotiations with NCIP, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), and their local governments.

A network of five grantees sent out letters and pooled resources to organize meetings with the responsible government offices. The grantees were: Nagkakaisang Tribu ng Palawan, Inc. (NATRIPAL); Tribal Filipino Apostolate (TFA); Bangsa Palawan Philippines-Inc. (BPPI); Marintub Ranao Sapang Tumarbong, Inc. (MRST); and Bayaan Kat Tagbanua Kat Barake, Inc. (BKT). Members of the National Steering Committee, who in their individual capacities were knowledge facilitators in policy processes, were tapped for advice and assistance on how best to garner support from national agencies. Within six months of implementing their strategy, government agencies started to take notice. NCIP got the names and contact numbers of SGPPTF grantees to expedite the titling process. Establishing direct communication between indigenous communities and NCIP officials and personnel helped facilitate faster communication.

Formal titles can be a long time coming. Collaboration has helped indigenous communities in Palawan, Philippines to speed up the process.

The grantees have also collectively strategized by pooling their resources to hire two geodetic engineers, at reduced rates. and to survey the 10 ancestral domain claims; surveying is a critical requirement in titling. Accomplishing this requirement individually would have cost them more.

Community institutions that can operate within the wider political sphere can help communities address conflicts and threats to resource rights.

Experiences from Cambodia and Indonesia show that strong community institutions help coordinate community action to secure resource rights. All other SGPPTF countries affirmed this finding when they reviewed the draft regional synthesis paper. Strong local institutions are also important in the capacity of communities to secure their livelihoods and culture, and to govern forests..

Box 4. Strengthening Social Capital to Manage Resource Uncertainty in Cambodia

One of the critical tasks facing community resource management initiatives in Cambodia is the gradual rebuilding of community-level institutions, relationships, and trust that have been decimated by the civil war. In some cases, this involves the revival and strengthening of Buddhist religious institutions or *pagodas*, and the monks who live there. In other cases, building the capacity of newly emerging community bodies has been important. This strengthening of social capital is bringing dividends to many spheres of community life through improved coordination and collaboration for social, economic, and resource management processes, as well as for strengthening the community's resilience and voice.

In Svay Rieng, a national NGO, Santi Sena Organisation, has facilitated the engagement of local monks in various aspects of community management in a 1,400-hectare forest area. In 2006, the community was requested by the province to excise 300 hectares of this area for development as a special economic zone (a form of land concession in Cambodia). The monks prepared a petition in behalf of the community and were able to make the Prime Minister agree to secure the area for religious use. While implementation by the Province is taking longer, the case provides a powerful example of the role of social capital in dealing with externally driven threats to land.

In another case, the Cambodian Rural Development Team in Mondulkiri province is strengthening the capacity and role of the Participatory Land Use Planning Committee of Andoung Karloeng village to manage disputes over land. In 2006, three land cases were directly resolved through the intervention of the Committee: one case in which the perpetrator came from within the village and two cases in which the perpetrators came from other villages.

Many of the SGPPTF grantees have worked with monks in village temples or *pagodas* to strengthen the implementation of community forest management. The Association of Buddhists for the Environment has used *pagodas* in environmental education activities, demonstration of community gardens, and mobilization of community action on waste management and fire fighting.

The incidence of forest fires has reduced substantially. The Santi Sena Organisation and others have applied the Buddhist ceremony of ordination, normally used for monks, to sanctify trees (also a practice in Thailand). Communities in Preah Vihear, with the support of the NGO Buddhism for a Progressive Society, work with monks to tackle infringements in communit-managed forests. The confiscated goods are stored in the pagodas while awaiting legal proceedings.

In Cambodia, the legal framework enables communities to: register forest management plans with the government; gain authority in the management of community forest areas (*Community Forestry Guidelines Prakas*); and manage the community in protected areas and other lands (Participatory Land Use Planning). In practice, registration takes time. This poses a risk for community forest management, given the stiff competition for alternative uses of agricultural and forest lands. This competition is at various levels -- within communities, from other communities, and from external actors that are well connected with key decision-makers and able to gain concessions over forest and agricultural land for other uses. The issue of concessions, in particular, has emerged as a recurring threat to community forest management because it weakens the legal basis for community management, the implementation of management arrangements, and the motivation of communities.

This threat can be managed by collaboration and action by communities, civil society, and government. The SGPPTF grantees in Cambodia have found that this process of strengthening tenure becomes easier when community-level relationships, coordination arrangements, and decision-making implementation systems are strong (Box 4). Attention to rebuilding social capital goes beyond land issues. It also focuses on strengthening of community resilience and internal coordination so that the community's capacity to manage change equitably in other spheres of life can be enhanced.

A similar connection between strong community institutions and resource security has emerged in Indonesia in relation to *Adat* or customary laws. Strengthening Adat institutions in Indonesia and building the capacity of community organizations in the Mt. Betung forest area, Lampung have helped them to engage strategically with the LGU to

negotiate a social forestry permit. In another case, an area leased to a gold mine in Rupit, Musi Rawas District, South Sumatra, was being reclaimed as Adat lands. The galvanizing forces for this transition have been the serious environmental impacts of the mine, as well as the strengthening of community organizations to take up the issue legally. The SGPPTF's involvement came after the mine closed to facilitate rehabilitation and appropriate economic development.

According to Walhi, the NGO grantee working with this community:

> *"Conceptually, all activities were conducted to restore the culture and structure of the ecological and socio-economic region. Improving the support to the communities was necessary to empower them and restore the ownership of the ex-mine as adat land."*

Lessons on Securing Access and Management Rights

The long-term security of forest access and management rights often rests on national or state/province-level decisions. However, steps can be taken to create opportunities for community engagement. Such informal approaches are a good starting point towards improving security of resource rights, but a legal component provides greater certainty and security. If arrangements do not move beyond the informal stage, rights can remain fragile.

Greater resource security can be achieved where a workable enabling legal framework for community forest management is in place and where government and communities ensure equitable implementation of forest management. Hence, there is a need to clarify and strengthen the legal and policy frameworks supporting community tenure and to simplify the processes for implementing this for the long-term. Strengthening social capital within communities enables them to actively participate in efforts to strengthen and define tenure.

Lesson 1: *Where community access rights cannot be formalized within the current legal framework, interim measures for communities to secure resource access include:*

a. *Improving communication and interactions between communities and local authorities; and*
b. *Paralegal arrangements backed by contracts or MOUs to specify the rights and responsibilities of communities and other key actors.*

Lesson 2: *Where laws that enable formal access to and management of forests by communities exist, collaboration between communities and strong local institutions helps communities reduce the cost of navigating complex laws and exercise their rights.*

The SGPPTF coordinators felt that the first lessons were key lessons to be shared with future programs.

Managing Rapid Social Change to Sustain Communities and Local Resource Management Practices

As noted earlier, rapid social transformation is eroding local institutions and practices, with detrimental impacts on forests, livelihoods, and identities. Securing the formal resource rights discussed above is necessary but not sufficient to address cultural and social erosion, and the capacity to plan for and manage change. These issues are particularly stark in indigenous communities, but they also apply more widely in rural society (the term local knowledge is used here to encompass indigenous and other local knowledge). The SGPPTF grantees have found that people can be supported to manage rapid change by actions that strengthen cultural identity, local knowledge, and practices. The term local knowledge refers here to the knowledge held by indigenous and other rural communities. Other comparable terms used more often in reference to indigenous communities include indigenous knowledge, traditional knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge, and cultural knowledge.

Local knowledge is contextual and based on values and beliefs that span many spheres of peoples' lives. Processes of social change and transformation in most Asian countries are eroding the exchange and nurturing of such knowledge across generations. This not only represents a loss of social integrity for these communities, but also a loss of knowledge for community livelihoods and forest management. At the same time, local institutions may be challenged in dealing with wider governance systems or with expectations for greater equity and voice for groups that may not have traditionally enjoyed authority.

Finding processes to facilitate the continuation of knowledge exchange and dialogue has therefore been an important thrust in all of the SGPPTF's country programs. Important strategies have included: documentation for keeping and sharing knowledge with key groups (Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand); creating opportunities for knowledge exchange within communities, particularly between generations and between communities (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam); and inclusion of cultural knowledge in current approaches to resource management and community development (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand).

Local knowledge needs to be used and exchanged for it to be kept alive. Methods for documenting and sharing this knowledge need to fit the purpose, which may include influencing societal attitudes towards indigenous peoples, inter-generational exchange, and inter-community exchange.

Local knowledge in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand has been documented for sharing with key target groups, including urban populations (Malaysia), decision-makers (Philippines), and the scientific community (Philippines, Thailand). The SGPPTF has supported activities that would revive and reintegrate such knowledge into the indigenous communities, especially those related to sustainable use of natural resources. In the Philippines, this was supported by a number of grantees, such as Pamalihi Community Inc. (PCI), Green Mindanao, Tribal Leaders Development Foundation, Inc. (TLDFI), Tagbalay, and Mihitrico.

Documentation of local knowledge is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to specific ends, such as securing recognition for the concerns, rights, and use of indigenous resource management and livelihood activities. As with all modes of knowledge management, the medium for documentation and sharing should suit the desired impact. In the Philippines, Palawan groups have been supported by the Grants Program to document their practices and genealogies as part of their application for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title. However, applying methods that are suited to these government processes may require capacities and tools that do not exist in the communities. As one community member expressed:

> *"Paradoxically, the indigenous peoples are asked to utilize western analytical tools to interpret, document and explain their own culture.[1]"*

Supporting indigenous groups to communicate in the dominant language can help them gain recognition for their culture and rights.

However, documentation may not be the best approach in facilitating exchange between generations and between communities. In Mindanao, Philippines, peer learning through cultural rituals has been supported at Mt. Kimangkil as a foundation for indigenous peoples to sustain and value their traditions, and to provide them a basis for political empowerment. This is an integral part of the forest management approach -- to deal with landscape-level issues of law and order, forest and wildlife protection, and development.

In the Thailand program, there is a belief that every community holds local wisdom that is alive and continuously evolving. This belief fueled a strong program focus on knowledge exchange within and between communities through peer learning processes and documentation, using different media. Hence, the tacit knowledge of communities has been captured and shared with others as a basis for sustainable livelihood activities.

The Inpaeng community has brought forest species into their agricultural lands as part of their philosophy of *eat what we grow, grow what we eat* to ensure local food security. This approach has been documented and shared with other communities. The SGPPTF has contributed to the sharing of this livelihood philosophy through the holding of

Mainstream celebrities act as goodwill ambassadors on behalf of indigenous peoples to attract the attention of the urban public.

community events and the production of books, newsletters, and video documentary. Such knowledge management activities were made possible because these have been built into the grant's support activities at the outset. The project has contributed to capturing the tacit knowledge of communities – or unselfconscious knowledge because it consists of things that people do everyday.

In Sabah, Malaysia, PACOS Trust is revitalizing local knowledge on natural resource management by training people in the community to effectively communicate local indigenous knowledge. A range of methods has been found to be effective. A seminar was held with communities to discuss their role in safeguarding native customary rights. Documentation of information on native land and land use patterns was undertaken and communities were trained in data collection using Global Positioning System (GPS). A workshop with the youth was facilitated to create awareness on the importance of maintaining their cultural heritage and natural resources as these form an integral part of their lives. Village medicinal gardens are being kept and traditional knowledge on medicinal plants is being documented. A book about medicinal plants in Upper Moyog was produced. The knowledge captured through activities under the SGPPTF has been stored in the existing database already established by PACOS Trust.

Another important thrust in the Malaysian program involved explaining local knowledge and perceptions to society so that the rights and the roles of indigenous peoples in forest management can be recognized. The program invited mainstream celebrities to act as goodwill ambassadors on behalf of indigenous peoples, with the idea that the urban public is bound to listen to a famous person endorsing a cause. Since resource rights constitute a sensitive issue, the campaign tackled the issue indirectly by enhancing the visibility of indigenous communities and their way of life through photo exhibits, participation of celebrities in village exposure trips, and mainstream media publicity. Such visibility has been contributing to the long-term process of attitudinal change in society towards indigenous peoples, which can open up opportunities to engage in policy related to their plight. The framing and format of the messages were compact and simple yet these had the potentials for far-reaching impacts.

In harnessing local institutions, it is important to consider issues of culture, equity, and representation, and to strengthen such bodies to work with current issues and governance contexts.

The recognition that local knowledge and institutions are core foundations for community forest management is not new. More recent is our

understanding that these should not be blindly supported; rather, local institutions need to be helped to address new roles, and challenged to address issues of equity and representation, particularly where traditional institutions may have excluded or marginalized certain groups at the community level.[2] Activities in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Thailand show that, with an understanding of the cultural context in which they operate, traditional institutions can be supported to address changing expectations and roles.

In Indonesia, efforts to revitalize the functioning of traditional *Adat* institutions have been picked up by a number of grantees. A key issue faced is the need to support these institutions in their dealings with local authorities and government systems. In Indonesia, OPANT (*Lembaga Organisasi Perempuan Adat Ngata Toro* / Ngata Toro Women's Adat Organization Body), a grantee working in Ngata Toro, Central Sulawesi province, approached this task by revitalizing and supporting the *Adat* community of Ngata Toro so that the latter can understand and deal with the current government system. They were also encouraged to foster representation of different groups within the community. Through this process, trusted institutions could gradually be made more inclusive. For example, a woman could also lead the community meeting and the *Adat* leadership can better address the state's administrative systems. The grantee expressed that the *Adat* institutions would better survive by strengthening various groups within the community, while adapting the Adat's function and relationship to the state administration. In Ngata, meetings were not always led by the *Totua Ngata*, the highest leader under *Adat*. Instead, leaders of meetings depended upon the issue being discussed. Hence, in some cases, meetings could be led by women.

In Pakistan, many of the grantees have recognized that simply following traditional leadership systems would not actively engage the women to participate. Women were especially targeted to make project activities more accessible to them, including the establishment of women's groups at many sites. Further, women were targeted for activities geared towards their interests, such as training and capacity building, hygiene and health, handicrafts marketing, and use of energy-efficient stoves. The targeted approach made

OPANT in Central Sulawesi helps the *Adat* community of Ngata Toro to understand and deal with current systems of government and encourages involvement by different groups within the community. Now, women are allowed to lead meetings when this approach better suits the issue under discussion.

sense not only in ensuring equity, but also in ensuring sustainable resource management since women were key resource users. Grantees attempted to balance this gender-sensitive approach while working with the traditional leadership and institutions at the village. This process has brought many challenges, as one grantee from the North West Frontier province reports:

> *"They have such strange notions about us – some actually think we are trying to westernize the women or convert their religion. It is only when they come here and receive trainings that they realize that we are only trying to help them to earn their own income, while respecting local culture and traditions. After all, women have been making*

mazri (palm leaf) products for centuries. We are only teaching them how to do it better." (Salma Bibi, a human rights development officer with the Sarhad Rural Sector Support Program)

An emerging lesson from these experiences is that traditional institutions need not be blindly supported, but these can be encouraged to ensure equity as part of their governance role. Instead of directly challenging existing institutions, the grantees have created fora to nurture and strengthen the voice of marginalized groups. Further, the grantees have helped them gain practical skills to improve their welfare and options. In an environment of social change, many traditional institutions are decaying as they struggle to deal with current expectations within communities, and the complex systems that they must bridge. By raising equity issues in ways that are tied to the specific focus and task of the project, for instance training women in *mazri* (*Nonnorrhops ritchieana*) weaving to improve livelihoods, traditional institutions may have to make small adaptations to improve their prospects of having a continuing role in community life.

Local and scientific knowledge can be combined to support resource management and livelihoods, if the process values both perspectives and secures the intellectual property of communities.

Past commentators have observed a gap between indigenous and local knowledge system, on one hand, and science, on the other hand. The former focuses on observation, practice, and specific, local, social, and cultural contexts, and is differentiated according to social position (age, experience, wealth, gender, production priorities). The latter has its focus on systematic analysis, objectivity, and rational explanation.[3] Activities in Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand highlight that this gap may not be as wide as once thought, and that both knowledge systems can be combined for development and environmental benefits.

One area of great interest to the scientific community is the knowledge of local communities on particular species and their uses. External actors are often driven by an interest in these species' commercial application or up-scaling. Some of the documentation efforts by the SGPPTF grantees have facilitated the exchange of resource management approaches that combine local knowledge with the commercial development of specific resources.

In the Visayas, Philippines, a non-government organization named South Leyte Integrated Development and Natural Resource Management Inc. (SoLIDaRM) worked with communities and the University of the Philippines to document 354 species of local plants, some with potential commercial applications. SoLIDaRM initiated this activity because it found that the scientific community gave little recognition to local wisdom, and that the literature on forest species in the Visayas was weak. Researchers, who are usually based in Luzon, concentrate on documenting species near the capital. Moreover, they are not documenting community names for local species.

Similar collaborative efforts to explore the potential commercial uses of local plants by linking communities with researchers have been supported by the Programs in Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. As these efforts spread, it becomes more important to recognize local knowledge in academic systems.

Commercializing resources based on indigenous knowledge brings both risks and opportunities for indigenous communities, according to the SGPPTF grantees. Grantees have worked with communities to manage such risks by tracking issues that have already started to emerge in earlier initiatives prior to the SGPPTF grant. In Malaysia, for example, the traditional knowledge of the Krokong in Sarawak on medicinal plants, handicrafts, and music, was documented by a community 'gatekeeper.' This gatekeeper was sensitized to issues on cultural intellectual property and was entrusted by the community with keeping the data in its digital form. In the future, it will be important to establish criteria for appropriate gatekeepers of indigenous information as applicable in different countries.

In another case, a community in Kanchanaburi district, Thailand, collaborated with an academic institution to

gain support in monitoring the impacts of its resource management and livelihood activities. The local knowledge on commonly used species, together with systematic systems for recording and analyzing observed changes over time, is helping to improve the responsiveness and effectiveness of the community forest management system.

Communities are finding modes of development that balance local perspectives with external opportunities, when supported with practical strategies to help people plan for and take up opportunities that support local practices and culture.

All of the SGPPTF programs have experimented with finding livelihood activities that would fit with community values and aspirations. One significant example of this is the 'sufficiency economy' approach adopted in Thailand (Box 5). The aim is a form of slow development by intention, which enables people to assess and consolidate their needs as a basis for agreeing on and pursuing appropriate pathways to meet their needs and aspirations. In the words of the Sureerat Kritsanarangasan, the Thai national coordinator for SGPPTF, *"The Sufficiency Economy is about development, but slowed down to make sure the communities get firm (sic) on the fundamentals before jumping into the mainstream."*

Box 5. Let the Knowledge Lead and the Money Follow: Sufficiency Economy in the Inpaeng and Kanchanaburi Community Forestry Networks[4]

The concept of Sufficiency Economy in Thailand comes from several decades of experimentation by civil society and the King. This happened when the Thai economy and society moved from being mainly agriculture-based into being an industrialized society, and endured the Asian financial crisis of the 1990s. The Sufficiency Economy concept has been explained as a philosophy and approach to life relevant at every level, from the family to the nation. Rather than rejecting change, the philosophy promotes a middle path based on key Buddhist principles:

- Moderation between frugality and extravagance to find a balanced level of 'wants';
- Reasonableness in decision-making, based on experience, self awareness, foresight, compassion, and empathy;
- Self-immunity or resilience to shocks;
- Knowledge and application of accumulated wisdom and experience; and
- Integrity in terms of ethical and honest behavior.

The 'gatekeeper' is sensitized to the issues surrounding cultural intellectual property and is trusted by the community to keep the data in its digital form.

Box 5 continued...

The Thai SGPPTF program took up the Sufficiency Economy concept at the program and project levels. The Inpaeng network predates the SGPPTF, but it was supported by the latter in its knowledge management activities related to indigenous knowledge and forest management practices. In its local and networking activities, Inpaeng promotes eight points related to the Sufficiency Economy philosophy: 1) having a secure living with enough food; 2) having enough to give to relatives and friends; 3) having enough to contribute for charities and needy people; 4) having clean and safe food to eat and remain healthy; 5) living in harmony with nature and other people; 6) accumulating knowledge and wisdom; 7) developing community-based enterprises; and 8) having community-based welfare schemes and safety nets. Far from isolating themselves from the wider economy and society, the Inpaeng network is actively supporting linkages to the outside world to market their surplus and to share knowledge but in a way that works with the community's needs and culture.

Like Inpaeng, the Kanchanaburi network also started its work before getting SGPPTF support, and it has used its small grant specifically for capacity building activities. In addition to its community forestry work, the Kanchanaburi network is building the capacity of communities, families, and individuals to understand and track their financial needs, and to plan for sustainable and compatible modes of development. Under the leadership of the local school principal, Ajan Somporn, the network has supported practical actions, such as bookkeeping in schools and households, as well as village-level surveys and planning activities to reflect local income, needs, and assets. These actions are used as bases for discussing and developing plans for households to secure their livelihoods.

A challenge for these networks is the emerging generation – will they see the relevance and continue to follow a slow development path or will they get drawn into the riptide of consumerism? Time will tell, although the efforts of both networks to support lively youth groups in their communities may help provide some guidance to the next generation.

The Malaysia program also supported development options that are consistent with local values and practices, in relation to defining an appropriate scale and style of ecotourism development. In Pakistan, similar efforts to blend indigenous knowledge with new practices have been undertaken in many sites as a way of finding locally relevant and sustainable ways to strengthen livelihoods. Vaqar Zakria, a grantee from Pakistan, has commented that the blending of local and indigenous knowledge with new practices provides a critical way to connect household economies with sustainable resource management outcomes.

Lessons on Managing Rapid Social Change

The SGPPTF experience highlights the fact that there are important social and environmental reasons for nurturing local knowledge and institutions. If communities are to sustain their identity and cultural integrity in an environment of rapid social change, globalization, and changing aspirations, we must find ways to value and support the continuing exchange of their knowledge, and incorporate these in current planning for livelihoods and resource management. In the program, the creation of such opportunities has been helping sustain cultural pride and political empowerment; it is also contributing to appropriate livelihood and natural resource management strategies.

There are also examples of efforts to strengthen the capacity of local institutions to deal more effectively with wider governance structures and processes, as well as challenge them towards greater social inclusion. Experiments in blending 'scientific' and local knowledge are showing some opportunities for mutual benefit. However, challenges remain in balancing free exchange with the protection of communities from commercial exploitation, and in gaining long-term recognition and respect from society for the way of life of indigenous communities.

Although social and environmental uncertainty and change cannot be prevented, there are promising ways to help reduce the level of uncertainty faced by communities in their efforts to manage forests, and to help them manage change. The common thread is supporting communities to meet their basic needs and rights, to give them the security and capacity to cope with uncertainty, and to give them greater confidence and voice. Many of the cases and examples discussed under the subsequent themes continue to illustrate the ways in which this is being tackled.

Lesson 3: *Sustaining the identity and cultural integrity of indigenous and other rural communities can help them manage rapid social change if:*

a. *Their identities and cultural practices are recognized in processes for local forest governance and poverty reduction*;
b. *Local knowledge is kept alive through methods of sharing and exchange; and*
c. *Local community institutions are encouraged to reflect on and manage change, aspirations, conflict, and threats to resource access.*

A meeting of SGPPTF coordinators prioritized Lessons 3b and 3c above, then 3a to inform future action.

2.2 Local Forest Governance

An increasing number of communities in Asia are struggling with common steps that are helping them formalize forest management agreements with governments.[5] The process begins with communities that already possess informal systems of natural resource management, either of a traditional nature or of more recent origin. An external or internal catalyst initiates a community dialogue about problems or opportunities that relate to the forest. Local authorities and other communities are often drawn into the discussions as the dialogue evolves. This process usually prompts community institutions to prove their capacity to manage by documenting the membership and management structure, rules and regulations governing forest use, the forest area to be managed, and plans for the area. These common steps represent various aspects of local forest governance.

Based on this process, governments implementing policies that recognize the role of communities have signed formal forest management agreements with community-based organizations. As mentioned earlier, around 18 per cent of forest lands in Asia are now formally under various modes of management by local users.

What practical strategies have worked to strengthen local forest governance? Many forest-dependent communities, together with non-government organizations, local governments, and/or field-level forest departments and other line agencies, are relating to the common steps outlined. The SGPPTF country guideline papers have been designed to teach and to build on previous and existing forestry programs that include social mobilization. As such, many SGPPTF sites provide examples where grantees have: strengthened existing local institutions; helped formalize indigenous institutions; and/or nurtured emerging community institutions. In the process, these institutions are contributing to the growing body of knowledge on local forest governance.

How Planning Decisions are Reached

Planning to formally manage local forest resources within a context of marginalization, poverty, insecurity, and rapid social transformation is difficult. People living in or near forest areas are dispersed and located far away from seats of government. Basic services, such as schools, health centers, and roads, are mostly inadequate or non-existent. In some countries, forest areas especially in the uplands are perceived as havens of insurgency and conflict. Communities living in forests that are still in relatively good condition face questions over access and management when their area is declared as protected or when it is licensed to external commercial interests.

Where appropriate leadership and arrangements for local governance already exist in the form of customary arrangements including rules and shared norms, the drive for planning may be to gain formal recognition and security of their land. This often holds true for cultural communities who have long standing systems of resource stewardship and relations with the land, as shown in the experience of SHK Lestari (Box 6). Gaining formal recognition is a long-term process especially in countries that do not have mechanisms to recognize the rights of the forest-based cultures or are unwilling to implement these rights.

Box 6. History of SHK Lestari, Lampung District, South Sumatra Province, Indonesia

17th century – Hurun Village (*desa*), named after Banten Kingdom's seal, was established. Hurun now means 'to stop' since the village used to serve as a resting point of spice traders from Banten going to Lampung.

1959 – Muara Tiga was established as a remote sub-village (*dusun*) of Hurun by five families from South Sumatra who had resource use permits from the Hurun *adat* chief.

1962 – Other hamlets (*talang*) were established by people coming from four ethnic groups. Forests were opened for the planting of rice, then coffee.

1974-80 – This was the Golden era for Muara Tiga, when cloves sold for Rp25,000-30,000 per kilo and harvest of coffee, *melinjo* (Gnetum gnemon) and durian were plentiful. People were able to send children to elementary school, some even to university, build proper houses, and go to Mecca on hajj pilgrimage.

1982 – Government trans-migration program used military forces to relocate them out of the forest and to North Lampung, a swamp area less fertile than where they came from. Even their cassava could not grow. Some families went back to Muara Tiga.

1998 – Another effort to move them out was made. Fifty government personnel from the District Forest Office, police, military, and Wan Abdurraman Forest Park administration came to expel the families from the forest. Hundreds of houses and the school and its contents were burned; some villagers were even forced to burn their own homes. Only one mosque was spared. People sought refuge in neighboring villages; others stayed in a community leader's house in Muara Tiga. Some were sent to jail without legal warrant and clear reason. Those with enough courage returned to Muara Tiga at night like thieves to harvest the coffee they planted in their own land.

2000 – Villagers formed a cooperative institution so that they can apply for a social forestry permit from the District Forest Office. They spent a lot of money for this but their application was rejected.

2001 – PUSSBik (*Pusat Studi Strategi dan Kebijakan* - Center for Strategy and Policy Studies) and Walhi Lampung conducted research on land conflicts in Muara Tiga. Initially, villagers were wary of them because of negative experiences with outsiders. The non-government organizations used the research results to facilitate dialogue among the villagers who have become divided.

2002 - After seven months of facilitating community dialogue, 230 family members in Muara Tiga decided to form the SHK Lestari and to develop plans that would strengthen their position in negotiating for rights to live in the forest and to manage the resources.

Present activities include building capacities in organizational management and enterprise development, paralegal training, linking with neighboring villages, dialogue with district forest office, and seeking local and national support.

In other cases, where the existing local institutions to take on forest management roles are weak or absent, planning activities nurture local governance through negotiation, collaboration, and building capacities.[6] This may still be a long-term process.[7]

Whatever the force driving communities to engage in planning is, two things have proven to be effective in strengthening local governance capacity. First, the level of dialogue and scale of planning initially need to be done among neighbors who share a common resource and who live nearest to it. Second, participatory decision-making is a critical approach in getting to a point of agreement on what to do with their common resource. Many SGPPTF activities revolve around institutional practices that support participatory planning at the local level, such as:

- Facilitating community dialogue;
- Strengthening community organizations or forming local committees and interest groups;
- Assessing the resource base; and
- Practicing management planning, including agreeing on goals, objectives, and activities.

In facilitating community dialogue for participatory planning, the more crucial investment is time, not money.

Facilitating community dialogue is about building trust and confidence among one another, and this takes time. The importance of time for participatory decision-making is highlighted in experiences from seven countries — Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Monsignor Merlin Logronio of St. Maria Goretti Foundation from Leyte, Philippines, said:

> *"People in the village are wary of visitors because of previous experiences when they were visited only for picture-taking and registration. It took time before the residents believed in us."*

Logronio expressed this during the conference on the completion of the Visayas cluster project where some grantees stated that two years were not enough to implement a project. They would rather spread the use of the same amount of money to implement a project over a longer period.

Community meetings are usually held in the evenings, after people work in their farms. This indicates the level of commitment and desire to address pressing problems in the area. This also indicates the presence of basic human and social capital that otherwise would not have been present in conflict and violence-ridden areas.

Yayasan Peduli Konservasi Alam Indonesia (PeKA) from Indonesia shared that the six villages along the Halimun-Salak corridor forest were in dialogue for three years before they decided to form an organization, Jamaskor. In Pakistan, CARAVAN in the Northwest Frontier Province facilitated a continuous dialogue among members of the Kohistan Integrated Development Forum (KIDF) for two years before they arrived at agreements on controlling the timber mafia in Swat District. In Balochistan, it took three years for the local elders' assembly (*jirga*) in Zhob District to agree to take on a role in protecting the chilgoza forests.

Non-government organizations, such as LATIN in Indonesia, have been using participatory action research with facilitation. It has drawn out the concerns, problems, and opportunities of the communities by helping them document: seasonal calendars, activity profiles, family decision-making processes, productive and reproductive role profiles, profiling of political roles in the community; and analysis of resource access, control, and benefits. The SGPPTF program in Malaysia produced a manual of good practices in facilitating community dialogue on forest management.[8]

The following cases from Cambodia and Vietnam explain why dialogue and planning in the context of forest communities need more time than the usual project durations of 1-2 years. Participants of the final reflection workshop in Cambodia shared problems that they encountered and the solutions they found to be effective in facilitating community dialogue (Table 5).

Table 5: Problems and Solutions in Facilitating Community Dialogue[9]

Problems	Solutions
› It was difficult to get villagers to come together. › Villagers did not have enough time. › Villagers were not interested.	› Be flexible: let villagers set the time and venue of the meeting. › Hold meetings in smaller groups, › Maintain direct contact; provide real examples.
› Literacy level in the community was low. › It was difficult to communicate concepts and approaches to target groups. › People were not used to recording discussions. › People were not used to making plans.	› Simplify complex documents: translate into local language; use visuals (photos, videos, posters). › Directly follow up to give further explanation. › Conduct study tours and training courses tailored to people's needs.

An evaluation of the process for allocating forest land to communities supported in Vietnam[10] generated valuable lessons on participatory decision-making from villagers who have undergone the process:

- Deciding as a community to agree to apply for a forest land allocation should involve many, many meetings.
- Inviting some government officers to take part in such meetings helps in the processing stage.
- Meetings should carefully discuss the purpose of forest land use, location of the allocated forest land, establishment of the management board, and methods of forest land management.

Where there is already strong human and social capital, for example, within several community forest networks in Thailand, the presence of strong and wise leaders who facilitate participatory decision-making has already built the trust and confidence needed for effective community planning and implementation (Box 7). Where human and social capital are present but weak, as implied in the cases mentioned above, communities need the time to discover who among their members could be effective leaders and who in the district scene could be trusted as good partners.

Box 7. Keys to successful community forest management[11]

1. High sense of community, closely knit networks of relatives or inter-dependent neighbors
2. Forest's strong potential for healthy recovery
3. Mutual benefit in conservation, water, food, medicines
4. Intense awareness of conservation well beyond immediate usage; united when faced with outside threat
5. Strong and wise leader — village elder or elected official
6. Local organization set up that represents village conservation interests
7. Strong belief in the concept of common resources and common rights; deep perception that forests belong to the community
8. Existence of set of enforced regulations and conditions for use of community forests

Strengthening community organizations or forming local committees and interest groups builds human and social capital needed to help rural societies participate in a globalizing world.

As emphasized in previous sections, the benefits of building social capital go beyond addressing access and management issues over state forest territories, to strengthening capacity for managing many spheres of life. This is particularly needed in rural societies that are far from urban centers but where critical decisions are made. Within rural areas where high-value forests are mostly found, this need becomes all the more critical as people are often more dispersed and they lack access to basic social services and infrastructure that urban societies have. Nurturing social capital builds their confidence not only to face threats to their lives and livelihoods but also to participate in opportunities brought about by a globalizing world. Experiences from seven countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam) describe how human and social capital are being developed in forest environments through community organizations, local communities, and interest groups.

Many of the needs expressed in proposals to the SGPPTF centered on acquiring skills that would help community-based organizations relate outside their locality. The skills sought were in project management, financial accounting, documentation, strategic negotiations, linking with local authorities, and paralegal techniques. In a knowledge management workshop in the Philippines,[12] participants shared that an offshoot of the process of developing these capacities was the development of computer skills by several farmers.

The SGPPTF engaged sites where community-based organizations have already been formalized with assistance from previous programs with social mobilization components. It also supported the formation of local committees and interest groups through non-government organizations as a way to work on a particular community concern.

As shown in Table 1 on Country Priorities, Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam mostly targeted communities

with established formal management structures or else those that worked with prevailing forest management programs and policies. The Community-based Forest Management Program and the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act in the Philippines required communities to formally register as a people's organization or a tribal council to enter into legal contracts. In Indonesia, Persepsi facilitated the formation of management units in several communities within the Solo Watershed in Central Java that wanted to acquire eco-labeling certificates for community forests with the aim of expanding their market. The SGPPTF land allocation study in Vietnam found that the program filled the need of communes which have allocated forest lands to communities but did not have the means to facilitate the development of community land use plans. There were 14 of 29 projects which focused on land use planning processes and formed different interest groups within villages.

Malaysia and Thailand worked mostly with indigenous groups or community networks which have established governance systems though some were not registered as legal entities. Projects in these countries have strengthened community organizations by documenting local knowledge and by revitalizing cultural practices that are at risk of being lost if not lived out by the younger generations. Indigenous communities in the Philippines also conducted these activities because documentation of their customary systems is required in acquiring an ancestral domain title.

The approach of forming interest groups to build human and social capital was particularly valued in societies where women and men could not work under one organization. This especially applies to Pakistan where a number of grants focused on the formation of gender-based interest groups and prioritized to support livelihood activities that allowed women in the village to get involved. The section on Sustainable Livelihoods provides details on how training in processing non-timber forest products was designed to suit the situation of women.

While 'positive discrimination' to level the playing field for vulnerable groups is a common method in the development sector, the challenges of implementing this in male-dominated societies are vast. Grantees in Pakistan found at least three ways to deal with the challenges. First, they worked to convince men to open up the process to women. Second, they employed women staff in the project, which was a big challenge in itself. Finding women who were active in the job market was difficult particularly in areas near the borders of Afghanistan and Iran where social environments tended to be more conservative. Third, they involved male children who could communicate to their mothers and other household females about issues surrounding non-timber forest products.

The dynamics are starting to change in Palas Valley of Kohistan District where feuds over landholdings and women are commonplace and where there are no schools for girls and only primary schools for boys. World Pheasant Association (WPA), concerned over biodiversity loss in the Himalayan Mountain Range, started organizing village meetings, conducting school lectures, and campaigning around the valley in March 2005 to raise awareness on the value of forests. In October, when the earthquake hit the area, WPA helped distribute corrugated iron sheets to families whose homes were destroyed. The combination of activities helped the highly conservative society realize that "*If we can save our forests, it is better for us in the long run*," as expressed by a villager, Ghulamullah.

The changing attitude towards forests has led to the formation of the Palas Conservation and Development Federation composed of 45 community-based organizations and three interest groups. The Federation has the support of the Northwest Frontier Province Wildlife Department as WPA collaborated with the department early on. Now, the federation is a venue for coordinating not only livelihood and forest conservation activities but also mainstream rural development projects in the valley.

Involving the youth is a common strategy among SGPPTF projects, as it stabilizes the present community-based organizations while shaping the values of future leaders in rural societies. In Sri Lanka, 11 of the 18 projects established youth committees in their areas of operation. In many community forest networks in Thailand, children were involved in biodiversity monitoring as part of their laboratory

work in school. In Indonesia's Lore Lindu National Park, the committee in Pakuli village which plans and implements strategies to conserve the endangered Maleo (Macrochepalon maleo), is composed mostly of youth.[13]

A number of community forest organizations are becoming training grounds for leaders who are acting as agents of political and social transformation, as well as local-level peace-brokers. In Indonesia, the establishment of five women's groups, working in support of strengthening community forest management activities, paved the way for three members to increase their political skills, and to be elected as village authorities. In Pakistan, leaders with experience running village forest committees are being considered as potential candidates for the Pakistan Citizen Board. A similar trend is happening in the Philippines where heads of people's organizations are being elected to village government positions because of the skills acquired from implementing community forest management.

Strong community-based organizations promote forests when members are aware of and experience the benefits for doing so.

When communities are highly aware of the benefits in promoting forests, they are more bound to organize themselves to make sure these benefits are not lost. This awareness tends to be strong among indigenous peoples whose cultures are strongly tied to natural resources, and in communities whose livelihoods largely relate to high-value forests. Conversely, awareness tends to be weak where communities' relationship to forestlands has long been degraded and there are limited resources to share. A number of communities participating in SGPPTF related how forests were being protected from encroachments because they had organized, were maintaining strong community relations, and were finding benefits from joint activities. While examples from Cambodia and Vietnam are the ones highlighted, ample cases can also be found in Indonesia, Philippines, and Thailand. This finding is also relevant to Pakistan because its country guideline paper emphasizes the point on *what's in it for them* (WIIFT) as one basis for its thematic focus.

In Cambodia, the Chheu Tom commune of Pursat, with the help of the Environmental Protection and Development Organization (EPDO), formed a committee to manage the Chrak Laeang Forest as a recreational site. The management committee was composed of 12 members: two from the commune council and one elected representative from each village. Elected village members represented in the management committee know that it is their job to raise awareness on the need for protection in their village. They meet twice a month with village heads to get the latter's support in carrying messages to villagers.

Thim Ngoc, commune head and committee chair, shared the impact of a strengthened organization on forest protection, thus:

> *"In the past, people came here to cut wood, but now they do not dare. Securing access to the area gave us the incentive and motivation to protect the forest. People in the community have stopped cutting wood and started collecting dead wood. Even when we issued a regulation to stop wood collection, they did not object, but just stopped."*

Over 10,000 local and foreign tourists visited the site in 2006, even if it was far from the town and roads were poor. The committee is responsible for managing finances, organizing provision of services (e.g., security, hygiene, and sanitation). People living in the area are exempted from paying entrance fees because they already protect the forest.

Vietnam provides one example of ensuring that community members are aware of the benefits of their forest management activities. One village operating a community forest management fund put in place measures so that the fund would be managed well and proceeds would sustain forest protection operations. The responsibility for fund management was given to the village head, the head of the women's union in the commune, and the leader of the forest patrol team. The people jointly responsible for the funds needed to report quarterly at village meetings on how the funds have been used.

During an SGPPTF visit to this village, the monitoring team observed that the people were actively asking the fund managers during the village meeting to report how they were using the money, as they went past the reporting deadline. One villager said that if the village head did not report, they had the power to terminate him or not to vote for him in the next election. In visits to other villages, the monitoring team observed that internal community regulations could differ and still produce equally effective results as long as members felt the benefits and were aware of what they were losing from not implementing the internal regulations. In villages where people were less aware and officials were more powerful, the existence of internal regulations did not automatically assure the promotion of forests.

Resource base assessment has to be rooted in community values concerning forests for it to be effective in the planning process.

Some community organizations that SGPPTF assisted underwent resource inventory or mapping exercises to establish baseline information on the area. While the foregoing finding comes from a variety of experiences from all SGPPTF countries, it is most pronounced in indigenous communities where people's values are deeply rooted in the forest.

In Sri Lanka, existing village land use plans were considered in preparing project activity plans. While projects mainly concentrated on individual home gardens rather than on public land, most of these projects developed village maps incorporating these home gardens. This exercise also identified degraded and unutilized areas that could be the focus of future interventions.

Identifying resources that were important for community livelihoods was the starting point of Save Cambodia Wildlife's (SCW) resource assessment study for Prek Thnout, a Community Protected Area in Kampot Province. Using aerial photos from the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the SCW staff selected sample plots based on forest density and asked villagers with skills to help them count trees and NTFPs in the selected plots. They used these data to extrapolate the available volume of different species that communities use, such as rattan. They then compared this information with results from the socio-economic assessment of how much wood and NTFP the community used annually for domestic consumption. Based on the study, the SCW found that resources in the area were insufficient to sustainably support livelihoods of the whole community. This became the basis for the livelihoods proposal to SGPPTF.

SCW has taken resource assessment further in response to local observations that rattan resources are declining. Rattan gatherers disclosed that while their rattan sales were doing well and many more villagers were getting involved in the enterprise, they now had to go deeper into the forest to harvest rattan. Based on the maturity period of rattan, the SCW set five years as the time frame for assessing the sustainability of the present management system. Meanwhile, it is conducting research with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) on the growth rate of rattan in the wild, as well as on extraction techniques.

Resource inventory of the Sinui Pai Nanek Sengik (SPNS) in Malaysia for the Lubuk Degong Waterfall Area was led by the youth. It also involved women, children, elders, and middle-aged members of the community. Together, they were able to identify 240 kinds of plants important to their community. To avoid boundary conflicts, they involved neighboring villages in their process of determining the management boundaries using GPS equipment, prior to putting up markers.

Grantees found that it was helpful to invite the local forest or environment department to assess community resources. This helps local authorities better understand the community situation. It also gives forest communities an opportunity to experience a 'personal' level of engagement; they often did not have such opportunity or if there was, it was a negative one. Usually, however, field-level government personnel do not have their own budget to go to the field or they are not so motivated. Nevertheless, the SGPPTF budgets covered their basic field travel costs in Cambodia and the Philippines. According to the grantees, involving

field-level personnel in community resource assessments has encouraged 'downward accountability' or made them more responsive to the communities.

On the other hand, weak relations with local authorities can slow down forest resource assessment activities. In Visayas, Philippines, one grantee found it difficult to secure clearance from the military detachment to conduct resource inventory and biodiversity assessment. Grantees were perceived as insurgents because of the equipment that they carried — telescope, handset, and digital camera. Another grantee assisting an ethnic group in a national park encountered problems in conducting the inventory of caves, flora, and fauna because local officials thought they were treasure hunters. To correct this impression, the grantee asked two village officials to join the inventory activities.

Some grantees used the results of the resource assessment and baseline spatial information from participatory mapping to develop resource management plans. Many of the grantees actually aimed to present these plans to the government and to seek formal recognition of their management initiatives.

The Topo Uma community in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia conducted participatory mapping with the assistance of Perkumpulan Karsa, as part of documenting the *Adat* system in Pipikoro. This was done so that they could negotiate with the District Forest Office to recognize their indigenous rights. Topo Uma decided to start this documentation process because a 1999 decree delineated the forest and water regions in Central Sulawesi. A map was subsequently released in 2002, zoning the area into four categories — limited production, protection, production, and convertible production. However, the mapping did not consider the *Adat* system already in place, and the community's complex system for managing forest resources. The system included classifying primary forests into three classes based on physiological condition and vegetation, as well as following the rules on activities that were allowed and not allowed in each of these classes.

The existence of a forest in Pipikoro is proof of the local wisdom and strong capacity of the *adat* system in forest management. The mapping exercise and analysis of the current condition of forest resources in this remote area showed that of the 5,400 hectares managed as forest, only 300 hectares of the land had been used in shifting cultivation since 1960. However, as the farmers' fields visually resemble forests, most have been reclassified as state forest. This is a great source of worry for the farmers as they feel that they could be driven out anytime. To assure sustainability of resources and eliminate conflict, the roles and responsibilities of communities in Topo Uma need to be restored.[14]

Topo Uma's other objective was to correct the government's perception that land practices of the upland communities, and their presence in the forest, were the main causes of deforestation. In Dutch colonial times, shifting cultivation was strongly regarded as the main cause of deforestation and this attitude has carried on to the present administration. This attitude was the basis for the 1967 Forest Law which prevented clearing of and habitation in state forests.

The Rupit people in an abandoned mining area in Sumatra, as mentioned in the Section on Uncertainty and Change, has a similar objective of re-claiming the area for management under *Adat* laws. The decision to initiate a planning process came after the villagers and the local government carried out initiatives on the abandoned mine; however, they failed several times. Some started mining in the tailing area using traditional instruments; others planted fruit trees, such as durian and rambutan, but without success. Walhi suggested *pulai* (*Alstonia spp.*) as a species to restore soil fertility, improve condition of surrounding plants, and secure future economic value. Collaborating with a company that supplies processed wood products (matches, pencil, and furniture), the communities obtained 10,000 seedlings for land rehabilitation. Parallel to land rehabilitation, participatory mapping and action research were undertaken to clarify present land use and ownership status. According to locals, the region has been managed traditionally through the Simboer Tjahaja ethnic law written in 1630 using Arabic and ancient Melayu and legalized in 1927 under Dutch rule. This *Adat* law guides all aspects of

social life, including how to manage the land and forests. This will be used as a guide to management planning.[15]

The SGPPTF case study on forest land allocation in Vietnam is a very important input to the national government as it develops guidelines for different community management models. The case study outlined critical questions to help frontline forest officials and assisting NGOs develop methods for ensuring that land allocation, as well as land use mapping and planning processes, respond to the equally important goals of protecting the environment and improving human well-being. It suggested that planning processes should:

- Assess awareness of all people in the community about the significance and role of forests in their lives (How do forests directly affect social, cultural, and economic activities of people in the community – women and men, young and old, those extremely poor, and minority cultures?);
- Understand the different land uses in the community and ascertain that the allocated land area can meet the needs of the community now and in the future; and
- Evaluate the management capability of the residents as a community to make sure that they can effectively use and manage allocated lands.

While these questions come from a situation where a policy framework for community forest management is in place, these can also be applied in situations where there is no mechanism to formally recognize the planning processes in community forest management such as in Pakistan and Thailand. In Northern Thailand near the borders of Myanmar and Lao PDR, participatory mapping outputs are at least helping tribal communities present their situation to local government authorities.

In Pakistan, resource surveys and participatory mapping were conducted by three grantees. Lasoona, HUJRA, and WPA used the mapping and survey results from the villages as inputs into broader planning mechanisms of the multi-sectoral Malakand Development Forum where these grantees were active.

The process of developing and communicating community management plans facilitates integration of forest-dependent communities into broader rural development frameworks.

Previous forestry programs tended to view community organizations as an efficient means to achieve national reforestation objectives, given limitations in human and financial resources of the forest sector. Now, there is increasing evidence that community forest management, when treated as a strategic entry point for social mobilization, can produce lasting positive impacts beyond environmental goals. Cases from Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, and Vietnam provide more details on how this shift is happening and how this is helping forest-dependent communities get attention from broader rural development frameworks.

An NGO leader facilitating the project in a conflict-ridden area succinctly expresses this shift from a bio-centric to an anthropocentric approach:

> *"Whereas others use community organization as an entry point to reforestation, we have used reforestation as an entry point to organize community. We want to see that when we leave, more than the trees growing, people's relations are growing."*

Community forest management initiatives are building the social capital needed to mobilize local resources for sustainable rural development. Glen de Castro, SGPPTF coordinator, observed that ensuring community participation within the small grants program during project conceptualization and development has helped many projects in the Philippines become catalysts of change at the local level.

In Pakistan, collaborative efforts to manage the high-value chilgoza (*Pinus gerardiana*) forests are providing a venue for local tribes in Zhob District at the border to learn how to work together with Afghanistan. Understanding the local power dynamics is key to the formation of the Chilgoza Forests Conservation Committee. To avoid tribal conflict, no officials were identified, thereby giving all committee members equal status. The committee represents five villages and meets once a month or when needed.

The assisting organization, WWF-Pakistan, can also attend the meeting. The committee discusses not only the chilgoza forests but also many aspects of community life.

Members of the conservation committee are now included in *jirga* - the assembly of elders in the area. Through a process of dialogue and planning, people have realized that the value of the nuts produced by a single chilgoza tree is higher than the timber value of an entire tree. A coherent plan for harvesting, collecting, and marketing of chilgoza nuts has been adopted. Now, the committee is able to enforce a fine of PKR 10,000 (USD 166/EUR 120) on any villager cutting a green chilgoza tree. From this project, WWF-Pakistan learned that *continuous social mobilization, along with rural development actions, can help achieve conservation goals*. The long-term plan is to build linkages with government line agencies about other concerns in the area while finding ways to coordinate with other villages spread around the chilgoza forests in Balochistan and Northwest Frontier Province.[16]

In 2000, Mitra Bentala facilitated a meeting among fisherfolk in Pahawang Island off the coast of South Sumatra to discuss natural resource concerns in Lampung Bay. The meeting resulted in: 1)agreements to stop the use of destructive fishing methods; and 2) a request for local government authorities to enhance patrolling and protection of the area, and to bring violators into custody. This meeting also paved the way for a multi-stakeholder planning process, although not until five years after. Through a series of workshops, communities mapped resources in the area, agreed on areas for mangrove protection, formulated management regulations, set up an environmental education program in the elementary school, and raised public awareness through community radio and video documentary. A community leader donated a portion of his land as a mangrove protected area.

Towards the end of the program, the SGPPTF in Malaysia held a series of workshops that helped project partners: 1) build a vision for their villages and forests; 2) assess their human, natural, and social capital; 3) identify opportunities for securing future assistance; and 4) match resources to their vision and plans. Twenty plans drawn up completely by the communities were presented to the National Steering Committee (NSC) and interested agencies during a National Workshop on Planning for Sustainability. These workshops also helped the Malaysian program identify capacities needed in the future and to inform national and international donor investments in the country of these needs.

Through the SGPPTF's country facilities for proposal and project development, communities and local governments gained experience in designing and managing projects. The trainings and workshops were especially appreciated in areas where these have not been conducted before. A representative from Samar Island Biodiversity Foundation (SIBF) in the Philippines shared, *"We see that the strength of SGPPTF is in choosing to support places that are hard to reach."*

Samar Island holds the largest contiguous block of forest in the Visayas Islands, yet two of its three provinces are part of the 10 poorest provinces in the Philippines.[17] It was the first time for a number of SGPPTF beneficiaries to experience the following: 1) conceptualizing proposals; 2) developing projects through logical frameworks and objectively verifiable indicators; 3) establishing systems to monitor and evaluate their activities; and 4) learning knowledge management methods.

In northern Philippines, support to land use planning in Community Forestry Foundation of Quirino, Inc. (CFFQI), Baguio Village Intercultural Association (BICAS), and Don Mariano Perez Farmers' Multi-purpose Cooperative (DMPFMPC) is linking with the broader management of the Quirino Protected Landscape.

Communities undergo these processes often accompanied by local NGOs with a mission for community development and natural resource management or forest conservation, or by field-level forest departments with people-oriented programs or community forestry policies. Village and sub-district government officials and local line agency departments are brought into the discussions to raise

their awareness or secure their moral or other kinds of support. In some cases, these local authorities have helped communities obtain financial assistance or other development projects for their area.
The design of SGPPTF promotes the value of self-reliance and self-determination in communities. In Vietnam, Mr. Vu Van Can from the Institute of Forestry Science conducted a case study on forest management planning and forest development funds. He found that the difference of SGPPTF from other forestry programs was that NSC selected projects that emphasized sustainability in all aspects of project operation. For instance, NSC prioritized those proposals that built community capacity for community members to establish their own nurseries, not relying on seedlings from outside, and for proponents to continue seedling production and planting even after the project. Program experience affirmed that cost-sharing mechanisms minimized dependency and encouraged self-reliance. Recognizing contributions provided in-kind has helped encourage innovations in communities and cooperation from local governments. Communities and assisting NGOs are coming up with various ways to mobilize resources to sustainably implement plans. In Vietnam, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia, revolving fund schemes linked to responsibilities for community forest protection have been initiated. This is discussed in the next section on sustainable livelihoods.

Lesson on How Planning Decisions are Reached

The five key findings all highlight the importance of the process by which decisions are reached within communities. As an old saying goes, "The journey is more important than the destination." Likewise, in local forest governance, the quality of the decision-making process is more important than the forest management plan, even if the latter is the tangible output. For plans to contribute to broader rural development frameworks in the midst of a globalizing world, the planning process needs to allocate ample time to raising awareness and capacities, nurturing social capital, and being rooted in community values concerning forests.

Lesson 4*: When the planning process promotes greater transparency, equity, and organizational capacity, community forest management plans can promote sustainable forest management alongside rural development.*

How Plans are Being Implemented

As the geographic focus of many SGPPTF countries falls under protected areas, many of the activities implemented relate to forest conservation and protection, rehabilitation of degraded areas, or decreasing pressures through alternative livelihoods. Country programs conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation to provide grantees with support during implementation and help them reflect along the way on how to improve their activities. With many communities seeking recognition from government, many grantees are learning to communicate their plans to local governments as a strategy to gain support for their activities.

Involving local residents in forest protection helps bring to the fore knowledge on the scale and scope of illegal forest activities and sustains local monitoring, especially when strong support in facing powerful groups is needed.

The most widespread forest protection strategy used in SGPPTF to monitor illegal forest activities is community-based patrolling. The design of patrolling mechanisms varies from place to place, based on experiences drawn from Cambodia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. One valuable outcome of involving communities in forest protection is the surfacing of knowledge on the scale

and scope of illegal activities in the forest, as the perpetrators of these illegal actions often tap some community members for assistance. The challenge for several communities conducting forest patrols, especially in high-value forests, is how to manage the risks involved in facing powerful groups affected by their efforts to stop destructive and/or illegal forest activities.

In Pakistan, several communities in Northwest Frontier Province set up check posts along the road. This is possible in Swat District, unlike in other areas where only governments can legally put up check posts, because forest lands can be formally owned by local people in this former princely state. In Behrain Range, the check post established by the Kohistan Integrated Development Forum (KIDF), in collaboration with CARAVAN, was initially guarded by one community member on rotation basis, to prevent smuggling of high-value deodar (*Cedrus deodara*) logs out of their area. Their early experiences taught KIDF that more than one community member was needed to guard the check post, not only to improve transparency, but also to level the power between the logging truck drivers and the check post watchers. One community member already died while guarding the check post. KIDF also asked the district forest department to assign staff to guard the post with them. Check posts along the gushing Swat River are also being established to catch logs floated by illegal cutters during the night, partly using funds generated from fines levied from confiscated timber.

Communities in the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan are operating check posts to prevent the smuggling of valuable deodar logs from their area.

In Visayas, Philippines, former illegal loggers have been transformed into eco-wardens with the introduction of livelihood opportunities linked with forest protection. The carabao dispersal scheme under SGPPTF gave priority to community members willing to serve as volunteer eco-wardens as part of the government-sanctioned Multi-Sectoral Forest Protection Committee (MFPC). The MFPC patrols at night and well into the dawn hours (2-5 a.m.), with only one locally-committed forest official, sometimes without police protection. Community eco-wardens preferred not to have a lot of forest officials during the watch, because they observed from previous experiences that *if several forest officials were involved in the patrol, they could not find anybody to catch.* The assisting NGO said that before the active patrolling activities, 30 chainsaws operated in the heart of the project area. Now, there are no more chainsaws operating. Of the 57,000 hectares that SGPPTF supports in the Visayas, 40 per cent are considered as strict protection zone.

The commitment of community members to continue serving as eco-wardens even after the project is strong. A former chainsaw operator, who is now an eco-warden, has been offered PhP5,000 (USD 110/EUR 80) for 100 board feet of *yakal* (*Shorea* spp), but he did not accept this. To boost his morale, the assisting NGO provided him with financial assistance out of its own funds. Now the NGO is working to provide eco-wardens with insurance because of risks they face in patrolling operations. The project has many critics because of its aim to stop illegal activities. UNDP even received a letter asking it to stop this project because of the forest patrolling component.

Not all cases of forest patrolling, however, are likely to be sustained with the same intensity, especially where the operational costs of patrolling come mainly from project funds.

In a final project workshop, Agri-Business Institute Cambodia (ABiC, an NGO working in Kratie, Cambodia) said that the multi-stakeholder patrolling activities in Snoul wildlife sanctuary, coupled with paralegal training on land and forest laws, helped significantly reduce illegal logging and land grabbing in the community protected areas within the sanctuary. The patrol team is composed of two commune councilors, four community representatives, two local police, two environmental officers, and staff from the provincial government. The community representatives mainly come from landless households of newly married couples who also gather non-timber forest products while patrolling.

With financial and technical support from the project, the team patrolled twice a month and was able to conduct 15 patrol missions within seven months of the project. Support was in the form of mobile and radio communications, handheld and station sets, and budget for food water, gasoline, maintenance of equipment, and community posts. However, an SGPPTF visit to the site in May 2007, four months after the project ended, revealed that illegal activities were being carried out again. Community members said that without funds to cover operational costs, they could only patrol every two months. A follow-up monitoring visit was made in June and this time, communities reported that they were able to continue patrolling activities after all, with strong support from the network comprised of 22 community forestry areas spread over five communes in Snoul District. Support also came from the micro-credit and small business enterprises that many community forestry groups were setting up. The members plan to use incomes from these ventures to fund forest patrolling activities and other local development projects.

Raising local awareness through knowledge sharing and paralegal training on land and forest laws has helped curb local involvement in illegal logging. In Vietnam, some patrol teams ask violators of community forest protection regulations to pay a fine using money or paddy. In Oddar Meanchey, Cambodia, the community forestry committee is gradually making illegal encroachment difficult in Beng Commune, even if it is backed by a military officer. Through raising local awareness and provision of alternative livelihoods, residents are not anymore getting involved in illegal logging. The present challenge of the CF committee, however, is that non-residents have replaced the local people in illegal encroachment.

Rural communities in Asia are increasingly realizing that illegal forest activities cannot be stopped only by exercising legal means but also through community involvement as an essential component of the whole process. As such, in Sri Lanka, forest protection has become a key component in most of the country's micro-capital grants. The most popular strategy taken is the establishment in the village of vigilant committees tasked to patrol the forest. The youth are strongly involved in these vigilant committees of Sri Lanka. In most of the cases, unemployed village youths have volunteered to become members of the vigilant committees in their villages.

The project billboards, originally meant as visible signs of action for the program, were used by the communities as a soft law enforcement mechanism against encroachers. In Malaysia, a Penan community requested the putting up of additional signboards to raise the awareness of visiting land speculators that the forest is under the community's management with international support.

In most countries, patrolling in the forest is mostly done by men. However, experience of the Women's Association for Community Development (WACD) in Cambodia shows that women can also be involved if needed. Women in the Pailin Province in the border of Thailand have become actively involved in patrolling. The women disclosed that the men in their village traveled far to seek jobs in the neighboring country, so women ended up shouldering all responsibilities at home. A community with a woman chairing the CF Committee succeeded twice in apprehending illegal transport of logs from the forest. WACD found that women, who were more dependent on the forest, tended to participate more actively. They also found that an important offshoot of the activities was that women have become more confident in voicing their opinions and in sharing in decision-making. In the past, women relied on their husbands to decide.

Local communities demonstrate various ways to protect forests from fire, livestock, and invasive species, aside from patrolling against illegal forest activities.

Apart from patrolling, the SGPPTF project partners also protect and conserve forests through land management techniques that help protect regenerating forest blocks, as done in Cambodia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.
In Pakistan, where uncontrolled livestock grazing is a common problem, some grantees have promoted rangeland management and rotational grazing. Practices to protect regenerating forests from fire, cattle, and invasive species are also adopted in Vietnam. In some areas of Vietnam, grazing is controlled through digging ditches or putting up barriers to prevent cattle from entering the forest.

Sri Lanka also protects its regenerating forests from fire, cattle, and invasive species. Invasive species have been uprooted in at least two project sites — at the Rajawaka Conservation Area Management Society (RCAMS) and at the Environment Protection Foundation, Sri Lanka (EPF). Biodiversity has improved considerably in areas where invasive species have been successfully treated.

In Thailand, building and maintaining fire breaks are regular voluntary activities in local communities. With decentralization through the *Tambon Administrative Act* 1994, local governments are now able to support this annual activity. The events that prompted communities to arrest rapid deforestation in their area are shown in Box 8.

Box 8. When Communities Started Protecting Limestone Forests in Nong Bua Lum Phu, Thailand[i]

People came to live in limestone mountains in Northeast Thailand 500 hundred years ago because of their naturally abundant forests. Karst limestone environments harbor unique forest ecology and are difficult to rehabilitate. International researchers see Southeast Asia as one of the premier karst regions in the world, and in 1997 the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas recognized karst landscapes as threatened areas in need of protection.

Over time, however, the limestone forests were gradually replaced with cultivated farmlands. The soils were not so productive so people turned to easier but destructive ways of living, like felling trees for sale. In 1977, each family owned a chainsaw. Destruction continued from the time when logs sold at TBT 60 (USD 2/ EUR 1.5) until it reached TBT 600 (USD 20/ EUR 14). The declaration of the area as a forest reserve by the Royal Forest Department hastened deforestation because villagers felt that they had to take everything in the forests before officials arrived. In time, people started feeling the severe damage done to the forests when they could no longer find wild shoots, mushrooms, and bugs for their meals.

In 1991, an NGO staff arrived with the intention of improving the education and quality of life of the local children. Through community dialogue, the NGO learned that deforestation was a core problem that needed to be solved first because people's food source was dwindling as forests became degraded. In 1995, the series of dialogues resulted in the establishment of a community forest network consisting of eight communities. In 1998, education and training for local villagers on forest rehabilitation included reforestation, creation of firebreaks, procurement and local production of forest fire extinguishing gear, and village patrolling to block loggers.

Initially, it was difficult to separate forest zones from farmlands that were adjacent to forests but with community planning and negotiation, they eventually succeeded. Now, mushrooms and other food stuff grow again in the area, though not yet in substantial quantities. Villagers recently agreed to close forest areas for some months yearly to let the crops regenerate naturally. Now, the network includes 33 communities from three districts in the limestone forests of Nong Bua Lum Phu.

In Buddhist societies, such as Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, several cultural and non-violent approaches to forest protection are being practiced and spread. Tree ordination as an approach to forest protection was discussed as an example in the previous section. Another approach was the series of awareness-raising activities with monks, facilitated by the Association of Buddhists for Environment (ABE). The activities encouraged monks to lead by example in fighting forest fires; villagers followed suit. Now each pagoda is responsible for protecting a particular area against fire. In Preah Vihear Province, monks assist communities in patrolling the protected area and have offered the pagodas as a place to safely store evidence of infringement. Monks also impart the importance of good forest management during religious thanksgiving ceremonies after harvest.

Investing in human and social capital is a critical aspect of asset creation in communities. It becomes the basis for them to pro-actively protect forests. Saleem Ullah, the SGPPTF Coordinator in Pakistan, believes that *"Sustainability is spirit, willingness, and commitment, irrespective of technical competence."*[ii] This is the thinking behind such practices as responding to community needs from the start; looking at their level of cohesion and commitment, and ensuring the will of the local government to support forest protection. This thinking contrasts with the strategy of engaging communities as wage labor in forest protection and reforestation. Emphasis on local ownership and accountability ensures accomplishment and sustainability of activities in the future.

Strategies for rehabilitating degraded areas are more likely to succeed when these also aim to provide sustainable livelihoods for local communities.

The SGPPTF activities to rehabilitate degraded forest lands included establishment of nurseries, development of tree plantations, forest rehabilitation, assisted natural regeneration, and agroforestry. While these are standard techniques for rehabilitating degraded areas used in past forestry programs, the difference with SGPPTF is that these activities have various livelihood components attached to them. Moreover, the starting point of most land rehabilitation activities is not from the technical skills required to bring back pristine forests, but from what the local population needs to build their natural, human, social, financial, and physical capital. Stories from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan elaborate on this finding (Details on how the livelihood components were implemented may be found later in the section).

Projects that take the time to design context-appropriate activities and assess progress towards the broader goals of improving human well-being side by side with environmental sustainability are more likely to succeed in the generational task of rehabilitating heavily degraded areas. This is especially important because forest areas designated as community forests are mostly highly degraded.

Support to establish tree nurseries has been requested from areas where seedlings are scarce because of forest degradation. For instance, 14 of the 24 projects raised nurseries or purchased seedlings for tree planting in Pakistan, where natural forests were only 5 per cent of the country's land area.[iii] The innovation of SGPPTF projects was in the way that the nurseries were managed to build human and social capital. In a region where women were not allowed to leave their homes without their husbands, tree nurseries were established (with the help of CARAVAN) near their homes for the women's groups to manage . This practice built their confidence that they were directly contributing to the Kohistan Integrated Development Forum in Northwest Frontier Province.

The SGPPTF Malaysia reforestation project in Uma Bawang, Sarawak has been built on the tree planting work of the Uma Bawang Residents' Association (UBRA) since 1992. Prior to the project support, the association planted 8,000 seeds from wildlings. Observing that these were now hard to come by, members requested support from SGPPTF in procuring 22,000 seedlings that would be planted within the project period. Their motivation to reforest the area came from the potential benefits they would gain from an ecotourism enterprise. They have already guided several visitors to the area, including students from Korea who visited Malaysia as part of an educational tour. These visitors create a market for the beads, handicrafts, and bamboo guitar produced in the area.

In Thailand, the SGPPTF supported the spread of the idea to '*bring the forest to our backyard.*' This was an idea of the founders of the Inpaeng Community Forestry Network. The network hosts cross-visits to villages to show how one village has conserved its forests and what benefits it derives from the practice.

The Sri Lanka projects implemented forest rehabilitation activities, all of which obtained strong technical support from the Forest Department. Some projects promote the conversion of exotic monoculture plantations into endemic, natural, multiple-use forests. The most remarkable example is the project of the EPF. With active technical assistance from the Forest Department, the state-owned exotic pine (*Pinus carebaea*) plantations at Kamburupitiya in Matara District have been rehabilitated. Alternative mature pine rows have been removed and endemic medicinal trees (*Garcenia quessita*), endemic trees (e.g., Pihimbia), and fast-growing timber species such as mahogany (*Sweteinia macrophilla*), have been planted under the shade.

The degraded forests in Kiribathgala Forest Reserve are also being enriched with native tree species, while the Bambarabotuwa Forest Reserve is being rehabilitated by forest gap-filling measures. The National Ethnic Unity Foundation (NEUF) Ampara project has implemented a silvicultural treatment program by removing infested branches and twigs from standing *Nelli* trees (*Phyllanthus emblica* L.), with participation from community members. In the process, the communities were trained on sustainable harvesting principles and participatory forest management programs. Some grantees also participated in the activity.

In Vietnam, fast-growing species (Acacia, Eucalyptus, or Manglestia) were planted in barren land, in tandem with planting indigenous species such as Dendro, *Dendrocalamus membranaceus*, Cunninghamia, *Hopea odorata*, *Chukrasia tabularis* Juss, and *Illicium verum* near households for domestic use. In the Philippines, planting of natural vegetative strips for soil conservation was supported by the following organizations: Baguio Inter-Cultural Association (BICAS) and Don Mariano Perez Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Quirino; the Kasanyangan Foundation in Zamboanga; and the Tiboli Land Development Foundation (TLDFI) in Cotabato.

Activities for assisted natural regeneration have been previously discussed as part of forest protection and conservation activities, in areas where forests are relatively still intact. In these areas, preventing or putting out forest fires is the most important activity to promote natural regeneration (Box 9).

Uprooting mana grass by forest communities reduces the need for regular burning, and helps the regeneration of forests in Nilgala reserve, Sri Lanka.

Box 9. How communities assist in regeneration of Sri Lanka's forests

In savanna areas experiencing intensive fire regimes, such as in Nilgala, Sri Lanka, natural regeneration is being assisted by uprooting flammable *mana* grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) from the forest floor. This intensive work is curbing frequent burning; now large numbers of forest tree seedlings and saplings could be observed in areas cleared of the *mana* grass. In Dorapada watershed, the Lower Uva Development Centre (LUDC) adopted a combination of approaches to manage forest fires that have caused soil erosion, landslides, decline in stream flow, and conversion of rich natural forests into *mana* grasslands in the area. Construction of fire belts, uprooting of *mana* grass, planting of fire resistant species, and employment of vigilant committees to patrol the forest are some of the actions taken by the communities. Although it is too early to comment on the regeneration of species, the forests can recover naturally if fire is controlled for a few more years.

Mangrove forests, compared to upland forest ecosystems, regenerate more easily.[iv] The shorter turnaround time in generating impacts of regeneration on improved seafood catch makes it easier for pioneer communities to spread the value of mangrove management to neighboring villages along the coast.

In Miani Hor along Sonmiani Bay south of Pakistan, the villagers used to think that the mangrove forest was a natural phenomenon that should be left on its own to regenerate. In the past years, however, the shrimp and fish catches have started to decline dramatically, such that fishes as small as flies and ants were being harvested. The low catches were results of unsustainable fishing methods, pressure on mangrove forests from livestock grazing, and un-managed fuel wood collection. However, Ahmed, a local fisherman, said that after the local fisher folk formed the Sonmiani Development Organization (SDO) and implemented a complete ban on the use of illegal nets in the bay, catches have improved. *"Since the ban was enforced six months ago, the number of shrimp and fish in the bay has increased."*

The SDO then sought assistance from the SGPPTF in rehabilitating the mangrove areas through reforestation and the introduction of ways to reduce the pressure to cut mangrove for fuel wood. Community members used three techniques for planting — transplanting saplings from nurseries, direct sowing, and wildling plantation. This is also happening in Kalpitiya, Sri Lanka, where local people have collected mangrove seedlings from nearby islands and planted over 100,000 seedlings of Rizophora species along the edges of Putlem lagoon.

Plantings in Sonmiani Bay were so successful that other fishermen have joined in, planting directly in the bay where there were gaps in the forest. The Bhera village, which is cut off from the rest of Sonmiani Bay during high tide and has traditionally been suspicious of outsiders, has also decided to form its own community-based organization after seeing how plantings have benefited SDO. For example, SDO was able to put up a boat engine repair enterprise that directly benefited its members.[v] Moreover, SDO officer Ghulam Qadir said that they tell the cattle herders, *"If you want to feed your cattle, then plant more nurseries of mangroves."* SDO uses the football tournament season, which draws large crowds from other villages, to promote messages about the importance of mangroves.

Building capacity of communities in assisted natural regeneration has been found to be very important in Vietnam, as shown in 13 SGPPTF-supported sites where forest lands allocated to communities are mostly regenerating natural forests.[vi]

In Cambodia, NSC member Ken Serey Rotha said:

> *Even while the newly-established CF sub-decree promotes welfare, livelihood, and poverty reduction, there is a real challenge in responding to these when resources available are so degraded. If communities do not gain benefits from managing CF in 15 years, they may think that their efforts are useless and they may lose interest in renewing the agreement to manage the area. On the other hand, where forest is relatively intact and has commercial value, it is essential to discuss benefit-sharing and agree on conflict management processes at the onset.*

While intensive agroforestry was common in Indonesia, especially in heavily-populated Java, the SGPPTF projects tended to focus on other rehabilitation methods apart from agroforestry. (Agroforestry practices are discussed in the Sustainable Livelihoods section of this paper.)

Grantees, who participated in past reforestation efforts, shared that these efforts failed because there was a lack of site-level understanding on the gaps in the five asset bases. These assets are important to the communities in reducing poverty (Box 2 in the Introduction section) and in generating livelihood opportunities.

Livelihood activities that aim to decrease local pressure on forests have greater potential to become environmentally and economically sustainable when linked with community management and broader land use planning.

Many grantees are working to decrease local pressure on forests through the introduction of substitute technologies or alternative livelihoods. Only two countries (Cambodia and Philippines) are highlighted here. Strategies range from improving productivity of agricultural crops and livestock to building skills in further processing of products so that communities can sell these at higher prices thereby reducing the need to harvest larger volumes. Details of livelihood activities are discussed in the Sustaining Livelihoods section.

In the Seima Biodiversity Conservation area in Mondulkiri, Cambodia, the SGPPTF supported the implementation of the participatory land use plan developed by the Phnong People and recognized by government. Cambodian Rural Development Team (CRDT), the assisting NGO, used the participatory land use plan as the reference for identifying where to implement the agricultural productivity-related livelihood activities. Securing that the activities will happen only in the agreed cultivation zones helps ensure that no forests will be further opened while reducing people's reliance on forests and wildlife. This phenomenon is also happening in Mt. Kimangkil in Mindanao, Philippines where a management plan for the whole mountain range is now in place. The section on Sustainable Livelihoods provides further detail on the approaches for improving agricultural productivity of people in the area.[vii]

Lesson on How Plans are Implemented

The four key findings capture the variety of strategies for forest protection and conservation which show that local people have come up with innovations that best suit their contexts. Some strategies need more broad-based support especially as local communities often have to deal with powerful actors. Degraded areas are more effectively rehabilitated through projects that support the creation of assets in communities, as compared to projects that use temporary wage employment as incentives for local participation.

Lesson 5*: Involvement of local residents is needed to effectively implement plans to protect forests and to rehabilitate degraded areas. Residents can help in various ways to achieve these aims, especially when planning and implementation are rooted in sustainable livelihoods. Further, strong support from local authorities and civil society is needed particularly when communities face powerful groups.*

Where Governance Capacities are Growing

The management plans and activities are becoming tools and venues for communities and local authorities to get to know each other. The result is a positive trend towards district, provincial, and state governments incorporating remote forest areas in their poverty reduction and development projects. For far-flung forest areas, local government is 'the point at which poor people experience the State and the point they can engage to change it.'[viii]

Community forest management activities are becoming venues for marginalized forest communities to effectively engage local authorities, civil society groups, and the private sector.

Forest-using communities value community forest management activities because these give them a

chance to talk with people outside their locality, as reflected in the cases from Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

According to the Malakand Cluster of grantees in Pakistan, there is an *overwhelming response from communities especially because the forums give them space to dialogue with local government officials.*[xi] Elsewhere, one grantee coming from a place perceived by government as a conflict-ridden area said, *"Line agencies are now more trusting of our activities."*

In the Philippines, Fe Acol-Pomida of the Eastern Samar Development Foundation Inc. (ESADEF) assists a community in a small island that can only be reached after a seven-hour land and boat trip from the provincial capital. She said, *"Before, people from the town did not want to go to this place and did not want to do anything with us because their impression was that far-flung Balagon was an insurgent-infiltrated community. Implementation of SGPPTF in the area dispelled this impression and now local government visits the area..."*

Elsewhere in the Philippines, the Marintub, Ranao, Sapang Tumarbong, Inc. (MRST, Inc.) in Palawan negotiated with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the use of confiscated logs to build their tribal hall. In Barangay Lasang, Davao City, the mangrove restoration and protection activities of the Association of Fisherfolk in Davao City, Inc. (AFDCI) were so appreciated by the local government unit that these became a showcase for the local government agencies and the local government unit as a whole.

In Cambodia, many of the SGPPTF projects have linkages with the government's Seila Programme that facilitates the development of a commune's plan at varying stages. This linkage is enabling community forest management plans to be recognized and integrated into the broader commune development plan. Further, grantees have observed that forests are better protected in areas where Seila integrated community forestry into its development planning process. Some also said that working with Seila provided opportunities (e.g., during the monthly meetings of the commune council) to build close links with local authorities. On the other hand, others saw participation decline when infrastructure development projects were selected over livelihood plans that people proposed.

Relations with provincial governments are also increasing. For instance, the Kampot provincial government hosted the national reflection workshop for Cambodia wherein participants talked about rural development issues, such as community forest agreements, community protected areas, indigenous peoples in the northeast, social capital development and livelihoods, and small-scale business planning and marketing. The governor of Pailin province expressed the view that without community management activities, the forests would have been gone. He supports the expansion of forest land under community management because he believes that this will curb illegal forest activities more effectively. The governor of Banteay Meanchey, who signed an agreement with the community, advised the latter to also enter into agreements with the border police and the military as they were under the Ministry in Phnom Penh.

The ABE in Cambodia found that linking with monks helped them engage the district governor, who also had close relations with monks. This shows the need to understand the sub-national 'drivers of change' by analyzing: *'who the actors are; what relationship exists among individuals, groups, and institutions; what relationship transpires between the powerful and powerless; how these relationships are reproduced; and how vulnerability and exclusion are maintained in a given locality'*.[27] (Details on the role of monks and the case of ABE are cited in Box 4 under the Section on Coping with Resource Uncertainty.)

In Indonesia, a working group with multi-stakeholder members directly under the West Lampung District Head informs the provincial governor on the current 'sensitive' issues regarding community forests. The SGPPTF partners that feed information to this working group are Watala and WWF-Lampung. Meanwhile, in Purworejo District, Central Java where YBL Masta operates, the district government has a grants facility for villages to replant their forests. Each village can be granted up to Rp1 million (approximately USD110 or EUR 80). YBL Masta expects 466 villages in the district to benefit from these grants.

The relationship with field-level forest departments is mixed because the situation and behavior of field-level officers from the forest or national park agencies vary from place to place. Pakuli Village in Sulawesi, Indonesia, for example, reported positive results in linking with the National Parks Office as the latter

provided IDR 10 million (USD 1,110/ EUR 804) to build the communities' capacity in handicraft-making. The National Parks Office also provided space for community exhibits and galleries while the Ministry of Environment helped circulate stories from the village in its SINERGI Bulletin. The evaluation report of Pakistan, on the other hand, stated that most participating NGOs have developed working relations with the Forest Department, which has helped in the implementation of technical activities. Sri Lanka also reported strong support from the Forest Department.

While cases of local governments that are supportive of communities managing the forests are increasing, there are still cases where the local government connives with unscrupulous external interests. As one male leader in Cambodia said of stations policing logging in protected areas,

> *"If a truck is big, they cannot see it, but a small ox cart they can see. If a cat is stealing a small fish people will beat it, but no one does anything to a tiger carrying a cow."*

In Cambodia and Pakistan, some grantees disclosed that there were local governments asking for payment before they approved plans for community forest management or before they attended project activities. This was due to their perception that assisting NGOs had money to pay for such expense items.

All the SGPPTF projects recognize the need to engage the forest or national park department. Efforts have been made to motivate these departments to support the projects. One effective strategy shared by some grantees was reaching the officials responsible for supervising field-level activities and requesting them to push the field staff to participate in supporting the projects. Often, enjoining participation solely of the junior officials is not effective.

Sectoral program strategies with poverty reduction goals, such as the SGPPTF, inevitably need to relate beyond the sector where they start from. Recognizing that poverty is driven by many factors, the SGPPTF projects, for instance, relate beyond the forest department to include various government line agencies.

Those with plans to set up ecotourism enterprises, such as communities in Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, tried to link with the tourism department. KANOPI in Indonesia was able to help nine villages get a certification from the Department of Health for food products that women were processing for sale. Some projects have helped build the capacity of communities to negotiate with middlemen who buy the products, such as in Preah Vihear Province, Cambodia. The Inpaeng Community Forestry Network that set up the Life University in Sakhon Nakorn Province Thailand, has strong relations with and support from local governments, as well as various line agencies and even the media. Inpaeng's experience was featured in the Thailand Human Development Report 2007 that focused on the concept of sufficiency economy. Details of how community forest management activities help people to create assets are discussed in the Section on Sustainable Livelihoods.

Community forest management projects are helping governments promote the rule of law.

Linking community initiatives with existing government systems has helped far-flung forest communities become familiar with existing administrative structures. This is illustrated by cases from Cambodia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Vietnam. Grantees who were initially not proactive in linking with local authorities and other civic groups quickly learned from grantees with a networking and communication strategy that planning and implementing in isolation did not work.

Translating national laws into simpler terms helps the local populace in rural areas to connect better with the state. At a national workshop in Pakistan, for example, participants said that the formation of community organizations was improving compliance to the rule of law. Vietnam is summarizing relevant laws and producing guidelines on community forest management in ethnic languages. In Malaysia, the dissemination of posters on relevant articles in the constitution about native customary rights, in the local language, assures indigenous peoples that there is space for them to get state and federal governments involved. Grantees in several countries conducted

training sessions to familiarize villagers with the national land and forest legislation, as well as with administrative policies about community forest management. This was particularly widespread in Cambodia.

The terms of partnerships and memoranda of agreement between the SGPPTF and community-based organizations have trained both entities on how to deal with formal written agreements while strengthening local ownership of and accountability for project activities.

In Cambodia, the national *Community Forestry Guidelines* were passed as the projects were ending. Nevertheless, the community forestry committee in Oddar Meanchey has taken the initiative to revise the documents they already prepared to suit the newly issued government guidelines, with the assistance of the Children's Development Association, a non-government organization. For CDA, a strong community forest management system means that people hold regular meetings, they collaborate in protecting the forest, and they communicate with the Forest Administration and relevant authorities from village to provincial levels.[28]

Participatory monitoring and evaluation sessions could help communities and local governments constructively reflect together on how things could be better.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) contributes to building local social capital as community members learn participative and transparent ways of reviewing implementation of plans, as shown by cases from Cambodia and Vietnam. Coordinators from Thailand and Indonesia also reported cases with related findings.

Srer Khmer (SK), the Proposal Development Facility of the SGPPTF (PDF) in Cambodia, conducted trainings on participatory monitoring and evaluation. The process is now being field-tested with FLD and MB. The process, facilitated by the SK facilitator, looks at the project management cycle with relevant stakeholders (i.e., PM&E team consisted of 6-7 persons, including a community member, village chief, one official from the Department of Environment, and one representative each from the district government, commune council, NGOs working in the area, and SGPPTF staff). The following criteria are applied: 1) inputs (technology, service, material); 2) process/ activity, output; 3) outcome (changes in attitude, decision-making process); and 4) sustainability (planning and investing activities). Srer Khmer developed guide questions for group discussions and obtained suggestions from grantees so that any questions and issues raised by the communities could be incorporated.

The case in Vietnam provides an example of how the SGPPTF emphasizes PM&E as an important supplement to the small grants assistance provided to community-based organizations and non-government organizations (Figure 2). PM&E with communities can strengthen their governance capacities if: 1) the timing of activities is mindful of their schedules; 2) the process is facilitated in a 'learning' rather than a 'fault-finding' manner; and 3) the indicators would help

Translating laws into local languages helps this ethnic minority community in North Vietnam to understand their rights and responsibilities.

communities reflect on how to improve their well-being, relationships, and productivity.

The visits of the SGPPTF coordinators, sometimes with other resource persons (e.g., from the National Steering Committee, Project Development Facilities), were used as venues to understand pressing concerns in the community and to exchange information about current opportunities.

Through processes promoting local forest governance, district and town centers are gradually changing the way they view forest people.

Local governments are learning that providing space for civil society participation in policy development and program planning helps them attract more development projects. As a result, local forest governance is producing lessons on how government and non-government agencies and civil society can become more collaborative, as well as lessons on how they can manage diversity, as featured in the cases from Indonesia, Pakistan, and Vietnam.

Recognition of culture and the human spirit is an important facet of cultivating inclusive attitudes and managing diversity. Recognizing the wide range of cultures in humanity means that a lot of effort is needed to listen and connect with people within their cultural contexts. For facilitators, this means learning to communicate in a non-prescriptive manner and finding ways to encourage openness in sharing knowledge.

Public acknowledgment of good practices through award ceremonies can promote positive attitudes and values. Moreover, it is helping shift urban attitudes towards forest peoples. The SGPPTF in Pakistan and Indonesia publicly recognized innovative management practices of communities, the heroic acts of forest

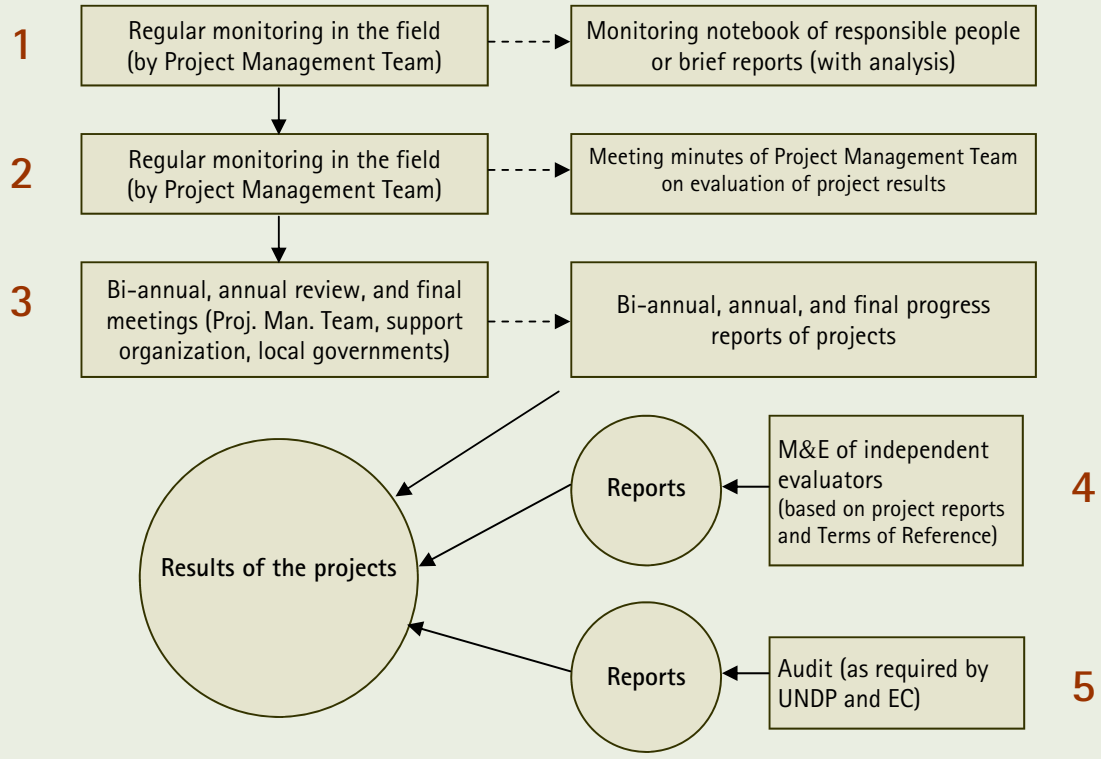

Figure 2. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Process in Vietnam

department officers in the face of illegal activities, and the growing support of local authorities. Vietnam illustrates how local governments can strengthen a community's sense of security for the land allocated to them. District governments are responsible for signing the community forest land allocation certificate. Upon receipt of the certificate, a ceremony is organized to publicly announce the People's Committee's Decision. A well-grounded community forest land allocation takes a long time to accomplish, and completing this with a public recognition event instills a sense of accomplishment and value for the process that the communities underwent. It also raises awareness in their locality that they now have formal rights and responsibilities over the allotted area.

Several expressions of how much forest communities want to change others' views of them and how they appreciate this shift can be found in several stories in this paper:

> *"Some say hill tribe people are the ones responsible for deforestation. But if you look at the map, you will see that where hill tribe people live, there remain forests." (Elder from the Pakayor Karen, an ethnic group in Northern Thailand)*

> *The Topo Uma aims to "dispel the government's perception that land practices of the upland communities, and their presence in the forest, are the main causes of deforestation." (Central Sulawesi, Indonesia)*

> *"Line agencies are now more trusting of our activities." (NGO staff working in a remote island perceived to be insurgency-infiltrated, Philippines)*

Lesson on Building Governance Capacities

Strategies for local forest governance are paving the way for the greater recognition of culture and the human spirit, and are securing the place of local people in forests and forest management. The national benefits of promoting local governance in forest areas go beyond sustainable forest management. The processes built through finding methods to support community forest management also develop human and social capacities needed to foster human development and economic stability.

Lesson 6: *Community forest management activities can become tools for marginalized populations to effectively communicate with local authorities, civil society, and the private sector. This communication can contribute to changing attitudes within the district and town centers.*

2.3 Supporting Practice Through Policy and Collaboration

A common thread among the SGPPTF's criteria for selecting grantees in different countries is the priority placed on initiatives in informal community systems of forest management. The National Steering Committees in Malaysia and the Philippines prioritized support for indigenous peoples who hold knowledge that recognize and promote sustainable use of resources. Pakistan and Indonesia sought to assist communities that depended heavily on forest resources and resided in areas with a good enabling environment for participatory management with local authorities. Approaches to achieve gender balance in decision-making were also supported in many projects.

The SGPPTF prioritized support for these initiatives based on the assumption that forest-dependent people held several land use practices that contributed to sustainable forest management while upholding the human well-being of the local community.

The continuing challenge to people in geographic and political margins seeking to bridge the practice-policy

gap in Asia is embodied in the question: what would help national or local governments open up to discussions over forest access, management, and tenure? As their capacity and confidence to engage with wider governance systems increase, communities are taking up this challenge using a range of strategies, with support from local government and civil society.

The following sets of strategies exemplify how communities and support organizations are engaging policy processes to support community forestry practices. The first set is a strategy of ***horizontal networking*** – community-based organizations and local authorities engaging their peers in other areas. The second set could be described as a ***vertical networking*** strategy – linking communities with governments, and improving coordination across government agencies and between government and civil society. The third relates to an ***upward strategy*** of finding opportunities to reach out to national policymakers.

Engaging peers

Many grantees facilitated networking or federating between communities to enable them to learn from the practices of others, face powerful external interests, increase bargaining power, and pool resources.

Peer-to-peer Learning Can Immediately Translate Lessons into Practice

Peer-to-peer learning in the SGPPTF mainly refers to inter-farmer, inter-grantee or inter-community interactions. However, there could be incidental cases where SGPPTF-supported interactions between local government officials or forest department staff from different areas of the country or region could generate learning.

This horizontal approach to networking occurred at two levels. The first level was when peers gathered to share innovations so they could enhance their own local practices. Peers shared experiences and methods; identified common concerns, trends and patterns; and learned to avoid mistakes. In the process, they built confidence and trust among themselves. The second and more sophisticated level occurred when peers coordinated to strengthen their voice in policy discussions. Peers generated collaborative agreements; mobilized and shared resources and skills; accessed wider governance systems; and engaged in local and national policy development. Experiences from Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Thailand illustrated these strategies.

SGPPTF is adding to the growing body of knowledge in community forest management through peer-to-peer learning among grantees (composed of CBOs or local NGOs). SGPPTF also supported community forestry networks, federations, and clusters parallel to the assistance being provided to individual community-based organizations, NGOs, and community forestry committees.

Community associations dependent on a contiguous forest block of high-value forests — usually nationally protected or reserved — often find the need to network with other neighboring associations to generate collaborative agreements regarding protection and use. In the process, they also get to build confidence in seeking recognition from forest departments or national park authorities. This is particularly evident in Thailand where horizontal networking is the main strategy of the SGPPTF in the country. Without an enabling policy environment to formally recognize community forest management, grantees used peer-to-peer learning to achieve a range of objectives -- from enhancing local practices to engaging in national policy development. Inpaeng Network, featured in previous sections, is one case among many other community forestry networks. Communities facing threats brought about by a degrading forest resource also have basis to network, as in the case of the threatened mangrove forests of the Margasari and Sriminosari villages in East Lampung, Sumatra in Indonesia.

During a monitoring visit of Holistic Understanding for Justified Research and Actions (HUJRA) to Miandam Valley in the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan, medicinal plant collectors were asked about the volume of plants they have collected. They replied that they have not yet collected as they would like to wait

Inpaeng's Life University in Northeast Thailand is a node for knowledge sharing on forests, agriculture and other livelihood activities.

for the proper collection season to allow time for the plants to mature. Similarly, local buyers are now refusing to purchase immature plants.

This change in the local collection of medicinal plants has been spurred by facilitating peer-to-peer learning activities among 10 village organizations in the valley. These 10 village organizations then formalized the network as a valley land use management committee -- the Organization for Miandam Ecological Development. In developing or updating the village land use plans, the stakeholders exchanged experiences on their valley's enterprise potentials if natural resources were protected. The HUJRA augmented this sharing and learning processes by conducting training sessions for both collectors and buyers in the valley on techniques for sustainably collecting medicinal plants.

In Malaysia, cross-community visits helped transfer ideas that could immediately be put to action. The visit of Institut Pribumi Malaysia (IPIMAS) in Belaga District to MAMAKAT, another SGPPTF partner, inspired visiting participants to plant ginger on their farmlands, after they learned of the potential returns from selling the product to local markets.

Numerous efforts were also done to engage the next generation in forest-dependent communities to carry on the collaborative attitude in managing natural resources. Activities targeted the teaching of children and youth in village schools, youth camps, and community meetings, and management implementation. Some examples have been discussed in the Section on Local Forest Governance.

Peer sharing of experiences and innovations helps build mutual trust and confidence, which can then lead to more substantive collaboration.

Peer sharing of experiences with the end view of fostering substantive collaboration is illustrated through cases from Pakistan and the SGPPTF Regional Coordination Office (RCO). Such cases are also found in Indonesia, Philippines, and Thailand according to the SGPPTF country coordinators (albeit they are not cited here).

The regional office of the SGPPTF facilitated learning among country coordinators to encourage them to exchange methods being used to face common challenges in supporting grassroots organizations through small grants, and in convening voluntary National Steering Committees.

The most recent process involved a series of five cross-country visits, composed not only of country coordinators, but also of NSC members and implementing partners in the field. The objective was mainly to expose the country teams to good practices in other countries facing similar situations. The visits followed a similar process:

- Orientation: Host provided orientation on the country program, the sites to be visited, and people to be met. Visiting and host teams clarified expectations and the flow of activities. The visiting teams organized themselves and gave assignments to members.

- Community Visits and Interactions with Stakeholders: Visits to pre-selected communities and interaction with leaders through facilitators and translators were undertaken. At least one country team prepared a PowerPoint presentation to share its project experiences. Daily reflections and activity evaluation were conducted to make it a two-way process.

- Reflection and Action Planning: After the visits and interactions, the facilitator guided visiting teams to reflect on observations and relate these with their own countries' issues and opportunities. Each country team prepared a list of activities that they would recommend to their respective teams back home. They also identified cross-country concerns to pursue with appropriate regional /international organizations.

- Post-Visit: Each country team was encouraged to share observations and lessons with the respective NSCs and to provide recommendations on which practices were applicable to their own context.

The SGPPTF countries also facilitated several national and sub-national events in which grantees were asked to share about their context/situation and their work.

In a two-day national workshop on Knowledge Management and Networking held in Pakistan, 40 partners were asked to share what worked and what did not work in their respective projects. Participants were grouped based on similarities in ecological, cultural, and geographical contexts. Through the sharing process, grantees identified common concerns, trends, and patterns in the countries, which led to an agreement to form six knowledge-sharing clusters that will continue working on common concerns after the SGPPTF. Each cluster identified focal points (*) and persons to coordinate the clusters. Some clusters went on to identify their common agenda, governance structure, and future activities. One cluster even proposed a national working group.

1. Northern Areas Chitral Cluster: Civil Society Support Institute (CSSI)*, Anjuman-e-Tasleem-o-Islah (ATI), Society for Sustainable Mountain Development (SSMD)
2. Malakand Cluster: Community Awareness Raising and Advocacy Ventures Around Needs (CARAVAN), Holistic Understanding for Justified Research and Actions (HUJRA), Binte-Malakand, Environmental Protection Society (EPS), World Pheasant Association (WPA), Lasoona*
3. Balochistan Cluster: Balochistan Environmental and Educational Journey (BEEJ), Centre for Peace and Development (CPD), WWF*
4. Scrub Zone Cluster: Sarhad Rural Support Program (SRSP), Shewa Educated Social Workers Association (SESWA), Lok Sanjh, Majeed Malik Foundation (MMF), (quarterly rotation: 1st, SRSP: 2nd, Lok Sanjh; 3rd, SESWA; and 4th, MMF)
5. Mangrove Cluster: Sonmiani Development Organization (SDO), Kharochan, Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)*
6. Temperate Zone Cluster: Sungi Development Foundation*, Haashar, Himalayan Wildlife Foundation (HWF)

Of the six clusters, Malakand has the most networking experience. The six organizations have previously met to discuss various forest management topics, such as revival of local initiatives, non-timber forest products for forest protection, ecotourism and equitable resource use for biodiversity, disaster management, interface of Hindu and Moslem cultures, breaking the timber mafia through joint protection, and non-timber forest products management. These discussions have also included the Forest Department, the Wildlife Department, and local governments.

These peer sharing exercises have led to more substantive collaboration in organizing the broader Malakand Development Forum. Based on a common objective of addressing deforestation, the forum generated active participation from around 50 representatives coming from the local governments, forest departments, local communities, law enforcement agencies, media, and academe. Forum participants jointly assessed opportunities and constraints of various strategies to stop timber trafficking, and agreed that it was best to monitor timber theft at the source. Checkpoints were jointly established and monitored by communities and forest officials. The forum also catalyzed the development of peer support networks among forest communities. Participants emphasized that in bridging relationships between entities in rural areas, it was important to consider their geographic proximity, the common interests shared, and their means of communicating.

Inter-community coordination strengthens voice in policy discussions.

Horizontal networking to strengthen local voices proved to be a crucial strategy for informing local and national policy processes about practices in community forest management. This was especially evident in countries where the public arena was not receptive to social questions regarding forest management, or where government mechanisms to discuss these were weak or lacking. A case from Thailand illustrates this point; Indonesia (WATALA) and Pakistan also report similar examples.

In the Hmong community network in Chiang Mai and Lampung in Thailand, the simple way of life and respect for nature are inseparable from the Pakayor's (Karen) religious practices governed by an animist belief system. Sacred forests where spirits reside are reserved only for religious ceremonies. Every newborn child is associated with a particular tree, which will be the child's spiritual base throughout his life. Yet Joni Odochao, a Pakayor elder, observed:

> *"Some say hill tribe people are the ones responsible for deforestation. But if you look at the map, you will see that where hill tribe people live, there remain forests."*

As the Thai economy grows, forest communities have come under increasing pressure. Many communities living within national parks have been forced to relocate many times. However, these pressures have also compelled them to defend their community forests. Now their network includes not just villagers in their area; they have also reached out to form networks from local to national levels. And they are campaigning for the right to manage traditional lands as community forests. Over 10,000 community forests throughout the country are now networked.

Though their struggles are far from over, there have been concrete results. There has been a rollback on the government's policy to relocate people from community forests. There is also a growing acceptance among the general urban public that people and forests can co-exist.[29]

Lesson about Peer-to-Peer Learning (Horizontal Networking)

Horizontal networking or learning among peers has been found to be an effective way to multiply impact. Peers can communicate and understand one another. People tend to absorb lessons more readily from peers whom they know are coming from a similar context and facing similar challenges. When peers who share common challenges develop mutual trust and have the capacity to regularly communicate, they are more likely to find means to collaborate and complement one another's activities towards a common goal.

Lesson 7: *Peer-to-peer learning and inter-community networks translate lessons into practice more immediately and build trust which can lead to more substantive collaboration to implement activities and influence policies for forest management and local development.*

Influencing Local Level Policies and Programs

Vertical networking refers here to communities linking with other stakeholders in their locality, such as local government, the private sector, or field staff of national line agencies. The desired impact of most vertical networking initiatives is the improvement of local policy and program implementation. Vertical networking helps disseminate findings and results to inform other sectors, thus facilitating development of policies and programs that are more responsive to the vulnerabilities and needs of people in forest lands.

Investments that bring local authorities to the forest and facilitate face-to-face interactions help communities to better communicate their concerns.

Recognition and support from local governments and local line agencies are big factors in raising community confidence to invest time and effort in managing forests more effectively. A case from the Philippines was used to illustrate this finding, although Thailand and Pakistan also related similar cases.

The Philippine case of Mount Kimangkil in Mindanao, for instance, shows that federations and clusters help politically-marginalized communities access wider governance systems. Mount Kimangkil is a protected area in Mindanao with many issues and concerns over boundary conflicts, law and order, forest and wildlife protection, and benefit sharing from development initiatives. The SGPPTF partners in Mt. Kimangkil realized that if they monitored in one locality only, trespassers would just move to neighboring areas.

The partners, mainly from indigenous groups, started a federation built through a series of rituals facilitated by Green Mindanao. The SGPPTF catalyzed activities while the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded the events. Rituals helped participants overcome cultural diversity and settle differences as this context enabled them to jointly seek advice from a higher authority they all respected — God.

Holding a series of rituals ensured that many concerns could be dealt with by phases. One pressing question that took time to resolve was whose problem should be addressed first? The common experience built over the long journeys to the sites where rituals were held generated a strong sense of belongingness and triggered a sharing of knowledge, expertise, and resources.

Now, a management plan for the whole mountain range is in place and a mountain-wide monitoring and coordination system has been created. The federation has become such a significant force in the region that the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the DENR, and other local line agencies have started to listen. The federation is now targeting to expand its constituency to one million forest people so that it can broaden its impact to cover the whole of Mindanao.[ii]

A number of SGPPTF partners also observed that the program strategy of giving the funds directly to communities or local assisting NGOs has helped, in a number of cases, to make local governments more accountable to their local constituents. This is because their budget in conducting their field operations has been provided by the local communities out of project funds. This point was raised especially in garnering the participation of the forest department in community-based resource assessment activities, as discussed in the section on Local Forest Governance.

Sharing community management stories with local authorities helps shape local policies and programs.

A rich array of cases can be found in SGPPTF wherein local governments and line agencies have come to support community organizations, upon learning the range of activities and innovations they were facilitating. Examples are the cases of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, while Pakistan affirms the finding.

In Malaysia, a partnership was forged between the Sabah State Forest Department and the UNDP for the Department to provide technical support to participating communities in Sabah during and beyond the SGPPTF program. The Sabah State Fisheries Department issued an administrative order promoting the spread of the *tagal* system when it saw its impact on improving fish catch. The *tagal* system is a traditional system among riverine villages to stop fishing during certain seasons or to close certain portions of the river to allow the fish to spawn. PACOS Trust encouraged villages along the Upper Moyog River to revitalize this traditional concept as part of community management. At the national workshop where communities presented their stories, the official from the State Fisheries Department in Sarawak informed the group that his office would work to adopt a similar ordinance.

In Thailand, many field-level officials from forest and national park departments were helping communities engage the sub-district or *tambon* level, knowing that the *Tambon Administrative Authority Act 1994* transferred the responsibility and budgets for protecting forestland areas against fires to *tambons*. Community forestry networks exerted efforts to cultivate close relations with their respective *tambon*s. Thirty of the Thai grantees are collaborating with their respective *tambon* administrative organizations, local forestry agencies, and local research units on plans and budgets that would sustain the practices after SGPPTF.

Some policymakers and research institutions in Indonesia question the value of decentralizing natural resource management responsibilities to local governments, because of stories of how this is contributing to further deforestation. This has fuelled the cancellation of some district-level regulations on natural resource management, including those that are supportive of involving local communities. The SGPPTF, on the other hand, has found numerous cases where local governments are actually facilitating a process towards sustainable management of natural resources with their local constituents.

In East Lampung, Sumatra, the village chief of Margarasri issued a decree in 2005 about the formation of a team that would develop village regulations on natural resource management. The decree stated that the team should be composed of village officials, community members, teachers, staff of the district planning office (BPD), village nurse, and representatives from women's groups. The decree also specified the duties of the team in planning the design of the village regulation, in conducting consultation meetings at the sub-village level, and in formulating village regulations.

Over five months, the drafting team worked intensively through a process of:

- Holding meetings with community members to understand community aspirations and identify their problems and needs;
- Sorting the issues upon which to base the main ideas of the regulation;
- Training on drafting legal documents, which included review of current laws;
- Presenting initial drafts of the regulation in public consultations; and
- Submitting the final draft to the village head for legalization.

The draft regulation was presented in a workshop jointly organized by the Margarasri village, Watala, and the East Lampung district government. The workshop was attended by representatives from various government and civil society institutions. As a result, 14 villages in neighboring Way Kambas National Park expressed interest to adopt this process for developing regulations on natural resource management.

In Sulawesi, upon hearing of the efforts of communities in Lore Lindu National Park to revitalize the production and use of the tree bark cloth (*fuya*), the district and provincial governments provided galleries to display the communities' products. They also supported the former's participation in trade exhibitions.

In Central Java, the multi-stakeholder process in Tegal District led to the establishment of a City Bill on community participation in Greenbelt Management. This came after the local government tried out several failed technologies to curb the worsening erosion along the coast. These approaches included a government-implemented mangrove planting program that cost Rp450 million (USD 49,880 /EUR 36,185), but implementation faltered due to poor understanding of tidal patterns. These programs involved coastal communities only as temporary labor.

The dialogue process in Tegal entailed getting different stakeholders together to identify common problems and to agree on solutions. The LPSSP, an NGO, facilitated the process. In one of the meetings, the government learned that there were already coastal residents who had organized themselves to plant mangroves. This was inspired by a community action planning that another program, Co-Fish, facilitated. The mangrove species they planted on pond banks and coastlines were growing well. This made government officials realize that the community members could have been tapped as resource persons to give advice based on the latter's knowledge of their daily environment, specifically on tide pattern, suitable planting locations, suitable species, and maintenance.

Now, there is a broad appreciation of how local communities are implementing their action plans. The dialogue is being sustained with the establishment of an environmental management office (Kapedal) run by enthusiastic young staff. The role of the provincial government is being given importance as it has the mandate to coordinate activities in coastal districts.

In a case study writing workshop that Perkempulan Karsa organized to draw out lessons from SGPPTF grantees, LPSSP shared the following tips in facilitating an effective multi-stakeholder process:

- Identify who are the primary and secondary users, as well as external policymakers who have influence in the area;
- Design activities in a way that encourages collaboration in integrating geographic boundaries, interests, and perceptions;
- Express appreciation for the efforts of each stakeholder;
- Create an atmosphere where stakeholders learn to respect one another, as well as recognize mistakes;
- Emphasize the importance of complying with agreements; and
- Make a habit of forging links and coordinating with many people on the conduct of activities.[iii]

The spirit of collaboration is what has led the SGPPTF country coordinator to participate in a roundtable discussion with the Association of Indonesian Municipalities (ADEKSI). The discussion aimed for better understanding of local government insights and their strategies to address local environmental issues.

The Dong Na Tam Community Forest in Thailand offers another example of how this strategy was implemented. Villagers negotiated with the senior forest official to allow long standing residents to be spared resettlement from the national park. The official agreed on the condition that their livelihood would not threaten the park's conservation. The community presented a plan to divide the forest into three zones, as it was done in the past: 1) reserve forests where felling of trees was strictly prohibited; 2) utility forests where cutting of trees was prohibited but people were allowed to collect wood products; and 3) animal farming forests where people could raise animals, collect forest products, and harvest trees with permission.

The local government recognized the community's rules, which inspired the Dong Na Tam communities in Nong Hong Song Forest Reserve to increase their efforts to improve their forests. Building a common understanding took sometime, but it paid off. Now, state authorities are more sympathetic to the villagers, and they act as facilitators and technical trainers for the network. As the community forest faces new threats, such as its conversion into a commercial rubber plantation, local people are more confident in airing their concerns to the government.

Reaching Out to National Level Policies

Rules relating to forest management at the national, provincial, district, sub-district, and community levels can be inconsistent and even contradictory. Communities are looking for ways to have a voice in policy development at higher levels to address these inconsistencies. They also want a voice to address the challenges they face regarding access and management, indigenous rights and identity, poverty reduction, and rural development.

Lesson on Influencing Local Policies and Programs

Vertical networking for local impact has been most important in countries where communal rights are fragile because national policies are not forthcoming. This pattern is similar to the climate change movement in the United States, where states and cities are passing local regulations to overcome the non-ratification of the Kyoto Protocol at the national level. Understanding the common environmental concerns within a landscape or seascape unit helps trigger local policies and galvanize local actions.

The common experience and essential human interaction generated through joint visits to the forest help communities in the geographic and political margins relate to a previously 'faceless' government. Such visits also build trust within government that communities can manage forests. These joint experiences gradually change the attitudes of frontline forest officers and communities towards each other – from "us and them" and "yes and no", to "we" and "what can we agree on."

Lesson 8: *Local governments can mobilize resources for communities doing forest management if they have effective communication with community institutions.*

Providing inputs to national working groups reviewing natural resource management policies can be effective venues in engaging national governments.

Countries that have national policy frameworks supportive of the role of communities in forest management underwent similar processes of policy formulation, approval, and revision, which were preceded by years of piloting socially-oriented forestry programs.[iv] In many countries, national multi-stakeholder working groups played a crucial role in the analysis of gaps between practice and policy and the wider economic, political, and social forces creating these gaps. Such gaps influenced the content of the policies that have been passed.

The SGPPTF partners in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Indonesia used national working groups and networks as key points for engaging in the policy development process. Through participation in working group meetings, SGPPTF coordinators in these countries gathered updates about recent national government actions affecting field-level implementation. They then informed national officials about field-level experiences, program results, and lessons.

In Cambodia, SGPPTF Country Coordinator Chhum Sovanny participated in the national-level Community Forestry Network. Through the network, he received updates on the development process of the implementing guidelines (*prakas*) for community forestry. He also shared stories from communities which were having problems in fulfilling the detailed requirements for preparing community forestry plans. He also supported the participation of grantee NGOs in a national forestry forum in Phnom Penh, which sought to identify specific measures to address legal gaps identified by communities regarding the Community Forestry Guidelines *Prakas* passed by the government in 2006.[v]

In Indonesia, the SGPPTF links with the Forest Land Tenure Working Group (FTWG), a national forum that reviews land tenure cases related to national forest lands, and identifies options to resolve conflicts created by overlaps between indigenous *Adat* laws and national policies on land and forests. The FTWG linked with the district-level working group in West Lampung where several grantees were active.

The Vietnam country program is making the most headway in influencing national level policy. As Box 10 shows, pro-active collaboration of SGPPTF with the National Working Group on Community Forest Management is influencing the drafting of the guidelines for implementing the new legislation recognizing communities as legal entities for forest land allocation.

Supporting government departments in activities that promote communities in forest management builds goodwill and trust, which in turn help open up policy development processes. Helping government officials solve the constraints that they face facilitates implementation of community-oriented forest policies.

Policies and programs recognizing the role of local communities in forest management grow with increased goodwill and trust between government and civil society groups assisting forest-using communities. Cases from Indonesia, Philippines, and Sri Lanka show how collaborative activities between these two actors help in building and implementing policies in community forest management.

The SGPPTF in Indonesia has collaborated with the Ministry of Forestry's Land Rehabilitation and Social Forestry Program and the Ford Foundation in publicizing good management practices of exemplary communities. Ten areas and individuals obtained awards, including one grantee, OPANT. The incremental growth in and sharing of knowledge on how farmers can also be good foresters contribute to

Box 10. Contributing to Policy Development in Vietnam

SGPPTF in Vietnam was driven by the conviction that a legal basis for communities must support the establishment and sustainable development of Community-based Forest Management (CBFM). It was this conviction that guided the program in prioritizing proposals that have enabling strategies to formally recognize village communities as legal entities eligible for forest and land allocation. The Program sponsored 24 Community Forest Management (CFM) projects in the country, 19 of which were working on forest and land allocation for the community.

The National Working Group for Community Forest Management in Vietnam (NWG-CFM) chaired by the Department of Forestry under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) is a crucial point of engagement to strengthen the legality for CFM. The NWG brought together representatives from various departments under (MARD), as well as from the academe, international development agencies, and individual professionals supporting forest management programs around the country. The NWG aimed to explore policy and operational strategies to facilitate and strengthen the role of communities in managing the forest resources in Vietnam by providing a forum for examining, monitoring, and accelerating progress in this area.

The working group met regularly, and facilitated annual national workshops to consider various aspects of community forest management policy and implementation. For several years, it worked to understand the interrelations of various laws and policies within and beyond the forest sector to clarify the policy framework within which government could support community forest management practices. It continuously gathered lessons and evidences from the field to understand the conditions under which forest land allocation may effectively operate, including the gaps in the process. The working group took several years to clarify the national policy framework; these efforts were leading to a series of decrees.

The landmark policy that the group helped develop was a revision to the *Forest Protection and Development Law* in 2004, which recognized village communities as legal entities for allocation of forest land.

Dr. Nguyen Hai Nam was the NWG-CFM secretary during the group's formative years, and he remained active even after taking on the coordinating role for SGPPTF in Vietnam. His continued engagement in NWG-CFM has greatly helped feed SGPPTF stories and lessons directly to the national policy development process. The SGPPTF supported the 'National Workshop on Guidelines for Implementation of Community Forest Management at the Village Level" held in July 2006, which contributed to a Decree that was passed one month later. The new Decree allows village communities to manage all three kinds of forests in Vietnam (production, watershed, and special use). At least 40 new community forestry model sites nationwide will benefit from piloting these new guidelines, with support from the national government and other donors.

Bringing NWG-CFM members to SGPPTF field sites helped build the confidence of communities visited because they knew that the central government officials from MARD and the parliament's delegation have come to see their management practices. The showing on national television of three video documentaries from SGPPTF sites in Quang Bin, Quang Nin, and Hua Bin also helped promote community forest management to the public and to policymakers.

The SGPPTF is finalizing a case study on forest land allocation, which affirms the limitations of the government's earlier approach of allocating forest land to individual households. Allocating land at the household level was inspired by the success of this approach on agricultural lands. However, there is much evidence now that managing forests is different from managing agricultural lands. For natural forest areas, community-level management is often a better modality compared to household-level management. This case study provides detailed analysis and insights on the gaps in the current models of forest land allocation at the commune and district levels.

new policies being developed, such as the new government act (*peraturan pemerintah*) passed to improve forest access rights of communities. Indonesian experiences in locally negotiating for community resource tenure in three islands (Sulawesi, Java, and Sumatra) are being documented for sharing at a national workshop.

A decade ago, the Philippines enacted specific policies supportive of community forest management and rights of indigenous peoples. The Community-based Forest Management (CBFM) Office of the DENR was tasked to implement the Presidential Order that made community-based forest management a national strategy for sustainable forest management. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) was tasked to implement the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act to provide indigenous groups with legal titles for their ancestral domains.

These two implementing institutions face severe human and financial resource constraints, making it extremely difficult to effectively implement and monitor policy implementation. Over 2.7 million hectares of ancestral domain claims await titling, and implementation on over 1.5 million hectares under CBFM agreements needs review.

The SGPPTF in the Philippines has helped NCIP accomplish its job by developing strategies that make it more viable for indigenous communities to fulfill the requirements of the titling process, as discussed in the Section on Coping with Uncertainty. The SGPPTF has also helped the people's organizations it supported to be exempted from the wave of DENR cancellations of many CBFM agreements that government believed to be operating poorly.

In Sri Lanka, the NSC Chairman, who is also Additional Secretary at the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, said, *"The good relations maintained throughout the program is facilitating the feeding of lessons on pine conservation, NTFP collection, and rural energy projects to the amendment process for the National Forest Policy that will start in 2008."*

Collaboration between various sectors and institutions facilitates entry of community forest management stories into national policy discussions and helps promote the well-being of rural people living on state forest lands.

The agenda for poverty reduction is proving to be the most effective entry point for local participation where centralized systems for forest management are strong. The growing number of local policies and programs recognizing the role of local communities in forest management is also helping shape national policy as local governments engage national agencies to plan and implement national programs, as can be seen in cases from Malaysia, Pakistan, and Thailand.

In Thailand, collaborating with the academe is seen as a strategic avenue for influencing policy dialogues. Forty-one case studies featured in *Refining Grassroots Wisdom for Amenable Community Forestry Management* have been shared with the academe in Thailand.[34] Professors in these universities have opportunities to provide advice to the government.

Cultivating the interest of the media to increase visibility is also a typical strategy in the SGPPTF. In Pakistan, for instance, HUJRA linked with the media to broaden the market for the people's ecotourism enterprises in Miandam Valley. HUJRA prepared a video documentary which became part of a 45-minute program on PTV Peshawar. The broadcast featured what people were doing to sustainably manage land and water resources in Miandam Valley. A CD version of the video documentary was also circulated. After visiting the area with SGPPTF, a journalist wrote an article which was published in leading newspapers.

In Malaysia, the strategy of collaborating with celebrities willing to showcase issues of forest communities is influencing a positive shift in the urban population's attitudes towards forest dwellers, thus enabling broader discussions on the plight of communities on reserve forests. The government's desire to eliminate "pockets of poverty" is allowing negotiations for state-level support.

This range of efforts is converging to change long-standing assumptions in urban societies about people in the forest being the main cause of deforestation. One can only imagine the policies and programs that can be developed with this change in perception of over 1.6 billion rural people in Asia who depend on forests for their survival.

Lessons about Reaching Out to National Policies

Strategies to influence national level policies are highly dependent on available opportunities and constraints in individual country contexts, particularly the policy-making environment, and the political and economic systems. In countries where policy-making environments are generally conducive to broad-based participation, civil society is choosing the path of national policy reform. Where this is not the case, strategies are focusing on finding areas where collaboration can be cultivated.

Lesson 9: *Opening national forest policy processes to inputs from community, as well as other government agencies, would enable better 'buy-in' to such policies, and increase the likelihood of successful implementation.*

2.4 Sustaining Livelihoods

As noted earlier, sustainable livelihoods, poverty reduction, and sustainable resource management are inextricably linked. While many conservation and livelihood programs in the past have focused on enterprise development to increase local incomes,[35] there is growing recognition that poverty reduction requires action to address fundamental needs among the poor and to develop their assets more broadly.[36] Experiences within the SGPPTF are adding to existing knowledge on effective ways of integrating livelihoods across different spheres to have a greater impact on poverty in the communities that had been selected for grants (Table 3 on Common Livelihood Interventions in SGPPTF).

The first set of strategies aims to strengthen fundamentals such as food, energy, and water security (discussed under ***Securing Basic Livelihood Assets and Flows)***. The second area of work relates to capturing emerging market opportunities through enterprise development (discussed under ***Forest-based Enterprises)***.

Securing Basic Livelihood Assets and Flows

The strategies of SGPPTF grantees to secure basic livelihood assets include:

- Creating village-level capital to support forest management and livelihood activities (Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Pakistan);
- Agroforestry activities to improve food security, resilience to environmental shocks, and substitutes for forest resources;
- Reducing pressure on forests and improving food security through support for home gardens, sustainable modes of agriculture, and livestock development; and
- Improving energy and water access through infrastructure and energy-efficient technologies.

Financing for Livelihoods and Sustainable Forest Management

The value of village level capital and finance mechanisms in poverty reduction has been established through the well-known micro-credit initiatives of the Grameen Bank and other rural development organizations. The SGPPTF did not replicate such micro-credit facilities, but explored in five countries how village level financial mechanisms could mobilize resources for forest management and provide capital for livelihood-related activities.

Financing mechanisms were established at some specific sites in Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan (self-help groups), and Vietnam (revolving funds). The mechanisms were initiated with a start-up grant that was built up through regular villager/ member contributions, interest from small loans, fines from forest infringements (Pakistan), and so on. The funds were used to support forest protection activities, as well as provide small loans to individual members

Box 11. A revolving fund to support forestry and agriculture in Vietnam

The Village Forest Development Fund (VFDF) model was tested at the sites supported by the SGPPTF in Vietnam, and subsequently incorporated into the national Community Forestry Guidelines (Box 10 on the Vietnam NWG-CFM). The SGPPTF provided start-up capital, which was expanded through compulsory contributions from farmers and interest from loans. Farmers could avail themselves of loans for agricultural materials and inputs. Each year, a proportion of the capital and interest had to be invested in implementation of the Village Forest Development Plans (VFDPs) (30% went to administration of the fund, and 70% had to be invested in the VFDPs).

VFDPS outlined what villagers would do to manage, replant, and protect their forest areas over five years. Developed through a participatory planning process, the plans outlined internal regulations as well as activities to support regeneration, replanting, and protection. Funds were managed by an Executive Board, which was responsible for consulting the community on implementation procedures, and which had to share information on the fund's financial status. The Board was generally chaired by the Village Chief and a Fund Supervisor, who was also the leader for forest protection activities. Payments from the fund were made directly to people undertaking forest protection duties. Payments for loans, however, were often channeled through village heads, to engage them in collecting repayments by individual households.

A recent case study of five VFDFs highlighted the fact that some villages performed well in mobilizing funds and in building these up through good repayment levels. Others had low repayment rates which depleted the capital base. These differences arose from the differing capacities of the executive board and community members. For instance, it was more difficult for the VFDF approach to succeed in areas of low literacy. Following are more findings of the case study.

- The funds were being actively used to implement VFDPs, for example, enabling the timely payment of patrollers. The close linkage between development of the fund and the VFDP, and the community contribution requirement, helped villagers link the fund with forest protection activities.
- Previous rural development experiences have shown the need for transparency in fund management. In the Vietnam case, this was a key issue in gaining the trust of the villagers so that they would willingly contribute to the funds. The level of transparency was good at the sites studied.
- A minimum fund size and membership base was necessary to enable sufficient funds to be available over time. In communities with a smaller population base, low levels of contribution and rates of repayment have shrunk the size of the fund until it became too small to be viable.
- Social pressure can play an important role in debt repayment. The model of securing loans through village heads brought better repayment rates than direct payments between households and Fund Executive Committees.

for various livelihood activities. These livelihood activities included participation in community enterprise activities, such as catering and service provision for ecotourism or NTFP enterprises (Cambodia, Sri Lanka), agriculture (Vietnam, Sri Lanka), crisis support, and others. Village finance groups also provided a forum for capacity building and coordination. For example, the revolving funds set up by the Conservation Area Management Committee in Bibile, Sri Lanka, were used to help develop home gardens from which excess produce could be sold. The funds were also used for trainings in such areas as bookkeeping, gardening, and marketing. Given this broad scope of work, a key issue for grantees was how to maintain this linkage between forest protection and using credit for other purposes.

Engaging active forest users and managers in self-help groups and management of revolving funds helps mobilize funds to support their forest management activities and livelihoods (e.g., agriculture, service provision for ecotourism and NTFP enterprises, crisis support).

Promoting active involvement of forest users was an important common thread in the funding mechanisms, to strengthen the link between resource mobilization for forest management and livelihood activities. In Cambodia, one project restricted fund membership to people who were identified as traditional forest users (Buddhism for a Progressive Society, Preah Vihear province). In Sri Lanka, while this was not an explicit requirement, forest users were targeted by working

predominantly in villages with a large forest-using community. In this way, local residents with the greatest impact on forest conditions could be supported in sustainable use or alternative livelihood activities.

The SGPPTF Vietnam adopted a programmatic approach to test a revolving fund concept (Box 11). Each village fund had a legal requirement that a proportion of it would be invested in forest protection activities, so that a sustainable local-level financing mechanism could gradually be built up to support the implementation of Village Forest Development Plans. The initiative provides a useful example of how to link capital development, forest management, and other livelihood activities primarily through conditions associated with the fund and through linkage to a VFDP.

Agroforestry, Agriculture, and Livestock

Intercropping on state forest lands helps expand livelihood opportunities, as well as increase the species diversity and resilience of forests, where appropriate species are used and access arrangements are agreed.

Grantees in three countries (Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam) promoted intercropping of trees on state plantation lands, enabling villagers to plant other species in-between. This approach had the environmental benefits of increasing species diversity in plantation areas, while enabling villagers to access the useful species that they planted.

The Environment Protection Foundation in Matara District, Sri Lanka, has been working with communities and the Forest Department to gradually convert pine plantations into natural forests by inter-planting with indigenous species, as discussed in the section on Local Forest Governance. The approach is helping improve the biodiversity of a monoculture plantation, particularly helped by the use of indigenous tree and medicinal plant species for inter-planting. By contributing and testing an innovative approach with the Forest Department, the project has enabled more secure access to important livelihood opportunities for the community in the form of pine resin and medicinal plants for health products through a lease agreement.

In Indonesia, PARAMITRA in East Java is facilitating negotiations between the community and the state forest corporation, Perum Perhutani, to enable the community to benefit from agroforestry crops grown on forest lands. Similarly, YBL Masta in Purworejo, Central Java Province, has successfully negotiated for the community to have the right to cultivate and harvest in forest lands managed with Perum Perhutani. In both cases, the arrangement is supported by a Memorandum of Understanding between Perum Perhutani and the community, thus enabling community members to continue accessing the forest area and planting agreed tree species.

In Vietnam, the opportunity to link agroforestry with forest land allocation processes is being picked up through the SGPPTF. Where the crops planted are compatible with and enrich forest diversity, supportive forest officials have shown a willingness to engage in legal arrangements to support continued access by communities.

Low-input organic methods have helped improve the productivity of home gardens, improving food security and providing alternative sources of forest products, such as fuel wood and timber. Organic farming in areas adjacent to forests has improved the resilience of communities to environmental shocks, such as drought.

Improving the productivity of existing cultivated areas reduces the need to expand cultivation areas while directly benefiting the forests, as well as providing a non-forest source of resources, such as timber, fruit, and fuel wood. Grantees in Cambodia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand have specifically supported the uptake of organic farming practices, which: 1) benefit the landscape by reducing nutrient run-off and pesticide flow from farmlands into water courses; and 2)reduce the costs of agricultural inputs for communities, although labor costs may be higher. Efforts to improve the productivity of home gardens (small-scale multi-purpose areas of cultivation), even where they are well established (Java and Sumatra, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka), are also contributing to food security and to the development of alternate sources of forest products, as illustrated in the following story from Cambodia. The case also shows that food security is a complex issue, ultimately requiring assets beyond knowledge of farming methods (Box 12).

In Sri Lanka, tea growers who have switched to organic practices through the support of SGPPTF grantees (SJP) discovered during a recent drought that they did not experience a drop in yield, while conventional tea farming areas did. The success of these techniques has led the UNDP in Sri Lanka to encourage organic farming in home gardens and tea plantations as one of four areas to upscale beyond the SGPPTF. They have also promoted organic practices in forests on the fringes of tea plantations to reduce chemical run-off into water courses that originate from forests.

Organic agriculture has also been a major thrust of SGPPTF Thailand, where demonstration and sharing of knowledge on sustainable agriculture methods, including the revival of traditional crop varieties, have been supported through networks.
These networks included the following: Kanchanaburi CF Network; the Swamp Forest Network of Patani, Yala, and Narathiwat provinces; Inpaeng network in the NorthEast; Mae Hong Son Development Foundation (Northern Thailand); and the Conservation Network of Tanaosri Mountain (Kanchanaburi).

Better management of livestock can reduce pressure on forest and pasture resources, improve food security, and strengthen the viability of non-forest-based livelihoods. However, this also raises capacity challenges for forestry organizations.

Some grantees in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Vietnam have tried to improve livestock management to improve agricultural food security, as well as to provide viable non-forest based livelihoods. In Pakistan, the focus at various sites has been to include capacity building in animal husbandry and the reduction of stocking levels through breed improvement, grazing management systems, and fodder production (Box 13).

In Indonesia as elsewhere, many communities draw on forests for livestock fodder. A number of Indonesian grantees have worked to reduce dependence on forests for fodder. Lembaga Pengkajian dan Pengembangan Sumberdaya Pembangunan (LPPSP) in Central Java included institutional development for small-scale pond owners and livelihood activities, such as goat farming, fish-mangrove ponds, and inter-cropping in agroforest lands. YBL Masta in Purworejo, Central Java found that the community's need for forest resources stemmed from the need for fodder for their goats, which were exported to Malaysia and South Asia. With facilitation

Box 12. Strengthening food security in Cambodia[37]

As an integral part of its forest management approach, the Agri-Business Institute Cambodia (ABiC) worked in the Snoul district to address the widespread and pressing problem of food shortage faced by around 35 per cent of the community. The landless households and those with newly married couples in this area relied on limited cultivation of vegetables and fruit trees around their homesteads, non-timber forest products, and day labor for their livelihood. Food security was tackled through farmers' trainings on improved production of vegetables, rice and soy bean, soil fertility and land management, and production and use of liquid and dry composts and organic insecticides. This was backed up with village-level agricultural extension and demonstration farms.

A monitoring study of project impacts found that around 70 per cent of the target group was growing vegetables for home consumption, and 7 per cent both for domestic use and sale. Those selling vegetables were generating between KHR 8,000 to 20,000 per day from vegetable growing (around USD 2/EUR 1.5 to USD 5/EUR 3.6). For the 30 per cent of target beneficiaries who did not pick up the new practices, capacity alone may not be the issue. Further support and asset building in a range of areas would be important, a point recognized in the final recommendations which call for the establishment of a micro-credit facility.

Another Cambodian project, this time in Mondulkiri Province, also demonstrated the value of improved farming practices in facing environmental crises. When the rice crops failed in 2006 because of a worm infestation, the 29 home gardens established with hands-on training and support from the Cambodia Rural Development Team played a critical role for the people of Andong Kraloeng village. The farmers have been persuaded to continue their home gardens even after project support winds up.

by the grantee, the community has come to value alternative options, such as fruit and other farm crops, to supplement this activity. An agreement with the state enterprise, Perum Perhutani, is enabling the community to secure access and to plant fodder crops under pine trees to reduce their dependence on other fodder sourced from the forest.

In Gian Bi village, Da Nang, Vietnam, a cow bank managed by the commune has provided an enduring strategy to support farmers with access to livestock. Initial SGPPTF funds were used for breeding stock (the 'capital') from which calves were provided to households. Management of the bank has involved key village institutions and is monitored by the Commune People's Committee. The strong involvement of the commune has helped build trust and accountability in the cow bank approach.

Box 13. Reducing Pressure through Improved Livestock Management in Pakistan

Uncontrolled grazing is contributing to degradation in the range lands and scrub forests of Pakistan. The SGPPTF grantees recognized that improving the prospects for forests had to go hand in hand with resolving the pressing issue of managing the wider landscape and grazing pressures. Several useful strategies have been applied, including:

- Introduction of improved varieties of fodder in Musakhel district;
- Reduction of livestock numbers through improved livestock breeds in Chakwal district;
- Tree planting for fodder (as well as fuelwood and erosion control) in Zarghoon Valley, Quetta; and
- Rangeland management plans, for example, to encourage rotational grazing in Upper Neelum Valley in Northern AJK (Azad Jammu and Kashmir).

Livestock and grazing land management was often found to be a major undertaking, requiring ongoing support beyond the life of the SGPPTF. However, important steps have been taken in raising capacity to undertake planning and to understand the importance of grazing and livestock management in addressing land degradation.

The Cambodian Rural Development Team (CRDT) has had mixed success in encouraging the use of pens for chickens, ducks, and pigs. Penning and intensification of livestock production can reduce pressure on forest areas because these ease the pressure on wildlife as a protein source and decrease the risk of disease spreading to wild populations. As CRDT works with communities living within forest areas, it focuses on smaller animals, including ducks, chickens, and pigs rather than larger livestock such as cattle. Large livestock are seen as less sustainable species in the context of conservation because of their higher fodder needs and environmental impact.

The common thread connecting these approaches is the desire to: 1) reduce pressure on forests by providing non-forest based sources of fodder and livelihoods; 2) improve the efficiency with which forest resources are used; and 3) improve food security. This multi-pronged approach has helped link forest sustainability with livestock management. On the other hand, livestock-related activities were perhaps among the least successful in the SGPPTF in terms of uptake and survival rates. This indicates that venturing into livestock is challenging for NGOs or CBOs, which have not engaged in this enterprise before. Livestock production brings new issues that must be managed, such as disease, breeding, penning methods, and so on. All of these issues are challenging to organizations that have previously focused primarily on forests and forest-based livelihoods, as well as to communities which have long-standing habits that are hard to change.

Linkages to organizations with relevant expertise on agricultural systems and support for peer learning can help fill knowledge gaps among grantees.

Some of the grantees had in-house knowledge on agricultural systems, while others found that moving out of traditional forestry challenged and taught them lessons the hard way. Some of these hard lessons were: 1) buying livestock in

bulk for community initiatives exposed animals to higher levels of disease and mortality; 2) if the quality of plant stock, such as fruit tree seedlings, was poor, then farmers would waste their time and efforts because they would harvest poor-quality fruits; and 3) seedlings planted on farm boundaries would be eaten by livestock.

An important lesson emerging from this, especially in Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, was that when veering outside areas of traditional expertise, it was critical and crucial to link with organizations having capacities in these areas, such as extension services, agricultural research centers, and so on. There is also a need to sensitize agricultural support providers to link with the forestry sector, as the Thai program has done; this is an approach that can be used by local government units to support sustainable forest management with community engagement. The Thai program has also found that farmers learn well from one another, thus facilitating peer learning through community forestry networks to enable farmers to directly share knowledge on successful farming practices.

In Pakistan, the Lok Sanjh Foundation found that facilitating linkages between the Kherimurat community of Attok district and relevant service-providing institutions was an effective way of gaining the communities' access to advice and services in areas that were beyond their immediate capacity. Similarly, grantees in Sri Lanka have worked with the Tea Research Institute to train farmers in converting their tea crops to organic tea, with a high rate of success.

Addressing Water and Energy Needs with Forest Linkages

Water-related infrastructure, where it addresses community priorities, is a good entry point to improve community welfare and engage people in managing watershed forests.

Forest-dwelling communities or those on the fringes of forests are often slow to receive infrastructure, such as water supplies and electrification, for reasons of cost, resource limitations, and even deliberate policies to deter further in-migration to the area. At SGPPTF sites in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Thailand, access to clean water and electrification emerged as community priorities that also provided an entry point to forest management issues.

In Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the SGPPTF supported grantees, with matching commitment from communities, to develop micro-hydro schemes for electrification in rural communities. In Sri Lanka, under a local government scheme, the community of Kendikattiya Village, Kegalle district contributed LKR 200,000 (USD 1,800/EUR 1,300) to construct two micro hydro plants (one supported by SGPPTF and the other by GEF funding). Approximately 52 and 29 households were served by these two plants, respectively. The households serviced by the scheme were limited to those that had contributed financially. The community was first loaned an amount for the whole activity, then the grant was provided to offset the loan component of the financing scheme.

Such facilities have improved the welfare of households reached by the electrification network. However, the challenge of reaching all families, particularly the poorest ones, remains. This also depends on the geographical lay-out of settlements. Issues of equity need to be tracked closely in such activities, particularly if this is contingent on financial contributions.

Access to clean water is a priority for the health and well-being of many communities. The SGPPTF in Pakistan and Cambodia addressed this need as part of their wider activities. This was often done at relatively low cost because communities were willing to commit labor and resources to address this urgent need. The Cambodia Rural Development Team found that a small investment, together with strong community contribution to a facility that they valued, made possible the construction of a spring water collector (Box 14). Balochistan Environmental and Educational Journey (BEEJ) similarly supported water harvesting structures in Musakehl district of Balochistan.

Building this spring water harvester helped the people of Andong Kraloeng, Cambodia, to get clean water and the resolve to look after their watershed.

Three important issues emerged from this experience. The Sri Lanka case highlights the fact that communities do not have to wait passively for government programs to address their needs — they can actively collaborate on this process (as discussed in the section on Local Forest Governance). Such co-financing or in-kind support gives them a direct stake in looking after the facilities. Where the government has deliberately avoided putting infrastructure to deter further in-migration to the area, the issues raised by the community led to the installation of infrastructure. Another important lesson is that communities can make a clear linkage between water and forest management, and water services can provide an important entry point for bridging livelihood issues and forest management.

People will take up energy-efficient technologies if these fit into their lifestyles and needs, and if there are convincing and immediate benefits to be gained from embracing change.

Grantees in Cambodia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka disseminated fuel-efficient stoves, using technologies developed prior to SGPPTF. These stoves were used for both domestic needs and the processing of marketable goods, such as palm sugar. The technology provides an important way of reducing demand for fuel wood from forests, particularly where there have been initiatives to plant fuel wood species in non-forested lands to supplement forest sources.

Box 14. How Clean Water Can Benefit Communities and Forests in Mondulkiri, Cambodia

In Andoung Kraloeng village, Mondulkiri, the most important thing to the community was getting a clean water supply. A natural spring source was located near the village, but the water was insufficient to meet the community's needs due to lack of storage facilities. The area around the spring was not kept clean nor protected from animals, resulting in frequent illness from water-borne diseases. Villagers had to travel far each day to find drinking water.

With the facilitation of the Cambodian Rural Development Team, a simple cement structure was designed with the help of an engineer. The community members immediately saw the benefits that would accrue from the harvesting facility and contributed their time to construct the collector. Once built, the community saw that it was important to keep the water source clean, so they fenced the area and cleaned the surrounding forests. This awareness was also raised through community education on hygiene and the importance of cleanliness of the water source.

The effects of these management actions are already being seen as fish, crabs, and frogs once again thrive in the area. The committee took the initiative to create a spring water collector committee to manage the facility. The community also committed voluntary funding for its upkeep. The case demonstrates the value of working with the community's livelihood priorities, and through that to make linkages to forest management issues.

Not surprisingly, uptake of energy-efficient technologies has been most successful where the technology is consistent with the cooking habits, tastes, and lifestyles of the communities. In the Sri Lanka case, a fuel-efficient stove (developed by IDEA prior to SGP-TPF support), has been designed to address local needs, specifically Sri Lankan cooking and eating habits. IDEA also produced a larger energy-efficient wood stove for processing palm juice into sugar, which is being promoted at some SGPPTF sites. The uptake of the Sri Lankan technology has been highly successful at SGPPTF sites and elsewhere.

Domestic fuel-efficient stoves have been introduced at some sites in Pakistan with varying rates of uptake. The potential benefits of the technology are clear — the stoves introduced in Sonmiani Bay, for instance, could reduce household fuel wood consumption by half. However, the uptake of the technology has been slow and the facilitating organization is working with female community members to determine the reasons for this slow uptake.

In Cambodia, the NGO Development and Appropriate Technology (DATe) introduced a fuel-efficient stove to produce palm sugar from the sugar palm in Kampong Chhnang Province (*Borassus Flabellifer* or *Tnaot* in Khmer). The challenges and issues faced are illustrated in the story of one of the households taking up this technology (Box 15). Choon Sophoeun of DATe said that not all the villagers were as keen as Chea Chantho to take up this technology. They tackled this resistance by setting up and operating two stoves in the village: the existing stove and the fuel- efficient stove. Through this approach, people saw for themselves the difference between the two stoves.

Chea Chantho of Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia, has become an advocate for this new fuel efficient stove because she sees that it uses less wood and creates less heat and smoke in her kitchen.

Box 15. Why change to a fuel-efficient stove? The story of Chea Chantho in Kampong Chhnang province, Cambodia

Chea Chantho started to use a fuel-efficient wood stove in early 2006 when DATe encouraged palm syrup collectors to participate in the activity. She was provided the stove under the project (the usual cost is about USD 50 or EUR 36). Chea took up the technology because she saw the benefits in using the stove, and she indeed realized these benefits in practice. She has also been participating in the further processing of palm sugar into sugar powder, a related initiative of DATe. This has substantially increased her income from sugar from around USD 375/EUR 272 to about USD 500/EUR 363 a year.

The stove uses less wood, emits less heat than the usual stove, and produces less smoke in her kitchen because of the chimney design. In the past, she would consume around 50 ox carts of fuel wood in one year for sugar processing; now she is using about 30 ox carts of fuel wood in one year. She knows of some other families using the stove and they have also been happy with it.

When she got the new stove, she had three days of training. It took some getting used to because the new stove had a higher cooking temperature so the palm juice evaporated faster. The training was followed up with home visits from the DATe staff who could advise her and answer her questions about the use of the stove, as well as on the processing of brown sugar powder. She has since received further training to support other villagers in constructing and using the stove. Chea has gradually moved from being a 'tentative innovator' to 'champion for a new technology.'

In Pakistan, some energy-producing and efficient technologies are showing success in reducing forest pressures. Biogas plants installed in two projects (Kerimurat by the NGO LOK SANJH and the Miandam project of HUJRA) are reducing pressure on forests in the scrub zone, which has been degraded by demand for fuel wood. Another innovation is the micro-hydro station used for efficient heat production during the severe winter season of Behrain (facilitated by the NGO, CARAVAN). One station provides power for heating in winter to 16 households (8-10 persons per household) with an average requirement of two truckloads per household of firewood coming from the forest. The technology has reduced fuel wood demand for heating from 32 truckloads to 2 truckloads for one winter season, which amounts to a substantial reduction of the burden on the forests. In summer, the extra power is used to lift water for irrigating the adjacent fields, thus contributing to livelihoods. Solar technology's operation and maintenance, on the other hand, proved to be too complex for the local community.

In the long-term, efficiency will need to be supplemented by alternative and additional fuel sources to replace the current demand for fuel wood from forests. This was taken up in Cambodia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, which have provided communities with seedlings for fuel wood species, along with energy-efficient stoves. However, survival rates of the species were mixed and no concrete gains have yet been reported.

Forest-Based Enterprises

Forest-based enterprises, including processing and marketing of non-forest timber products, making of handicrafts, and promoting ecotourism, have been one of the most widely supported approaches in SGPPTF. The value of NTFP enterprises is currently under debate in the research community. Some suggest that fostering the poor's dependence on these forest products, which have the lowest value, cannot ultimately offer a pathway out of poverty.[38] Others question whether forest dependency should be fostered in rural communities through the development of forest-based enterprises, or non-forest-based activities should provide a better pathway for both forests and communities in the long-term. An alternative perspective is that forest-based small- and medium- enterprises provide a direct entry point to generating income and other benefits for the poor.[39]

Lessons on Securing Basic Livelihood Assets and Flows

The SGPPTF has moved beyond forestry to address the range of assets needed for sustainable livelihoods. An integrated approach, which addresses people's basic needs for food, water and energy, is helping consolidate the various assets that communities need to sustain their welfare, promote non-forest-based livelihood options, and highlight the relations of forests, agriculture, and water supplies as a way of building commitment to forest management.

Lesson 10: *Small grants to establish capital generation schemes for community forest management (e.g., micro-credit, village development funds) can allow people to expand the financial base to invest in forest management and community development.*

Lesson 11: *Addressing food, water, and energy requirements through forest-linked methods and technologies helps communities plan beyond subsistence activities. This strengthens the viability of non-forest-based livelihoods and allows them to develop enterprises while managing forests.*

The SGPPTF experience addresses these perspectives in two ways, bearing in mind that diverse approaches have been used in supporting forest-based enterprises. First, many projects looked for ways to improve the returns when they were already being used commercially. Second, as already discussed, grantees were not pre-occupied with forest-based enterprises alone, but many looked for integrated solutions to community livelihood issues. Often the promotion of NTFP enterprises came with actions to improve non-forest-based livelihoods, and targeted those communities, households, and individuals who were already doing this. Sometimes, there were visible opportunities in the community as in the case of ecotourism.

The following broad types of activities were emphasized in enterprise projects:

1. Market analysis (including product choice) and business planning;
2. Development of the capacity of communities to capture the best possible return from the value chain through value addition and market information;
3. Improvement of the transparency, equity, and robustness of enterprises, especially financial management (enterprise governance);
4. Sustainable management of forest product extraction; and
5. Capacity building in all of the above areas.

Following is a discussion of key approaches and findings.

Market Analysis and Enterprise Planning

Market analysis and enterprise planning need to assess the financial, social, and environmental viability of potential enterprise options early in the process of enterprise development. Initial support and ongoing advice from enterprise specialists help develop community capacities in enterprise planning.

A thorough analysis of the financial viability of a business idea, as well as detailed planning and networking to support its effective implementation, are fundamental starting points for a successful enterprise. Aside from financial analysis, many SGPPTF projects added emphasis on assessing the social and environmental feasibility of enterprise options. Useful examples of this approach are found in the programs in Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, and Malaysia.

In the Philippines, the National Steering Committee took the approach of engaging the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), together with its partner, the Upland Marketing Foundation (UMF), to guide grantees beyond the traditional NTFPs as enterprise products. They supported systematic analysis of alternative paths to entrepreneurial development, based on sound enterprise planning and market linkages to major stores in the country. Their business planning approach started with a systematic inventory of resources and community competencies. PBSP and UMF encouraged the community to examine the internal and external factors that affected their daily lives before committing to any livelihood activities under SGPPTF. This approach, which was later promoted in other sites supported by SGPPTF Philippines, developed the skills of grantees and communities to plan enterprise activities according to:

- the resource base in the area;
- the competencies or the capacities available within the community;
- market facilities and opportunities, and
- the relative value of particular enterprise compared with other livelihood options.

The business planning process increased the chances of success for a community-based enterprise, since it factored in resources and community capacities and values, together with realistic market assessment.

Similarly, a Bogor-based NGO, LATIN, assisted its target community in West Java, Indonesia, to identify and evaluate the market potential of NTFPs. The community was supported through the process of

identifying appropriate micro-enterprise opportunities, taking an inventory of forest resources to supply the enterprise, and selecting potential products and marketing options. Through this process, the community identified nine NTFPs for sale, which have now been certified by the Health Authority for local marketing. In Lore Lindu National Park, Sulawesi, the NGO JAMBATA facilitated community level education and capacity building, including strengthening of the local organization to improve market access for their products and the prospects for fair trade. The project engaged a small business to conduct market surveys for various NTFPs and provided links to local exporter, galleries, and retailers, as well as an environment group to lend support with forest monitoring.

In SGPPTF Malaysia, ecotourism was chosen as an enterprise product in a number of projects working with indigenous communities. Ecotourism capitalized on these remote groups' economic opportunities while enabling them to sustain their values and also to protect the environment. The ecotourism activity at Tasik Bera Ramsar Site in Pahang followed a similar planning approach.

Since community-based organizations are not necessarily formed with entrepreneurship in mind, capacity building has been important in most SGPPTF enterprise projects. The early support and ongoing advice provided by grantees nurtured the ability of community organizations in market assessment and enterprise planning. This contributes to a long-term process of building community capacity to analyze market information and opportunities, and to plan for financially, socially, and environmentally viable products in a dynamic market environment.

In developing enterprise products, it helps to start from existing business activities and products, so that existing community skills, market information, and networks can be strengthened and developed.

It takes time for communities to develop enterprise skills, and market information and networks. Many grantees in Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Thailand started from enterprise activities that community members were already engaged in. Current production and skills were then adapted to new market niches, designs, and products, rather than having the community embark on completely new product choices. Often the focus for these enterprises was domestic markets.

As for the woven *mazri* products in Pakistan, traditional techniques were adapted to products that would have a better prospect in urban markets, such as file covers, pen holders, wall hanging, bags, jewelry, and make-up boxes. This opened up new opportunities for an existing product. One of the community organizers working with women producers, however, pointed out that expanding market linkages was still a challenge: *"We take the new samples to the village women and teach them how to make these new products from mazri leaves. We teach them new color combinations and designs. The real challenge lies in marketing these handicrafts."*

In Sri Lanka, a profitable community-run enterprise in Bibile managed by the Conservation Area Management Committee, chose to focus on forest fruits. These fruits had a long history of local collection and were in demand from a well-established and growing domestic and international market in Ayurvedic medicines. The choice of these medicinal plant products also enabled the enterprise to work with traditional collectors, who were among the poorest in the community. Highlighting that product choice is one factor that can influence involvement by the poor (a point discussed further in the findings on Equity).

In Sri Lanka and Cambodia, communities already had the skills and knowledge needed to harvest and process palm juice into sugar. Grantees built on this by assisting communities to improve their returns with techniques that would increase the yield of palm juice, improve quality control, and foster more efficient processing techniques, as well as techniques to raise product standards and market appeal.

In Thailand, there has been a deliberate effort by the government to encourage sub-districts or *tambons* to identify and market specialty products that reflect the local culture, tradition, and nature. This is known as

the One *Tambon* One Product (OTOP) Campaign. Marketing outlets have been established throughout the country. The Thai networks, supported by SGPPTF, have similarly supported the marketing of local products according to specialized niches and local production patterns. These are marketed through networks as well as through the OTOP program. Again, the emphasis has been on working from what is already produced in the area, rather than targeting new products, although innovations in design and markets are continually being developed.

Another case of revitalizing or adapting local products for marketing is the production and marketing of *Fuya* (tree bark cloth) by JAMBATA with the communities of Lore Lindu National Park in Sulawesi, Indonesia. Box 16 shows that the production and marketing of such products can provide the added benefit of revitalizing traditional production techniques and designs. Marketing the products remains to be the challenge.

By making small changes to the way they gather, store and process palm sap, collectors can increase their income from this traditional activity.

Selecting existing products for enterprise development has many social and economic advantages, although market linkages may be weak where these products have been mainly used and traded at the community level. Apart from product selection, grantees have played an important role in facilitating successful market linkages by developing networks with national stakeholders, marketing bodies, industry, and endpoint buyers and selling points. In the two Sri Lankan cases discussed below, such groups have been instrumental in forming linkages with international companies, supermarkets in urban centers, and provincially-based outlets for products.

In product development, it is important to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of international, domestic, and local markets. Marketing to urban and international markets may provide higher returns, but it also involves higher start-up costs and more stringent standards. Linkages to domestic and local markets can be a more viable starting point for community-based enterprises.

Box 16. Fuya Production by the Communities of Lore Lindu National Park, Indonesia

Tree bark cloth, known as Fuya, has unique cultural value locally in the communities of Lore Lindu National Park. Fuya is being transformed into handicrafts geared towards contemporary tastes, in the form of lamp shades, wallets, paintings, pen holders, book covers, and so on. This blending of traditional with contemporary design is a recurring theme in efforts to find income opportunities for local producers in the SGPPTF. The challenge then remains in marketing the products successfully. In Lore Lindu, the markets are still limited, relying on tourists visiting the area, as well as on fair trading networks.

Local markets for surplus produce are accessed by rural people daily, and their value chains and actors are familiar. Products that capitalize on international niche markets can bring good returns, but are risky for communities, involving high start-up costs, long lead times, new product standards, and markets that are vulnerable to sudden shifts outside the sphere of influence and even knowledge of communities.[40] Both domestic and internationally focused enterprises can be found in the SGPPTF portfolio, and important issues have emerged in either case. Three supporting cases are cited here.

In Sri Lanka, the Ayurvedic product enterprise at Bibile discussed earlier supplied local, national, and regional markets through Colombo-based, export-oriented companies. The higher returns from these high-end domestic and international markets have enabled them to become self-sustaining enterprises. The anticipated profit level for the year will be sufficient to cover seed funds, salaries, and other costs. Managed by an elected committee, the increasingly specialized nature of the medicinal plants enterprise is also bringing about changes. They now need to employ specialist or skilled staff, and to ensure regular knowledge exchange in their meetings to help the committee members develop a good understanding of the issues and processes in enterprise management. Product standards are more stringent for these companies, which have to be conveyed to the collectors. The benefit of the longer-term agreement with larger companies is the guaranteed market at good prices for their product. The cost is that management of the enterprise becomes a more specialized activity outside the realm of understanding of local NTFP collectors.

In contrast, the People's Development Foundation (Sri Lanka) markets palm sugar and other forest products from Ratnapura communities primarily to local and domestic markets. They have thrice exported palm syrup to Italy, the US, and Japan but they feel that production volumes are too low for export. For example, a company in Japan wanted a contract with PDF for 600 kilograms per month of palm treacle, but they could not sign up because production levels were too low. If production increased due to a higher price, they might consider this, but for now, they are content with the domestic market. In many cases from the Philippines, local and domestic markets have also been prioritized over an international market.

A difference in requirements for domestic and international markets is also relevant for ecotourism. In the Chambok ecotourism project in Cambodia, the SGPPTF supported a range of capacity-building initiatives for venturing into ecotourism, such as training for the guides and training for the women providing food and ox-cart ride services to tourists. These service providers reported that their skills needed enhancement if they were to meet the higher expectations of international tourists (currently around 4% of visitors) for facilities and services.

The more remote the market from the local producer, the greater the need for ongoing support from intermediary organizations to overcome gaps in capacity and communication. An important issue for the future will be to consider how to diversify and strengthen linkages beyond the few players that may currently be involved, and how to build the capacity of local people in these areas.

Facilitating Better Returns from the Market Chain

Good market information and knowledge of the market chain are critical foundations for value addition. These, together with stronger negotiating capacity, are helping producers of forest-based products get better returns.

Experiences with enterprises in Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia highlighted the fact that two key areas of information helped bring about better returns to producers: 1) knowledge of the market chain and the value added at different points in the chain; and 2) the price differential for different grades of the product.

The first type of information made possible good planning for value addition activities. Small additional investments in time by individual producers were generating increases in their income. These included the processing of palm treacle into sugar (Sri Lanka), the processing of block sugar into powdered sugar (Cambodia), and the initial processing of rattan (Cambodia). In other cases, community enterprises

were purchasing raw or partially processed products from collectors in several villages for value addition at a center. Examples include coffee production (Indonesia), Ayurvedic products (Sri Lanka), Chilgoza nuts and honey production (Pakistan), sugar packaging for direct sale to consumers (Cambodia), and coordination of rattan furniture production (Cambodia). This central processing approach to value addition has raised the need to develop the capacity of the community-based enterprise in business and financial management.

The second type of information -- the price attracted by different grades of products -- can make an immediate difference in the returns gained by producers, once they know how to process and handle their products to take advantage of such price differentials. The Ayurvedic Products enterprise at Bibile found that collectors of forest products were quick to learn about grades of products and the different prices they could get for these, since they directly benefited financially from improvements in quality. Information sharing on price and on how harvesting and handling techniques affect product grade was a critical driver for this change.
A number of community-based organizations in SGPPTF were stepping into the role of traders as buyers of raw or partially processed forest products. But apart from gaining profits, middlemen also bear costs: advancing credit to collectors; bearing the risk of damage to products; transportation; and maintaining market networks. As one project coordinator in Cambodia noted, *"This is our first try at the enterprise. We are ensuring some marginal profit to pay staff, but are not paying detailed attention to costs and market price."*

There was a question of how the project would be sustained once the subsidy was over. Producers have an instinctive sense of this potential pitfall with CBOs becoming middlemen. In Sri Lanka, even though NGOs provided a higher price, collectors sold some of their products to traditional buyers. This was partly because middlemen had to raise their purchasing price to keep up with the higher rates offered by NGOs. However, this was also a way for producers to manage risk by maintaining these networks.

Rather than take on this daunting middleman role, support organizations may provide good market information to communities towards improving the transparency of market chains and the prospects for communities to benefit more fully from these.

Gaining equitable returns from market chains can be a matter of negotiating capacity, as well as having adequate market information. Buddhists for a Progressive Society (BPS) took the approach of strengthening the communities' capacity to negotiate with middlemen who buy rattan products in Preah Vihear province, Cambodia. Communities and traders agreed on product prices in advance so that producers knew what could be gained for different types and grades of the product. In return, the middlemen did not have to pay in advance, only when they received the products. Initially, when the organization started working in the area, middlemen were afraid that they would lose access to the product, but they quickly saw the benefits achieved in product standards and in not having to make advance payments. BPS also did a survey of all who produced rattan, then provided training and start-up funds to those new to rattan production. As the BPS project coordinator reported, *"These days business is largely successful. Communities are now selling products at a higher price and they are getting high demand from middlemen. Each day, rattan producers are earning about KHR 8,000-10,000 (USD 2-3 or EUR 1.5-2)."*

Producers' associations have also played an important role in strengthening the negotiating capacity of the community. For example, a handicraft association among communities in Lore Lindu National Park, Indonesia (facilitated by Jambata) was supporting artisans to gain a fair price for their products and also to provide them legal backing to access capital.

Gaining higher returns from market chains may not require supplanting the role of middlemen; indeed taking on this role involves risks for community-based organizations and NGOs and the communities that they serve. Such organizations may instead help producers by sharing good market information, and by facilitating equitable negotiation processes with existing market actors.

NGOs and CBOs can play an important role in value addition by building the capacity of producers in collection, grading, storage, processing, and transporting of products.

Next to enterprise planning, capacity building in value addition was perhaps the next critical focus in the enterprise activities supported by SGPPTF. Examples included training for:

- guides and service providers connected with ecotourism (Cambodia, Indonesia, and Malaysia);
- grading and processing of forest fruits and nuts (Sri Lanka and Pakistan); and
- processing of forest products for direct sale to consumers, often managed through a community-based enterprise at village level or across several villages (These included drying and packaging of spices, preparation of palm sugar, honey production, and production of natural medicinal products.) (Cambodia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand).

The SGPPTF approach and experiences are not new in this regard, but these add to the general understanding that NGOs and CBOs are well placed to contribute to the ongoing development of value addition capacity at the community level. It is important to note, though, that training in itself will not guarantee value addition if communities do not have secure access to resources, are unable to cover start-up costs, and are unable to plan effectively for the most appropriate type of value addition, given the market opportunities as well as the capacities and networks in the community. It therefore makes sense to assess capacity building needs as part of enterprise planning and local forest governance. A further point is that capacity building in many SGPPTF-supported projects focused on the production and processing end of value addition rather than on the management of enterprises themselves, which was in the hands of the CBOs or NGOs undertaking the activity. A future challenge will be to increase the engagement and capacity of producers to take on entrepreneurial roles and the governance of forest-based enterprises.

Equitable Enterprise Governance

Equity in sharing enterprise benefits starts with involving marginalized groups in enterprise planning and design to address their interests and skills. Although NTFPs have a lower value than timber, NTFP enterprises provide a direct opportunity for active NTFP collectors, who are often the poorest in a community.

There is ample evidence within SGPPTF and outside that being community-based or participatory does not mean that an enterprise will automatically benefit the poor or reach the most marginal groups.[41] In discussing efforts at dealing with equity in enterprises, one national coordinator shared that *all efforts have a story* about inequity. It is important then to consider the key factors that support or constrain the poorest or most marginalized groups in benefiting from community-based enterprises and how these have been addressed in the SGPPTF.

Fundamentally, the impacts of enterprise activities on the poor depend initially on who can participate in enterprise-related activities, such as the sale of products to the enterprise, direct employment opportunities, and the distribution and use of enterprise revenues generated by community-based enterprises. Benefit sharing outcomes are best understood through detailed interaction with project participants, which was only possible to a limited degree in the preparation of this paper. Nevertheless some general points can be made based on the information available.

The selection and planning of enterprise products is a first critical step in determining access. By focusing on NTFPs, grantees in Sri Lanka and Cambodia, as well as in other SGPPTF countries, created by default an opportunity for households with little or no land, and which depended strongly on the forest for their livelihoods. This, together with the reported improvements in income, indicates that some benefits have accrued to these poorer households in the Sri Lanka case. Since no timber extraction is allowed from these forests, NTFPs provide one viable way of improving incomes for this group of resource users; at the same time, forest and biodiversity conservation

Women in Hangu District, Pakistan gained income and independence by selling traditional *mazri* handicrafts. Their strong participation was helped by the formation of women's weaving groups, as well as development of products that they were familiar with and could work on at home.

could be promoted, if use is well managed. Targeting the disadvantaged through product choice also needs to be backed up in value addition and capacity building efforts to ensure that the returns from these products are maximized.

Apart from livelihood strategies, awareness of social disparities helps secure the engagement of groups that do not automatically benefit from or engage in community enterprises, such as women. To gain their participation, selection and design of enterprise activities need to address their needs and social context. Without exception, those grantees looking for gender equity in participation used the formation of women's groups, women's self-help groups and, in the case of ecotourism enterprises, service provision groups, as an avenue to engage women in enterprise and livelihood activities. The emphasis on targeting women as a group for participation in enterprise-related activity has been most notable in Pakistan (Mazri, Kailash, Keti Bunder), where gender mainstreaming was an overarching goal, and women's engagement was encouraged through the formation of women's groups that would coordinate activities, training, and decision-making.

Women's service groups have been tapped in the Chambok ecotourism project of Cambodia to give women more opportunities to earn from visitors. They also had representation in the community ecotourism committee so that their needs and concerns could be factored into management actions.

Although the actions taken to involve women have been well described in SGPPTF programs, the impacts of these are less well known. The Mazri enterprise in Hangu District in Pakistan highlighted the fact that the choice of product strongly influenced the capacity of women to participate. Although local women were often restricted to their homes in this area, the selection of a handicraft that women could make at home, together with strategic capacity building on design and efficient use of the raw product, truly improved their income. This, in turn, enabled a new level of independence. As one woman from Kohat village reported, *"I make around PKR 1,200 (USD 20/ EUR 14) a month from selling these products. Before the trainings, I would make PKR 200 (USD 3/EUR 2.5) only. My husband is very happy now that I don't ask him for extra money any more."*

Value addition activities may be another important entry point for women in enterprise activities. For example, men usually collected palm syrup while the women processed the syrup into treacle or sugar. Activities in Sri Lanka and Cambodia that have enabled more efficient processing and further processing into higher value sugar powder have improved the incomes of women.

In West Java, LATIN focused on engaging women in the strengthening of livelihood activities through the formation of forest farmers' groups to strengthen their decision-making role. Three of these women-farmers have become members of the village authority; others were leading the community group; and one person has become the village's head for community welfare.

These stories, while small in one respect, emphasize that gender equity in accessing the benefits of forest-based enterprises can be supported through a tailored approach to engaging women.

Transparent, equitable, and sustainable management structures and processes are essential to ensure that enterprise benefits would be equitably shared, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of enterprises.

Beyond product choice and enterprise design, the management processes and structures for enterprise management strongly influence benefit sharing and the social sustainability of community-based enterprises. Management committees can rise or fall depending on issues of representation, transparency in maintaining financial records, and capacity.

This issue is most vividly illustrated by a case in which management arrangements collapsed and were rebuilt in Sri Lanka. In July 2006, the former management committee of the enterprise faced a crisis in confidence from the communities that they represented, leading to a changeover of office bearers. The crisis emerged from lack of financial transparency and disconnection between the committee members and the constituents they represented. The new office bearers were acutely aware of the need to maintain transparent records and opportunities for exchange with the communities.

Previous work by RECOFTC and WWF has highlighted the crucial role played by management bodies in deciding on and implementing benefit sharing arrangements from enterprises.[42] In the Sri Lanka case discussed above, failure with the system led to conflict, but it also led to learning and improvement of the arrangements for greater transparency. While the skills for value addition are critical, building the capacity to effectively and equitably govern enterprises is equally important.

Sustainable Management of Forest Products

If economic returns from forest-based resources are high enough, they can provide an incentive to shift from unsustainable to sustainable harvesting practices.

In dealing with forest-based enterprises, the long-term viability of the enterprise ultimately depends upon the continued availability of the resource. This closely links enterprise activities with arrangements for local forest governance and management plans. Examples of sustainable harvesting regimes for marketed forest products have already been shared in the preceding section on Local Forest Governance, including the harvesting of chilgoza in Pakistan and rattan in Cambodia.

The question remains on whether or not forest-based enterprises actually work as an incentive for conservation. It is early yet to assess the outcomes of enterprise activities on forests, although observations in the Philippines, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka -- four of the early countries to commence program implementation -- showed that destructive harvesting practices have decreased. This supports the sentiments of one Filipino grantee, thus, *"The scheme of including a livelihood component in conservation efforts is the best thing done, because it helps them divert from unsustainable practices."*
An important assumption in the value addition approach is that once collectors start to get a better return from NTFPs, they would reduce unsustainable collection practices. But is this true?

Two cases in SGPPTF show that higher economic returns for resource collectors are fostering greater value for the standing resource from which the NTFPs are taken. In Pakistan, the Sherani tribe of Zhob district, Balochistan has become involved in a pine nut harvesting enterprise. As they saw the value of pine nut harvesting, the community cut less timber. In the Sri Lanka case, the payment to collectors in the Bibile area from a middleman was LKR 7 per kilogram (USD 0.1or EUR 0.05), compared with LKR 23 per kilogram (USD 0.2 or EUR 0.2) from the Conservation Area Management Committee for a key Ayurvedic species, *Arulu* (*Terminalia chebula*). With this rise in income, destructive harvesting declined.

In economic terms, the answer perhaps depends on *how much* the value increases and changes the relative value of different livelihood options to the collector. For example, in the case of chilgozas, the value of the unprocessed chilgoza nuts was about 76 per cent higher than that obtained from timber from the same tree. For medicinal plants in Sri Lanka, there is an added issue that medicinal fruits can be collected only by a 'special' group of collectors so that the rising price is not creating a rush harvesting by non-traditional users. Nevertheless, findings do support the idea that a better price can lead to a better outcome for the forests, especially if the increase in value is sufficient.

Another case highlights issues in managing sustainable collection through the management of extraction rates

and processes. The Conservation Area Management Committee initiative in Sri Lanka was supported in a prior IUCN project to undertake a detailed resource inventory of the area. Based on this inventory, sustainable levels of harvest for key species have been proposed. However, the implementation of the system through annual permits to the buyers rather than collectors of the product (the CAMC as well as private buyers) does not provide signals on sustainable harvesting levels to the collectors. Harvesting may be more sustainable if such information goes directly to collectors.

Certification is another potential system for securing sustainable production and harvest of forest products. In the SGPPTF, certification has not been widely taken up, given the costs and lead-times involved. However, the story of Persepsi in Indonesia is worth sharing. In the Bengawan Solo Water catchment, Central Java, Persepsi has supported certification of a community forest by helping the village meet certification requirements and by mediating in the application process. While environmental criteria are being met, the costs in achieving certification have been high, and may not have been manageable without the

Lessons on Forest-Based Enterprises

Through its approach, the SGPPTF has added to the evidence that for forest-based enterprises to make an impact on poverty, there must be: sound market analysis and enterprise planning; value addition based on good market information; and effective and equitable governance of enterprises and the forests on which these depend. Developing effective linkages with traders and companies gave better returns to producers, provided arrangements were equitably negotiated and based on transparent market information. Communities needed support to build their capacity for enterprise planning and management, more so for national and international markets than for local markets. Hence, it was more workable for them to access local and domestic markets first before turning to international markets.

Researchers have established that policy barriers can constrain forest-based enterprises, such as complex transit permits and fees for the collection and transport of NTFPs. However, these were not brought out strongly in the SGPPTF cases probably because a local market was often targeted.

In dealing with forest-based enterprises, the days of the 'silver bullet' — where ecotourism or some other activity can be regarded as the solution to a community's livelihoods — are fortunately over. The strongest aspect of the SGPPTF's approach has been to balance enterprise activities with attention to non-forest based livelihoods. This has been important not just in managing risk to communities, but also in enabling the participation of all sectors in the communities where the SGPPTF has been implemented.

Lesson 12:
External facilitators can play an important role in:

a. *Strengthening the capacity of sellers to: analyze market opportunities; engage in value addition; plan and manage enterprises transparently and effectively (especially financial aspects); and negotiate better prices with traders and companies; and*

b. *Facilitating flow of marketing information and linkages but not to permanently supplant the role of different actors in the market chain.*

Lesson 13: *Small-scale enterprises that start from existing products, skills, and domestic markets allow communities to progressively build their enterprise management capacity.*

Lesson 14: *The impact of enterprises on the poorest, most marginalized groups can be increased by knowing who they are and factoring in their skills, interests, and participation into enterprise planning and governance.*

Lesson 15: *If economic returns from forest-based resources are high enough, these can provide an incentive for communities to shift from unsustainable to sustainable harvesting practices.*

involvement of an NGO. Achieving a price premium for certified products was one important reason for communities to engage in the process. Certification was achieved in February 2007, but so far, the community has yet to feel an increment in their income, although the door to fair trading networks has been opened.

In short, the environmental sustainability of forest-based enterprise is strongly affected by arrangements in local forest governance and the reward of a continued and, perhaps, enhanced income for following sustainable practices. It was early days for many of the enterprises supported by SGPPTF, but improvements were being seen, at least in the

Endnotes

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Conclusions and Recommendations

Given the opportunity, communities can make a significant contribution to two pressing international priorities: protecting our forests and reducing poverty. Forest degradation can be quick and poverty intractable. Reversing these problems requires an incremental process where programs such as SGPPTF can contribute, along with other stakeholders and programs. Although the impacts of forest management plans will take time to be evident, there are already local rules and practices on how forests should be used and managed. Similarly, there are evidences on how communities have developed their assets, capacities, and local institutions that are needed to reduce poverty in the long-term.

While the SGPPTF has contributed to evidences in these areas, the program's unique contribution lies in people's understanding of *how* community forest management can be effectively realized and the actions and processes needed to turn potential into reality. The findings and lessons have been synthesized under four themes, which now form an agenda or program for future action.

In managing resource uncertainty and coping with rapid social change, the SGPPTF experience highlights the fact that where access rights cannot be formally recognized under current laws, actions can still be taken to improve the security of resource access, both informally and through specific legal agreements. The creation of such access has been based on supportive action not just by development organizations and communities themselves, but also from local forest authorities and local governments. While informal and limited legal arrangements cannot substitute for workable national legal frameworks in the long-term, they can address pressing community needs.

The strategies shared about supporting indigenous and other communities in strengthening cultural identity and sharing knowledge pave the way for traditional practices and values to be reflected in local development pathways. Such strategies also strengthen the role of local institutions and knowledge in forest management.

The SGPPTF sites in protected areas range from 29 per cent in Pakistan to 89 per cent in Sri Lanka. The program adds to the increasing evidence that conservation and livelihood outcomes need not be contradictory goals. Conservation and livelihood are compatible at the local level, particularly where people's livelihoods depend strongly on the continued protection of biodiversity, and where some national planning and implementation decisions have been decentralized to state or local governments. Experiences from SGPPTF sites show that local communities, with support from local authorities, can and should play an important role in managing higher value forests. This role can help in achieving environmental sustainability efficiently and effectively, and more importantly, in attaining human development.

The featured local forest governance strategies -- for planning, implementation, and building governance capacities — allow for greater recognition of culture and the human spirit, thus securing the place of local people in forests and forest management. The small grants mechanism enabled local communities to engage a wide range of local stakeholders, especially local governments and line agencies, beyond forest and environment departments. These engagements are helping nations develop social capacities needed to foster human development and economic stability.

When practice is supported by policy and collaboration, innovative strategies can be developed for people relying on forest resources to cope with uncertainties while upholding their cultural identities amid rapid social change. People are finding interim measures and support systems that encourage them not to lose hope in mainstream systems of governance. These measures include learning among peers, influencing local policies and programs through vertical networking, and tapping venues for communicating to policy planners and decisionmakers at the national and regional levels. Compared to the large loans and grants spent on technically-focused national reforestation programs, this relatively small, socially-sensitive investment is generating early returns. The returns may be more difficult to quantify, but they are seen in impacts on people's lives.

As for sustainable livelihoods, the SGPPTF abandoned its main focus on forest-based programs, which used to be the norm in national forest programs. Instead, the grantees have been embracing the emerging view that food, water, and energy security, as well as social and political capital, are fundamental needs to be addressed in poverty reduction. Livelihood activities supported through SGPPTF went beyond forest management to food security, energy, and non-forest-based livelihoods. These activities are helping decrease local pressure on forests while securing basic assets. Parallel to this, forest-based enterprises have provided venues to increase local capacity in enterprise planning and management, local understanding of how markets operate, value addition, and equitable governance of enterprises. The future application and development of these capabilities to new market opportunities will perhaps be more important than the financial gains that such enterprises have already brought about.

The potential of community forest management in securing forests and livelihoods is increasingly understood among development practitioners and sensitized forestry professionals. However, the approach is still some way from being mainstreamed into government policies and programs for economic development. For community forest management to have a larger role, action and collaboration are needed across sectors. These sectors would need to include implementation of supportive policy and regulatory measures, as well as investment of time and money so that capacities could be built at the community level. In this regard, some grantees have disclosed that time -- the ability to work with communities over a long duration -- is more important than large sums of money poured on individual sites for a short period. Through these processes, the contribution of community forest management to addressing forest loss and poverty can be secured.

Recommendations for Specific Target Groups

Group	Recommendations
Environment and Natural Resource Departments	› Simplify procedures and invest in communicating legal rights, responsibilities, and procedures with communities and local authorities (local government and line agencies) where legal frameworks for community access/tenure exist. › Clarify forest access and management with communities through workable and equitable legal frameworks where these do not currently exist. › Reference local terms and systems of forest classification (e.g., spirit forests, backyard forests) in national systems of forest classification. › Ensure that forest management programs complement and work with existing community organizations. › Link with other government agencies to promote active inclusion of forest communities in poverty reduction programs. › Support local governments and community networks engaged in local forest governance. › Reward local governments with policies and programs supportive of community forest management. › Open up policy processes to inputs from community, as well as other government agencies (land, rural development, agriculture, agrarian reform, indigenous affairs, home affairs, etc). › Remove barriers to the development of small-scale enterprises (e.g., transport tariffs) and simplify permit systems.

Group	Recommendations
Donors	› Support more small grants programs with longer project duration to build local capacities for organizational management, livelihood development, and community forest management. › Continue requirements for cost-sharing mechanisms and recognize contributions provided in-kind to encourage cooperation.
Local government	› Use community forest management plans in designing and budgeting for local development projects and activities.
Site level staff and other practitioners	› Facilitate dialogue between communities and government to secure long-term community management of forests, together with governance systems. › In the short term, facilitate agreements on specific access arrangements between communities and local authorities. › Assist indigenous communities in establishing mechanisms to protect their intellectual property rights. › Build social capital to strengthen community resilience and forest management. Strengthen the capacity of local institutions to deal with wider governance systems, and equity and representation within communities. › Start resource assessments from local knowledge and interests, not from external inputs found in literature on the area. › Use participatory methods that pay attention to vulnerable groups within the community. › Tailor peer-to-peer learning process based on understanding of issues and effective strategies to suit the local contexts. › Inform local governments about the need to enrich their understanding of community forest management and how this links with objectives of rural development. › Foster appropriate modes of livelihood development and resource management that take into account the values and needs of people; take care not to get too focused on forest-based enterprises alone. › Link with organizations outside forest departments to bring in the capacities needed for supporting livelihoods and asset bases. › Targeting vulnerable groups based on social categories, such as gender, age, livelihood means (e.g., NTFP collection), is an important way to bring them benefits from livelihood activities, as this may not happen otherwise. › Work from existing resource use activities and products, to build on the existing skills, market information, and networks.

Group	Recommendations
	› Support communities with market analysis and enterprise planning early in the process and follow up with mentoring to build local capacity. › Facilitate market linkages and the capacity of communities to negotiate with different market actors, including middlemen. › Facilitate coordination among neighboring communities on planning, production, and marketing, bearing in mind the landscape management unit that they share.
Regional organizations	› Promote regional exchanges on enabling legal frameworks to recognize community rights and responsibilities in relation to forests in Asia.
Researchers	› Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of different legal arrangements for forest access (e.g., laws, MOUs, contracts). › Develop guidelines based on sharing of experiences and analysis on what makes effective and equitable local organizations. › Track benefits and outcomes of livelihood activities, including factors that help or hinder equity and correlation with forest protection.

Annexes

Annex 1. Products of Knowledge Management Processes in SGPPTF

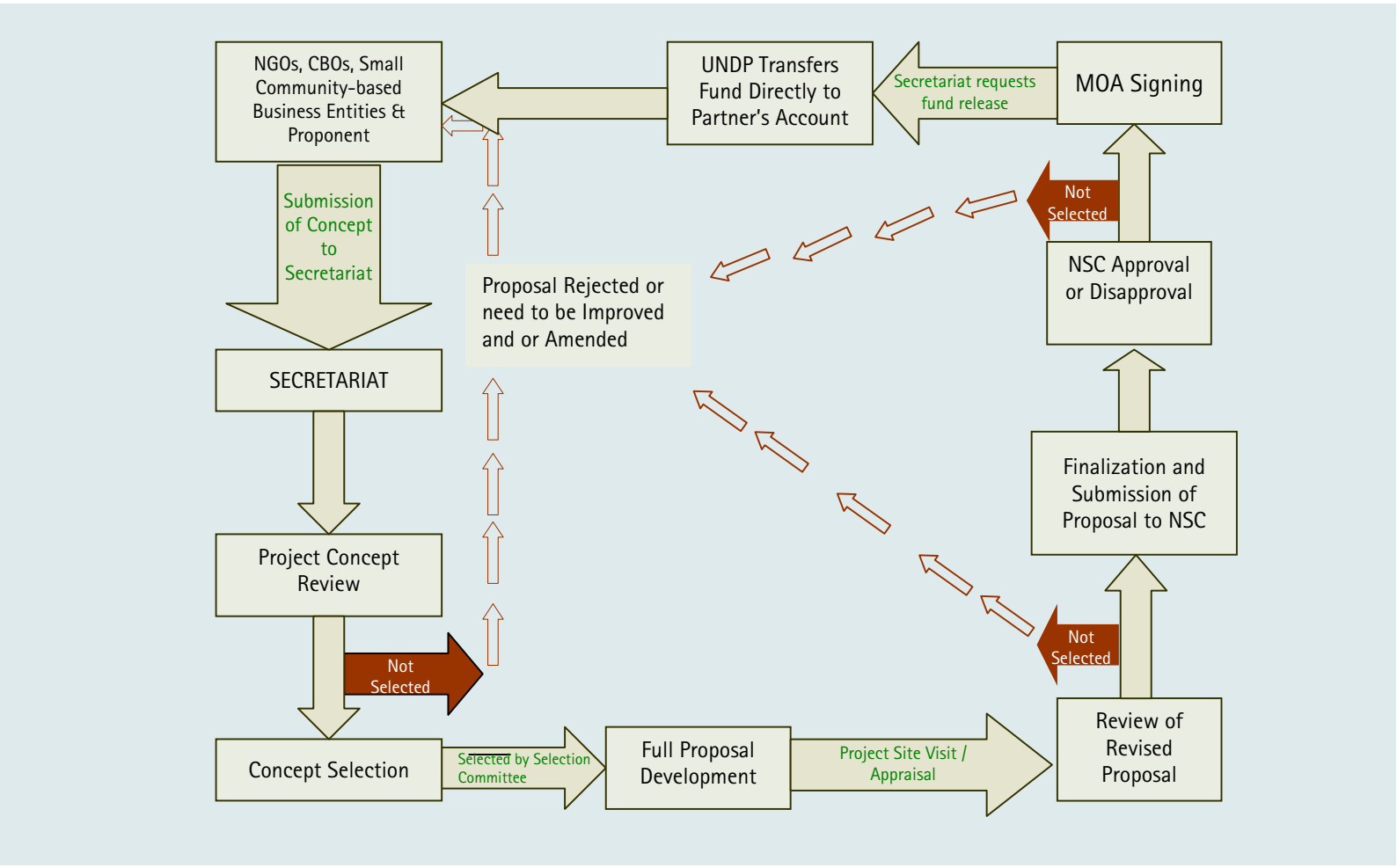
Country	Title	Produced by	Site/Event Coverage	Nature and form of material	Language
Cambodia	Towards 2015: Effectiveness of EC UNDP SGPPTF support to rural livelihood and community based natural resources management (CBNRM)"	SGPPTF Cambodia	national	Video documentary and TV talk show (round table discussion)	Khmer with English sub-title
Cambodia	SGPPTF Final Workshop, September 2007	SGPPTF Cambodia	national	Proceedings	Khmer with ear-phone translator
Indonesia	*Profil Peraih CBFM Award Dan Proses Seleksi* (Profile of the Winners of CBFM Award and the Selection Process)	SGPPTF Indonesia, Ford Foundation and Ministry of Forestry	national	book (announcement of outstanding practices with some analysis)	Bilingual
Indonesia	Hope for Sustainable Livelihood	SGPPTF Indonesia	national	documentary film with brochure	Bahasa Indonesia
Indonesia	Introduction to participatory market analysis for Non-timber Forest Products	Lembaga Alam Tropika Indonesia (LATIN)	4 villages in Sukabumi District	Interactive CD Training Material	Bilingual
Indonesia	Sanggabuana Bulletin	RMI	Kasepuhan Cibedug in Citorek Village, Cibeber Subdistrict, Lebak District	Local Bulletin targeted for local audience and dev't community	Bahasa Indonesia
Indonesia	Lesson Learned SGPPTF Indonesia	SGPPTF Indonesia and Perkempulan KARSA	national	compilation of case studies resulting from writing workshops with grantees	Bilingual
Malaysia	Krokong Traditional knowledge	JKKK Krokong	Krokong, Sarawak	CD	-

Country	Title	Produced by	Site/Event Coverage	Nature and form of material	Language
Malaysia	Manual for Community Forest Facilitators	SGPPTF Malaysia and BiiH	national	manual	-
Pakistan	Protecting Forests for the People of Pakistan	SGPPTF Pakistan	national	Book	English
Pakistan	Community Forestry & Enhancing Livelihood of Rural Communities	BEEJ	national	CD	English
Pakistan	From Mangroves to Conifers	SGPPTF Pakistan	national	DVD documentary	English
Pakistan	Role of Stakeholders in Sustainable Forest Management	SGPPTF Pakistan	national	Workshop Proceedings	English
Pakistan	National Workshop on Knowledge Management and Clustering for Networking	SGPPTF Pakistan	national	Proceedings	English
Pakistan	Documentary on Community Forestry in Mushakhi, Balochistan	BEEJ	Local	CD	Local
Pakistan	TV Documentary on Promoting Biodiversity Conservation through Ecotourism and Equitable Resource Use Project (BCEP)	HUJRA	Local	CD	Local
Philippines	*Bakas:* An Ethnographic Documentation of theBatak indigenous People in Sitio Kayasan, Barangay Tagabenit, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines	Bakas (In collaboration with *The Batak and the Tagbanua Indigenous Peoples)*	Sitio Kayasan, Barangay Tagabenit, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines	Book	English
Philippines	Baggao Biodiversity Landscape/Seascape Project	PROCESS Luzon Association Inc.	Quirino	CD	English
Philippines	SGPPTF Philippines Knowledge Management Workshop	Communication Foundation for Asia Inc.	national	workshop proceedings, 27-29 Nov 2006, Manila, Philippines.	English

Country	Title	Produced by	Site/Event Coverage	Nature and form of material	Language
Sri Lanka	Awareness workshop on SGPPTF projects to the officials of Department of Forest Conservation, October 2006	SGPPTF Sri Lanka	national	proceedings	local
Sri Lanka	Awareness workshop on export oriented market avenues for organic forest / garden products, October 2006	SGPPTF Sri Lanka	national	proceedings	Local
Sri Lanka	Project Progress Review and Evaluation Workshop	SGPPTF Sri Lanka	National	Proceedings	Local
Sri Lanka	Key Progress According to Themes	SGPPTF Sri Lanka	national	English translations of the most recent narrative progress reports submitted by respective grantees	English
Thailand	Community Forests in Thailand	SGPPTF Thailand	national	Book	Bilingual
Thailand	Community Forests in Thailand	SGPPTF Thailand	national	map poster	Bilingual
Thailand	Refining the Grassroots Wisdoms for Amenable CFM	SGPPTF Thailand	national	Book	Thai (English summary)
Thailand	Lessons Learned from Community Forest	SGPPTF Thailand	national	VCD documentary	Bilingual
Thailand	Celebrating Diversity, Community Forest and Harvest Festival	SGPPTF Thailand	national	VCD documentary	Bilingual
Vietnam	Sharing experiences and lesson learned: meeting, cross visit and cultural exchange among SGPPTF projects from Northern Mountain Area	SGPPTF Vietnam (secretariat)	Quang Ninh Province (23-25 Aug 2006) and Quang Binh Province (19-23 Sep 2006)	VCD documentary	Vietnamese with English subtitle
Vietnam	Project activities, achievements and lesson learned from implementation	Project VN/MOA/03-001	Vo Nhai District, Thai Nguyen Province	VCD documentary	Vietnamese and English subtitle
Vietnam	Community forest management models supported by SGPPTF program in Viet Nam	SGPPTF office, project VN/MOA/05-012 and VTV (Vietnam Television)	Thai Nguyen, Son La and Nghe An Provinces	VCD documentary and broadcasting in VTV2	Vietnamese
Vietnam	Community forest management model and lesson learned from implementation project VN/MOA/04-001	Project VN/MOA/04-001 and VTV (Vietnam Television)	Ban Sen commune, Van Don district, Quang Ninh Province	VCD documentary and broadcasting in VTV2	Vietnamese

Country	Title	Produced by	Site/Event Coverage	Nature and form of material	Language
Vietnam	Community forest management model and lesson learned from implementation project VN/MOA/05-010	Project VN/MOA/05-010 and VTV	Chieng Kheo commune, Mai Son district, Son La Province	VCD documentary and broadcasting in VTV2	Vietnamese
Vietnam	Community forest management model and lesson learned from implementation project VN/MOA/04-001	Project VN/MOA/05-014 and VTV	Dong Rui commune, Tien Yen district, Quang Ninh Province	VCD documentary and broadcasting in VTV2	Vietnamese
Vietnam	National workshop on Guidelines for Implementation of CFM at Village Level	NWG-CFM, SGPPTF Vietnam and MARD	National	proceedings	Vietnamese and English
Vietnam	The SGPPTF first cross country visit: Vietnam	SGPPTF Vietnam	Ta Van Mong village, Ta van commune, Sa Pa district, Lao Cai province	Report publication	English
Vietnam	3 Case study reports	SGPPTF Vietnam	3 consultant groups	Report publication	Vietnamese and English
Vietnam	14 project evaluation reports	SGPPTF Vietnam	14 project sites and consultants	Report publication	Vietnamese and English
Region	SGPPTF Connects	SGPPTF Regional Coordination Office	Regional	special publication of SGPPTF, August 2006	English
Region	www.sgpptf.org	SGPPTF Regional Coordination Office	Regional	website	English
Region	Knowledge Management Strengthening Strategy and Action Plan	SGPPTF Regional Coordination Office, RECOFTC and AFN	Regional	Report on Knowledge Management Roundtable Discussion, Aug 2006	English
Region	Forest Lives: Lessons from SGPPTF	SGPPTF Regional Coordination Office, RECOFTC and AFN	Regional	Regional synthesis paper	English

Annex 2. SGPPTF Proposal Approval Process



Source: SGPPTF Indonesia Brochure

Annex 3. Summary of Findings from the SGPPTF by Country and Sub-Region

			Archipelagic SouthEast Asia			Mainland Southeast Asia			South Asia		
No		FINDING	Ind	Mys	Phil	Tha	VN	Cam	SL	Pak	RCO
COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY, LIVING WITH CHANGE											
Improving Security of Resource Access (6)											
1	Clarifying the status of forest resources, particularly the delineation of access and management responsibilities, can be supported by skilled facilitation and participatory mapping processes, if there is acceptance of community processes by government.		Watala Karsa RMI		Participatory mapping widely used				programmatic focus on boundary marking	Malakand	
2	Formalizing arrangements for community access and management in forest areas takes time. In the meantime, informal access rights can be improved in the short term through building better communication and linkages between communities and local authorities		RMI, Photo	PACOS		A	A	A		A	
3	A legal arrangement backed by a contract, Memorandum of Understanding or lease, provides greater security than informal access rights, and is particularly relevant where there is no specific legal framework for community management of forests.		A			A		Use of MOUs for buffer zones noted by coordinator	EPF	Haashar MMF	
4	In the long term, enabling and workable legal frameworks that recognize community rights and responsibilities provide a strongest basis for community forest management than informal and context specific agreements, if they are implemented effectively in practice.		legal framework exists	legal framework in Sabah & Sarawak Box: SPNS Photo	enabling framework through IPRA and CBFM		enabling framework for village community forests	effects of ineffective implementation		guzara forests in former princely states can be locally owned	
5	Collaborating to navigate complex laws and bureaucratic systems helps to reduce the cost and increase the negotiation capacity for communities to secure indigenous resource rights.				NATRIPAL, BPPI, TFA, MRST, BKT; Photo						
6	Community institutions that are able to operate within the wider political sphere can help communities to address conflicts and threats to resource rights.		Walhi	A	A	A	A	Box: SSO, CRDT, ABE, BPS	A	A	

			Archipelagic SouthEast Asia			Mainland Southeast Asia			South Asia		
No		FINDING	Ind	Mys	Phil	Tha	VN	Cam	SL	Pak	RCO
Managing rapid social change to sustain communities and local resource management practices (4)											
7	Local knowledge needs to be used and exchanged to keep it alive. Methods for documenting and sharing this knowledge need to fit the purpose, which may include influencing societal attitudes towards indigenous people, inter-generational exchange, and inter-community exchange.		A	PACOS, PTF, Photo on Heroes of the Forest	PAMALIHI Green Mindanao TLDFI, Tagbalay Mihitrico Palawan network Mindanao network	Inpaeng + programmatic focus				A	
8	In harnessing local institutions, it is important to consider issues of culture, equity and representation, and strengthen such bodies to work with current issues and governance contexts.		OPANT			A				Photo SRSSP	
9	Local and scientific knowledge can be combined to support resource management and livelihoods, if the process values both perspectives and secures the intellectual property of communities.		linking communities with researchers	JKKK-Krokong	SoLIDaRM	Kanchanaburi			linking communities with researchers	linking communities with researchers	
10	Communities are finding modes of development that balance local perspectives with external opportunities, when supported with practical strategies to help people plan for and take up opportunities in ways that support local practices and culture.			Ecotourism at various sites		Box: Inpaeng & Kanchanaburi				VZ (Vaquar Zakria)	

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LOCAL FOREST GOVERNANCE											
How planning decisions are reached (5)											
11	In facilitating community dialogue for participatory planning, the more crucial investment is time, not money.		Peka LATIN SHKLestari	PTF manual on CF facilitation	Sta. Maria Goretti Foundation	Box: keys to successful community management	PTF land allocation case study	Table: problems and solutions in community dialogue facilitation		CARAVAN & KIDF	
12	Strengthening community organizations or forming local committees and interest groups builds human and social capital needed to help rural societies participate in a globalizing world.		Persepsi community management units; Lore Lindu youth	Indigenous groups; CF as training ground for village leaders	farmers gaining computer skills; Ips learning to negotiate legal contracts; organizations brokering for local peace	community networks; youth in biodiversity monitoring	PTF land allocation case study		youth involvement in 11 of 18 projects	interest groups; ways to level playing field for women; WPA & PCDF; training ground for Citizen boards	
13	Strong community-based organizations promote forests when members are aware of and experience the benefits for doing so.		A (Watala)		A	A	PTF land allocation case study	EPDO		WIIFT	
14	Resource base assessment has to be rooted in community values concerning forests for it to be effective in the planning process.		Topo Uma & Karsa; Rupit & Walhi	SPNS	covering costs; what can slow down assessment	northern Thailand	PTF land allocation case study	SCW; covering costs	incorporating home gardens in village land use planning	Lasoona, HUJRA, WPA	
15	The process of developing and communicating community management plans facilitates integration of forest-dependent communities into broader rural development frameworks.		Mitra Bentala; revolving fund scheme	PTF workshops on planning for sustainability	SIBF, CFFQI, BICAS, and DMP		PTF study on management planning & forest dev't fund	revolving fund schemes	revolving fund schemes	WWF-Zhob	

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How plans are being implemented (4)											
16	Involving local residents in forest protection helps surface knowledge on the scale and scope of illegal forest activities and sustains local monitoring, especially when they have strong support in facing powerful groups.		A (Opant)	project billboards providing sense of security	multi-stakeholder forest protection committees		money or paddy as fines for violators	ABiC; Oddar Meanchey; WACD	vigilant committees involving unemployed village youth	Caravan & KIDF checkposts	
17	Local communities demonstrate a variety of ways to protect forests from fire, livestock and invasive species - aside from patrolling against illegal forest activities.		A (LPSSP)			fire breaks; Box on Nong Buan Lum Phu; Buddhist practices	livestock management to control grazing	Buddhist practices e.g. ABE; Preah Vihear; NSC	SLGF EPF RCAMS HEDO; Buddhist practices	rangeland management; SGPPTF comment on sustainability	
18	Strategies for rehabilitating degraded areas are more likely to succeed when these also aim to provide sustainable livelihoods for local communities.		agroforestry skills in Java	UBRA	BICAS, DMPMC, Kasanyagan Foundation, TLDFI	Inpaeng bring forests to backyards	planting on barren land; use of indigenous species; tree planting near households	NSC comment on CF in degraded areas	EPF, NEUF; Kalpitiya mangrove; Box on LUDC & assisted regeneration	Caravan/ KIDF women in nursery management; SDO mangrove	
19	Livelihood activities that aim to decrease local pressure on forests have greater potential to become environmentally and economically sustainable when linked with community management and broader land use planning mechanisms.				Mt. Kimangkil management planning			CRDT			

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Where governance capacities are growing (4)											
20	Community forest management activities are becoming venues for marginalized forest communities to effectively engage local authorities, civil society groups, and the private sector.		Watala & WWF-Lampung in FTWG; Group ; YBL Masta & Purworejo District Govt; Pakuli village & Nat'l Park; KANOPI & Health Dept.		ESADEF & positive attention from local govt ; MRST & DENR; AFDCI & local govt.	Inpaeng Life University featured in UN Human Dev't Report		Seila link; Kampot, Pailin, Banteay Meanchey Provinces; ABE on monks link with gov't officials; traders in Preah Vihear	strong relations with forest department	Malakand & working relations with forest dept.	
21	Community forest management projects are helping governments promote the rule of law.			posters on native customary rights found in national constitution			summarizing national laws and translating to ethnic languages	para-legal training; CDA updating guidelines to suit new law		formation of community orgs improving compliance to rule of law	
22	Participatory monitoring and evaluation sessions could help communities and local governments constructively reflect together on how things could be better.		A (Watala)				Figure on PM&E	Srer Khmer			
23	Through processes promoting local forest governance, district and town centers are gradually changing the way they view forest people.		awarding good practices; Topo Uma quote		community member quote	community member quote	public ceremony for awarding land allocation		A	awarding heroic acts	

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SUPPORTING PRACTICE THROUGH POLICY AND COLLABORATION											
Engaging peers (3)											
24	Peer-to-peer learning can immediately translate lessons into practice.		East Lampung-Watala	IPIMAS,Ma makat		Inpaeng				HUJRA	
25	Peer sharing of experiences and innovations helps build mutual trust and confidence, which can then lead to more substantive collaboration.		(Opant)		A	A				Knowledg e Manage ment & Networki ng workshop ; Malakand cluster	cross-countr y visits
26	Inter-community coordination strengthens voice in policy discussions.		(Watala)			Hmong in Chiangm ai & Lampung				A	
Influencing local level policies and programs (2)											
27	Investments that bring local authorities to the forest and facilitate face-to-face interactions help communities to better communicate their concerns.				Mt. Kimangkil/ Green Mindanao					A	
28	Sharing community management stories with local authorities helps shape local policies and programs		NRM regulation, Sumatra; Sulawesi local govts supporting fuya marketing ; LPPSP & Tegal Bill on greenbelt mgt; Karsa writeshop; APEKSI	UNDP-Sabah State Forest Dept MoU; PACOS Trust and Sarawak Fisheries Dept. upscaling of tagal system		Dong Na Tam CF increase d sympath y from local governm ent, forest & park authoriti es				A	

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Reaching out to national level policies (3)										
29	Providing inputs to national working groups reviewing natural resource management policies can be effective venues to engage national governments.	PTF-FTWG				Box: PTF-NWG	PTF-CFNet-work			
30	Supporting government departments in activities that promote communities in forest management builds goodwill and trust, which helps open up policy development processes. Helping government officials to solve the constraints that they face facilitates implementation of community-oriented forest policies.	PTF-MOF		PTF-NCIP & DENR				PTF-MENR		
31	Collaboration between a variety of sectors and institutions facilitates entry of community forest management stories into national policy discussions and helps promote the well-being of rural people living on state forest lands.		collaborating with volunteer celebrities		Refining grass-roots wisdom publication				HUJRA video documentary on PTV Peshawar	
SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS										
Securing basic livelihood assets and flows (7)										
	Financing for livelihoods and sustainable forest management									
32	Engaging active forest users and managers in self-help groups and revolving funds helps to mobilize funds to support their forest management activities and livelihoods (e.g. agriculture, service provision for ecotourism and NTFP enterprises, crisis support	self help groups			A (REST)	Box: Revolving Fund	BPS	CAMC programmatic focus	self help groups	
	Agroforestry, agriculture and livestock									
33	Intercropping on state forest lands helps to expand livelihood opportunities, as well as increasing the species diversity and resilience of forests, where appropriate species are used and access arrangements are agreed.	PARAMITRA YBL Masta				PTF forest land allocation case study		EPS		
34	Low input organic methods have helped to improve the productivity of home gardens, improving food security and providing alternative sources for forest products such as fuel wood and timber. Organic farming in areas neighboring forests has improved the the resilience of communities to environmental shocks such as drought.	Damar			Programmatic focus through networks		Box: ABiC & CRDT food security	tea growers switch to organic practices	promotion of organic farming	
35	Better management of livestock can reduce pressure on forest and pasture resources, improve food security and strengthen the viability of non-forest based livelihoods, but raises capacity challenges for forestry organizations.	LPPSP YBL Masta	(IPIMAS)			Da Nang	CRDT		Box showing 4 sites	
36	Linkages to organizations with relevant expertise on agricultural systems and support for peer learning can help to fill knowledge gaps amongst grantees.			A	CF guides for local governments; peer learning			TRI	Lok Sanjh	

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	Addressing water and energy needs with forest linkages										
37	Water related infrastructure, where it addresses community priorities, is a good entry point to improve community welfare and engage people in managing watershed forests.					A		Box: CRDT	Kendikatiya Village, Kegalle District	BEEJ	
38	People will take up energy efficient technologies if they fit with their lifestyles and needs, and there are convincing and immediate benefits to be gained from making a change.							Box: DATe	progammatic - fuel efficient stove	Sonmiani Bay, Lok Sanjh, HUJRA CARAVAN	
Forest based enterprises (8)											
	Market Analysis and Enterprise Planning										
39	Market analysis and enterprise planning need to assess the financial, social and environmental viability of potential enterprise options early in the process of enterprise development. Initial support and ongoing advice from enterprise specialists helps to develop community capacities in enterprise planning.		LATIN JAMBATA	Tasik Bera	PBSP UMF					A	
40	In developing enterprise products, it helps to start from existing business activities and products, so that existing community skills, market information and networks can be strengthened and developed.		Box: fuya-JAMBATA			and linkage to OTOP		palm juice processing	CAMC &tayurvedic medicines; Photo	mazri-SRSSP	
41	In product development, it is important to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of international, domestic and local markets. Marketing to urban and international markets may provide higher returns, but also involves higher start up costs and more stringent standards. Linkages to domestic and local markets can be a more viable starting point for community based enterprises.				A			Chambok ecotourism (Mlup Baitong)	Bibile (CAMC); PDF		

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	Facilitating Better Returns from the Market Chain									
42	Good market information and knowledge of the market chain are critical foundations for value addition. These, together with stronger negotiating capacity, are helping producers of forest based products to get a better return.	JAMBATA					BPS	CAMC	Zhob (chilgoza)	
43	NGOs and CBOs can play an important role in value addition by building the capacity of producers in collection, grading, storage, processing and transporting.	(LATIN); ecotourism	ecotourism		direct sales of forest products		ecotourism; direct selling forest products	processing forest fruits & nuts	direct sales of forest products	
	Equitable Enterprise Governance									
44	Equity in sharing enterprise benefits starts with involving marginalized groups in enterprise planning and design to address their interests and skills. Although NTFPs have a lower value than timber, NTFP enterprises provide a direct opportunity for active NTFP collectors, who are often the poorest in a community	LATIN (JAMBATA)					Chambok	NTFP grantees	Mazri (Hangu), Kailash, Keti Bunder	
45	Transparent, equitable, and sustainable management structures and processes are essential to enable enterprise benefits to be equitably shared, and for the long term sustainability of enterprises.							CAMC building transparency		
	Sustainable Management of Forest Products									
46	If economic returns from forest based resources are high enough, they can provide an incentive to shift from unsustainable harvesting practices.	Persepsi						CAMC	Zhob (chilgoza)	

Notes:

1. Highlighted cells indicate the countries where each finding can be substantiated.
2. Highlighted cells with case examples summarized are those that are discussed in the section on Findings and Lessons from SGPPTF. Case summaries could refer to the grantee, the community, the location, or the context of the finding.
3. Highlighted cells marked with 'A' are countries (or cases) that SGPPTF national coordinators asked to be added when they reviewed the list of findings from 17-18 June 2007 in Jakarta, Indonesia.
4. Cells without highlights indicate that the researchers responsible for the synthesis of these findings were unable to capture documented cases from these countries.