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Manual

Capacity Development for Sustainable Land Management

LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development &
Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project

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LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development & Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project

Manual

Capacity Development for Sustainable Land Management

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Preface

This manual for Capacity Development for Sustainable Land Management was developed in the context of the GEF's LDC and SIDS *Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management* Project. It is designed to provide tools, methods and information on the process of developing national capacity for sustainable land management.

This manual is based on an extensive review of existing literature and practices in capacity development, and is adapted to respond to the specific challenges of LDCs and SIDS in the context of sustainable land management.

The manual was produced by Unisféra International Centre for the Global Support Unit. The authors wish to thank all who have contributed, directly or indirectly, to its development. The authors also wish to thank the participants in the regional workshops in Nadi, Fiji, and Bridgetown, Barbados, for their input on earlier drafts of this manual, and to the UNDP and GSU for their support and advice.

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Introduction

Healthy ecosystems sustained by productive lands play a vital role in ensuring socio-economic development and securing basic human needs such as food, water, shelter and health. Agricultural landscapes, water and forest ecosystems are interrelated in a complex productive chain that generates the goods and services such as food, fuel wood, fibre, timber, drinking water and a myriad of traded goods that constitute the very basis of human livelihoods and socio-economic development. Healthy lands are the keystone of this vital productive chain.

LDCs and SIDS, and especially poor populations, depend on these ecosystem goods and services in greater proportions than any other population or countries in the world. Generally speaking, poor populations derive a greater share of their food and incomes directly from their natural environment, especially from land, water and forest ecosystems. Moreover, these resources are often scarce, and too often degraded in LDCs and SIDS as a result of natural and socio-economic constraints and a general lack of country capacity to manage land in a sustainable manner. This combination of factors leads to the gradual erosion of an already limited resource base, with dramatic impacts on livelihoods and development.

Individuals, organisations and domestic systems may be perceived to have little control over some of the natural and socio-economic determinants of land degradation. However, individual, organisational and systemic capacities to implement sustainable land management can evolve rapidly and allow countries to change outcomes in a short period of time by changing the way stakeholders behave, interact and address land management challenges. This may take place within the boundaries of existing natural and socio-economic constraints and ultimately push these boundaries back.

Purpose and target audience

The purpose of this manual is to support LDCs and SIDS in developing country capacities for Sustainable Land Management (SLM) with a view to influence SLM outcomes by improving the response of individuals, organisations and systems to land management challenges. Sustainable land management can be defined as:

conservation and utilization of land resources such as soils, water, animals and plants to meet the material, aesthetic and spiritual needs of humankind today, while ensuring the future productive potential of these resources, as well as the maintenance of their environmental functions.[1]

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) defines sustainable land management (SLM) as "the use of land resources (soils, forests, rangelands, water, animals and plants) for the production of goods to meet human needs while assuring the long-term productive potential".[2]

This manual is intended for SLM stakeholders in LDCs and SIDS and their advisors. This includes public servants and officials, programme managers, public and private decision makers, experts and academia as well as NGOs, associations and individuals involved in various sectors, including: agriculture, forestry, tourism, energy, extractive

1. World Bank, 2002.
2. GEF, Focal Areas and Strategic Programming for GEF 4, October 2007. Available at www.gefweb.org

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industries, infrastructure development, fire management, drought and coastal management. This also includes local stakeholders directly involved in land management (farmers, communities) as well as stakeholders involved in setting up legal and economic frameworks as well as the multiplicity of policies that exert a direct or indirect influence on land management nationwide. From the parcel of land to the capitals, a myriad of stakeholders intervene on land management issues. Developing their individual and collective capacity to understand and implement SLM is the purpose of this manual.

This manual takes as a starting point the context and capacities of these SLM stakeholders in LDC/SIDS. Generally speaking, LDCs and SIDS have a smaller pool of individual capacities (skills, knowledge, abilities) to rely on in implementing SLM, whether in the scientific and technical realm or in the policy and planning one. Organisations are often small, understaffed and operating under important budgetary constraints. Staff turnover is important and organisational learning constitutes a constant challenge. Last but not least, systemic capacities, i.e. the overall governance framework including laws and regulations, economic regimes and incentives systems, land tenure arrangements, infrastructure and a myriad of other systemic factors influencing land management may be sub-performing or dysfunctional.

SLM stakeholders comprise:

- Land users, farmers and communities
- Environmental and Development NGOs and community organizations
- Academia and the research community
- Private sector firms, including small and medium enterprises and the informal markets
- Local authorities, elected officials, traditional authorities
- Ministries in charge of agriculture, water, urban planning, tourism, forests, finance, planning, mining, environment

In such a context, capacity development needs are huge and the task of prioritizing needs and delivering capacity development interventions may seem overwhelming for individuals and organisations who take such responsibility. The starting point of a successful capacity development initiative must therefore be to assess the individual and organisational capacities that can be harnessed to deliver the needed interventions. In some cases building organisational delivery capacity could be a good first option to consider.

Elsewhere, capacity retention in weak organisations can be the first challenge to address when considering capacity development in a long term perspective. Individuals and organisations responsible for delivering capacity development interventions should therefore seek to develop and retain their own capacity to become capacity multipliers and agents of change.

Assumptions and definitions

For the purpose of this manual, **capacity** is defined as the ability of individuals, institutions and systems to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner. **Capacity development** is thereby the process through which the abilities to do so are obtained, strengthened, adapted and maintained over time.

Three different types of capacities need to be considered in capacity

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development initiatives: individual, organisational and systemic capacities. The GEF Guide for Self-Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management[3] defines these three types the following way:

- Capacity building at the **systemic** level emphasises the overall policy framework in which individuals and organisations operate and interact with the external environment, as well as the formal and informal relationships of institutions.
- Capacity building at the **organizational** level focuses on the overall organisational performance and functioning capabilities, as well as the ability of an organisation to adapt to change. It aims to develop the institution as a total system, including individuals, groups and the organisation itself.
- Capacity building at the **individual** level refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviours-imparting knowledge and developing skills while maximising the benefits of participation, knowledge exchange and ownership.
- **Institutional strengthening** refers to the process of building on individual and organizational capacities to create effective and efficient processes and organizations that enable them "to constantly adjust to their environment in order to attract the resources (human and financial) required to carry out their mandate".[4]

This manual starts from three assumptions. First, capacity development is **endogenous**, which means that interventions need to be country-driven, adapted to domestic circumstances and to take existing capacities as a starting point. Second, it is a **process**: even though capacity-building interventions may have a starting point and an end, they all eventually tie up together into the long term process of capacity development. This means that short term interventions must be planned with a long term vision. Last but not least, capacity development is a **participatory** exercise: individuals and organisations are ultimately the depositories and users of the capacities we seek to develop. Without a proper engagement strategy, capacity development interventions might miss their target.

3. Global Environment Facility, A Guide for Self-Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management, 2001.

4. Adapted from Charles Lusthaus, David Gray, Marie-Hélène Adrien: "Strengthening Institutions in the Developing World: Trends and Issues", Universalia Occasional Paper, 1996

Key concepts

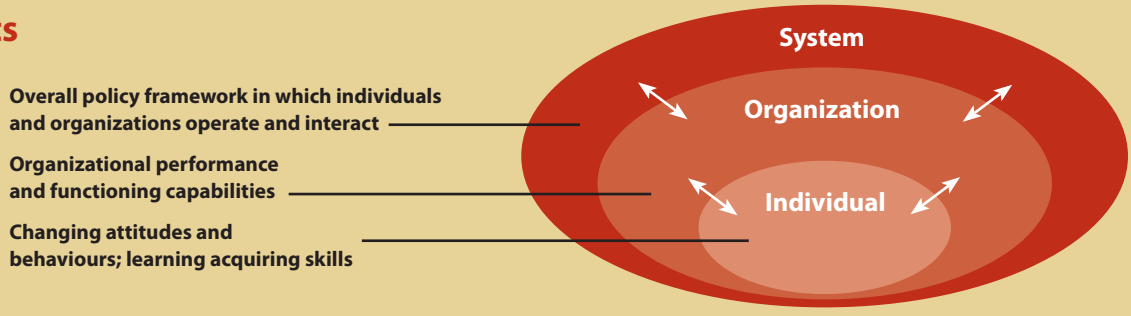

Figure 1: Key concepts in capacity development

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Organisation of the manual

This manual provides guidance in the process of developing individual, organisational and systemic capacities to address SLM in a cross-sectoral and integrated approach. The reader will find concrete steps, methods, tools and approaches to undertake capacity development in a systematic, comprehensive manner.

The manual is organised into four main sections.

PART 1

Part I

provides an overview of capacities needed for SLM for reference purposes. This part may be used by readers to help better define their needs and capacity development interventions. It also provides an overview of the various methods that can be used to build capacity at the individual, organizational and systemic levels.

PART 2

Part II

presents a generic method to assess existing capacity and to determine gaps and future needs. Although it is expected that most readers have already completed some form of self assessment, the proposed method is designed to enable the reader to complete their understanding of their country's or organization's needs.

PART 3

Part III

provides tools and methods to prioritize, implement and evaluate capacity development initiatives for Sustainable Land Management. It is intended to assist readers who are responsible for designing, planning and delivering capacity development projects in their own country.

PART 4

Part IV

consists of a compendium of additional resources, references and linkages which provide additional insights on the tools and methods presented in this manual.

PART 1 Capacities for SLM

Part I identifies the capacities needed for achieving key milestones towards SLM. At the end of this section, the user should have a better knowledge of the various capacities required for SLM at the national level.

Contents of this part

1. Overview of required capacities for SLM

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a broad overview of capacities required in order to achieve the major milestones of sustainable land management. In many cases, countries using this manual will have already achieved some of these steps during the development of their NAPs or SLM policies. Therefore, this section provides both an indication of the capacities which may already be present in a country and of those that may be necessary in the longer term in order to maintain achievements.

The chapter is organized so as to present the core capacities needed to achieve the main tasks or milestones of SLM planning and implementation. While there is no single path for achieving sustainable land management or for developing SLM policies, it is recognized that a number of major milestones need to be achieved. Their actual order is flexible; in practice, some of the steps may take place concurrently. These milestones each involve specific capacities at the individual, organizational and systemic level.

1.1 Capacities for stocktaking

Obtaining an initial snapshot of a country's condition from the environmental, institutional and financial perspectives requires a certain set of capacities and resources ranging from the highly specialized and technical – such as the capacity to deploy GIS data – to the more general, such as the capacity to undertake policy analysis and literature reviews. Building a national capacity to undertake such assessments in an iterative, continuous manner throughout the SLM policy and programming cycle obviously implies developing human (individual) resources, but maintaining this capacity may very well depend on the development of organizational and institutional capacity.

1.1.1 Capacities for assessing the environmental conditions

Assessing the precise state of land degradation at the national level can be a complex and daunting task beyond the capacity of many countries. Depending on the type of initial diagnostic required, as well as on continuing information

needs, a country will either chose to develop its own capacity or to rely on external sources of information. Nevertheless, in order to generate a minimum level of environmental knowledge, a combination of scientific, policy and technical skills is necessary.

- **Scientific capacity:** from a scientific perspective, obtaining an assessment of land degradation can involve physical measurements of soil fertility, vegetative cover or agricultural productivity, and observations of the land use practices. For the most part, a science-based land degradation diagnostic will rely on a combination of on-the-ground observation and existing information. Capacities needed to achieve a scientific assessment are not limited to the availability of scientists, academics and researchers in the relevant fields, such as soil science, water quality management, or forestry. They also include the organizational capacity to receive and analyze the information, as well as abilities to conduct community-based assessments and cross-cutting competences such as coordination, communication or analysis.
- **Information management capacity:** Given that most assessments of the environmental conditions will rely on externally available information and data, the ability – both at the individual and organizational level – to collect, analyse and disseminate the information is crucial. For example, if a country requires the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), their deployment should be supported by adequate technological infrastructure (i.e. computers) as well as adequately trained staff (i.e. in database management), but also with the organizational capacity to extract GIS information relevant to policy-makers (i.e. mapping specialists). GIS and Remote sensing tools are a preferred technological option for continuous monitoring of land use and quality, but their use is onerous. It may be recommendable to ensure that they are used for multiple applications, or that the technology is shared within a region. Ensuring the free flow of data and information among organizations involved in SLM is equally important in this regard (see section 1.8).

Capacities for assessing environmental conditions

- **Science:** scientists, researchers, and trained specialists in relevant fields (ie agriculture, hydrology, forestry, climatology); ability to synthesize scientific information; capacity to conduct consultative assessments;
- **Information management:** Information technology infrastructure (hardware and software); GIS information specialists; database management; mapping specialists;

1.1.2 Capacities for assessing the policy and institutional conditions

Achieving sustainable land management often requires the development of new policies or, at the very least, reforms and institutional changes that will support changes in land management on the ground. This requires a thorough knowledge of broader, systemic constraints and incentives that can hinder or promote sustainable land management. Consequently, assessments of a country's baseline condition usually include an analysis of

legal, policy and institutional conditions. This capacity will be essential throughout the policy planning process.

- **Legal analysis capacity:** At the outset of the SLM process, a review of existing legal instruments related to land use and land management is necessary in order to determine gaps and to identify possible new instruments. Legal assessments usually include an evaluation of the legal framework and of its enforcement, as well as the impacts of customary law on land management. The capacity needed to achieve this step of the baseline involves the consultation of lawyers or environmental law specialists. Such specialists will usually be required to participate in SLM planning committees, so as to inform future regulatory or policy choices.
- **Policy and Institutional analysis capacity:** The task of reviewing the policy and institutional context for SLM is often entrusted to project coordinators in lead ministries. This task usually requires knowledge of SLM-related policies, but also of policy making mechanisms in the country as well as a thorough knowledge of institutions and organizations involved in SLM. Most often, this task is achieved through literature reviews as well as through consultation with stakeholders, particularly from relevant government departments. From an individual and organizational perspective, this task requires broad analytical and communication skills (see 1.2 for policy capacity).

Capacities for assessing the legal, policy and institutional context

- **Legal:** environmental legislation specialists; specialists in land tenure law; knowledge of customary law; general legal analysis capacity.
- **Policy and institutional:** knowledge of policy making mechanisms; knowledge of organizations involved in SLM; information gathering capacity; policy analysis capacity.

1.1.3 Capacities for assessing the financial conditions:

Addressing the financial barriers to sustainable land management is considered by many to be the most important step in SLM planning. This is achieved both through the removal of policy barriers to SLM and through the active mobilization of resources. The mobilization of resources and investment towards SLM, whether domestic or international, requires in the first stage an accurate portrait of available resources. In addition, it requires the implementation, at an early stage, of a private sector engagement strategy.

- **Financial analysis capacity:** The skills needed to track and analyse resource flows towards SLM are similar to those needed to conduct the policy and institutional analysis referred to above. However, in addition to these individual and organizational capacities, a sound knowledge of budget allocation processes at the national level is also necessary. This may go beyond the capacity of environmental ministries, but such skills may reside naturally within central government agencies (ie ministries of finance and planning). Staff within central financial agencies is usually trained to conduct public expenditure reviews and, in certain cases, if they are tasked with coordinating donor support, will be able to provide a synthesis of international flows towards SLM. In cases where donor support is channelled through various

ministries, some coordination and will be necessary in order to obtain an accurate picture of resources currently dedicated to SLM projects and programs.

- **Private sector engagement capacity:** Obtaining information from the private sector is often challenging, and it is useful to engage them as stakeholders at the beginning of the planning process so as to ensure buy-in and potential investment. While the skills needed to consult the private sector are not much different than those needed to consult other local stakeholders, an understanding of private sector investment and planning cycles may be useful. Engaging small and medium enterprises that have an impact on land use and land management, as well as larger companies which may have significant investments in land resources, will require strong advocacy or even lobbying skills, as well as individual and organizational leadership (see also 1.8 for leadership capacity).

Capacities for assessing the financial conditions

- **Financial analysis:** policy analysis capacity; ability to undertake public expenditure reviews; coordination
- **Private sector:** advocacy; knowledge of private sector dynamics; consultation; lobbying skills; leadership.

1.2 Capacities for SLM policy setting and NAP development

Once the initial stocktaking has been achieved, a country is poised to begin developing SLM plans and policies. The process to achieve this most important milestone is a long and often complex one to manage. It involves a wide range of participants, as well as a broad range of individual, organizational and systemic capacities. As a first step, identifying stakeholders and partners and engaging them in the process requires strong communication and leadership skills; in addition, building organizational capacity to support a consultative process is also essential. Indeed, the success of the policy development cycle will often depend on overcoming organizational or institutional challenges, particularly the resistance to change which is inherent in every organization.

1.2.1 Engagement

Developing new policies or instituting a process of reform that will ultimately lead to changes in land management requires a strong capacity to engage all SLM stakeholders and partners. The capacity to maintain these changes in the longer term will also depend on the willingness and capacity of the various types of actors, organizations and individuals involved in land management.

- **Capacity to engage governmental stakeholders:** Because the responsibilities for land management are often distributed across a section of government ministries, the creation of an interministerial steering committee is recommended. Lead ministries, and within them individual program/project managers will require the capacity to coordinate such committees, and to foster collaboration and consensus. This requires broad communication and networking skills at the individual level, as well as a minimum of organizational support. Lead ministries will also be required

to engage political stakeholders (ie parliamentarians) and local or traditional authorities. In this regard, successful communications will often depend on the skills of individuals involved in SLM as well as on the ease with which organizations communicate between themselves (regular flows of information, information technology, but also established channels of communication).

- **Creating buy-in and maintaining consultative processes (organizational capacities):** As mentioned above, engaging all segments of society entails the creation and maintenance of a legitimate consultation process. Organizations in charge of spearheading this process may need to invest resources from a number of perspectives, such as: the development of communication mechanisms and public awareness campaigns, or the provision of infrastructure to support consultations (meeting rooms, translation into local languages, documentation, transportation, financial support and incentives to participation). The organization should also demonstrate the capacity to integrate the information, requests and recommendations from consultations and to translate these into meaningful policy alternatives for SLM. The success of such an engagement strategy can be measured by the general willingness to take the results of consultations into consideration.
- **Negotiation Capacity:** Making decisions in the field of SLM, based on a consultative process, will inevitably entail a negotiation among the stakeholders. For example, achieving SLM may require implementing some changes within the realm of a specific ministry (ie Tourism) or a series of changes. Defining the policy options within government as well as with civil society and the private sector will therefore require some discussion so that all stakeholders understand and assume their responsibilities. A successful negotiation entails that all parties understand the benefits and costs of the new policy options, and that the end goal remains achievable within the available means (see also 1.4 for capacities needed for broad stakeholder consultations).

Capacities for consultative processes

- **Engaging government:** communication, lobbying and negotiation skills, coordination capacity, communication infrastructure.
- **Organizational capacities:** communication mechanisms and infrastructure, willingness to integrate local concerns, financial resources and the creation of incentives to participation.

1.2.2 Policy development capacities

In its broadest sense, "policy" is a set of interrelated decisions designed to achieve a particular goal. Policies can be developed in a number of contexts (for example, in reaction to an emergency or through a longer, pre-determined process) and are not always explicitly stated. Often, policies are the result of a series of individual decisions made over time. In general terms, a country's capacity to develop a new SLM policy will depend on its overall capacity to understand the problems with current land management

systems, to analyse the possible policy responses in regard to their impacts, and to negotiate the final recommended policy with stakeholders. Setting a new policy for SLM will also require making a set of decisions in a broad range of sectors and to implement changes from the local to the national levels. Ensuring that the policy is implemented in the long term will depend on a country's capacity to set benchmarks and indicators, to monitor compliance by the various actors, and to make necessary adjustments as required.

- **General policy capacity:** The capacity to conduct policy analysis and development can be described as a combination of skills at the individual and organizational level. In the case of SLM, this capacity should be developed within each of the concerned ministries, regardless of the lead institution. Policy capacity is determined first and foremost by the ability of an individual to research and understand the issues and the linkages between them, and to formulate clear recommendations for a potential decision. In the case of SLM, this entails the ability to research and access information related to land use, land management at the local level, as well as on the impacts of other policies on local land use, for example agricultural subsidies and tenure arrangements.
- **Organizational policy capacity:** At the level of organizations, developing policy capacity may require the recruitment of specialized staff in the various SLM related sectors, and providing them with the means and support to accomplish their tasks (for example, adequate salaries to ensure retention). Policy specialists usually have a background in social sciences or economics and are trained in policy analysis methods. Access to information and pertinent data is also crucial to policy analysis and development, while leadership and established decision-making mechanisms at the organizational level can greatly facilitate the process.

Policy Development Capacities

- **General Policy Capacity:** policy specialists with social science or economics training, information and communication infrastructure.
- **Negotiating skills:** individual and organizational communications capacities, leadership
- **Organizational capacities:** human resources, leadership, established decision-making mechanisms

1.2.3 Policy Reform Capacities

Achieving sustainable land management will, in most cases, entail more than implementing a limited number of programs and projects. In some cases, extensive policy reforms and the adoption of new legal instruments, directives, guidelines, and market-based instruments may be necessary to enable long lasting transformation on the ground. Implementing policy changes require a broad set of skills within and outside government, many of which have been explored earlier. For example, selecting the best available instrument will likely require strong analytical skills.

- **Capacity to adopt and implement regulatory instruments:** the adoption of new legal instruments (laws, ordinances, regulations, permit systems) will require a thorough knowledge of law-making processes in the country, engagement and lobbying skills, access to parliamentarians and decision makers where applicable, as well as legal drafting expertise. In addition, where the promulgation of laws is concerned, enforcement capacity is a crucial factor of success. For example, in the case of regulations addressing excessive deforestation, local monitoring capacity (e.g. village patrols) as well as the ability to administer sanctions (e.g. fines) in case of contravention will help ensure the application of the rule.
- **Capacity to develop and apply fiscal instruments:** In many countries, addressing the underlying economic conditions is a necessity to achieve SLM. Fiscal incentives (such as subsidies) or disincentives (such as taxes) can be useful to orient land users towards better practices. Similarly, the capacity to administer these instruments should be created within government. The application of certain instruments will be facilitated or hindered by the overall fiscal system of a country. For example, a country's overall tax collection capacity will determine the success of fiscal instruments applied specifically to land. Expertise in economics is therefore necessary in order to determine the best blend of instruments and their points of application and potential impacts.

Capacities to implement policy reforms

- **Capacity to adopt and implement legal instruments:** expertise in law-making, engagement and lobbying skills, enforcement capacity.
- **Capacity to apply fiscal instruments:** understanding of systemic conditions, expertise in economics or environmental economics, policy capacity.

1.3 Capacities for creating the enabling environment for SLM

Setting and implementing SLM policies require more than making an explicit decision about land use patterns or methods. In many cases, the effectiveness of SLM policies will be determined by other, broader factors. The importance of integrating SLM principles in non land-related policies, programmes and projects has been recognized for some time now. In the case of countries where an SLM plan already exists, it is likely to have been developed as a stand-alone policy or programme; therefore its integration in broader country frameworks, including poverty reduction strategies, is advised. This integration – commonly referred to as mainstreaming – maximises the impact of SLM interventions by removing structural obstacles, helps facilitate the mobilization of domestic and international resources, and ensures the long-term sustainability of policy decisions.

The capacity to mainstream SLM principles into broader frameworks depends mostly on the creation of processes within governments that allow for policies to be revised and changed if necessary. This in turns depends on established interdepartmental communication mechanisms, as well as on solid policy analysis capacity to determine which frameworks are likely to have an impact on SLM. These capacities were highlighted above.

- **Strategic Environmental Assessment Capacity:** In many cases, the activities needed to integrate land concerns in broader policy frameworks are similar to those needed to integrate environmental issues in development policies. Such initiatives may already be ongoing in a number of countries, and it may simply be a matter of adding land management concerns to the overall process. In other cases, no such effort has been undertaken and a decision to restrict mainstreaming efforts to land management or to broaden them to the wider environmental agenda may be required. In any case, a number of tools are available to facilitate the mainstreaming process, such as strategic environmental assessments (SEA), which are conducted at the policy level. Strategic environmental assessments are usually conducted according to specific methodologies, and their application is not limited to environmental ministries. It is therefore important that policymakers and staff in all ministries are well informed and trained in SEA methods. In this way, provided SEAs are required before the adoption of a policy, major environmental side-effects will be identified and addressed. At the systemic level, however, generalizing the use of SEAs may require an explicit directive from the highest level. Strategic environmental assessments usually demand resources (whether human, financial or technical) which should be made available at the organizational level.
- **Awareness raising capacity:** Mainstreaming land issues in poverty reduction policies, programmes and projects also require that a large array of actors are aware of the major issues and challenges, and cognizant of the linkages between SLM and their own sphere of action. For example, for an economist or an education specialist, the links between trade or primary education and SLM may not be immediately apparent, even though they exist. Public awareness campaigns, or targeted information dissemination may help lift these barriers. Large-scale public awareness campaigns often require resources that are beyond the scope of a single ministry or agency, for example access to the media, financial resources, and the production of specific communications products. At a smaller scale, targeting community leaders or champions in the various stakeholder groups can also help create awareness. Information dissemination can take place as part of a capacity development initiative or can be part of a national-level awareness-raising effort. Regardless of the method adopted, the capacities required to create awareness include communications capacity, consultation capacity (see section 1.4), access to information and information technology, relations with the media (radio, television, print) and financial resources.
- **Managing organizational change:** The successful integration of land management issues into other policies require that organizations, particularly government organizations, can accept and manage change. Established processes for reviewing national policies are useful systemic attributes in this regard. Leadership, whether at the individual or organizational level is also an essential factor.

Capacities to set the enabling framework

- **Strategic environmental assessment:** policy analysis skills; familiarity with EA methods and approaches, adequate training of non-environmental staff; senior-level decision to apply EA to new policies; human, technical and financial resources to conduct individual EAs.
- **Awareness raising:** Consultation capacity; access to information; channels of communication with the public; access to the media; individual communication skills; information technology; social marketing skills; financial resources.
- **Organizational change:** policy review processes and mechanisms; leadership.

1.4 Capacities for engaging local stakeholders

Whereas Section 1.2.1 spoke about the capacities needed to engage government partners, this section provides an overview of the capacity necessary to undertake participatory processes that will inform SLM policies "from the ground up". It is usually recommended that a process of engagement through consultation be undertaken so as to integrate local concerns in future policy choices. Stakeholder consultation involves a wide range of technical, organizational and informational techniques. Multi-level and cross-sectoral stakeholder participation and engagement is essential for all aspects of SLM, given the multifaceted aspects of both the causes and consequences of land degradation and SLM solutions. A thorough consultative process will usually operate at a minimum at the local and the national level. Other levels, such as at district level or among groupings of communities facing similar challenges can also be important in certain situations. At each level as wide a range of stakeholder groups as possible need to be included in the process, for example at the local level: land users, local traders and merchants, decision and policy-makers, desk officers, researchers, NGOs and other civil society agencies and representatives from relevant government departments.

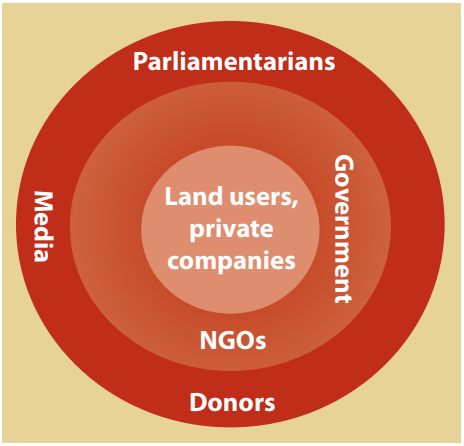
1.4.1 Capacities for identification of stakeholders

In the context of consultation processes the first area where capacity has to be available or developed is in the methods for stakeholder identification at each of the consultation levels. The range of stakeholders to be included in the consultation process will vary from country to country, but it is important that as many groups as necessary participate to ensure that consultations achieve consensus on strategies and that no one group feels excluded from the process. It is important to develop strategies that incorporate stakeholder participation throughout the SLM analysis and strategy development process.

Stakeholder analysis is an essential tool in this context. For each level in the consultation process, stakeholders need to be identified through the compilation of profiles that incorporates their understanding of the issues under investigation and their individual concerns, needs and expectations. Criteria upon which the assessment of stakeholders will be based should be agreed in advance. It is usually recommended to distinguish three categories of stakeholders:

- Primary stakeholders: individuals and local groups directly impacted by the land degradation under investigation and direct beneficiaries of SLM strategies. Here is it important to ensure the participation of vulnerable groups such as women and marginal groups like pastoralists.
- Secondary stakeholders: people or groups who have a role in the decision-making process without being directly affected by the outcome of the consultation process. These are usually intermediaries in the program delivery process. These can be funding organizations, implementing agencies, executing agencies, NGOs, etc.
- Key stakeholders: those who can significantly influence the consultation process and/or who are critical to the success of it. These include policy and decision makers, external experts and government representatives.

Stakeholder analysis in the context of SLM usually implies determining who has an interest in, or might benefit or suffer from changes in land management, and identifying which individuals or organizations might have an influence on the process as a whole. It also involves, to some extent, an analysis of their assets and possible contributions to SLM planning and implementation.



Example of a stakeholder map for SLM [5]

1.4.2 Capacities for stakeholder consultations

A wide range of expertise is required for undertaking stakeholder consultations. Most of these capacities are similar for each level of the consultation process, with additional demands on the national consultation task force. Each consultation process feeds into the next level, starting with the local level.

- **Multidisciplinary technical expertise:** Capacity needs to be in place to ensure high quality in data collection and analysis. Experts may have to be brought in to present and explain different models and systems options to the stakeholders. This expertise requires neutrality and sensitivity towards local needs and perceptions. In addition there is usually a need for a coordination capacity for multi-sector data collection as well as for managing the integration of multiple consultation processes.
- **Communication and facilitation:** Capacity will be needed to lead the participatory consultation processes at the different levels and to mediate between different interests and potential conflicts among stakeholders. The consultation process can take a number of different forms and structures that will depend on the specific circumstances, for example public forums, targeted workshops, strategic planning meetings, seminars, cross-visits or community-based discussions. Adequate capacity should be in place for all options where possible. Expert facilitators are useful to lead the consultation and to act

5. Adapted from IDRC, Enhancing Organizational Performance, 1999.

as moderators in group discussions. For example, in circumstances where there are weak or adversarial relations among stakeholders, neutral facilitators can help develop a sense of common purpose.

- **Participatory assessment and research:** A range of participatory methodologies can be used to enhance primary stakeholder participation. For field consultations and interviews of small groups, familiarity with Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) or similar assessment methodologies is usually required. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is often used for assessing needs, context, and impact at the community level. Other methods include socio-economic surveys, mapping, conflict analysis, stakeholder analysis, and ecological studies. More sophisticated tools such as GPS and GIS for developing accurate maps can also been used. Integrating participatory research and other forms of joint fact-finding into the decision-making process is a key feature for the SLM policy development. Where adequately trained staff in participatory methods is not available, expertise can be brought in to ensure that local communities are fully engaged in the analysis of the problem and the determination of solutions.
- **Gender awareness:** Given the key role played by women in natural resources management, including land management, it is widely recognized that the consultation processes for SLM need to include their perspective and knowledge. Staff performing the consultation, or facilitators and other contributing technical experts should be trained or have the expertise in gender sensitivity so that they can ensure that gender specific approaches to needs assessment and SLM are presented and integrated into the consultation outcome reports.
- **Reporting and follow-up:** The capacity to synthesize the findings of consultations, from the local to the national level, including identifying the major issues and recommendations is similar to policy analysis capacity. A template and other analysis tools could be developed to ensure that consistent reporting. In addition, this exercise can involve making choices about the types of information that emerge from consultation: governments will want to ensure a balance between their agenda and the needs expressed by communities. This may require setting up mutual accountability mechanisms, where the participants to the consultative process validate the results of the synthesis.

1.4.3 Capacities to participate in consultations

All stakeholders and groups will bring unique perspectives to the consultative process, but launching a public consultation may not be sufficient to ensure all opinions are represented. To ensure that the consultative process is broad-based and legitimate, it may be necessary to give some thought to the potential barriers to participation and to build the capacity of stakeholders to make meaningful contributions. This is particularly true of the most vulnerable groups, which are often the most impacted by land degradation. Barriers include:

- **Material obstacles** (such as remoteness, inability or lack of resources to travel), which may be lifted by providing financial assistance;
- **Lack of awareness** and information about the issues, which may be overcome by distributing standard documentation in advance, with particular attention to making the information accessible (eg in local dialects, or adapted to the levels of education of the stakeholders);

Organizational issues, for example if a certain community does not have established associations able to represent them in a national-level consultation. This challenge can be addressed by targeting under-represented communities and by helping them mobilize and organize their own structures; and

- **Cultural or motivational issues:** in some cases, some groups or segments of society may have been consulted too often with little concrete results, which means they will be less inclined to contribute. In other cases, some groups may not feel their participation is legitimate. The presence of facilitators and neutral conveners can help build trust.

Capacities for stakeholder consultation

- Capacity in stakeholder identification
- Capacity to ensure high quality in data collection and analysis
- Capacity to lead the participatory consultation processes and to mediate between different interests and potential conflicts among stakeholders
- Gender sensitivity
- Capacity to synthesize the findings of consultations, from the local to the national level, including identifying the major issues and recommendations
- Capacity to participate in consultations

1.5 Capacities for program and project implementation

Translating an SLM policy into concrete, on-the-ground impacts may require the development and implementation of programmes and projects in specific communities or geographic areas. The development, implementation and monitoring of project impacts require a certain set of skills in addition to the capacities referred to above (policy, financial, scientific). These techniques and resources are also required in order to deploy a capacity development initiative and to implement a resource mobilization plan. Program and project capacities are transferrable skills: while they may be developed in a specific context, the abilities they imply are applicable in a variety of fields and sectors. While government agencies may already have this capacity to a certain level, because the successful implementation of projects often relies on the full participation of the communities involved, it is useful to develop project capacity at the local level.

- **Results-based management:** Results Based Management (RBM) and the ability to develop Logical Framework Analyses (LFA) are essential skills for developing and managing programs or projects. RBM allows for the development of traceable objectives, outcomes and impacts and help develop project methodologies that maximize impact and monitor resource use. Using Results-based tools and methods to develop, implement and monitor projects helps ensure that activities, roles

and responsibilities, accountability mechanisms and resources are all clearly stated and understood by project participants. Most government administrations now use some form of RBM framework.

- **Project management infrastructure:** At the organizational level, beyond the recruitment of Programme or Project Managers, it is useful to agree on a unified approach and system for project management. Program and project management are often significant tasks that may need to be devolved to a single staff member or to a team. Clarity of roles and responsibilities, as well as accountability mechanisms for project management is useful. Software applications are available to assist managers in developing and tracking project progress; they vary in complexity, but usually require that an IT infrastructure is in place, as well as extensive training of staff.
- **Local project capacity:** Using a results-based approach to local project development also helps build the capacity of local stakeholders. The participatory formulation of project objectives, as well as a clear enunciation of roles, responsibilities and available resources can help build project ownership at the community level. However, local stakeholders participating in project development and implementation should understand the methods used, and their capacity to formulate recommendations along an RBM framework could be strengthened. In the case where the full responsibility for a project is devolved to a local organization, proper training in project management, RBM and accounting methods might be necessary.

Capacities for program and project implementation

- **Project management:** Staff trained in RBM, ability to use and develop LFAs.
- **Organizational capacities:** IT and communication infrastructure, agreement on a unified method for project management, continuous training for staff, appropriate software.
- **Local project capacity:** local training in project management, accounting; awareness of the expected results; mechanisms for participation; technical backstopping from government agencies.

1.6 Capacities for financial planning

Once the SLM policy has been set, and after its objectives have been integrated in broader policy frameworks, it becomes time to mobilize resources needed for its implementation. This section provides an overview of the capacities needed for governments to set financial targets and to cost the implementation of their SLM plans, as well as the capacities needed to mobilize national and international sources. Developing an 'investment plan' or a resource mobilization strategy to support the NAP and SLM in a country can be a complex exercise, and it is advisable to undertake concurrently with NAP development to ensure that SLM policy options are implementable. The analysis of the costs and benefits of chosen policy options will usually be undertaken during the policy development process, so as to present realistic options to the communities and decision-makers.

- **Cost-benefit analysis (CBA):** Cost benefit analyses are designed to estimate the equivalent money value of the benefits and costs to a community or a society of policies, programmes and projects it wishes to undertake. In

the context of an SLM plan or a NAP, this task will usually be entrusted to the program or project leader, with input from various ministries and stakeholders. In the environmental field, and particularly in the case of SLM, CBAs include social, environmental and economic costs and benefits which may be difficult to quantify or even to attribute ("who incurs the costs of land degradation?""Who benefits from SLM?""What is the money value of sound land ecosystems?"). In order to obtain a thorough CBA of SLM policy, the valuation of ecosystem services provided by healthy lands could be considered; similarly, the cost of inaction should also be considered. Applying these tools and methods may require the participation of staff trained in economics (or environmental economics, if possible), who can also communicate their findings in a simplified way to decision-makers, so that they may set goals, targets, and choose policy options based on an accurate description of their implications.

- **Resource mobilization capacity:** Mobilizing resources towards SLM requires good negotiating skills and leadership. It has been recognized that the capacity of a country to mobilize resources for SLM will often depend on the extent to which they have addressed broader systemic constraints such as the integration of SLM principles in country planning and development frameworks. Solid CBAs allow for the creation of resource mobilization plans that are based on concrete results, which in turns can be used to convince potential funding partners. It is useful to consider all possible sources of funding during the resource mobilization phase, from the national budgets to private sector investments and international grant-making agencies. Therefore the development and implementation of a resource mobilization plan will require knowledge of the various instruments of funding. Lead ministries may also wish to create a coordinating mechanism to mobilize resources so that efforts by stakeholders are channelled appropriately. [6]

- **Accounting and statistical capacity:** In general terms, at the organizational and systemic level, appropriate accounting practices, and statistical capacity are useful in the context of SLM planning. Accounting practices that are aligned to international standards are usually required by funders, and while they are usually in place within ministries of finance, technical ministries often have low capacity in this regard. It is recognized that the adoption of new accounting mechanisms may require systemic changes beyond the scope of SLM planning; however, creating this capacity in a country will provide benefits that extend well beyond environmental issues. At a minimum, program and project committees may find it useful to secure the participation of accountants to ensure proper controls are implemented and maintained.

Capacities for financial planning

- **Cost-benefit analysis:** environmental economists or staff trained in economic analysis, training in CBA methods
- **Resource mobilization capacity:** Coordination, communication, negotiating skills, knowledge of funders and their practices
- **Accounting and statistical capacity:** accountants, information systems to track financial information, statistical analysis tools

6. Additional guidance on the development of Medium-Term Investment Plans is provided in the Guidelines on Developing MTIPs.

1.7 Capacities for monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are essential aspects of program and project implementation. These tasks allow one to draw lessons from initiatives, to monitor impacts, improve interventions, and, ultimately, feed into a culture of accountability. In the context of SLM, the large number of stakeholders, implementing ministries and the diffusion of responsibilities calls for a shared system for monitoring and evaluation. M&E systems are a natural companion to results-based management practices, and apply to the broad range of activities involved in developing and implementing SLM policies, program and projects. Although the capacities involved in M&E are treated separately in this section, they should be developed in parallel to the capacities for program and project management. The M&E Framework for SLM should be developed at the outset of the process. In the case of many countries using this manual, this task may already have been completed.

- **Capacity for setting the M&E framework:** As mentioned earlier, the capacity needed to establish an M&E framework is of a rather general nature, and similar to that needed for policy setting and project management. Staff that is well versed or experienced in the development of LFAs and RBM systems will usually make a sound contribution to the definition of desired impacts, outcomes and outputs or activities. Usually, the development of indicators to track progress in the implementation of an SLM plan will reveal gaps or potential challenges inherent to the policy itself. Hence, the development of the M&E framework as one of the initial steps of planning towards SLM provides a useful check. In addition, M&E frameworks usually require that policy assumptions are clear and that risks are adequately assessed; therefore some capacity in risk assessment may also be required.
- **Capacity to perform periodical M&E:** Regular evaluations and monitoring milestones should be set as part of a project or program plan. In a context where the involved agencies, organizations, communities and individuals are numerous, and where the scope of intervention is broad (as will be the case for SLM) a simplified, shared M&E framework that can be applied by various users inside and outside of government, would be useful. Conducting M&E requires significant investments in staff time, as well as consultations and information gathering from stakeholders. There are various methods for performing evaluations, which range from desk reviews, surveys, rapid appraisals and stakeholder interviews, impact evaluations (usually at the end of a process), or expenditure reviews. Each technique offers distinct advantages, but also entails different costs and investments on the part of the implementing agency. Therefore, it may be useful to perform a cost-benefit analysis of the various tools in relation to the information needs.
- **Organizational capacities:** In many contexts, it may be useful to provide for an independent or semi-independent evaluation function within the government. In some countries, auditors exist who can be tasked with monitoring and evaluating the SLM policy or project. In other cases, it may be useful to create such capacity within the lead ministry as a separate office. Regardless of the configuration or the location of the M&E function inside the government, the development and application of a M&E framework should be provided adequate human,

financial and technical resources. As with project management, this may require the acquisition of software, training, the facilitation of consultations, and the availability of information. Finally, it is essential that the information generated from the application of M&E be fed back into future policy and program development. In that regard, the willingness of organizations to learn, their ability to manage change as well as the availability of an information management system, may contribute to strengthened organizational and systemic capacity.

Capacities for monitoring and evaluation

- **Setting the M&E Framework:** RBM, cost-benefit analysis, LFA development, consultation techniques, policy analysis capacity, risk assessment knowledge.
- **Performing M&E:** financial resources, human resources, consultation techniques, auditors, M&E specialists.
- **Organizational support:** information management system, independent M&E function/staff, audit functions, support for change.

1.8 Technical capacities for sustainable land management

Sustainable land management is a process that involves policy mechanisms supported by appropriate technology and technical expertise. Scientific and technical knowledge and capacity intervenes at various points throughout the process, from stocktaking to implementing sound projects and programmes. The creation or strengthening of a country-based pool of scientists, experts and technicians can yield multiplied social benefits that go beyond the strict scope of environmental science. Building scientific and technical capacity at the national level often requires long-term efforts in individual and institutional strengthening, such as training of individuals, strengthening research organizations, developing adapted curricula and higher education programs, and providing financial support. Among the various scientific and technical capacities needed for sustainable land management, the availability of qualified practitioners and researchers in areas related to land use (e.g, agriculture, forestry, urban planning, coastal zone management) is a key first step; in the longer-term, building research institutions, academic support structures and linkages between science and policy are also assets.

This could include technical capacity in areas such as:

- **Sustainable agriculture and forestry:** Capacity to promote sustainable agriculture includes promoting research on soil fertility, expertise in agronomy, agricultural statistics, irrigation management, livestock management and pastoralism, forestry and agro-forestry, as well as expertise in local economics and trade. In addition, while many countries have independent or para-governmental institutions dedicated to agricultural research, these remain weak and their linkages with policy-making are often tenuous. Finally, agriculture and forest ministries, particularly in Small Island States and LDCs are often small, with limited amounts of staff, and limited capacity to deliver appropriate extension and enforcement services. This is particularly true in the case of Small Island States where remoteness is an additional challenge. Strengthening these organizations, and ensuring that their work provides input into policy-making is crucial.
- **Water, fisheries and coastal zone management:** In the case of many LDCs and SIDS, combating land degradation entails the promotion

of alternative sources of livelihoods, taking communities away from an excessive dependence on land resources towards livelihoods based on fisheries. This entails that knowledge of fish stocks and fisheries management exists in the country, as well as appropriate infrastructure to promote local enterprise. In addition, water management, particularly in terms of agriculture is intimately linked to soil management. Technical capacity in monitoring water quantity and quality, as well as the technology to extract and use water in an efficient and sustainable way is essential. Finally, in the case of Island states, coastal zone management, including coastal zone urban planning is part and parcel of SLM, particularly for countries who depend on tourism for their income. Expertise in impact assessment, coastal zone infrastructure and urban planning are also essential components. At the organizational level, strengthening government ministries as well as non-governmental or para-governmental organizations is often needed.

- **Organizational and systemic technical capacity:** Creating locally-owned scientific and technical capacity to manage and implement SLM programmes and policies requires long term efforts, particularly in the fields of education, science and research. The creation of educational programmes, bursaries and scholarships is a preferred course, but can entail high costs with little immediate results. In all cases, these measures should be accompanied by measures to provide incentives to scientists to remain in the country, to avoid "brain drain". More often, regional cooperation provides a suitable and economical avenue to achieve this goal. For example, regional centers of excellence and regional organizations can offer scientific and technical services on an ad hoc basis.

1.9 Cross-cutting competencies: Communication and leadership

Throughout this section, we've referred to a number of cross-cutting competences at the individual level, as well as a number of organizational factors and systemic constraints likely to influence success in planning for SLM. These core capacities are often overlooked, but when strengthened, they can play a very significant role in policy making and programme implementation. At the level of individuals, personal abilities such as communication and leadership are important skills to develop; at the organizational level, we've referred to communication infrastructure and processes; at the systemic level, issues such as culture and values are also important factors to take into consideration. Finally, it may be useful to consider how financial resources, while not a factor of capacity per se, influence capacity and capacity development initiatives.

- **Communication skills, infrastructure and processes:** From the perspective of the individual, communication skills are acquired and strengthened through experience and education. While these skills can be further developed through targeted training, the capacity to create and maintain positive and productive interpersonal relations is difficult to qualify. However, it is recognized that good communication skills are an invaluable asset when it comes to coordinate large groups, to build consensus around a set of goals, and to negotiate with partners. Organizations can go a long way in helping to facilitate good communication among its staff: by providing clarity of mandate and levels of authority, stable support structures and easy to use means of communication. Throughout the

previous sections, we have referred to communication infrastructure: this includes established channels of communication within a ministry (for example, access to senior decision-makers) as well as between government agencies. Information management systems, reliable communications equipment (e.g. easy access to internet and email) also form part of the communication capacity of an organization. It is important not to ignore these important – albeit mundane – factors when strengthening capacity. An additional factor to consider is the free circulation of information and data within and among organizations; removing barriers to the dissemination of important information, such as user fees or confidentiality provisions, may therefore be needed.

- **Leadership:** Leaders in all fields of development and in all organizations help steer the policy-making process by developing and expressing vision, by mobilizing stakeholders around it, and by providing a focus for accountability. Absence of, or ineffective leadership, can sometimes be at the root of the failure in achieving policy results. In the environment field, and specifically in the case of SLM, strong leadership at the national and local levels can help ensure continuity in the process, motivation among stakeholders and can also help resolve conflicts when they arise. For the purposes of the readers of this manual, building the capacity of SLM leaders – whether in government, within communities, or among NGO and private sector partners – may be desirable to achieve multiplied benefits. In turn, these leaders or "champions" will rally their constituencies and networks towards a shared vision for SLM.

Cross-cutting competencies

- **Communication:** communication, consensus building and negotiation, clarity of roles, responsibilities and mandates, clear channels of communication with leaders and decision making, access to communication tools and reliable infrastructure.
- **Leadership:** developing and communicating vision, mobilizing and motivating stakeholders, resolve potential conflicts, provide a focus for accountability.

PART 2

Assessing National Capacities

This part provides tools and methods to assess existing capacities (individual, organisational and systemic) for SLM in LDCs-SIDS and to identify needs and gaps, based on existing information. At the end of this section, the user should be in a position to list specific capacity needs and to initiate the development of a capacity development plan.

Contents of this part

2. Assessing country capacities and identifying gaps

Evaluating existing capacity is a necessary first step in developing a capacity development program or initiative. Broad-based capacity assessment (CA) exercises can be far reaching and extremely onerous undertakings. However, many countries have already performed capacity assessments, even partial, in the framework of the various multilateral programmes (eg GEF National Capacity Self Assessment), donor-funded projects and international environmental agreements. For countries who have not undertaken such an assessment, or in the case of countries who wish to explore capacity issues more thoroughly, this section proposes an overview of generic methods and tools.

There are a myriad of capacity assessment methods, tools and approaches offering different conceptual approaches, points of entry, and each with a different level of depth and entailing different costs. Some of the proposed assessment methods may require a level of capacity and resources that is beyond the grasp of many LDC/SIDS. Hence, the choice of method should be informed by an understanding of its potential benefits in relation to the time and resources invested. That being said, there is no cookie-cutter approach to assessing capacity, and each proposed method can be adapted to the specific country conditions and needs.

2.1 Generic approach to capacity assessment

The following "generic approach" to capacity assessment (CA) is derived from a review of a number of approaches, and inspired more specifically by the UNDP "default" Capacity Assessment Framework, the GEF's Guidebook for National Capacity Self Assessment and the Guidebook on Enhancing Organizational Performance, developed by the International Development Research Center (IDRC)[7]. Indeed, while different approach will emphasize different aspects of capacity, all methods share a number of common elements or steps that can be used as building blocks.

7. Enhancing Organizational Performance, IDRC, 1999.

Step 1

Establishing a coordination mechanism

The first step in all CA methods is the establishment of a coordination mechanism or assessment team. In most cases, it is recommended that existing structures or committees be used. Where the assessment itself is a preliminary step in developing and implementing a strategy or program, it is recommended to use the same committee which will be in charge of overseeing the whole process. This ensures continuity, ownership, and reduces duplication and potential conflicts between the various groups. This also requires that roles and responsibilities of the members of the team be clearly spelled out at the start of the process, while maintaining a clear focus for leadership. The development of, and agreement on, Terms of Reference for the group is a way to achieve this.

Most capacity self-assessments are led by government authorities. However, it is useful to consider participation from stakeholders outside government, who would be invited to participate in the broader policy development process: NGO participation, as well as representation from vulnerable or excluded groups, and the private sector, can bring added value to the assessment by contributing their different perspectives and resources. They can in turn act as focal points ("leaders" or "champions") for their constituencies, and mobilize responses throughout the assessment process.

At this stage, it is also useful to conduct a brief review of stakeholders and of the intended audience for the results of the assessment. Stakeholders are individuals or organizations that would be affected by the outcome of the assessment process (in many cases, the beneficiaries of capacity development). In the case of sustainable land management, committees such as the National Coordinating Body for the UNCCD National Action Plan can be a useful starting point, as they already include the major stakeholders, government agencies and partners involved in SLM.

Step 2

Designing the assessment framework

Investing some time and resources in achieving a well-designed assessment framework can greatly facilitate the assessment process itself, and can yield added benefits in terms of monitoring and evaluation, later on in the process. For instance, in the case where the capacity assessment is to be used to design capacity development initiatives, the questions used in the assessment can also be used as indicators of change after the interventions. This can also help delegate parts of the assessment to team members, or in some cases, external expertise. At this stage, it is helpful to conduct a brief literature review of past assessments, to pinpoint information needs.

The key elements of the design of an assessment framework include defining the point of entry or unit of analysis; identifying the core competencies to be investigated; and the formulation of questions, linked to sources of information, indicators and methods of investigation.

- Points of entry can be individuals, organizations, or systems. Comprehensive capacity assessments in a given sector typically require analysis at each of the three levels, making the assessment exercise a little more complex.
- Core competencies issues can be defined according to the information needed: examples include leadership, the effectiveness of policy frameworks, or functional capacities, such as the ability to engage in multi-stakeholder dialogue, or the

ability to manage and implement projects. It is up to the assessment team to define the level of depth and the type of core issues they wish to analyze. In the context of Sustainable Land Management, the previous chapter provides a good starting point for identifying the key issues. For example, the assessment could be framed along the key SLM milestones or cross-cutting capacities: hence, the capacity for stocktaking, policy development and cross-cutting communication could be evaluated separately, using individual or organizational points of entry.

- Questions and indicators to investigate the core competence issues can vary in degree of precision. In general, however, general questions (for example: "does the ministry have the capacity to conduct stakeholder consultations?") may not yield information that is targeted enough to derive a solution to the problem, though they may provide an overall qualitative assessment of capacities. In such cases, supplementary questions may be needed (for example: "can the ministry disseminate information in local languages?" or "can the ministry identify and reach stakeholders?"). The type of question chosen will also depend on the level of depth and rigour required in the assessment, as well as the level of resources available to perform it. In some cases, it is recommended to use verifiable or easily measurable indicators, while in some others, a more qualitative type of answer can be preferred. Many approaches to capacity assessment recommend the use of indicators that are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound (e.g. "existence of standardized annual reports"). Indicators also often dictate the methods for investigation: for example, open general questions leading to qualitative evaluations lend themselves more easily to interviews and questionnaires, whereas normative indicators can be the object of direct observation, and answers of the yes/no type. These indicators can also be measured as per a scale or a point system.

Table 1: Examples of indicators and rating systems†

Question	Sub-questions	Indicators	Rating System
Do authorities have the capacity to engage stakeholders throughout the process of SLM planning?	—	Effectiveness of public consultation forums	Qualitative analysis
	Is information available in local languages?	Availability of information on land degradation and SLM in local dialects.	Yes/No
	Does the ministry in charge of SLM have the capacity to conduct participatory research?	Availability of staff trained in Participatory Rural Appraisal methods	0 – no staff trained in PRA is available 1 – very limited number of personnel trained in PRA is available 2 – all relevant staff is trained in PRA methods

† Adapted from UNDP "Capacity Assessment Methodology: User's Guide".

It is also at this stage in the design of the CA framework that capacity targets can be set, so as to identify gaps between what exists and the desired outcome of capacity development initiatives. Gap analysis is sometimes treated as a separate step at the end of the assessment process, but it is always derived from the indicators and questions used in the assessment itself. It is therefore useful to create a matrix or scorecard where all the information will be gathered, including the assessment of the current level of capacity and the desired outcome. This reinforces the need for clear, easily interpreted indicators.

Table 2: Example of Score-Card††

Key issue: Capacities for assessing the environmental conditions

Overall Question: Does the country have the scientific and technical capacity to assess and monitor the state of land degradation?

Point of Entry	Question/Criteria	Indicators	Rating	Source	Target	NOTES
Organization	Can the ministry of agriculture perform site-specific scientific observations?	Availability of agriculture extension staff	0 – no extension services are available 1 – staff is available in limited numbers 2 – adequate number of staff is available	Observation – information from Agriculture Ministry	2	
		Existence of an information management system for GIS	0 – no information management system is available 1 – a system is available but staff is not trained to use it 2 – a system is available and staff is trained to use it effectively	Observation, interviews with relevant staff	2	

†† Adapted from UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology: User's Guide, and UNDP-GEF Capacity Development Indicators (UNDP/GEF Resource Kit No. 4).

Step 3

Conducting the assessment

This step concerns mostly the formal investigation and evidence gathering that will fill the assessment. As mentioned above, different questions and indicators will lend themselves to varied methods of investigation. Examples include documentary reviews, direct observation, focus groups or consultation forums, interviews, questionnaires. Each method comes with its own costs and benefits, and a full capacity assessment will typically rely on a variety of sources of information and methods of investigation. It is therefore necessary to have in place the required resources to perform the investigation itself. In the case where the points of entry combine the individual, organizational and systemic levels, or when the entities being assessed are numerous – as would be the case for a national-level assessment of SLM capacities – it may be useful to delegate parts of the investigations to members of the coordinating committee ("champions").

It is also useful to carefully plan the investigation phase, so that timelines are respected and targets are reached. Comprehensive capacity assessments have been known to take up to 18 months (as for the GEF's NCSA), whereas quick assessments of a single organization can take as little as a few days. Establishing a workplan that can be shared by the members of the steering committee is a useful tool to keep everyone on track and to share work-load and resources effectively.

Once the information has been gathered, it is usually advised to synthesize the findings and to validate them with the stakeholders and participants. The synthesis phase is important because different types of information can be interpreted in different ways. Ensuring that the coordination committee agrees with the findings of the assessment is a first step. Informing the primary audience (e.g., government authorities, donors) will usually be required in the form of a report, but some form of communication with secondary stakeholders, for example NGOs and communities will be useful, particularly if they are to benefit from capacity development initiatives resulting from the assessment. Finally, a comparison of the results of the assessment with the capacity targets set during the design process will provide a useful starting point for the design of targeted CD initiatives.

Step 4

Develop a capacity development plan

The necessary capacity interventions should emerge clearly from the assessment process, and to a certain extent, their level of priority or urgency will also be apparent. This reinforces the need to include all possible beneficiaries in the assessment process, because consensus around the assessment framework will generate agreement on the interventions.

Because in the case of LDCs and SIDs, the capacity needs are very large, it is likely that the interventions will need to be prioritized. At this point, it will be useful to identify interventions that can yield multiple benefits, and remove barriers for further capacity building. Part 3 provides some guidance on how to prioritize interventions.

PART 3 Developing National Capacities

Contents of this part

Following the systematic identification and assessment of SLM country capacities conducted in Part 2 of this manual, one should now a good overview of existing country SLM capacities, gaps and needs. The current Part takes this assessment as a starting point to plan, deliver and monitor capacity development interventions. It provides guidance for prioritizing capacity development interventions in the context of LDC-SIDS and for identifying appropriate approaches, tools and resources to develop capacities. It also suggests approaches, tools and resources to plan, deliver and monitor capacity development interventions.

This Part is divided into four sections. The first section (section 3) presents some information on the various tools and methods used to develop capacity at the individual, organizational and systemic levels. Section 4 supports the reader in setting capacity development priorities. Section 5 provides specific guidance on how to plan, budget and deliver capacity development interventions. The last section (section 6) focuses on monitoring and evaluation. At the end of this Part, the user should be in a position to prioritize, undertake and evaluate targeted SLM capacity development interventions with appropriate tools and methods.

3. Methods for developing capacities

A wide variety of tools and methods designed to develop capacity exist, depending on whether the recipients are individuals or organizations. The following provides an overview of these tools and methods, as well as guidance on how to prioritize among them. Depending on the point of entry and capacity targets, users of this Manual can use the prioritization tools presented in part III to choose among them.

3.1 Methods for developing individual capacities

Interventions that address individual capacities include those that create or improve knowledge, skills and attitudes. Addressing organizational constraints is also a way to develop or strengthen individual capacities. To the extent possible, the barriers to capacity should be identified so as to target the intervention to deliver the highest impact. For example, removing barriers to career advancement within

an organization can motivate staff to acquire new skills. On the other hand, training in a particular technique may be the most appropriate means of building individual capacity, but without providing personnel with the financial and infrastructural resources to apply their new skills, training may prove to be insufficient to generate stronger capacity. Different approaches exist for training individuals, including the following:

- Formal class-room **training and workshops** are useful to reach larger groups, and to impart specific knowledge, or techniques. They can be tailored to any audience (governmental, community, private sector) and can vary in depth, length, and cost. Training is an easily verifiable way to impart new knowledge and skills to a broad range of individuals
- On-the-job **professional development and continuous education** are variations that allow for people in a given organization to learn by doing, provided they are given appropriate organizational support (for example, latitude to demonstrate initiative, leadership, and to make mistakes).
- Other methods include **mentoring, study tours, networking**, which are more informal, and build on inter-personal relationships. The results of mentoring and networking are more subtle and harder to monitor, but often more durable.

3.2 Methods for developing organisational capacities

An organization or group's capacity to perform certain functions is partly determined by the capacity of individuals within it, and partly by certain attributes it cultivates. Interventions that address organisational capacities include those that create or improve:

- Clearly defined and understood **missions and mandates**: means to achieve this include visioning exercises and workshops, charter development, or even legislative changes.
- Organizational **culture, structure and competencies**: SWOT analyses, organizational assessments, as well as staff retreats and the development of individual skills are all tools that can be useful in changing or strengthening the values and competencies of an organization. Facilitators and organizational change specialists can assist in these processes, particularly where they involve restructurations.
- **Institutional processes** such as planning, quality management, monitoring and evaluation: Ways to strengthen these aspects within an organization include recruiting specialized staff, as well as ensuring that the proper systems are in place for human resources management, audit and evaluation functions.
- Adequate, sufficiently skilled and appropriately deployed **human resources**: beyond the recruitment and training of personnel, organizational capacities should be developed to retain and motivate staff – for example, human resources management plans. In the case of many countries, initiatives targeting the modernization of the public sector provide useful avenues.
- The **effective management and allocation of financial resources**: training staff in financial management, auditing, accounting, and monitoring and evaluation are means to provide an organization with the capacity to manage its resources. This may also

entail creating systematic decision-making processes (for example, agreed criteria for prioritization) that are transparent and applicable to the whole organization, as well as setting up infrastructures needed to effectively manage funds.

- **Information resources**, as well as their effective distribution and management. At the organizational level, developing information management capacity can include developing a series of competencies, such as library, cataloguing and archiving functions, as well as acquiring the technical and infrastructure resources to perform information management (e.g. software). Creating a culture of information sharing and promoting the free access to information is a longer-term task which requires leadership.
- **Material conditions** such as buildings, offices, vehicles, computers, as well as their effective allocation and management. These infrastructural conditions often enable or hinder the delivery of specific tasks and functions in addition to being often ignored as determinants of individual capacity. The ability of an organization to allocate and manage material assets rests upon capacity related to efficient planning systems and financial controls.

Because, in the end, an organization is only as strong as the individuals that compose it, activities targeting specific groups of individuals, for example administrative staff or senior government officials, will add up to overall stronger organizations. Other methods include exchange visits between members of organizations, or twinning between organizations to allow for transfers of knowledge and technology.

Institutional strengthening: Developing organizational capacity

"Institutional strengthening" is a term used to designate interventions that aim to make organizations more effective in delivering their functions. Traditionally, this term refers to cooperation programmes that target an entire organization, rather than focus on a specific set of individuals. In the context of sustainable land management, institutional strengthening could be applied to any initiative that aims at enhancing the capacity of ministries, NGOs or enterprises to deliver on their SLM objectives and commitments.

Successful institutional strengthening programs look at the individuals in an organization (their skills and abilities in relation to their functions), and at the ways these individuals interact within the organization (e.g hierarchy, decision-making and accountability issues). They also consider technical aspects of the organization's functioning, for example its infrastructure (building, material, equipment) and its systems (information management, financial management, human resources management).

When designing an institutional strengthening initiative, it is important to begin with a clear and candid assessment of all elements of its operations, and to take a holistic approach to addressing gaps. For example, if the organization lacks adequately skilled personnel, attention should be given to recruiting, remunerating, training and retaining staff, as well as ensuring they are supported in their work through appropriate decision-making structures, prospects for advancement, and infrastructure.

3.3 Methods for developing systemic capacities

Developing capacity at the systemic level requires efforts to be targeted at removing structural barriers to the acquisition of capacities at the lower levels (organizational and individual), but also addressing policy gaps or inconsistencies that may hinder the achievement of sustainable land management. Policy issues that fall outside the scope of environmental planning often need to be addressed as a matter of priority in order to create an enabling environment. This might include, for example, addressing broad governance issues, promoting a climate of transparency and access to information, participatory decision-making or decentralization, as well as enhancing the investment climate and conditions for the private sector.

Tackling these broad issues may seem daunting, and requires strong political will and leadership, as well as long-term, sustained effort. Because a given system is usually the result of how organizations and individuals interact among themselves, no single intervention can be designed that will result in immediate changes. Cultural issues, including potential conflicts, are also an important determinant of how systems function overall. In the case of sustainable land management, addressing systemic challenges may involve creating coordination mechanisms, instituting provisions for information sharing, human resources management and retention, as well as making policy or legal reforms in areas affecting land management.

As mentioned earlier, capacity development at the individual level contributes to creating stronger organizations, and efforts to strengthen organizations and institutions by enhancing their processes and infrastructure, will in turn add up to benefits for the wider system. Interventions that can help address systemic capacity for SLM include:

- Interventions designed to promote effective **decentralization**: this can include policy changes and legal reforms that provide the basis for effective decentralized administration of natural resources and economic development. Strong governance mechanisms, as well as an efficient system for channelling resources to the local level, can help provide incentives for local land users to manage their resources better. Program delivery and management is also greatly enhanced by the presence of structures of support and extension services closer to communities.
- Addressing **land tenure and property rights** issues: It is widely recognized that unclear property rights, or land tenure systems that disadvantage small land users, can contribute to creating distortions that lead to unsustainable land management. In addition, clear property rights facilitate access to credit and financial resources, and are required elements in the setup of many innovative financial mechanisms. Addressing land tenure and property rights issues often require long-term efforts and delicate political balancing, in order to manage potential conflicts.
- Initiatives that promote **economic diversification**, particularly in the case of poor rural populations, can also impact land management, by reducing their dependency on land resources, as well as reducing

poverty. These measures also involve creating appropriate conditions for small enterprises, including access to markets, credit, and technical support. Rural development programmes that comprise a food security component are common within the framework of Poverty Reduction Strategies, and may provide an opportunity for increased SLM impact.

- **Public sector reform** and institutional strengthening may also help pave the way for stronger delivery of SLM policies and programmes. In many cases, these reforms occur within the framework of large, macro-economic cooperation programmes. By providing technical, financial and human support to public administrations at the highest level, these programmes help build a strong public sector that delivers on expected results.
- **Mainstreaming** and integrated policy-making: This is perhaps the single most important intervention to remove systemic barriers to sustainable land management. Mainstreaming implies that environmental issues, and SLM principles in particular, are taken into account at all levels of government, and integrated in policies that have a direct and indirect impact on land. This integration can help catalyze public and private investment in SLM, as well as help channel resources from internal and external sources. Most importantly, successful integration implies that all government policies and programs are assessed for their potential benefits and damages to land and the environment.
- **Education** and awareness raising are also important systemic interventions. Promoting integration of environmental and SLM issues at all levels of the educational system can have a profound and lasting effect on behaviours. Moreover, strengthening scientific and technical curricula will yield benefits that go beyond the protection of the environment. On the other end of the spectrum, public awareness of challenges related to land degradation can help create accountability among leaders and administrations for achieving SLM results.

4. Settings priorities for capacity development

4.1 Selecting and prioritizing interventions

Considering the diversity and multiplicity of SLM capacity development needs identified in the first Part of this manual and the scarcity of human, financial and organisational resources that can be harnessed to deliver interventions, the first step in planning for SLM capacity development interventions is to set priorities. Such priorities are essential to deploy a set of feasible, targeted interventions and avoid the dispersion of scarce resources with low impact on SLM outcomes. In some cases one may already have some indications of where gaps, bottlenecks or the most acute needs may be. In other cases, a systematic priority setting exercise may help clarify these priorities.

It should be noted that setting priorities may be a delicate political and organisational balancing exercise since it sometimes involves creating winners and losers, be they individuals, organisations or stakeholder groups. If undertaken in

a systematic and participatory manner, it may strengthen buy-in among key SLM stakeholders, which is a key success factor of capacity development initiatives. However, if priorities are perceived as arbitrary or unjustified, they can generate resistance among key stakeholders. It may therefore be well advised to consult with stakeholders in selecting the methodology and criteria that will be used to set priorities.

Several approaches, tools and methods can be used to screen capacity development needs in order to distil the key priorities that should be the subject of a capacity development initiative. Some of the most common tools and methods are presented in this sub-section.

4.1.1 Defining criteria for setting priorities

When setting priorities for capacity development risks creating conflict situations among stakeholders and potential beneficiaries, it is useful to agree on a set of criteria that can guide the prioritization process. Criteria that should be taken into consideration when setting priorities include the following:

- **Urgency/Timing aspects:** Will the option be able to meet SLM needs that must be addressed in an urgent manner? Can the option be implemented within the required timeframe?
- **Practicability/Feasibility:** Can the option be undertaken in a reasonable manner considering socio-economic factors, etc.? Are there other factors that make the option unrealistic?
- **Affordability:** Is the estimated cost of implementing the option affordable?
- **Efficiency and effectiveness:** Does the option make the optimum use of resources? What degree of impact will the option have in meeting the goal/objective?
- **Cost-benefit:** Will the option achieve a degree of impact worthy of its cost?
- **Monitorability:** Is it possible to measure the progress towards achieving the option?
- **Synergies/Multiplier effects:** Is the intervention a requirement for further capacity development? Is the intervention likely to address multiple dimensions of SLM capacity?[8]

8. UNITAR

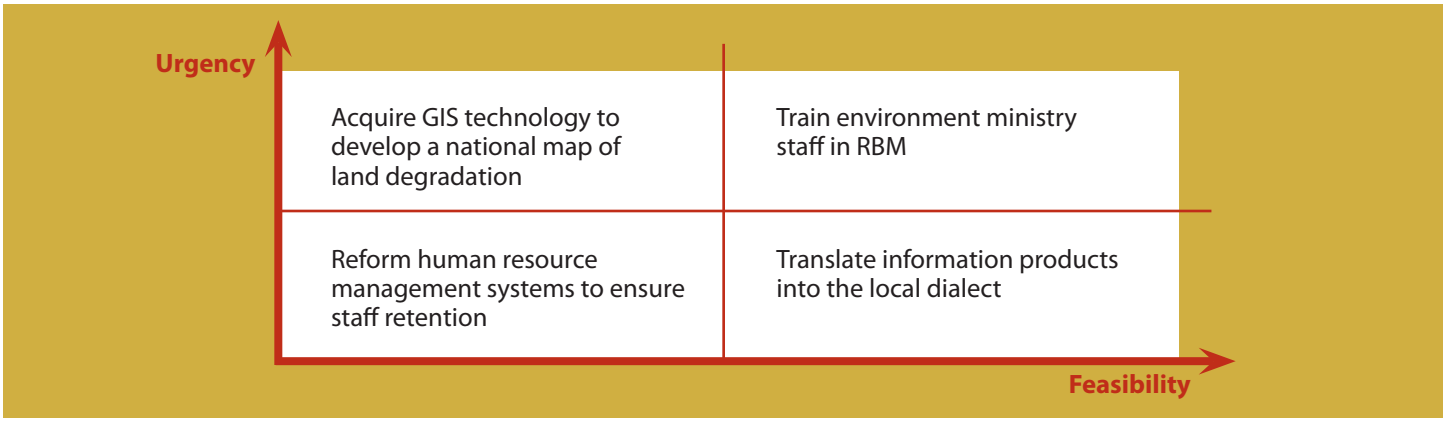
4.1.2 Prioritizing interventions

A set of issues at individual, organisational and systemic levels that need to be addressed should emerge from the capacity assessment process. These issues should then be ranked in order of priority. The ranking process is usually contentious due to the various interests represented in a stakeholder group.

In order to facilitate the process, a **prioritization matrix** that allows for the realistic prioritization of capacity building interventions could be a key part of such an exercise. Each of the capacity building interventions is assigned a degree of urgency and is evaluated for its feasibility. Each item is then placed on the matrix; the higher up it is placed, the more urgent it is, and the further to right it is, the more feasible it is. While keeping in mind the need for sequencing capacity building interventions, urgent and feasible interventions should be implemented first, means of achieving urgent but not feasible interventions should be investigated, not urgent but feasible interventions should be considered for implementation once the urgencies have been dealt with, and not

urgent and not feasible interventions should be re-examined for their importance and potentially stricken from the list of priorities.

Applied to the myriad possible capacity development initiatives for SLM, this matrix could yield the following example:



An alternative to the prioritization matrix is the following **prioritization table**, which ranks interventions against a number of criteria. This will allow a simple comparison of the relative importance of each and should facilitate further group discussion on setting, confirming or reviewing priorities. Neither of these tools, however, should be seen as an end in itself. They are first and foremost evaluative tools. Simply adding values assigned to each issue will not take into account the different weighting assigned to particular criteria.

Prioritization table

Intervention	Criteria			Priority Ranking (3)
	Scale of Problem (1)	Level of Concern (2)	Ability to adequately address issue (2)	
Intervention 1				
Intervention 2				
Intervention 3				

(1) Enter: local, regional, national, or global.
(2) Enter: low, medium, or high.
(3) Provide relative ranking from 1 to 5 of the problem(s) being faced by the country (1 = most severe problem(s); 2 = second most severe problem(s), etc.). The same ranking can be given to different issues where appropriate.[†††]

††† UNITAR

4.1.3 Identifying relevant methods, tools and approaches

Once capacity development priorities have been selected, the next step consists of choosing the right set of methods, tools and approaches that will successfully deliver needed interventions and generate maximum impact on SLM outcomes. One important aspect in determining the right set of tools is to consider at which level (individual, organisational, systemic) SLM capacity development interventions will generate the desired outcomes. In many cases, a successful strategy will involve a mix of these three levels. The key therefore is to fine-tune interventions to invest resources and energy where it generates more impact. This section provides a process for selecting tools, methods and approaches to build individual, organisational and systemic capacities.

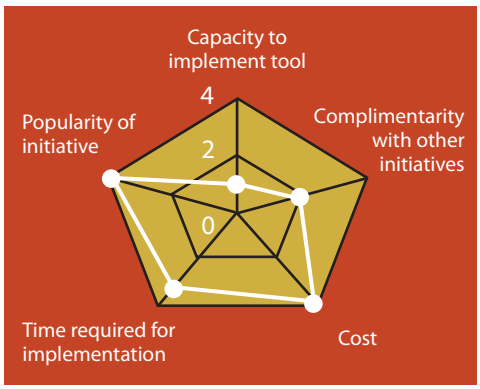
The factors that need to be taken into consideration for this process include:

- Cost and cost effectiveness
- Capacity (skills, human resources, financial resources etc.) to use tool
- Required time and timing within overall SLM process
- Complementarity to other tools and initiatives used

A tool that can facilitate the evaluation of approaches is the **Options Evaluation Web**. Since a range of criteria can be used to facilitate the evaluation, it is necessary to consider the specific context of the action plan and determine which criteria are most appropriate. Mapping options in the matrix helps to identify which options are most appropriate for the given context and allows for a systematic comparison.

To create an Options Evaluation Web, the evaluation criteria are established, and each of the options is assigned a score for every criterion. In the below example, a low cost would be assigned a high score, a short time frame for implementation would receive a high score, high capacity to implement the option in question would receive a high score etc. The larger the resulting web is the, higher the option has scored.

Options Evaluation Web



5. Delivering capacity development

Once priorities have been determined and specific approaches, tools and methods to deliver capacity development interventions selected, the following step is to plan, budget and deliver these interventions within the scope of available financial and human resources. This section is designed to provide tools to help plan and deliver capacity development interventions.

5.1 Developing an action plan

The development of a sound **action plan** can help make it easier to coordinate activities, lead teams to reach objectives, secure more predictable results and monitor implementation. Properly applied, action plan development allows one to "hold the project in the palm of one's hand".

Potential benefits of sound planning can include:

- ensuring a common goal for the action plan;
- ensuring a clear understanding of the planning process;

- increasing transparency in planning and implementing (and evaluating) a project;
- anticipating, identifying, and addressing potential logistic issues;
- enhancing communication, coordination, commitment, and teamwork;
- increased likelihood of mobilising funding for a project;
- improved results and performance, as well as optimum use of resources (such as time and money);
- sustaining momentum and focus;
- facilitating systematic implementation and monitoring of the action plan; and
- facilitating a clear evaluation of the action plan's impact.

As with undertaking a capacity assessment and prioritizing interventions it is important that the action plan be developed with all relevant stakeholders so as to achieve buy-in for the plan, as well as to help ensure that everyone is able to meet their responsibilities. Involving stakeholders should also lead to better decisions, foster their acceptance and promote accountability, and therefore credibility and success. Applying a process approach to planning (see following box[9]) will help ensure the plan's success.

Applying a process approach to planning

- All relevant stakeholders should be involved in the process: a decision to exclude important parties may block the process at a later stage.
- There must be a feeling of unease or even a sense of urgency among most of the stakeholders. If parties are not convinced that something should be done, nothing will.
- The process must be transparent, open and democratic. It should be clear what the rules and procedures are and how and by whom decisions will be taken.
- The core values and central interests of the stakeholders must be protected. Process approaches are characterised by 'finding future values': every viewpoint proposed by the actors is valid and legitimate.
- Moreover, the process must generate options for improvement or gains and triggers for cooperative behaviour. It must be relevant to all stakeholders.

Key elements of an action plan include:

- A situational analysis and gap analysis (see Part II on Assessing Capacities)
- A set of objectives (which will feed into Monitoring & Evaluation, see section 5); and
- An outline of activities and tasks, and related timeframe, resources, and responsibilities.

5.1.1 Developing objectives

Based on the situation and gap analysis, it will have become clear what needs to be achieved in order to meet the goal. This should provide the direction needed for setting objectives. Objectives statethe specific outcomes that the action plan expects to accomplish – answering the question "What needs to be achieved to get from where we are now to where we want to be?" Some objectives can be attained only by the end of the project; others may be met along the way.

9. Institutional Development: Learning by Doing and Sharing. Approaches and tools for supporting institutional development. European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) & Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poverty Policy and Institutional Development Division (DSI/AI). P 10. http://www.capacity.org/Web_Capacity/Web/UK_Content/Download.nsf/0/9CA60DAADFE2D4BCC1256E3E003CC2E5/$FILE/final%20draft%20booklet_rev.pdf

SMART Objectives

Well-developed objectives are 'SMART' objectives:

Specific
Measurable
Assignable/agreed
Realistic, and
Time-bound

An objective that is too ambitious should be avoided – it could undermine the success of the action plan. It is therefore important to assess the feasibility of the objectives and select ones that are achievable with the means available (or within a budget that can be reasonably mobilised). A disappointing and unsatisfactory outcome of an action plan which is based on unachievable objectives is to produce a document which results in little more than a paper exercise. Regularly asking questions like "Is this particularly realistic?" and "Will this be effective?" as the action plan is developed will help to keep it focused, and ultimately successful.

5.1.2 Defining activities, tasks and milestones

The next step is to define activities. Activities are the highest level of action in the action plan hierarchy – they set the path for which the fine details are developed.

An activity can be defined as an element of work performed during the course of a project. An activity has an expected duration, cost, and resource requirements.

Since the activities are typically large elements, they will need to be broken down into more manageable tasks. Activities should only be broken down to a level which enables the action plan development working group to effectively estimate time and resource requirements and provides enough information for those responsible for the particular activity or task. Breaking down activities into too much detail overemphasises the role of planning and makes it difficult to easily obtain an overview. Experience shows that it is difficult to control more than 10-20 tasks per activity.

Estimating how much time each activity/task will likely require to be completed is key to developing an effective action plan. While the duration of each activity/task, at this stage, can only be an estimate (be prepared to adjust the action plan during its implementation), the durations should be carefully estimated to ensure that the action plan is as accurate as possible. Reviewing earlier projects may provide insight into realistic timeframes, and experience shows that this is the most efficient way of learning to plan realistically. In addition, where activities or tasks are of a technical nature, it may be necessary to consult with those who have the related technical knowledge or expertise in order to make realistic estimates. However careful the planning, it is wise to build in extra time to allow for unforeseen events.

Setting project milestones helps establish reference points that mark clearly distinguishable events in the action plan that can be used to monitor progress during implementation. They are predetermined points to gauge whether a project is on track as planned. The simplest project milestones are the dates estimated for the start or completion of an activity.

An action plan can be presented using a Gantt chart, which enables a visualisation of the schedule and actual progress in a project. It allows an understanding of the project at a glance. The chart clearly lists each activity and task – represented by a single horizontal bar. These task bars are positioned across a timescale, which is displayed at the top of the Gantt chart. The length of an individual bar represents the amount of time estimated to complete an activity or

task; the placement of the bar represents the corresponding start and end dates. Linking bars in a Gantt chart also reflects relationships (or 'dependencies') between tasks, such as whether a particular task can start before another task is finished. A Gantt chart can also include budget and human resource details. [10]

10. Guidance on Action Plan Development for Sound Chemicals Management, UNITAR.

ID	Task Name	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
1	Activity 1: Technical consultations														
2	Review existing technical standards (situation and gap analysis)														
3	Propose amendments to align with GHS														
4	Activity 2: Economic analysis														
5	Review economic impact of GHS implementation (costs and benefits)														
6	Report to GHS implementation committee														
7	Activity 3: Drafting regulations														
8	Review existing regulations in all sectors														
9	Draft amendments or new regulations (as appropriate) to align with GHS														
10	Review revised regulations														
11	Submit implementing regulations to regulatory authorities for approval														
12	Activity 4: Regulatory process initiated														
13	Implementing regulations approved														
14	GHS-based regulations/standards enter into force														
15	Activity 5: Application and monitoring														
16	Initiate use of GHS-based tools in all sectors (regulations/standards followed)														
17	Training/awareness raising on new procedures (including regulations/standards)														
18	Inspectorates/agencies ensuring use of new standard														
19	Feedbakc on compliance/use to regulatory authorities														

Figure 2: Example of a Gantt chart for action planning (from UNITAR)

The action plan then needs to be costed, which will be covered in the following step. It is important that an "owner" of the plan be designated, and that this person or institution be assigned the responsibility for the plan's monitoring and implementation.

5.2 Budgeting

A range of resources is typically required to implement capacity building activities. These may include, among others: human resources, facilities, equipment, and materials. Other costs may include travel, training, equipment, venue rental, technical assistance etc. It is important to be as accurate as possible when estimating resource requirements at this stage. The more accurate the estimates are, the less likely the undertaking will run into problems during implementation (and require requests for additional funds). Finer details on each resource can be defined by considering the following:

- Human resources: knowledge and skills; person-days required; estimated cost;
- Facilities: types; space and time required; estimated cost;
- Equipment: types; time required; estimated cost;
- Services: types (e.g. travel expenses, translation); quantity; estimated cost;
- Materials: types; quantity; estimated cost; and
- Any special requirements: unique skills; resources; etc. [11]

There are many models of budgets, for example incremental budgeting, zero base budgeting or programme based budgeting. Incremental budgeting means basing the resource estimate on the previous period's expenditures and adjusting it for predictable increases or decreases (e.g. inflation). In zero-based budgeting, the expenditure amounts are planned from zero every year, based on proposed activities. Programme-based budgeting means that resources are tied to the achievement of a specific objective (e.g. SLM), and may be reallocated once the objective has been achieved.

11. Ibid.

5.3 Expert resources

Not all human resources will be available within the existing stakeholder groups. In order to fill these gaps, recourse can be made to temporary staff or consultants. Donor agencies can often facilitate the process of finding qualified staff or consultants.

Terms of reference

- Title of the assignment
- Background
- Scope of work
- Duration and timelines
- Budget and available resources

Identifying the right expert resources relies on the development of sound Terms of Reference (ToR). In ToR the background of an assignment is described, including its motivation and objectives. The type of expertise required, its scope, duration etc. are also outlined. The quality of the ToR is of crucial importance for the kind and quality of the assignment that is to be implemented.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

Capacity development interventions are often conceived as one-off interventions with very general objectives that produce diffuse effects that are difficult to measure. For this reason, monitoring and evaluation is often neglected in capacity development. Indicators of success are often limited to the number of workshops or training sessions held, the number of attendees or other process indicators. It may be advisable, where feasible, to complete these indicators with others that seek to measure the impact of interventions on SLM outcomes. This can provide feedback into future capacity assessment processes, thereby closing the capacity development loop to make it a truly continuous process. In that perspective, monitoring and evaluation of capacity development interventions can be seen as both the last step in a capacity development cycle and the first step of a new one. This is one of the ways through which capacity development initiatives can build on each other.

6.1 Measuring impact and developing targets & indicators

Impact measurement depends on the creation of sound indicators. It is important that the number of indicators be kept limited, but meaningful. Once stakeholders have defined these indicators, then ways of measuring them can be worked out.

An indicator can be defined as a statistic or measure that provides information about change. It can address a number of factors:

- **Quality:** the type or nature of the change;
- **Quantity:** the scope or extent of the change, such as by how much or how many; and
- **Timing:** the time in which the change should have taken place.

Making use of indicators at various stages of the implementation of the action plan can help the project team understand where they are and how well they are progressing towards meeting the various objectives.

In view of the multi-dimensional and long-term nature of learning processes, changes in capacity are best assessed through subjective and qualitative, and supplemented by empirical and quantitative measurements.

The reasons for this more qualitative approach lie in the fact that, while some measures exist about inputs and outputs to capacity development (e.g. number of staff trained), and often about their performance outcomes (e.g. increased number of infractions recorded by staff trained in monitoring protected area boundaries), the nature of knowledge and learning processes underlying behavioural changes are poorly understood and are potentially difficult to confine within the bounds of quantitative analysis.[12]

Indicators should say as much as possible at as little cost as possible. Simply stated, indicators can be developed by asking, "How will we know if we have achieved this objective?" Criteria that may be used to develop effective indicators include:

- **Feasibility:** an indicator should be suitable in terms of costs, equipment, skills, and time required to measure;
- **Relevancy and accuracy:** an indicator should reflect what is being measured in an accurate way;
- **Sensitivity**: an indicator should be capable of detecting changes over the desired time period;
- **Unbiased:** an indicator should not be open to more than one interpretation about what is being measured and what data are being collected – it should have clear operational definitions that are independent of the person conducting the measurement; and
- **Adequate:** the number of indicators tracked for a given result should be the minimum necessary to ensure that progress toward the end result is sufficiently captured.

The SMART framework (see section 5.1.1) is also applied to determine the quality of indicators: Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Attributable, Relevant/ Realistic, and Time-bound/Trackable.

6.1.1 Measuring individual capacity development

Some common ways of finding out developments in individual capacity include:

- Feedback forms at the end of significant events such as training courses,
- Feedback workshops, or conflict resolution meetings;
- Follow-up interviews or questionnaires some time after the intervention;

12. Capacity Development Indicators, UNDP/GEF Resource Kit No. 4, p. 5.

- Feedback files which capture unsolicited verbal conversations or written letters from clients after the intervention;

As well as measuring quality, the cost-effectiveness of initiatives should be assessed. For example, the cost of achieving certain benefits in individual capacity should be evaluated to determine whether the intervention could be designed more effectively. The cost of a capacity development initiative has to be appropriate in relation to its benefit at the individual, organizational and systemic level.

6.1.2 Measuring Organizational Capacity Development

Objective measure of organizational capacity is sometimes a challenge, since there is a tendency to reduce the capacity of the organization to the capacity of the individuals that compose it. While we have seen that the weaknesses of the individuals may result in low organizational capacity, some indicators of organizational capacity go beyond individuals. For example, many capacity building tools include indicators relating to the institution's openness and ability to manage change, governance, mission, strategy or systems (having established systems for decision-making, communication, M&E, personnel, administration and finances). Below are examples of indicators that are often used for organizational capacity:

Organizational infrastructure	
—	The institution's legal framework, policies, rules, and procedures provide a consistent referent for operations.
—	Appropriate facilities and equipment are available to support operation.
—	The institution has access to logistical and communications needs.
—	The organizational structure meets needs of efficiency and control.
—	Organizational subsystems for administration, production, financial management, and other operations operate efficiently.
—	The institution possesses needed technological resources.

Human resources	
—	The institution has adequate staff in all key positions.
—	Compensation is adequate and equitable.
—	Monetary and non-monetary incentives support targeted behaviour.
—	The staff turnover rate is low.
—	Opportunities exist for staff professional development and on-the-job training.
—	Staff is held accountable for getting work done according to clear performance standards.
—	Staff needs are analyzed in the planning process.
—	Recruitment and promotion policies provide for internal and external staff growth.
—	Fiscal data are up-to-date and accurate.

Financial resources

—	The institution has access to resources in line with planning budgets (including credit, where appropriate).
—	The institution has control over its own budget.
—	The institution has awareness of its future resource needs.
—	Effective financial management and accounting procedures are in place.
—	Budgets are used as a planning and monitoring tool.

Management

—	Institutional management has a high degree of autonomy.
—	The institution has adequate management depth.
—	The institution's management style is participatory and enabling.
—	Managers have a clear sense of realistic goals and priorities.
—	There is effective delegation of management responsibility to second-level managers.
—	Managers have a high level of fiscal and operational awareness.
—	Staff can clearly describe their roles and responsibilities.

Institutional character

—	The institution has a documented mission that is clear and understood by staff and/or members.
—	The institution establishes its own policies, goals, and structure.
—	Institutional activities mesh with institutional mission and priorities.
—	Staff morale is high and regularly evaluated by the institution.
—	Staff is clearly aligned in attitude and performance with institutional goals.
—	"Critical events" analysis indicates that the institution is effective at defining and acting on those opportunities of most significance to its development and impact.
—	High job satisfaction is evident at all levels of the institution.
—	The organization learns from its mistakes and staff are rewarded for confronting rather than concealing errors.
—	Information is shared openly within the organization.

Leadership	
—	The institution's policy contributes to achievement of institutional goals and strategies.
—	Management effectively represents the institution to external interests.
—	The institution has a clear vision, affirmed at all levels in shared values.
—	There is evidence of effective institutional innovation and learning.
—	The institution is characterized by effective staff involvement and teamwork in planning and work.
—	Staff at all levels is oriented toward producing results that meet institutional goals.
—	The external institution image is consistent with its goals and objectives.
—	The institution's leadership philosophy is clear to internal and external stakeholders.[13]

13. Measuring Capacities: An Illustrative Catalogue to Benchmarks and Indicators. Capacity Development Group, Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP. September 2005

6.1.3 Measuring systemic capacity

Measuring systemic capacity or the capacity of a society to achieve its objectives is a difficult and subjective task. While, at a given moment it may be possible to analyse a system to determine its success in achieving its goals, it is challenging to link systemic capacity with any specific intervention. An assessment of systemic capacity is a useful tool at the beginning of a Capacity Development programme, because it will reveal gaps and barriers.

In addition to the indicators mentioned above, high-level indicators that may provide insight into a system's capacities to achieve SLM include:

High-level indicators	
1	Policies, legislations, strategies, and programmes are formulated and implemented
2	Efforts are made to engage and build consensus among stakeholders
3	Mechanisms for conflict resolution around natural resources exist
4	Information and knowledge is readily available to the public and government
5	Government organizations are created and maintained efficiently
6	Government organizations coordinate effectively
7	Effective decentralization mechanisms exist for natural resources management
8	Government policies take into account environmental impacts
9	Political leadership understands challenges related to natural resources management and is committed to addressing them
10	The public is aware of challenges related to land management

PART 4 Compendium of Resources for Capacity Development

This section presents resources relevant to capacity assessment and development.

1. Assessing National Capacities: Resources

Capacity Assessment

Document:	Capacity Assessment: Practice Note
Authors	UNDP
Year	June 2006
Purpose	The note is intended to serve as a starting point for capacity assessment exercises.
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=1941

Document:	Capacity Assessment Methodology: User's Guide
Authors	UNDP
Year	May 2007
Purpose	The guide provides an overview of UNDP's approach to Capacity Development and Capacity Assessment and a step-by-step guide to conducting a capacity assessment using UNDP's "default" Capacity Assessment Framework and Supporting Tool.
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=1939 http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=6021

Document:	National Capacity Self-Assessments: UNDP/GEF Resource Kit (No. 3)
Authors	Dennis Fenton, Arturo Garcia-Costas (UNDP/GEF)
Year	2003
Purpose	This Resource Kit provides implementation guidance to national project teams responsible for managing and overseeing all activities related to NCSA implementation.
Available at:	http://www.undp.org/gef/05/documents/howtoaccessgefgrants/NCSA/NCSA%20Resource%20Kit_Nov03_Final.doc

Document:	Manual for Capacity Development
Authors	SIDA
Year	2005
Purpose	Contains a good discussion on the importance of looking at capacity form a holistic perspective, especially pp. 30 – 39.
Available at:	http://www.sida.se/shared/jsp/download.jsp?f=SIDA4656en_Manual+Capacity_web.pdf&a=3456

Document:	A Guide for Self-Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management
Authors	GEF / UNITAR
Year	2001
Purpose	Guide containing modules on strategic planning, capacity assessment, gap analysis
Available at:	http://www.gefweb.org/Documents/Enabling_Activity_Projects/documents/NCSA_Guidebook_-_English.pdf

Document:	A Brief Review of 20 Tools to Assess Capacity.
Authors	UNDP
Year	2005
Purpose	A compendium of capacity assessment tools with descriptions and link.
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=1383

Document:	Institutional Assessment and Capacity Development: Why,what and how?
Authors	EuropeAid / European Commission
Year	2005
Purpose	Outlines a 5-step approach to assessing institutional capacity (p. 7 – 16), as well as a variety of tips and tricks.
Available at:	http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/reports/concept_paper_final_051006_en.pdf

Document:	Donor Assistance to Capacity Development – Development co-operation Guidelines Series
Authors	OECD
Year	1995
Purpose	The document is intended to articulate a set a of basic orientations which can act as a point of reference for aid donors in forming approaches to aid programming aimed at contributing to the enhancement in developing countries of capacities to address environmental issues in a sustainable manner.
Available at:	https://www.oecd.org/document/10/0,3343,en_2649_33721_1916746_1_1_1_1,00.html

Document:	A Review of Selected Capacity Assessment Methodologies
Authors	UNDP
Year	July 2006
Purpose	Catalogue of methodologies
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=5850

2. Developing National Capacities: Resources

General

Document:	Capacity Development: Practice Note
Authors	UNDP
Year	September 2007
Purpose	Provides a basic understanding of core capacity issues to focus on in a development context. Also proposes default principles for suporting capacity development and pointers for mainstreaming capacity development into programming and operations
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=1507

Document:	Resource Catalogue On Capacity Development
Authors	UNDP
Year	July 2005
Purpose	Catalogue of resources on capacity development
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=5456

Conducting an Integrated Environmental Assessment and Impact Monitoring

Document:	Capacity Building for Integrated Environmental Assessment and Reporting: Training Manual
Authors	IISD, UNEP, Ecologistics International, Ltd.
Year	2nd edition, 2000
Purpose	The training program and manual prepares the user to undertake integrated environmental assessment and reporting nationally or subnationally.
Available at:	http://www.iisd.org/pdf/geo_manual_2.pdf

Document:	Sustainable Land Management: Guidelines for Impact Monitoring (4 modules)
Authors	Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), Berne
Year	1999
Purpose	The Guidelines assist programme and project co-ordinators and managers in initiating a monitoring procedure, selecting indicators and methods, assessing the results, and organising user-oriented outputs, presentations, dissemination and storage of the information gathered in the process of SLM impact monitoring. The Guidelines also provide project specialists with tools to carry out impact monitoring.
Available at:	http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/essd/susint.nsf/Image+Catalog/pathfinder.pdf/$File/pathfinder.pdf http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/essd/susint.nsf/Image+Catalog/slm.pdf/$File/slm.pdf http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/essd/susint.nsf/Image+Catalog/slm.pdf/$File/slm.pdf http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/essd/susint.nsf/Image+Catalog/toolkit.pdf/$File/toolkit.pdf

Institutional Development

Document:	Institutional Development: Learning by Doing and Sharing – Approaches and tools for supporting institutional development
Authors	European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poverty and Institutional Development Division (DSI/AI)
Year	2004
Purpose	The booklet presents a number of experiences, practices and tools used in institutional development
Available at:	http://www.capacity.org/Web_Capacity/Web/UK_Content/Download.nsf/0/9CA60DAADFE2D4BCC1256E3E003CC2E5/$FILE/final%20draft%20booklet_rev.pdf

Policy Making

Document:	An Operational Manual on Integrated Policymaking for Sustainable Development (Draft Version 1)
Authors	UNEP
Year	April 30, 2007
Purpose	The manual outlines key issues for implementing integrated policymaking for sustainable development (IPSD). The objective is to provide insights and good practice on how policy-makers can take advantage of IPSD approaches in developing national policies and development strategies to implement sustainable development.
Available at:	http://www.unep.ch/etb/events/pdf/operationalManualIA_Rev.pdf

Stakeholder Consultation and Participation

Document:	Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes
Authors	UNDP
Year	November 2006
Purpose	The paper makes the case that Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes (MSEPs) will only have the desired effect when all parties have the relevant capacities, knowledge and experience, together with the desired commitment, to engage effectively. In addition, evidence from case experiences suggests that it requires strong leadership and motivation to engage in an MSEP, a network of conducive formal and informal institutions that can be relied upon for action, and most importantly, a balance in power relations between stakeholders.
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=6008

Document:	Who are the Question-makers? A Participatory Evaluation Book
Authors	OESP Handbook Series
Year	1997
Purpose	Participatory evaluation
Available at:	http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/who.htm

Integrating Capacity Development into Project Design and Evaluation

Document:	Integrating Capacity Development into Project Design and Evaluation: Approach and Frameworks
Authors	Charles Lusthaus, Marie-Hélène Adrien, Peter Morgan
Year	December 2000
Purpose	To identify ways to integrate capacity development objectives at the project planning stage; and to develop a framework and indicators for evaluating the performance of capacity development activities
Available at:	http://www.gefweb.org/Outreach/outreach-PUblications/M_E_WP__5.pdf

Action Plan Development

Document:	Guidance on Action Plan Development for Sound Chemicals Management
Authors	UNITAR et al.
Year	2005
Purpose	Provides a detailed description of how to develop an action plan, as well as tools to use in the process.
Available at:	http://www.unitar.org/cwg/publications/cw/ap/UNITAR_action_plan_gd_26_apr_05.pdf

Document:	Develop Strategic and Action Plans
Authors	Community Toolbox / University of Kansas
Year	2007
Purpose	Step-by-step resources on how to develop an action plan / strategic plan. Primarily intended for community groups, but equally useful for other organizations.
Available at:	http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/developstrategicplan/index.jsp

Financing

Document:	Practical Guidelines to Designing Integrated Financing Strategies for Combating Desertification
Authors	The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD
Year	2007
Purpose	Guiding framework for locating and developing a mix of financial resources to fund SLM programs and projects
Available at:	Not available on-line

Leadership Development

Document:	Leadership Development: Leading Transformations at the Local Level
Authors	UNDP
Year	November 2006
Purpose	This document provides specific evidence of existing leadership programmes, primarily within international multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental, and examines the array of methodologies and materials currently in use. It also focuses predominantely on local leadership development since this is the level for which more evidence exists and which coincides best with UNDP strategic opportunity
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=6006

Capacity Development in NGOs

Document:	Effective Capacity Building in Non Profit Organizations
Authors	McKinsey & Company, Venture Philanthropy Partners
Year	2001
Purpose	To assist NGOs to assess their organizational capacity
Available at:	http://vppartners.org/learning/reports/capacity/capacity.html

Monitoring & Evaluation

Document:	Capacity Development Indicators: UNDP/GEF Resource Kit (No. 4)
Authors	UNDP / GEF
Year	2003
Purpose	This report outlines a capacity development indicator framework to measure, analyze and report capacity development results.
Available at:	http://www.undp.org/gef/undp-gef_monitoring_evaluation/sub_undp-gef_monitoring_evaluation_documents/CapDevIndicator%20Resource%20Kit_Nov03_Final.doc

Document:	Practical Guidelines for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Capacity Building: Experiences from Africa
Authors	Rick James / INTRAC
Year	2001
Purpose	The aim of this publication is to help NGOs and donors to develop appropriate, cost-effective and practical systems for the monitoring and evaluation of capacity-building. It is aimed primarily at NGO Support Organisations providing CB services and donors of CB programmes, both International NGOs and official agencies.
Available at:	http://www.intrac.org/docs/Ops36.pdf

Document:	Measuring Capacities: An Illustrative Catalogue to Benchmarks and Indicators
Authors	UNDP
Year	2005
Purpose	Contains a list of suggested indicators at the individual and organizational level, as well as applied examples from UNDP projects.
Available at:	http://www.capacity.undp.org/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentID=5509

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