ASSESSING FOREST GOVERNANCE

A Practical Guide to Data Collection, Analysis, and Use

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A Practical Guide to Data Collection, Analysis, and Use

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PROFOR

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Foreword

In the last twenty years, practitioners have come to appreciate that governance is often the weak link in addressing unsustainable use of forests and trees. Technical knowledge alone is insufficient, and no natural forest management, protected area, plantation, or agro-forestry project will succeed if the resources are poorly governed.

The concept of "forest governance" is often difficult to grasp because many laws, rules, policies, actions, and interactions shape forests. This also makes it difficult to be clear about what the major governance impediments are and what to do about them. Thus, an essential first step towards improving forest governance is to define its most relevant core elements in a coherent framework.

In 2009, several organizations working on forest governance initiated a series of discussions on forest governance monitoring and indicator development. This partnership led to the production of a document, "Framework for Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance," published by FAO and PROFOR in 2011. Since then, the framework has been used for forest governance assessments by several organizations, in many different countries, and is seen as an increasingly useful basis and point of departure for forest governance work.

The framework facilitates systematic thinking about forest governance issues but leaves open the broad question of how to collect and analyze the empirical data. Thus, as a follow-up, FAO, and PROFOR took the lead in producing this guide on data collection and analysis, in collaboration with other organizations.

The guide is the outcome of a remarkable collaboration of experts from organizations with different views and roles on governance issues who nonetheless united to direct the compilation of a common set of good assessment practices. This guide presents a step-by-step approach to planning forest governance assessment or monitoring, collecting data, analyzing it, and making the results available to decision makers and other stakeholders. It also presents five case studies to illustrate how assessment or monitoring initiatives have applied the steps in practice, and it includes references and links to dozens of sources of further information.

The remedy to poor governance starts with understanding where governance is weak. If we can measure forest governance, we can diagnose problems, advance reforms, and monitor their impacts. Governance data collection and assessment provides a necessary foundation for systematic improvement. This guide is a handbook for those seeking to better understand the issues, status, and trends of forest governance, through assessment and analysis. The guide will complement the efforts of both FAO and PROFOR to support sustainable forest management by improving the information base and understanding of governance.

FAO and PROFOR are proud to have partnered in the production of this guide. We hope that it will prove valuable to people around the world whose lives are linked to forests.

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The impetus for the guide came from FAO (Eva Muller, Ewald Rametsteiner, Emelyne Cheney, and Robert Simpson) and PROFOR (Nalin Kishor).

A 2012 workshop at FAO's headquarters in Rome confirmed the need for the guide and produced its rough outline. The workshop participants included Crystal Davis, Alice Thuault, Cecile Njebet, Giorgio Budi Indrarto, Sam Lawson, David Young , Samuel Nguiffo, Phil Franks, Saraswati Rodriguez, Tina Sølvberg, Abdul Wahib Situmorang, Joachim Nahem, Evgeny Kuzmichev, Vladislava Nemova, Marina Smetanina, Stephano Kingazi, Nguyen Phu Hung, Doan Diem, Beatrice Lukama , Orleans Mfune, Sam Nketiah, Chris Beeko, Jo Van Brusselen, An Bollen, Herman Savenije, Tapani Oksanen, Tek Narayan Maraseni, Laura Secco, Eva Muller, Bob Simpson, Marjo Maidell, Ewald Rametsteiner, Emelyne Cheney, and Nalin Kishor. Kenneth Rosenbaum facilitated.

The 2012 workshop prompted creation of a core group of experts to oversee creation of the guide. This group included Robert Simpson, Ewald Rametsteiner, Nalin Kishor, Jo van Brusselen, Tina Sølvberg, Emelyne Cheney, Crystal Davis, Saskia Ozinga, Filippo del Gatto, Boris Romaniuk, Steve Nsita, Nguyen Quang Tan, and Ragna John. Kenneth Rosenbaum and Guido Broekhoven facilitated the group meetings. The European Forest Institute (EFI) hosted the first meeting of the group in November 2012; the World Resources Institute (WRI) hosted the second in June 2013. Also participating in parts of the meetings were Rudi Kohnert, Tuukka Castrén, Dan Miller, Lauren Goers Williams, Florence Daviet, Flore de Préneuf, and Phil Cowling.

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Phil Cowling and Kenneth Rosenbaum wrote the body of the guide with the valuable assistance of Kristin DeValue. Kristin DeValue led the assembly of the case study, tools, and glossary annexes.

The guide was edited by Daria Steigman and designed by Studio Grafik.

James Cantrell provided editorial and publication support.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CS-IFM	Civil Society-Independent Forest Monitors
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EFI	European Forest Institute
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FARO	*Fundación para el Avance de las Reformas y las Oportunidades* (Foundation for the Advance of Reforms and Opportunities)
FLEG	Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade
GIZ	*Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*
GFI	Governance of Forests Initiative
IAP2	International Association for Public Participation
ICA	Institutional and Context Analysis
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAFORMA	National Forest Resources Monitoring and Assessment
NFP	National Forest Programme
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PGA	Participatory Governance Assessment
PROFOR	Program on Forests
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REDD+	REDD plus Fostering Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks
SCAPES	Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
US	United States
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WRI	World Resources Institute

INTRODUCTION

This is a guide to measuring or assessing forest governance. Forest governance comprises all the social and economic systems that affect how people interact with forests, including bureaucracies, laws, policies, traditional norms and culture, patterns of land tenure, and markets.[1]

People assess forest governance for many reasons. Assessments tied to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus fostering conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) have aimed to fulfill international obligations, diagnose problems, and establish a baseline for future monitoring. Assessments under the World Bank Forest Investment Program have helped set the agendas for donor funding. Assessments by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have held officials more accountable and have been the basis for advocacy for reform or better implementation of forest laws.

People assess forest governance on many scales. The assessment in Liberia highlighted in Annex I focused on a few concessions; the cases from Tanzania, Indonesia and Uganda covered whole nations; and the one on Ecuador was part of a larger study intended to compare performance in several countries. The Ecuador assessment looked specifically at transparency, while the three national assessments attempted to cover forest governance more broadly.

1. For a good, detailed explanation of what makes up forest governance, see the framework presented in PROFOR & FAO (2011). That publication breaks forest governance down into pillars, components, and subcomponents. Davis et al. (2013), World Bank (2009), Situmorang et al. (2013), IIED (2005b), and USAID (2013) offer alternative frameworks.

People assess forest governance in many ways. The Uganda case study gathered most of its data in a two-day stakeholder workshop. The Tanzania case surveyed thousands of households. The Indonesia case study involved many weeks of interviews, library research, consultations, and surveys.

In every assessment, people take on varied roles. Some plan the assessment. Some manage its implementation. Some carry out the data collection, analyze the data or communicate the results. Some participate as information resources, constructive critics, or advisors.

This guide aims to be useful to everyone involved in a forest governance assessment. Some readers will want to go through the whole guide to have a full picture of the process. Others will find what they want in particular chapters on planning, data collection, analysis, and use of data.

Readers will find that this guide bases its approach on a few key foundations. These are that a good assessment:

- Requires good planning. For that reason, this guide goes into detail on planning.
- Is transparent and includes stakeholder involvement and outside review. For that reason, this guide stresses participatory approaches.
- Uses data collection methods that are technically sound. For that reason, the data collection chapters of this guide introduce technical topics.
- Does not stop at data collection and analysis; rather, it disseminates results in ways that encourage use of the assessment. For that reason, this guide talks about

dissemination strategies and ways to build upon assessments.

- Is open to learning. It evaluates itself and seeks to improve. For that reason, this guide talks about piloting, adaptive changes in planning, and self-evaluation at the end of the process.

The guide presents approaches to assessment consistent with these premises. If you are conducting a large, detailed, and unique assessment, you will be interested in following most of the steps in the guide. If your assessment is smaller and less complex, you may decide that you do not need to follow every step. For example, you may not need to write a work plan or a data collection manual if the assessment is built around a single day's workshop, or to design a new method of data collection if the project wants to use a method designed for a previous monitoring process.

This guide does not set standards. There is no single best way to conduct an assessment. This guide builds upon what others have done in this rapidly developing field and points to some useful practices and resources.

The potential number of steps can seem daunting, but doing a governance assessment is not necessarily harder than doing other kinds of inventories or monitoring. The case studies in Annex I show how assessments of different sizes and complexity have approached the task and succeeded.

To decide what parts of this guide will be useful to you, read the overview of chapters presented below and consult Table 1. You may discover that you want to use the whole guide, or you may end up using the guide selectively to improve your planning and to learn new ways to collect data or increase the impact of your findings.

LANGUAGE CHECK

BOX 1: SOME KEY TERMS

Different sources use terms like "assessment" and "evaluation" differently. This guide gives these terms broad definitions:

Assessment means "appraisal based on careful analytical evaluation" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31).
Data collection means the systematic gathering of information.
Evaluation means study or measurement, often with an aim to compare the current situation with a past situation or a desired goal.
Measuring means finding the size, amount, extent, status, or degree of something. As used in this guide, it can apply to both quantitative and qualitative data collection.
Monitoring means "systematic tracking or scrutiny for the purpose of collecting specified data or information" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31).

Refer to Annex VI for definitions of other useful terms.

OVERVIEW OF THE GUIDE

This guide comprises three sections. The first section is about planning, the second is about data collection and analysis, and the third is about using your assessment.

Section I: Planning Your Assessment

Chapter 1 of the guide deals with setting objectives. It includes:

- Identifying why you are doing an assessment. Your answer to "why" forms the foundation of your remaining work.
- Assessing the context in which you are working. Context can affect when you decide to do an assessment and what approach you take.
- Setting out your objectives in consideration of what is practical to achieve.

This chapter will be most useful to people initiating, funding, or overseeing assessments.

Chapter 2 of the guide gets into the details of planning. The steps in this chapter lead up to writing an assessment work plan. Not every assessment needs a formal written work plan, but every assessment needs to make some basic planning decisions. These include:

- Setting the technical scope (the specific elements of forest governance you are interested in), geographical scope (e.g., whether local, national, or international), and social scope (the specific social groups or institutions you want to gain information on).
- Choosing the general methods you will use to gather data. For example, will you use household surveys? Expert opinion? Stakeholder workshops? Document reviews?
- Deciding who will conduct the assessment. Who will fund it, who will do the field work, and who will provide institutional support?
- Making a budget.
- Drawing a timeline or setting a time schedule.

This chapter will be most useful to people carrying out the high-level planning, but it will also be of interest to funders, stakeholders, and others who may have a say in the planning decisions.

Chapter 3 deals with planning for data collection. This planning requires some technical knowledge of data collection methods, and the chapter offers an introduction to these with pointers to further information. Some assessments will come to this point with definite ideas of how to collect data. For example, they may be part of an established monitoring process and be bound to use more or less the same methods as the previous round of monitoring. Other assessments will be creating new methods and will need to carefully go through all the steps in the chapter. These steps are:

- Deciding what aspects of governance to measure. This step builds on the scope-setting in Chapter 2, but takes it to a new level of detail. The step may entail creation of indicator sets.

- Identifying data sources. This means understanding where to find relevant information and who to involve in the search.
- Selecting data collection methods. Again, this builds on decisions made in earlier planning. However, the general plans for methods need to become more concrete guidance for data collection.
- Developing data collection tools. These may include interview protocols, surveys, workshop agendas, and so forth.
- Writing a data collection plan. Complex projects involving many data collectors will also want to write a field manual.

This chapter will be of greatest interest to the managers responsible for implementing the assessment as the task of designing data collection usually falls to them.

Section II: Implementing Your Assessment

Chapter 4 covers the basics of collecting data for the assessment. The details of the steps will vary with the methods that the assessment uses. You will need more effort and staff to gather data through household surveys than you will by collecting the opinions of a few experts.

The basic steps covered in this chapter are common to most data gathering efforts:

- Recruiting and training staff.
- Collecting the data.
- Assuring the quality of the data collected.

The information in this chapter will be of use to high-level managers, data collection managers, data collection staff, and people outside the assessment who want to understand and critique data collection practices.

Chapter 5 covers interpretation and analysis:

- Processing the data, which may include entering it into digital form, summarizing it, or producing visual representations of it.
- Analyzing the data, which means interpreting the data in terms of the local context. This may include scoring indicators, identifying patterns in the data and shedding light on their causes and effects, or explaining the data in terms of social or economic theory.
- Making recommendations, which typically take the form of suggested priorities or actions.

As with Chapter 4, this chapter will be of interest to people doing the work of analysis as well as to people who want to understand and critique the analysis of others.

Section III: Using Your Assessment

Chapter 6 covers dissemination of results. Too many assessments simply publish a report that gets read a few times and then filed away. Chapter 6 discusses:

- How to develop a dissemination strategy that will bring your findings and recommendations to the attention of decision makers and stakeholders who can put the information to good use.
- How to implement the strategy.
- How to institutionalize the assessment process, or at least make it more likely that the next assessment will have your records and methods available to build upon.

This chapter should be of interest to people who are interested in seeing the investment of time and energy in assessments lead to real change: assessment initiators and funders, managers, data collectors, analysts, and stakeholders.

Chapter 7 discusses learning and improvement to make the first and future assessments better. It covers:

- Ongoing self-evaluation of the assessment process during implementation.
- Evaluation of the process after the assessment is complete.
- Capturing and sharing lessons learned. Assessment is an evolving practice, and we can all learn from each other's experiences.
- Finding ways to keep gathering feedback after the assessment is over and the staff have moved on to other projects. Some lessons will emerge only after events play out over months or years.

This chapter should be of interest to all who hope to improve the quality of assessments.

Postscript

The postscript briefly notes the rapid evolution of forest governance assessment and encourages practitioners to contribute to the growth of the field.

Annexes

This guide includes several annexes that should provide as much practical guidance as the text itself.

Annex I includes five case studies:

- A broad, indicator-based, countrywide assessment in Indonesia that uses several methods to gather data (with regional and local components).
- A national survey-based assessment in Tanzania that was part of a larger effort to collect biophysical and social data about forests.
- A national assessment in Ecuador focusing on evaluating transparency and designed to be part of an international survey of several developing countries.
- An assessment in Liberia of the governance of seven forest concessions.
- An assessment in Uganda using a national stakeholder workshop for rapid scoring of a large set of indicators.

Each case is outlined using the steps presented in the main text of the guide.

Annex II presents a set of references and tools linked to the chapters of the guide. For example, if you are interested in learning more about political or economic assessments (discussed in Chapter 1), creation of survey instruments (Chapter 3), or data visualization (Chapter 5), you will find links to resources on those topics in this annex.

Annexes III and IV present guidance on two planning tasks covered in Chapter 2. Annex III has advice on creating budgets. Annex IV has a sample outline for a work plan.

Annex V contains information for people interested in developing or refining their own indicators of forest governance.

Annex VI is a glossary of terms used in the guide.

This guide is part of the growing exchange of ideas among practitioners of forest governance assessment. Please join that conversation by sharing your feedback and experiences with the sponsors of this guide. Send email to assessment@forestgov.info.

TABLE 1: ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDE

Sections	Chapters	Technical Elements	Points on Process
Section I: Planning your Assessment	Setting the Objectives	– Define the "why" – Consider the context – Set the objectives	– Developing shared objectives
	Developing a Work Plan	– Identify your scope – Identify your approach – Decide who will conduct the assessment – Figure timing – Figure cost – Write the work plan	– Communicating and managing the process
	Planning for Data Collection	– Decide what aspects of governance to address – Identify potential sources of information – Select data collection methods – Develop tools for each method – Finalize your work plan and develop a data collection manual	– Vetting the Methods
Section II: Implementing Your Assessment	Data Collection	– Assemble and train a data collection team – Collect data – Assure data quality	– Practical and ethical data collection
	Interpretation and Analysis	– Process the data – Do the analysis – Make recommendations	– Vetting and Validation of Analysis
Section III: Using Your Assessment	Application of Results	– Decide on an implementation strategy – Implement your strategy – Institutionalize further assessment	– Facilitate use of your findings
	Learning and Improvement	– Begin self-evaluation during the assessment – Hold an evaluation after the assessment – Make the evaluation results available – Keep the door open for further feedback	– Conducting a team self-evaluation

SECTION I:
PLANNING YOUR ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

- Section 1 provides an overview of how to plan your assessment. It is divided into three chapters: *Setting Your Objectives, Developing Your Work Plan, and Planning for Data Collection*.

- Chapter 1, *Setting the Objectives*, helps readers to assess why they are doing the assessment and what contextual factors could affect its design as part of an objective-setting process.

- Chapter 1 also provides an introduction to stakeholder engagement within the assessment process to help readers consider how they will engage different groups within their assessment.

- Chapter 2, *Developing a Work Plan*, helps readers to develop their assessment's approach by considering what they want to include within their assessment (the geographical, technical, and social scope), what methods they want to use (quantitative, qualitative), and who will be involved in conducting the assessment. It then provides further guidance in considering the practical elements of developing a work plan for the assessment, including identifying when it will be done, how long it will take, how much it will cost, and whether it will be repeated.

- Chapter 2 also provides guidance on effectively communicating with the different stakeholder groups engaged within the development and planning of your assessment.

- Chapter 3, *Planning for Data Collection*, helps readers refine their plans to produce practical tools for collecting needed information. It has readers set concrete measurement aims, identify potential data sources, select data collection methods, develop specific data collection tools, and capture everything in a data collection manual.

- Chapter 3 also discusses going to stakeholders or peers to get feedback on proposed methods.

- While this section is presented in a sequential order, planners will need to consider many elements at the same time—with decisions on finance, human resources, and intended outcomes all influencing the potential scope and approaches to be used.

- You should thus consider Section I to be a general guide to developing the approach to your assessment. The steps can be useful even if you do not have a full commitment to go ahead with an assessment. You can undertake some or all of this planning to attract funding, to cost out an already-agreed-upon assessment, or to identify how you can achieve an assessment within your budget.

1 SETTING THE OBJECTIVES

Setting objectives is the first step in the development of an assessment. It will define what you are trying to achieve and help you to communicate this to others. Even if you are planning to use an assessment tool used many times before, having clear objectives will help guide the decisions you make as you apply the tool to the circumstances at hand. This chapter provides an overview of the objective-setting process. That process has three main steps.

STEP 1

DEFINE THE "WHY"

Begin with a clear understanding of why you are conducting the assessment. This will help you refine your objectives and explain them to others. Understanding the "why" requires thinking about your background motives and the intended achievements or outcomes from the assessment.

STEP 2

CONSIDER THE CONTEXT

The broad social, political, and environment context, which the forest sector is part of and in which your assessment will take place, will affect what you want to and can achieve. Analysis of this context may help you to identify opportunities, risks, and obstacles. The process can also help you identify which groups should be the key audiences of the assessment and which groups should be engaged in its development. This knowledge can lead you to revise your timing or anticipated outcomes and shape your objectives to ensure that the assessment is as relevant as possible.

STEP 3

SET THE OBJECTIVES

Having considered why you are doing the assessment and the context in which it is taking place, you can now set your objectives. These can be divided into three levels: a high-level goal related to the overall impact you want the assessment to achieve; a small number of outcomes that you think will help achieve the overall goal; and a number of more direct outputs that will contribute to achieving your desired outcomes.

POINTS ON PROCESS: DEVELOPING SHARED OBJECTIVES

Many different stakeholders are engaged in the forest sector, many of whom will have different interests in and views on the sector. Talking with these different groups at an early stage can help you develop objectives that are relevant to many of them. This can increase support for conducting the assessment and make it more likely that the stakeholders will accept the assessment's results.

Step 1: Define the Why

What are your motivations? What is the purpose of the assessment? Do you need to do an assessment?

There are many reasons to undertake an assessment, and your specific motivation will depend on your position within the sector, the organization you work for, and the existing status of governance within your forest sector. Some of the more common motivations include:

- Diagnosing forest governance challenges related to elements of the forest sector, usually as part of a planning process related to the development of policies and measures related to international agreements such as Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) (linked to European Union (EU) market access) or REDD+ Readiness processes linked to REDD+ developments under the UNFCCC. (See the Uganda and Indonesia cases in Annex I.)
- Raising awareness of a perceived issue/problem or number of issues within the sector that action should be taken on. (See the Ecuador case in Annex I.)
- Monitoring the impact or performance of a specific policy, program, or legal or administrative process (e.g., forest law reform) over time. (See the Liberia and Ecuador cases in Annex I.)
- Setting a baseline for future monitoring. (See the Indonesia and Liberia cases in Annex I.)
- Establishing or strengthening a system of forest sector monitoring to include forest governance. (See the Tanzania case in Annex I.)

Your motivation may be one of these, something else, or a mix. Having multiple motivations is not a problem and can improve the relevance of the assessment. Being clear on your motivations will help you to decide whether you need to conduct an assessment and to communicate to others why an assessment is or is not needed. It will also help you to ensure that your own motivations are effectively captured within proposed objectives and approaches, including within the geographical scope (where), the technical scope (what), and the social scope (who) of the assessment (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2).

FROM THE TOOL BOX

BOX 2: USING THE SAME TERMS—FOREST GOVERNANCE

Forest governance is a broad topic, and actors will have different understandings of the key concepts and the language used to describe them. Many will also have an incomplete knowledge of the forest sector and forest governance, with their knowledge shaped by their own experiences and interests.

It is thus good at the beginning of any process to establish some common understanding. This can be achieved by presenting a list of key terms and concepts and coming to agreement on what they mean for the purpose of your discussions. This may also be achieved or helped by using a basic framework around which discussions on forest governance can be structured. This approach can help to bring the ideas of diverse stakeholders together by showing how their different experiences in the sector may be linked by a common governance issue or form part of a chain of governance that you want to get more information on.

Assessments have used a number of different forest governance frameworks. The one shown below, developed by FAO, PROFOR, and others in 2011 as a common framework, is one example. The three main pillars are presented as the core elements of forest governance, while the cross-cutting (horizontal) principles are seen as the generally accepted principles of good governance. Use of a framework such at this can allow you to focus in on a key problem area that stakeholders may be interested in (e.g., transparency in the development of forest laws). While not essential at the objective-setting phase, introducing the framework at an early point in the process of developing your assessment may help structure discussions throughout the process, moving from discussion on why you are doing the assessment to how and what you are going to assess.

Step 2: Consider the Context

Both your motivations and intended outcomes are likely to be shaped by the context in which you are working. This requires you to step back from your immediate motivations and look at the wider environment in which the assessment will be taking place. Such analysis will help you identify:

- **Windows of opportunity.** These are current or upcoming events or situations that would increase the relevance or impact of the assessment (e.g., changes in leadership of a key institution, an election, or a shift in the domestic or international economic situation).
- **Risks.** An assessment may pose risks associated with its physical implementation or use of its findings. These include safety risks to people participating in the assessment, risks of results being misapplied to justify poor decisions, and risks to the reputations of people conducting the assessment. Considering these within the broader context will help you mitigate them from an early stage.
- **Other initiatives.** Awareness of past or ongoing assessments or other programs working on governance can help you identify how to work with them and prevent duplication of effort.
- **Key problems.** The forest sector is complex. Assessment may ultimately identify different problems, different perspectives on problems, and different underlying drivers of these problems than the ones you expected to find at the start. Gaining an early perspective on what problems might exist and whether they come from within the forest sector or outside will help you to make your assessment relevant and increase its potential impact.
- **Ownership and power dynamics.** There are many different stakeholders within the sector with differing levels of power and influence and differing relationships. Clear understanding of these will help you focus your assessment and develop approaches and methods that take such imbalances of power into consideration.

An analysis of the context in which you are working can be strengthened by engagement with stakeholders (see the process note on stakeholder engagement at the end of this chapter). The exact focus areas will depend on your own areas of interest, but some common areas for analysis are discussed below.

The Political and Institutional Context

- What are the main formal and informal institutions affecting or affected by the forest sector?
- Who are the key decision makers and what areas of information are of interest to them? What would make the assessment more compelling for them? What elements of an assessment could they be opposed to?
- What local, national, or international events are coming up or ongoing that could influence the assessment and its outcomes? Upcoming events might include elections, planned reforms, or planned investments from development partners or the private sector. Ongoing events might include notable public failures of governance (e.g., a weak response to a disaster, exposure of corruption). Be particularly aware of other forest governance programs, like Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) or Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) programs that might be supportive of assessments.

FROM THE TOOL BOX

BOX 3: ASSESSING CONTEXT—TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES

Governments, NGOs, development partners, and the private sector have used many tools and activities to assess the context in which they are working. These can produce a range of information, from detailed analyses to quick snapshots of "headline" issues. Below are examples of some analysis tools and activities that could be of use. Annex II has pointers to resources for many of these tools.

- **Stakeholder workshops.** A simple workshop to bring stakeholders together to discuss the existing status of the sector and potential opportunities for change provides a forum for analysis of the current context. It also provides an opportunity to learn about other programs and initiatives that may be ongoing. Such a workshop could be part of a multi-stakeholder planning process for the assessment.
- **Timeline development.** A basic timeline showing key events and cycles occurring in the sector and in the national/local government may help you identify for the optimal time to issue your report (e.g., before a budget cycle begins) or when to avoid fieldwork (e.g., during the winter or the rainy season).
- **Stakeholder analysis/mapping.** Mapping stakeholders within the sector can identify which groups you need to engage and which groups are important target audiences. Discussions with stakeholders during the mapping process can identify their interests and could point to possible conflicts. Mapping can also be linked to a power analysis, looking at the power different stakeholders have within the sector.
- **Development of a background document.** It may be possible to recruit a consultant or other personnel to prepare a background report on the sector, including assessment of key stakeholders, status of the forests and land-cover change, and key political and social issues. PROFOR's *Users Guide to Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance* (Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012) provides a sample outline of such a document for a forest governance assessment, but you could design and develop one based on your own areas of interest and the resources you have available.
- **Political economy analysis (PEA) or institutional and context analysis (ICA).** These processes are more in-depth analyses and will include many of the above tools and activities. Analysis of this type often takes months to undertake in any detail and will provide key recommendations on potential drivers of future change in the sector that an assessment or future programme could capitalize on. UNDP provide a guidance manual on ICA while DFID have developed a guidance note on PEA.
- **Poverty or livelihood impact assessment**. This process uses a number of different methods to identify what social impacts proposed or recently implemented policies or activities will have or have had. The tool has been developed by the NGO Forest Trends and has been used most frequently in association with voluntary partnership agreements linked to the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade (FLEGT) Initiative.

Very detailed analysis may be beyond the capacity of your assessment, but it will be valuable to see if such assessments have been conducted and whether they can help inform your objective-setting and planning process.

The Economic Context

- How significant are the formal (e.g., regulated timber industry, ecotourism) and informal (e.g., firewood collection, non-timber forest products used in communities) elements of the forest sector to the economy?
- What other economic activities are important and how do they influence the forest sector?
- Who are the key economic stakeholders and what influence do they have?
- Are there potential changes on the economic landscape, such as changes in commodity prices, access to markets, or development of new natural resources?

The Social Context

- What are the different social and cultural uses of forest areas? Who are the key stakeholders from a social and cultural standpoint?
- What is the tenure situation? Do local communities have respected tenure rights? Are tenure rights disputed (between communities, between communities and the state, and/or between official state-issued allocations)? Are there overlapping resource concessions?
- What are the existing relationships between different stakeholders within the forest sector?
- Which stakeholders have power within the sector and which stakeholders are more excluded (e.g., rural women and other subgroups)?
- Which groups are interested in forest governance and view the need to support assessment and monitoring or push for change?

The Technical/Operational Context

- What resources, people, and organizations are available to help in the assessment?
- What other assessments or analyses have been conducted or are ongoing that could either strengthen the assessment or conflict with it? Again, look for programs like FLEG or FLEGT.

The Environmental Context

- What are the key environmental issues being faced at local and national levels?
- Are nationally or internationally significant ecosystems/species affected by current forest practices?
- Has any analysis of the costs of environmental degradation or the value of ecosystem services been done?

Gaining this knowledge will help you refine the outcomes you think are both possible and most important. This knowledge will also help you address such key points as the audience for the assessment, the timing of implementation and delivery (which can be critical in terms of identifying opportunities to increase impact), and the potential resources available for conducting your assessment. These considerations are not just relevant at the objective-setting stage; they will be important throughout the planning and development process. The more context that can be woven into the planning stage, the more you will be able to consider how contextual factors will influence your assessment—and identify opportunities to use these contextual factors to strengthen the assessment and avoid potential pitfalls.

Step 3: Set the Objectives

Having considered both your initial motivations and the broader context, you can move to identifying the overall *goal, outcomes, and outputs* that you want your assessment to achieve.

These represent the top level of your "hierarchy of objectives"; this will eventually provide a link between the *activities* you are doing and your overall objectives. Activities contribute to the delivery of direct *outputs* (such as reports or a workshop), which then support broader *outcomes* (such as increased awareness of forest governance amongst forest dependent communities or increased capacity to monitor forest governance within government agencies), which will help support achievement of your goals (such as increased demand for good forest governance amongst forest dependent communities or improved access to information on forest governance within a country).

Working out the links between these different levels is often called developing a theory of change. A theory of change provides a plausible path from the activities and outputs you will work on to the overall goal you may have (i.e., how all the different activities add up to several medium-sized changes (outputs) that then lead to bigger changes (outcomes) and contribute to one big change (the goal)). Developing this will help you think through exactly what it is you want to achieve and how you will achieve it. As you develop your plan, the theory of change will also help you to identify the scope of your assessment, the target audience of your outputs, and what activities you want to undertake. These decisions will be crucial in shaping the type of outputs you produce and how these contribute to achieving your outcomes and goal.

Goal
Overarching objective to which the assessment will contribute and that will be supported by achieving the stated outcomes (e.g., enhanced engagement of indigenous peoples in forest governance decision making).

Outcomes
Key developments that will help achieve the goal and will be supported by outputs. Normally limited to 2-4 things (e.g., increased understanding of the role of indigenous communities in forest management).

Outputs
Number of outputs that will contribute to delivering outcomes. These are normally more tangible things that the project will definitely deliver e.g. a report on the role of indigenous communities in forest management.

Activities:
Specific activities that will be undertaken in order to achieve the outputs (e.g., workshops, assessment work, meetings.

Theory of Change
How different activities will lead to outputs, outputs to outcomes, and outcomes to goals.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 4: STAYING SMART—KEEPING YOUR OBJECTIVES FOCUSED

Each objective (from goal to output) should be a clear statement of what the assessment wants to achieve. Each may focus on a specific change occurring or the process by which the assessment is conducted, but as a group they should conform to a number of key guidelines:

- **Be Specific.** Objectives should be well-defined and unambiguous, focusing on a clear result.
- **Be Measurable.** Objectives should define success in a way that can be measured.
- **Be Achievable.** Objectives should be achievable considering your resources. You will need to consider your time and financial and human resources when assessing this.
- **Be Realistic.** Objectives should be realistic considering your context (the social, political, economic, and environmental situation).
- **Be Time-bound.** Objectives, particularly for outputs, should be achieved within a certain time frame or by a certain deadline.

Examples of Objective Setting

Here are examples of setting objectives from two different assessments.

EXAMPLE 1: INDEPENDENT FOREST MONITORING IN LIBERIA

Motivations
The purpose was to assess whether logging concessions were helping to meet the national forest policy's objectives of economic development, equitable forest access, and stakeholder participation.

Contextual Factors
- The Liberia-EU voluntary partnership agreement includes provisions for civil society monitoring. It was through this provision that the study was funded.
- Timber exploitation remains a highly political issue in Liberia. Increased public information on the public benefits of commercial logging will provide an important basis for decision making on future activities.

Goal
To ensure that concessions help meet the objectives of the National Forest Policy regarding economic development, equitable forest access, and stakeholder participation.

Outcomes
- Provision of a baseline against which the social impacts of implementing the EU-Liberia VPA can be judged.
- Identification of areas of government policy that will require new regulations or modification.
- Increased awareness among communities of forest governance developments.

Outputs
- An assessment methodology that could be repeated in coming years.
- A report on existing benefits of logging concessions and identifying areas of policy and legislation that could be strengthened/modified.

Theory of Change
Better information on concession performance and governance will promote compliance with forest and revenue laws, empower local people, and persuade officials of needed enforcement or reforms.

EXAMPLE 2: CASE STUDY FROM ANNEX I INDONESIA PGA FOR REDD+

Motivations
Indonesia's national policy-making and international REDD+ commitments demanded robust and credible baseline data on forest, land, and REDD+ governance as a first step toward improving forest governance.

Contextual Factors
- In 2009, Indonesia's president committed to reducing the country's greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by 2020. Indonesia had received significant external support from UN agencies and foreign governments to advance Indonesia's REDD+ efforts, including a national climate and forest strategy.
- The country signed a Letter of Intent with the Government of Norway to undertake actions to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Goal
To improve information on and awareness of forest governance to inform future domestic reforms and boost international support.

Outcomes
- Increased capacity among key stakeholder groups to undertake forest governance assessments.
- Awareness of existing levels of capacity to address forest governance.
- A baseline for Indonesia's REDD+ safeguards information system.

Outputs
- A clear and repeatable method for assessing forest governance that conforms to domestic legislation and international best practice and engages indigenous peoples.
- A forest governance report that is easily accessible to international and domestic stakeholders and available within 12 months.

Theory of Change
Assessment will increase awareness of problems and broad participation will lead to broad acceptance of findings. Forest-dependent people, officials, donors, and others will then be closer to agreement about areas needing reform; this will make achieving reform more likely.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 5: GAUGE YOUR RESOURCES

Any assessment will be defined to an extent by the resources available. These include time, money, and people. While these are discussed in more detail in Chapters 2 and 3, they must be considered even at the stage of objective setting. It is possible to assess this by asking a number of questions:

- Who could support the achievement of this objective?
- What capacity do the people available to support the assessment have in terms of time and technical skills?
- What level of finance is available to undertake the assessment? Are there any potential additional sources of finance?
- Are there constraints on how long the assessment should take?
- Is this a one-off assessment, repetition of an existing assessment, or the development of a baseline on which future assessments will be based?

In some cases—for example, monitoring processes for which a government office is responsible and a budget has been allocated—answers to some of these questions may be predetermined as part of the assessment structure or history. In most cases however further consideration of the context can help assess what opportunities or constraints exist within these areas (e.g., the best timing for an assessment might be prior to an election, or additional funding might be available from a development partner).

A large number of stakeholders are engaged within the forest sector, and they have different perspectives on forest governance, different motivations for engaging in an assessment, and different desired outcomes. Engagement with these stakeholders occurs along a continuum from simple awareness-raising through consultation to joint decision making and eventually to empowerment. You should consider as soon as possible at what level you want engagement to occur as seeking true engagement will require a commitment to allowing different groups to have a role in the design and ongoing decision-making processes for the assessment. While this may seem daunting, increased engagement can bring a number of benefits:

- **Increased relevance.** By engaging different stakeholders you are able to access different ideas and information on the forest sector. This can bring insight into key areas that the assessment should cover as well as providing information on other programs and activities that may help in the design process. This can help increase the relevance of the assessment above and beyond your original ideas and increase the number of stakeholders interested in the outcomes.
- **Increased ownership and support.** Engaging stakeholders helps increase their understanding of the process. If they see that an assessment can benefit them, that increases their interest in its success and could also increase their willingness to support a reform based on the assessment. Understanding can thus increase cooperation, ranging from willingness to answer questions to provision of ongoing financial, logistical, and technical support. The resulting participation creates a sense of ownership.
- **Increased legitimacy.** Engagement of stakeholders at an early stage allows stakeholders to see that the process is being developed in a transparent and open way and understand the motivations behind it. This, combined with having an increased sense of ownership through being engaged, can help to increase the perceived legitimacy of results and interest in them—helping to improve the impact of the assessment and its overall value. This is particularly relevant if a key target group for the assessments may not welcome assessments of sector governance.

It is also important to consider the challenges that might come with increased stakeholder engagement. These can include increased time required to allow for effective discussion of approaches, increased costs due to broader engagement and consultation, and a broader scope of issues requiring assessment due to a wider range of interests being represented. While these challenges are important, they are generally not considered to outweigh the benefits and increased impact of strong stakeholder engagement in almost all forms of governance assessment.

Engaging Stakeholders in Planning, Development, and Implementation

There are a wide range of methods for engaging stakeholders that support different levels of engagement. Figure 1 provides an example of some of these. Engagement of stakeholders in developing and discussing the initial context analysis can provide an excellent starting point to discuss the approaches as well as to determine which stakeholders should be engaged at what points in the process. Further information on who to engage in implementing the assessment is provided in Chapter 2 and further information on specific methods and tools is provided in Annex II.

FIGURE 1: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM

Description: Transfer of control of level of decision making.
Example in an assessment: A specific stakeholder group could take responsibility for undertaking and leading the assessment. This may be a situation that is aiming at, for example, development in year one of an assessment approach and method that can be led and undertaken by civil society groups in subsequent years.

Description: Collaboration where there is shared control of decision making.
Example in an assessment: Multi-stakeholder steering committee established to provide oversight of the assessment and make joint decisions on objectives, approach, methodology, and use of results.

Description: Joint activities, with stakeholders engaged in problem solving and the development of proposals.
Example in an assessment: Multi-stakeholder team brought together to implement an assessment and refine the approach, with the key decision making role still held by one or a group of lead agencies.

Description: Two-way flow of information to gain feedback on views and respond to feedback.
Example in an assessment: Individual meetings or consultation workshops held with stakeholders to gain feedback on the assessment (with comments being collected and responded to).

Description: Information provided to stakeholders
Example in an assessment: Briefings provided on the assessment, including events (e.g., awareness-raising meetings) and information sharing (e.g., press releases) about the assessment but with limited opportunity to comment or contribute to its design or implementation.

Source: Adapted from International Association for Public Participation spectrum:www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/spectrum.pdf.

It will be up to you to decide the approach best suited to the nature of the assessment you are planning, your country, and the organizational context, as well as to the potential relationships and power dynamics that may exist between stakeholder groups. Your resources and deadlines may also be factors.

A good place to start can be to conduct an initial draft objective-setting and planning process within your organization or with existing partners. Framing your own objectives first and considering what resources you have will allow you to outline more clearly what you see as possible, will help increase the productivity of any stakeholder engagement, and will help you be alert to unwarranted expectations from stakeholders of what the assessment will be able to achieve. Sharing this draft with stakeholders will also help increase the transparency of the process and help stakeholders understand your motivations.

2 DEVELOPING A WORK PLAN

*Chapter 1 developed the idea of **why** you are doing the assessment. Building on your thinking of **why**, this chapter starts the decision making on **what** to cover, **how** and **when** to do it and **how much** it will cost. Working through the steps you should develop a high-level work plan that you can use to aid further planning, guide implementation, and explain your work to others.*

Each assessment is unique, and you may begin your work with some matters already decided (for example, the budget or the technical scope). If so, first identify what parameters are fixed and then use these to help guide your decision making within the other steps.

STEP 1

IDENTIFY YOUR SCOPE—WHAT TO MEASURE

The scope of your assessment provides the basic parameters around what information you are interested in assessing. It can be divided into three areas: technical scope (the specific elements of forest governance you are interested in); geographical scope; and social scope (the specific social groups you want to gain information on).

STEP 2

IDENTIFY YOUR APPROACH—HOW WILL YOU GET YOUR INFORMATION?

How you conduct the assessment is influenced by what type of outputs you want, what types of information your target audience is interested in, what methods for data collection your target audience sees as acceptable, and what capacity and resources you have. You will need to consider how you might link different methods (such as desk reviews, expert analyses, key informant interviews, focus groups, surveys, and workshops) together and whether your approach should focus on quantitative or qualitative information.

STEP 3

WHO WILL CONDUCT THE ASSESSMENT?

Any assessment requires contributions from a range of actors, including those who fund it, provide institutional support to it, and implement it. Identifying who will fill these roles, what capacity they have, and in what ways they will engage in the development and implementation of your assessment will help you clarify how the assessment will be conducted.

STEP 4

WHEN WILL IT BE DONE, HOW OFTEN, AND FOR HOW LONG?

Time is often left out of the planning process, but is a critical element. Consideration must be given not only to how long the assessment will take but also how often it might be repeated.

STEP 5

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

The cost of an assessment is often a critical element. Working through the pricing of different methods, covering different scopes, can help to provide a clearer analysis of costs and benefits and clarify what decisions and compromises need to be made.

STEP 6

WRITE THE WORK PLAN

From the steps above you can start to develop an outline for your work plan. This will provide a structure around which further planning and communication can occur.

POINTS ON PROCESS: COMMUNICATING AND MANAGING THE PROCESS

Many stakeholders will be interested in being engaged in an assessment of forest governance. It will be impossible to ensure all of their interests and expectations are met and have the assessment done in a reasonable time frame and on budget. It is thus important to communicate clearly with different groups to ensure they understand what the assessment will focus on and why, and to be transparent about how these decisions have been taken. Clarity at this stage in the development of the assessment will help prevent confusion and conflicting expectations later on and will also facilitate more detailed planning with all groups sharing the same understanding of why the assessment is taking place.

Step 1: Identify Your Scope—What to Measure

Identifying *what* you want to measure will set the scope for your assessment. There are three main aspects of this scope: the technical scope, the geographical scope, and the social scope. At this point in your planning, all that you need to do is set the general scope of what you want to measure. Chapter 3 discusses in detail how to narrow down what you want to measure and specific ways of measuring.

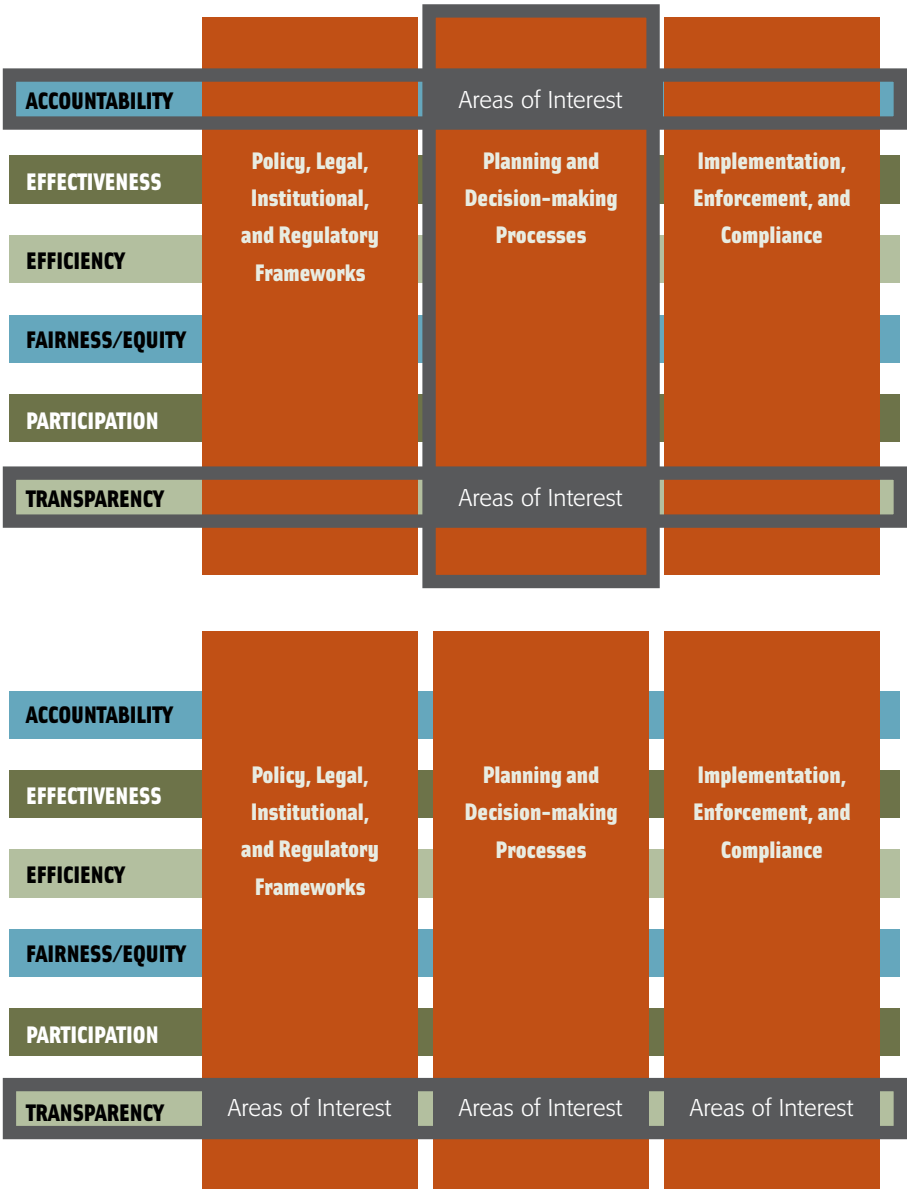
The **technical scope** of the assessment may be simply to identify if you are complying with an international reporting format, are following a past assessment, or have a very specific issue you are interested in gaining information on (e.g., existing legislation within the forest sector). If your objectives are broader, or you are developing an assessment for the first time, however, you may need to consider a larger number of elements cutting across forest governance. This process can be challenging, particularly if you are working with others who do not have an overall picture of the different elements of forest governance. If this is the case, using an existing governance framework to structure discussions and link different perspectives on the technical scope may prove helpful.

Several existing frameworks look at forest governance or governance more broadly.[2] Each provides a structured simplification of governance arrangements. The Forest Governance Framework (PROFOR & FAO 2011) provides one such example. The three pillars presented (see Box 2 in Chapter 1, above, or Figure 2, below) can help you broadly define which core part of governance you are interested and within that what principles of 'good governance' you may be most concerned with. For example you may be most interested in the planning and decision-making processes (the pillar) within the forest sector and how transparent and accountable (the principles) these are. Equally it may be these principles of 'good governance' that are of most interest to you for example transparency, and seeing how this is implemented across existing policy, institutional and regulatory frameworks, the planning and decision-making processes that create them and their implementation, enforcement and compliance (See Figure 2 for overview example). The full framework further divides the pillars into components and subcomponents, which can allow you to identify your scope at a more detailed level and to relate the specific interests individuals or groups may have back to the broader area of governance that you have identified as your scope. Linking these to specific criteria for measurement is covered in more depth in Chapter 3.

2. Some of these frameworks are listed in Annex II. These are not exhaustive lists but should provide an indication of some of the main frameworks available.

FIGURE 2: USING A FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY TECHNICAL SCOPE AND FOCUS OF ASSESSMENT

Grey boxes added show area of interest—where they overlap (solid red boxes) are the key focus areas.



LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 6: BALANCING BREADTH AND DEPTH OF ASSESSMENT

Agreeing on the scope of your assessment will require you to balance a temptation to assess everything, everywhere with what is possible from a practical point of view and what will provide you with enough depth of analysis to achieve your desired objectives. The broader your assessment, the less depth you are likely to be able to achieve given the same level of resources. In most situations you have to choose between a very detailed assessment within a focused area (be that technical, geographical, or social) or a less in-depth assessment across a broader area.

Table 2 provides an overview of these choices. Note that you can try to address some of these challenges by being strategic in the way you collect information (your approach to sampling) and using methods that may be lower cost but provide effective representations of the situation. More information on these options is provided in Chapter 3.

TABLE 2: BALANCING BREADTH OF ASSESSMENT SCOPE WITH DEPTH OF ASSESSMENT

		Completeness	
		Addressing only a subset of forest governance aspects considered most important and perhaps acting as proxies for other aspects.	Complete, addressing all aspects of forest governance in detail.
Rigor	Less rigorous measurement, building on existing methods but with some adaptation based on input from country stakeholders.	OPTION 1: The worst option, though still better than nothing and better than aiming for Option 4 and not achieving it.	OPTION 2: Sacrifice rigor for completeness. Typical uses: diagnosis of problems; surveillance for emerging issues.
	Highly rigorous measurement, using new methods designed for the specific measurement with full multi-stakeholder engagement.	OPTION 3: Sacrifice completeness for rigor. Typical uses: tracking impact of a specific reform; monitoring of priority concerns.	OPTION 4: Very expensive, unlikely ever to be funded, certainly never likely to be funded repeatedly over time so that improvements can be tracked.

Source: Adapted from Lawson (2012).

The **geographical scope** of the assessment can be shaped by both technical and logistical considerations. First, identify what geographical scale and locations are relevant to the technical areas you are interested in; next, consider whether it is relevant to include other areas for comparison or if you can compare between different areas of interest. For example, it may be appropriate to assess the application of forest laws between provinces if all areas have similar forest coverage. If, however, only one province has significant forest cover, such an assessment would be less valuable. In such a context it may be appropriate for data collection to focus only on that province, saving time and resources on data collection from other areas. If you are considering doing an assessment between different countries or regions, you may need to first think about what similarities there are in terms of technical areas of interest to help focus the assessment and to keep findings relevant to each location.

Almost every assessment will rely to some degree on sampling: measuring a random or representative sample of an attribute rather than every manifestation of that attribute. Geographically, if three provinces are believed to be similar, you might collect data in one province rather than all three. If you are interested in local governance in a collection of 1000 villages, for example, you might select ten randomly for study. Chapters 3 and 4 further discuss sampling; you should be aware, however, that good use of sampling can reduce the costs of assessment.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 7: REMEMBER THE CONTEXT—INCREASE IMPACTS AND REDUCE RISK

Your approach must be firmly rooted in the realities of your context. Weak links between your approach and the context can reduce its relevance and impact, and even cause political and social difficulties. For example, when defining technical scope it may be difficult, and even dangerous, to explicitly focus on corruption or illegality. Information that directly challenges a social group may also be controversial and result in lost opportunities for dialogue with the impugned groups. You may, however, be able to find an acceptable indirect way to address these problems. For example, you might frame corruption as an impediment to trade and marketing, and plan to measure it in terms of lost reputation.

Defining the geographical scope presents similar challenges. Strong comparisons between regions of the country may promote change through exposure of provincial diversity— but it may also be used by others to aggravate social or ethnic tensions that go beyond the intentions of your assessment. In that case, structuring the output around geographical comparisons could lead key decision makers to try to distance themselves from the assessment's findings.

Thus, it is important to remember and revisit your context analysis when developing your approach, discuss it with other key stakeholders, and, if necessary, consider ways of mitigating impacts or risks through the methods and outputs you choose.

The **social scope** of your assessment will consider *who* are the social groups and institutions that you want to gain information on. Many assessments will be interested in understanding the role of different social groups in forest governance and how they are impacted by changes; some assessments, however, will focus on specific social groups (e.g., indigenous peoples, rural communities) or be interested in looking at their situation relative to that of other groups. In considering who should be included it may be important to identify frequently overlooked groups whose views may be more difficult to capture or who are often left out of other forms of assessment (e.g., women, landless people). Some assessments will look at all institutions affecting forest governance, but some will limit their scrutiny to government agencies as opposed to traditional community structures, markets, or civil society institutions. In every case, who to cover within the assessment will be influenced by your objectives and technical scope, and in turn will influence how you collect your data.

Step 2: Identify Your Approach—How Will You Get Your Information?

You can use a large number of different methods to collect information for your assessment. Each of these has different strengths and weaknesses and, in most assessments, you will need to combine a number of these in order to collect all the information you need. The combination of these different methods can be referred to as your approach. A number of different methods for different types of data are shown in Table 3; Box 8 provides more information on the different types of data and methods.

TABLE 3: TYPES OF METHOD AND DATA

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Secondary	Existing censuses, assessments, budgets, etc.	Prior assessment reports, plans, etc.
Primary	Surveys (e.g., opinion polls, household surveys, assessments of forest cover, etc.)	Questionnaires for experts, structured/semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, etc.

LANGUAGE CHECK

BOX 8: METHODS, APPROACHES, AND TYPES OF DATA

Assessments and guides to assessment don't all use words in the same way. Some key terms used in this guide are defined below (and more information on several of them is provided in Chapter 3). Within your own work, try to be clear and consistent in your use of terms. This helps ensure that all stakeholders understand what is happening and that your team is clear about what it can and cannot achieve.

- **Methods.** Within this guide, methods are identified as ways for undertaking an activity (e.g., data collection or stakeholder engagement). They lay out a specific set of actions to take to guide you in how to undertake them.
- **Approach.** Within this guide, approach refers to the way different methods are brought together to complete the assessment; this will include methods relevant to assessment development, implementation, and application of results.
- **Primary data** are new data that the assessment generates.
- **Secondary data** are existing data (e.g., from prior assessments, censuses, scholarly studies) that the assessment can use.
- **Quantitative data** are data expressed in hard numbers (e.g., income levels, percentages, budget numbers).
- **Qualitative data** are data not generally measured in numbers (e.g., expert opinions, focus group preferences, workshop findings, and anecdotal information such as individual stories, examples, or cases that illustrate a point).*
- **Participatory Approaches** engage different stakeholders throughout the development, implementation, and evaluation of an assessment. These can increase ownership of results among target groups. Tools such as workshops, focus groups, and advisory groups can help strengthen participation. (See also Chapter 1, Points on Process.)

*Boundaries between these data types are not absolute. If you gather enough qualitative opinions in a public opinion poll, you may be able to produce a quantitative data e.g. 70 percent of people believe X or 20 percent of people believe Y.

For any assessment, there is usually more than one possible approach. To take a narrow example, say that you wanted to measure the level of corruption in the forest agency. You could:

- **Rely largely on secondary data.** Look for existing public opinion polls on the subject, court cases, and news reports of corruption.
- **Aim for primary quantitative data**. Conduct a new public opinion poll on the reputation of the forest agency.
- **Aim for primary qualitative data representing broad sampling.** Convene focus groups or workshops to score a "citizens' report card."
- **Aim for primary qualitative data representing narrow sampling** (i.e., anecdotal data). Conduct confidential interviews with people and look for whistleblowers.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 9: REMEMBER YOUR PARTICIPANTS AND YOUR AUDIENCE—THE HUMAN CAPACITY OF THOSE WHO PROVIDE AND USE YOUR INFORMATION

Human capacity is also a context issue. The capacity of the intended participants and final audience for the assessment should factor into the design of your approach. How much time, knowledge, and skills does this audience have to contribute to the assessment and interpret its results? For example, a written survey may have limited success if respondents are not able to read; a long and detailed report analyzing every technical element of forest governance may likewise have limited impact on a target audience of busy government officials with limited time to read and digest the report. Assessment of the capacity of the target audience will also help in deciding what types of outputs to develop.

Each of these specific methods would deliver some of the results you need, but in reality assessment approaches will draw on more than one method. For example, you might do an initial review of secondary data sources, have experts review those findings and fill in gaps with expert opinion, and then vet the findings of the experts in a stakeholder workshop. A mix of methods is often best to capture a range of viewpoints, provide a diversity of information, and improve the reliability of the findings.

Deciding on which methods to use must also be shaped by who your target audience is, how long you have available, and how much it will cost. For example, some people in the intended audience may prefer quantitative findings on specific points while others may be looking for a broader, more qualitative picture. Remember, too, that some methods have side benefits, such as informing or building capacity among stakeholders, which may serve the assessment's goals; other methods have challenges related to the existing levels of capacity in the country.

These decisions will be a fundamental part of your planning and will affect the design and implementation choices that you make later. New information gained as implementation proceeds may require you to adjust your methods, so be prepared to remain flexible. Nevertheless, careful consideration of key points early in the process will make later changes less likely. Those key points include:

- **Is your approach practical** given your likely capacities, resources, time frame, and context? Do you have the budget to do a large public survey with face-to-face interviews? Do you have the resources to go into the field and conduct focus groups all over the country in local languages? Do you have the time before the rainy season starts to conduct five regional workshops? Will respondents be interested enough to sit through a long survey and candid enough to give you honest answers?
- **Will the approach provide the data that you need** to answer basic questions within the scope of your assessment? For example, you may want to rely entirely on secondary data—but if no one has collected data to answer your questions on how the forest agency uses public input in its decision making, you may need to collect the data yourself.
- **Will your approach provide data that are convincing to your target audience?** You may have agency experts who only value quantitative data. You may have rural

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 10: TAILORING YOUR APPROACH TO MATCH OBJECTIVES—MIXING METHODS

A large number of factors will influence the methods chosen for an assessment. The most critical, however, is the ability of these methods to help deliver the goal and desire outcomes the assessment. The PROFOR Assessing and Monitoring Forest Governance tool (Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012) is a complete forest governance assessment tool, which has been used in a number of countries. Even when using an existing approach, however, there is the opportunity to mix the combination of methods to best suit the goals of an assessment:

- In Uganda the tool was piloted as a way to diagnose problems in governance and promote reform. An expert developed a background paper and customized the tool's indicators for the country. A multi-stakeholder workshop scored the indicators, providing a forum for discussion and a means to increase awareness and acceptance of the assessment. Key stakeholder interviews were then used to vet results and further strengthen understanding of and support for the process. In other words, the methods chosen were focused on building support for the results among key stakeholders, a critical element when the assessment's goal was to foster reform.
- In Russia the assessment sought to diagnose problems and promote reform, but it was considered that acceptance of the results would be highest if they were supported by the opinions of "experts." As such, the assessment used two independent methods to score the same indicators: expert analysis and stakeholder workshops.

The case studies presented in Annex I also present a range of different approaches to achieving their objectives. In Ecuador, Grupo Faro chose to limit the resources invested in data collection, relying on expert analysis from their in-house team and key informant interviews. They invested, however, more on raising awareness of the results of their assessment through workshops and events. This was also appropriate for an assessment that had to be conducted on an annual basis—a "fixed parameter."

Conversely, in Tanzania the objective was to develop a comprehensive assessment linked to biophysical information collected through household surveys; the data presented a number of fixed parameters. In response, a combined approach was developed that linked governance information to these planned surveys, with the most relevant information subsequently being supported by key stakeholder interviews. The data this produced was used in a review of the National Forest Programme (NFP) 2001–2010. The revised NFP for 2015–2024 will thus be based on stronger evidence of biophysical, socioeconomic, and governance factors and projections of future trends.

residents who you can reach best through anecdotes. You may also need to consider what types of outputs you want to deliver at the end of the process—do you want narrative reports, statistics, short publications for broad public reading or a mixture of these?[3]

- **Will your approach be acceptable to your target audience?** You may have key stakeholders who will only value the data that has been collected through an approach they were engaged in developing or implementing. Or you may have a target audience who will only accept data generated by high-level academics or other independent experts.

Table 4 provides information on six common methods. Further information on specific methods is included in Chapter 3.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 11: DO YOU NEED TO BE DIFFERENT? DESIGNING A COMPLETELY NEW APPROACH VS. WORKING WITH EXISTING FOREST GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT APPROACHES

Forest governance has attracted increasing attention over the past ten to fifteen years, and many groups have spent a long time working out how to measure and monitor its status and changes in it. Many of these approaches have been developed into formal manuals or tools that can be adapted to specific country contexts. This guide refers to several of them, and a more comprehensive list is provided in Annex II. Working with existing approaches may reduce the time needed to develop your approach, help you to gain technical support for specific institutions or countries that have already done it, and provide an opportunity for comparisons with other countries or areas. This should only be done, of course, if you can find an approach that meets your specific requirements and will deliver the outputs you need.

3. Chapter 6 provides more information on the different types of outputs and the information needed for them. It is advisable to read that chapter prior to finalizing an approach to ensure that you will be able to develop the outputs you want from the approach you choose.

TABLE 4: SIX BASIC DATA-GATHERING METHODS FREQUENTLY USED IN GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENTS

	Description	Strength	Limitations
Desk Review	Assessment based on existing and available information (some effort may have to be put into collecting reports and documents from different sources). This provides access to secondary data, which can be both qualitative (e.g., narrative reports) and quantitative (e.g., trade statistics). This often forms part of any assessment providing a baseline from which all further data collection and discussion is undertaken. Desk reviews are often conducted by an expert who is able to put information gathered into context and so provide a more useful output than could be achieved by simply reproducing information.	**Low cost.** This method requires limited resources and can be done by an individual or a small team. **Limited logistics.** The assessment can be done remotely with limited travel required and can cover areas that are difficult to visit. **Consolidation of "accepted knowledge."** Using official or accepted data and bringing this together can gain traction with stakeholders as they see their own information being used and thus become more interested in the outcomes.	**Limited accuracy/consistency.** In many countries the information easily available may not be up to date or may have limits in terms of accuracy. In relying on others data sources, you are relying on the quality of their data collection and analysis (which may not be at a standard you want). **Lack of new information.** While consolidation of available information into one place may be useful and present a clearer picture of the current status of forest governance, it may not capture key underlying issues and may not be accepted by all stakeholders (potentially adding bias to any assessment).
Surveys	The term survey encompasses a range of different tools (e.g., structured and semi-structured questionnaires, field-based observations), all of which can be administered at a range of scales (i.e., large or small numbers of respondents across a large or small geographical area). Structured surveys can collect primary data, which can be a mixture of quantitative and qualitative information. Semi-structured surveys collect primarily qualitative information in a more narrative form.	**Large volumes of primary data.** Surveys can collect large volumes of primary quantitative and qualitative data. Collection of primary data beyond what already exists may strengthen the position of an assessment. **Structure.** Developing a structured approach to what information to collect and questions to ask will help ensure consistency and improve accuracy of information.	**Limited understanding of roots of problems/opportunities.** Overly structured surveys may limit the opportunity to gain in-depth information on why a problem or issue is occurring (i.e., if that falls outside of the existing questions format). **Expense.** It can be expensive to conduct large-scale surveys when personnel are required to travel and administer the process. **Bias.** If a survey is not conducted at random and not effectively supported, a bias may appear in the data. This can be affected by who has time to respond, who has capacity (e.g., language/ability to write) to respond, and who has issues they feel strongly about.
Expert Analysis	Use of one or a number of individual experts in forest governance or related areas can provide a basis for developing an assessment. Experts can provide analysis based on their own experience in the sector and carry out some desk-based analysis. They may also be able to add additional depth to information that you collect through other methods. Experts on forest governance may be part of your implementation team or they may support the process through various structures (e.g., advisory groups, steering committees, or expert respondents, using approaches such as the Delphi method[4]).	**Depth of analysis.** Expert knowledge will help throughout the assessment process in planning and collecting and analyzing information—and may be able to identify links between key issues that are not immediately obvious.	**Bias.** Experts may have a specific opinion or area of interest related to forest governance; this may result in excess focus in this area or strong views being expressed at the detriment of other opinions. **Legitimacy.** A single expert may not have legitimacy with all groups and an assessment developed by a single expert in isolation of others may not be seen as legitimate by all stakeholders. Linking of expert analysis with other methods can address this.

	Description	Strength	Limitations
Key Informant Interviews	There will be a number of key individuals who know a lot about the specific areas or forest governance you are interested in. These may be academics, government officials, private sector operators, or local community members—all of whom bring different perspectives. Interviewing these stakeholders will provide information on the sector and where to get further information. Using a structured or semi-structured questionnaire format can help ensure that you gain the information you want from the discussion and that there is consistency across interviews.	**Depth of opinion.** Ability to gain information from key stakeholders with significant knowledge of the sector. **Ability to speak freely.** Allows informants to speak freely as there are no other stakeholders present and information can be treated confidentially (this will depend on who is conducting the interview). **Low cost.** Limited logistics and time may be required for this if key stakeholders are based in one place.	**Bias.** Each informant will have a very specific view, which may be highly subjective and based on personal experience as opposed to the broader context. It is also difficult to identify which opinion should be given most prominence in a subsequent compilation of interviews. **Replicability.** Key informants will change, as will their views, making accurate replication difficult. This can be facilitated by ensuring that the same specific questions are asked each time.
Focus Groups	Focus groups bring together key stakeholders to discuss specific issues. These can be experts or a sample of the specific social groups you are interested in. Focus group discussions provide an opportunity to talk about positions and validate findings from other forms of assessment.	**Broader perspective.** By bringing together a range of people, you gain a broader view (i.e., one that is less specific to an individual). **Increased participation.** Focus groups can provide a cost effective way to engage with a larger number of people (versus one-to-one interviews).	**Harmonized views.** A group may have varied experiences of the forest sector but individuals, particularly the most vulnerable, may find it difficult to speak out in a group setting. This can be addressed to some degree by stratifying your focus groups to include respondents of similar social, economic, and geographic position.
Workshops	Workshops bring together a broad range of stakeholders to share information and discuss key issues. Workshops offer a good opportunity to provide information to a range of stakeholders.	**Broad participation.** Broad participation and the potential for discussion of key issues. **Time efficient.** By bringing all stakeholders together it may be easier to gain a broad range of viewpoints than multiple individual interviews. **Increased consensus.** Workshops may help to deliver a broad consensus on issues.	**Expensive.** Depending on logistics, it can be expensive to bring groups together. **Balance of stakeholders.** All stakeholders may not be willing to talk openly within a workshop format. **Participation vs.** information sharing. Workshops require careful planning to increase participant participation as opposed to being just a forum for information sharing.

4. See Box 28 in Chapter 3 for further information on the Delphi method.

Step 3: Who Will Do the Assessment?

In any assessment there are a range of different actors who will be engaged in the process. They will have different roles and responsibilities, which are partially defined by the approach and methods you choose but should also be clarified during the planning process to help improve efficiency and avoid confusion. Three key roles in almost all assessments are the funder, the political/institutional sponsor, and the implementer.

- **The Funders** are responsible for providing financial support to the process. They may be a development partner, a central government, or another institution or a combination of a number of different groups. They may play a role in defining the overall objectives and scope of the assessment, either directly through discussions with implementers or more indirectly through guidance provided with funding.
- **The Political/Institutional Sponsors** are responsible for providing their political and institutional support to the process. In many cases this will be a government institution, a well-respected NGO, or an international organization or group of such organizations. In some cases funders and sponsors may be the same. They will likely play a role in defining objectives and scope and may also be engaged in defining the approaches taken.
- **The Implementers** are responsible for actually conducting the assessment. They may be an office within a government institution, an NGO, a consultant, a community group, or a mixture of these organizations. They will have a primary role in developing the details of how the assessment will be achieved, including the approach, methods, and physical implementation. There should always be, however, a central implementer and focal person or persons to whom communications can be directed and who takes responsibility for delivering the assessment.

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities for each of these groups will help ensure effective working relationships as well as good external perceptions of the assessment. Assign roles and responsibilities based on the comparative strengths of the different groups, but also consider vested interests, reputations, and potential appearances of undue influence. For example, a logging company may provide some financing for the assessment; it would be inappropriate, however, for that company to have too strong a position in deciding on the assessments design and approach. Similarly, a government body may have trouble getting honest evaluations from stakeholders who rely on it for permissions and licenses and are anxious not to offend it and junior government officers may be reluctant to publically present an assessment that is critical of their superiors.

In many cases the roles of funder, sponsor, and implementer are predefined—for example, if the Forest Authority is required to do an assessment of forest governance on a periodic basis. In other cases, however, it may be valuable to consider broadening engagement beyond an initially identified group to help bring in additional resources and skills and to improve the legitimacy of the assessment (see Box 12). In all situations when identifying potential funders, sponsors, and implementers there are a number of key points for consideration:

- **What levels of authority do they have in the sector?** High levels of authority within the sector may be good for a sponsor who can help bring stakeholders together. It may not be good for an implementer who may struggle to gain an unbiased opinion from stakeholders who are wary of the power the organization or individual holds.
- **How legitimate will stakeholders perceive them to be?** The more legitimate all groups engaged in the process are the more legitimate the results will be perceived to be.
- **What vested interests do they have?** This may also affect their legitimacy with other stakeholders and should be considered before accepting support. You can adopt measures to help mitigate undue influence, such as creating clear definitions of a role that is away from their vested interest.
- **How will they engage with stakeholders?** Are they well respected by them and have they working experience with different groups? This is particularly important for the implementer.
- **What benefits are there of increasing this stakeholder's capacity to be engaged in an assessment?** Increasing the capacity of key stakeholder groups to be engaged in an assessment may have benefits beyond the immediate assessment (e.g., building capacity for future assessments or building capacity to engage in the forest sector more effectively). These benefits may outweigh a desire to immediately select organizations with existing capacity.

Further detail on how to develop your implementing team and the range of structures that can be used to strengthen both the team and engagement with other stakeholders is provided in Chapters 3 and 4.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 12: ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS—THE BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIPS

Assessments can be expensive and require time, logistical, technical, and financial capacity. They also require a level of social, political, and technical legitimacy to ensure that they are accepted at international, national, and local levels. Your organization may be able to bring some of these elements to the table, but it is likely that there will be limitations in some areas (e.g., the already busy schedule of your staff, your organization's legitimacy or profile with a certain stakeholder group, or your ability to reach different areas of the country).

Given these constraints, engaging different stakeholder groups can provide many benefits. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this can occur along a continuum from keeping them informed of the assessment process to fully empowering them to take leadership of it. Engaging stakeholders in a more comprehensive way in decision making and implementation can not only increase the legitimacy of the assessment but also share the burden of resources by sharing operational costs and increasing capacity (e.g., by bringing in new staff and ideas). These benefits must be weighed against the challenges of linking your objectives with partners, completing work within the assessment time frame, and ensuring effective coordination and standardization of methods throughout the process; it can lead, however, to a more comprehensive assessment that is able to draw support, skills, and information from a wider pool.

You can strengthen collaborations by using a number of different tools:

- **A steering committee.** This can include highly respected individuals who will provide oversight of the assessment, something that may increase its legitimacy. Although not a governance assessment program, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) FLEG Program has reported success using a regional operational committee representing donors, participating countries, and implementing agencies to steer the program, and national program advisory committees, representing government and nongovernmental stakeholders in each participating country, to bring in country-level oversight. (ENPI FLEG 2013).
- **A technical working group.** This can include a range of technical specialists to help review and improve methodologies and can bring a range of skills and experience to the table. The Indonesia PGA (Annex I) used a multi-stakeholder expert panel composed of government, civil society, academic, and private sector representatives.
- **A memorandum of understanding (MOU).** A written agreement to share logistical costs, responsibilities, or control between or among government agencies, NGOs, and/or other stakeholders, this may help increase the potential geographical coverage of the assessment. Global Witness (2005) notes that an MOU with the government is especially useful when independent agents are collecting data and need cooperation from authorities.

Step 4: When Will It Be Done, How Often, and for How Long?

Time is a critical and often overlooked element of any planning process and can be particularly important in an assessment that may involve multiple stakeholders, cover a large geographical area, or be conducted on a regular basis. The approach and methods you choose must be practical within the time frame identified during the objective-setting process, and they should take into account contextual factors ranging from the practical (e.g., national holidays) to the environmental (e.g., impassable roads during rainy seasons or winters), to the strategic (e.g., timing the production of the report to coincide with the development of a forest sector strategy or legislation). (See Chapter 1 for further information on these considerations.)

You should also consider the long-term implications of your decisions, including how often the assessment will need to be repeated and what the likelihood is that the same inputs (finance, human capacity, and time) will be available at future points in time. In this way, the potential replicability of inputs as well as actual implementation may influence the approach you choose. For example, if you design an assessment that requires international experts to conduct it the technical aspects may in theory be easily replicable by recruiting another expert—but the funds available to hire the expert may not be so easy to find on an ongoing basis.

Step 5: How Much Will It Cost

The cost of an assessment varies significantly based on the approach you use (the geographical and technical scope, the methods, and the levels of stakeholder engagement) and the country in which you are doing it. As such, it is impossible to provide specific and universal guidance on the levels of finance required. For some, the financial resources will be the first point of consideration for an assessment, with many working within a predefined budget. Within this context you will need to adjust your approach to fit this budget and develop a clear outline of options and costs of different activities to help you achieve your goal. For others, it will be a case of developing a proposal for the assessment and trying to gain full or partial funding from different sources. A clear assessment of costs—and options for reducing the budget—will be a useful tool within this context.

Having a budget to cover the entire assessment will also help ensure effective implementation, allowing you to focus on implementation rather than fundraising and ensuring that you can deliver the whole process without delays caused by lack of funds.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 13: HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Some outline budgets are provided below for significant assessments recently undertaken. While even the base costs for these are significant, the variety of approaches available provides examples of how to develop, implement, and apply an assessment within almost any budget.

Global Witnesses' Forest Transparency Report Card: Linking Assessment and Advocacy in Ecuador
Grupo FARO's approach utilized a budget of approximately $100,000 per annum. Half was spent on maintaining a core team which worked on development of the report card (reviewing secondary data and conducting key stakeholder interviews) and managing a small grants program to provide grants to other organizations taking action on forest transparency (the goal) which could link with their assessment work. The actual assessment work (the report card) represented only a relatively small portion of the budget; running events and supporting other organizations to increase levels of awareness of forest transparency absorbed a higher portion.

Indonesia PGA for REDD+: Building Capacity, Informing Policy, and Setting a Baseline
The assessment was supported by a large number of consultants who conducted field work and facilitated engagement of other stakeholders. The cost of data collection has been estimated at $130,000 over two years, covering both salaries and the logistical costs to travel to different areas within the country.

Uganda PROFOR's Diagnostic Tool for Assessing Forest Governance: Developing a High-level Assessment
Uganda used the simplest approach outlined in the PROFOR diagnostic tool, linking expert review with a series of participatory workshops to develop an assessment of existing levels of forest governance. This approach was estimated to cost approximately $35,000–40,000 to cover the fees of experts to support the process and a small number of workshops.

See Annex 1 for further information on these case studies and the approaches taken.

Step 6: Write the Work Plan

Having considered why you are doing the assessment, the scope of what information you want and how you will be able to collect it, you can develop a work plan and corresponding budget. Having a work plan will help you in further developing your methods as well as providing a guide for when things should occur. It may also help you explain your work to stakeholders, potential funders or supporters.

Depending on the complexity of the assessment it may be appropriate to start this by clearly outlining the key elements of the assessment in a short summary covering:

- **Objectives.** What will it achieve?
- **Timeline.** How long will the assessment take?
- **Scope.** What is the technical, geographic, and social scope?
- **Methods and approach.** What methods will be used—qualitative, quantitative, participatory, other?
- **Groups involved.** Who will be involved in funding, sponsoring, and implementing the assessment, and from whom and how will information be sought?
- **Cost.** Do you have an outline budget that includes basic resources (e.g., vehicles, venues, staff, computers, and so forth)?
- **Outputs.** What are the tangible outputs that will be produced from the assessment?

The key elements can then be built into a work plan, including assessment planning and development (which you are already involved in), implementation (which will include stakeholder engagement, data collection, and analysis), and the dissemination and application of results. In its simplest form the work plan should lay out *what* activities will be conducted, *when* those activities will be conducted, *who* will conduct those activities, and, through a supporting budget, *how much* these activities will cost.

The easiest way to approach this process may be to draw an initial timeline (working in weeks or months and identifying the current time and the time by which the assessment needs to be completed). A range of tools can help you develop this plan, including a number of computer packages; a simple linear timeline with a list of activities beneath often provides the most practical approach, as it is easy to amend, discuss, and share with others. Once developed, you can review this plan against your objectives and the assessment of context developed in Chapter 1 to identify if it is likely to achieve the objectives while remaining relevant and practical.

Once you have identified the list of activities you will be working you can then develop a list of key items for budgeting. You must work through the full list of activities when undertaking this as well as consider what activities may be more expensive than initially anticipated (e.g., the cost of field work or workshops).

Grouping different activities within budget areas may also help clarify the choices that you need to make on how the assessment will be implemented. For example, the cost of developing a website to house information on the assessment may be twice the price of translating the report into a local language and running two provincial workshops, providing you with a choice as to which you think would be more beneficial.

See Annex III for an example of an assessment budget outline and Annex IV for an example outline of an assessment work plan.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 14: REVIEW YOUR WORK PLAN

Having identified the key elements of your approach, you should review it to decide whether it is possible, realistic, and achieves what you want to achieve. One way of doing this is to consider it from four sequential viewpoints:

- **Inputs.** Do you have the inputs in terms of financial support, human capacity, and time to achieve what you are planning?
- **Process.** Is the way you are planning to conduct your assessment appropriate to the context in which you are working and the objectives you want to achieve? Within this you should consider if you are covering the right technical, geographical, and social areas, engaging the right people in the right way, and conducting the assessment at the right time.
- **Outputs.** What will the outputs you produce look like? How will they be developed from the work that you have done? Will they be relevant to your target audience? Will they help achieve your objectives?
- **Outcomes.** What will the outcomes of your assessment be? Do the different elements of it contribute to these and can they be improved? Are there any potential negative outcomes that could occur and how can you mitigate against these?

Consideration of these points will help you review and revise the approach you are taking. It will also present a number of key questions that will required more detailed thinking. Chapter 3 will help in answering some of these, particularly with regard to which methods to select and how to develop and further define these methods.

Points on Process
Communicating and Managing the Process

As you begin to define the plan for your assessment it will be increasingly important to ensure that you communicate clearly with other groups and manage the development process effectively. A well-managed, transparent process will help ensure that all groups understand what the assessment is about, who is engaged, why, and what to expect at the end. They may agree or disagree with these points, but as long as they are aware of them and their justifications, any challenges to the assessment can be dealt with effectively. Failure to provide this information may lead to some stakeholders trying to discredit the assessment as biased or unrepresentative or lead to excessive expectations of what the outputs will deliver. As such, is it important to keep a number of guidelines in mind during the development process:

- **Strive to be transparent and inclusive.** Build trust within your effort by being trusting and trustworthy.
- **Manage expectations.** People participating should find no surprises about their own roles and responsibilities; they should also have reasonable expectations about what the assessment can achieve. In addition, they should understand the practical constraints of the assessment.
- **Develop a shared clear statement of the assessment's objectives,** including a statement of the perceived problem or need that the assessment will address, anticipated outputs, and ways of achieving these. It may be relevant to get each stakeholder to first do this independently—and then share these as a step toward developing a smaller number of shared objectives.
- **Get people to think through and explain how they see the assessment** helping to resolve the problem or fill the need.
- **Get people to think through and explain who will need to use the results**, who should be influenced by the results, and what that implies for the objectives and planning of the assessment.
- **Encourage people to view the problem from varied perspectives.** Will the assessment advance the interests of a large set of stakeholders? Are we overlooking the interests of hard-to-represent groups? For example, are we considering the interests of youth, women, landless people, and indigenous peoples?
- **Use simple language** and try to avoid the use of language unfamiliar to your stakeholders. Technical language and jargon should be avoided. Try, when possible, to explain things in the local language.

3 PLANNING FOR DATA COLLECTION

In Chapter 1 you identified clear objectives for your assessment; Chapter 2 helped you to identify your approach. This chapter will help you to focus on exactly what elements of governance you want to look at, where you can find information, how you can access that information through different methods, and how those methods can be refined to help you get the information you want in an effective way.

Whether you are planning to use an existing tool or approach or are planning a new approach, this chapter will help you think about your proposed data collection methods, make sure they meet your objectives, and consider whether you need to fine-tune them or adjust them. It provides a number of steps for refining your methods. Although this may take as many as five steps, for some assessments some of the steps are quite simple.

STEP 1

DECIDE WHAT ASPECTS OF GOVERNANCE TO ADDRESS

To guide your data collection, you need to add detail to your description of scope.

STEP 2

IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

You need to understand where you can find the information you want.

STEP 3

SELECT DATA COLLECTION METHODS

You must decide how you will tap your information sources.

STEP 4

DEVELOP TOOLS FOR EACH METHOD

You need to work out how you will apply your methods. In the process, you may develop protocols for interviews, questionnaires for surveys, sampling plans, and so forth.

STEP 5

FINALIZE YOUR WORK PLAN AND DEVELOP A DATA COLLECTION MANUAL

You can now fill in details to your assessment work plan and, if necessary, write instructions for the people who will collect the data.

POINTS ON PROCESS: VETTING THE METHODS

Like many other parts of the assessment process, defining the method can benefit from drawing on knowledge and values outside of the assessment team. This may mean vetting the choice of methods with outside experts or stakeholders or small-scale testing of a method followed, if needed, by revisions.

Step 1: Decide What Aspects of Governance to Assess

At this point in the planning process, you need a detailed statement of what to measure. A general statement, such as "this assessment will measure the state of forest governance at the national level," is too broad and abstract. An assessment guided only by this statement would be difficult to repeat with consistency and is unlikely to deliver meaningful results.

Chapter 2 introduced the idea of using existing forest governance frameworks to help you identify the technical scope (the elements of forest governance) of your assessment. You should now further refine this process to consider exactly what the constituent parts of these elements of forest governance are and which parts you (and your target audience) are most interested in. If you are interested in looking at transparency, for example, what are the key elements of transparency that you want to consider? Do you want to look at existing legislation (what level of transparency is required by law), its implementation (what really happens in a practical sense), what procedures there are to address failings in transparency, or a combination of all of these things?

To help you review this it may be useful to bring a group of stakeholders together to discuss the key elements of governance you want to assess (you can also link this with starting to identify how you will assess it).

One way to work through this process is to consider the following steps, labeled (a) through (e):

a) **Recall the overall scope and objectives.** Chapters 1 and 2 of the guide covered setting of scope and objectives, and you should not lose sight of them while thinking about the detail. Always consider whether the elements you are discussing will be of importance to the quality of your assessment and of interest to your target audience.
b) **Look at existing forest governance frameworks.** Existing frameworks provide a basis around which you can frame your discussion and can save you getting lost in long technical arguments about forest governance itself. Even if you are planning on using an existing assessment framework, you should still review it to ensure that it is covering the points

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 15: BE CLEAR ON WHAT YOU ARE ASSESSING

Being clear on what you are assessing will be critical to all elements of your assessment design and implementation. It will help you communicate, what you are doing, why you are doing it, and how. Ensuring there is a shared understanding among your team will also help ensure that data is collected accurately and effectively, with all members working to gain the specific information you need.

Confusion on this matter can result in significant effort being put in to collect information that does not address the issues you were interested in. So spend time planning and revisit these plans again as you refine the assessment to make sure you are going in the right direction and that everybody knows which direction that is!

you are interested in and that it is not using a lot of resources covering elements you are not interested in.

c) **Decide how detailed you want to be.** In looking over approaches in other sources, you will see variation in how precisely the descriptions are set out. Some approaches list over 100 aspects of governance to be evaluated or measured, while others describe fewer than a dozen. Key areas in which decisions will need to be made are the same as those considered for the general scope of the assessment and include:

   a. The level of technical detail—how much detail you want to assess the element of governance you are interested in.
   b. The geographical detail—what areas will be included and whether you are interested in showing differences geographically (and, if so, at what scales).
   c. The social scope—whether you are interested in assessing the different experiences of governance between different social groups (e.g., genders, economic groups, ethnic groups, and so forth).

These considerations will be affected not only by your objectives but also by such practical considerations as time, resources, and capacity. In addition, if the decision on a detailed description is up to a group, the group may find it easier to agree on a few broad statements than on a large number of narrow statements.

d) **Decide how you will specify what you want to measure.** Will you use a narrative description or indicators? This decision will influence the remaining steps of your assessment, from design of data collection, to analysis, to reporting.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 16: EXAMPLE OF NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF WHAT TO ADDRESS

The following is an example of a narrative description of what to assess regarding forest tenure, based directly on the components of the PROFOR-FAO Framework:

The assessment will evaluate:

- The extent to which the legal framework recognizes and protects forest-related property rights, including rights to carbon.
- The extent to which the legal framework recognizes customary and traditional rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, and traditional forest users.
- The consistency between formal and informal rights to forest resources.
- The extent to which the legal framework provides an effective, due process means of resolving disputes.
- The comprehensiveness and accuracy of documentation and accessibility of information related to forest tenure and rights.
- The existence and effectiveness of implementation of processes and mechanisms for resolving disputes and conflicts over tenure and rights.
- The effectiveness of compensation mechanisms when rights are taken away.
- The adequacy of measures and mechanisms to ensure the tenure security of forest owners and rights holders.

A narrative states what you are going to measure in sentences and paragraphs. Good ones draw on an existing model or framework of governance to provide organization and detail. Box 16 gives an example of a narrative description of what an assessment will evaluate concerning governance of forest tenure based on the PROFOR-FAO Framework (PROFOR & FAO 2011). For another example, see the Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES) tool (USAID 2013), which bases a narrative description on a model that sees governance in terms of legitimacy, capacity, and power.

If you choose a narrative description, its underlying framework will point toward what data you need to collect, how to make sense of the data, and how to describe what the data tell you.

Assessments using indicators go one step further. First they develop a list or description of what the assessment is interested in evaluating and then they set these out in a structured format. The PROFOR-FAO Framework (PROFOR & FAO 2011) sets out a list of "components" and "subcomponents." The WRI GFI Framework (Davis et al. 2013) calls these "themes" and "subthemes." In other references you may find these called "criteria."

Assessments using indicators next develop specific measurable indicators (an indicator set) that will shed light on the components and subcomponents. An indicator is simply "a quantitative, qualitative, or descriptive attribute that, if measured or monitored periodically, could indicate the direction of change in a governance subcomponent." (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31). Each subcomponent can have one or more indicators. Box 17 has examples of indicators for governance of forest tenure either taken from existing tools or based on existing frameworks; further information on developing indicators is provided in Annex V.

If you choose to adopt an indicator approach, the data collection tools will have to be built around your indicators. The first step in this analysis will be to score the indicators, and the report will have to include those scores and present them in an understandable way.

Recent practice seems to favor the use of indicator sets. Indicator sets make data collection planning easier because they give you definite questions to answer. In addition, the strong structure of indicator sets makes assessments easier to repeat with consistency. But indicator sets can also have shortcomings. Poorly designed indicators, for example, can be too focused to give you a complete understanding of what you want to evaluate. (See the discussion of indicator design in Annex V for other possible weaknesses.)

Compared to indicators, a narrative description will give you less direction to shape your data collection, but more flexibility to inquire into problems; a narrative based on a clear model of governance, meanwhile, can provide structure for analysis. In other words, both narratives and indicator sets can lead to good assessments—and both have limitations in the way they shape assessments and thus both options should be carefully considered.

e) **Set out the description in writing.** Guided by your work in Steps (a) through (d), describe what you want your assessment to address as a set of indicators or as a narrative of the things to measure. This description will be critical in undertaking the subsequent steps in this chapter, as it will provide you with a clear understanding of what information you want to gain and will shape the data-gathering process that you are designing.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 17: THREE EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS

Here are three examples of indicators. Each deals with an aspect of the governance of forest tenure.

The ***WRI GFI Indicator Framework*** (Davis et al. 2013) has nine indicators under the heading of "Forest Ownership and Use Rights"; each indicator has four to six "elements of quality" that can be evaluated as being present or absent. The first indicator is "To what extent does the legal framework recognize a broad spectrum of existing forest tenure rights and rights-holders?" Its elements are:

- Individual rights. The forest tenure rights held by individuals and households are recognized in the legal framework.
- Communal rights. The forest tenure rights collectively held by local communities and other relevant groups are recognized in the legal framework.
- Traditional rights. The forest tenure rights traditionally held by indigenous peoples and other groups with customary tenure systems are recognized in the legal framework.
- Rights of women. The legal framework does not discriminate against the forest tenure rights of women.

The GFI manual suggests that the elements be scored as present or absent, and the indicators be scored on a scale of one to ten based on the element scores.

The ***FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure*** (2012) do not have indicators, but they do have 25 principles (each of which has sub-principles and, sometimes, sub-sub-principles). Many of these are normative: they begin "States should" and could be the basis of indicators. For example, sub-principle 3.1 says that States should:

- Recognize and respect all legitimate tenure holder rights.
- Safeguard legitimate rights.
- Promote enjoyment of legitimate rights.
- Provide access to justice to deal with infringements.
- Prevent tenure disputes, violent conflicts and corruption.

BOX 17: THREE EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS (continued)

(The actual guidelines give more detail explaining each of these points.)

The assessment could gather data to score each normative sub-principle and sub-sub-principle on a one-to-five scale, and then rate overall conformance with each principle as red (poor), yellow (fair), or green (good) based on these scores.

The ***PROFOR tool*** (Kishor and Rosenbaum 2012) has 15 indicators based on tenure-related subcomponents from the PROFOR-FAO Framework. One of them is:

Do forest-dependent communities have secure access to the resources that they depend on?
Rationale: It is a basic human right for forest-dependent communities to have secure and equitable access to forest resources on which they depend for their livelihoods. Their rights should not be arbitrarily changed or taken away.

Possible responses:

a) All forest-dependent communities have secure access to necessary forest resources.
b) Most forest-dependent communities have secure access to necessary forest resources
c) Some forest-dependent communities have secure access to necessary forest resources.
d) No forest-dependent communities have secure access to necessary forest resources.

To score this indicator, the assessment needs to choose one of the possible responses. Note that despite their format, the PROFOR indicators are not intended as survey or interview questions. Like all indicators, they pose questions for the assessment to answer by gathering data. Step 4 of this chapter has more to say about designing good survey and interview questions.

Step 2: Identify Potential Sources of Information

Once you have a sufficiently detailed description of your measurement aims (what you want to assess), you need to identify where you can gain access to this information (this step), what methods to use to gain access to it (Steps 3 and 4) and how you will prepare to use them (Step 5).

Movement through these steps will need to be iterative—you will go back and forth between steps, adjusting to ensure that you are best able to collect data from different sources within your budget and time frame. During this process your selected methods may change as you become aware of new data sources, review the time and effort that will be required to gain access to effective information from other sources, and discuss practical considerations (such as availability of experts and budget).

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 18: SETTING THE FOUNDATIONS

Chapter 2 provides information on the first steps toward identifying data sources and methods. It provides information on some key methods as well as the different types of data (including primary, secondary, qualitative, and quantitative) and the methods used to collect these different types of data. If these terms are new to you, you may find it helpful to review Chapter 2, Step 2, prior to working through the steps in Chapter 3.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 19: USING EXISTING METHODS AND TOOLS

Some assessments reach this step having already made basic decisions about sources, methods, and tools—or are required to use a specific tool.

Nonetheless, reviewing exactly what information you want to collect (Step 1), where you can get it (Step 2), and how you will get it (Steps 3 and 4) will help you get the most out of your chosen approach and, if necessary, allow you to customise it to make it more relevant to your situation.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 20: INPUTS, PROCESS, OUTPUTS, AND OUTCOMES

Some sources will shed direct light on the questions that you are trying to answer. More often, however, you will find sources that contain indirect measures of things that cannot be measured directly.

For example, forest law enforcement is difficult to measure directly, but you may find information about *inputs* to law enforcement, such as number of enforcement officers and size of enforcement budgets; about the *process* of enforcement, describing how patrols are structured or how suspects of forest crimes are prosecuted; the *outputs* of enforcement, such as statistics on arrests made, cases brought, or offenders sentenced; and perhaps on the outcomes of enforcement, such as trends in deforestation from illegal logging. Gaining all this information will allow you to develop a compelling description of forest law enforcement as well as, potentially, to identify exactly where challenges may exist.

Assessments generally have used three broad classes of sources: *written materials, people, and physical evidence.*

- **Written materials** usually provide secondary data and are at the heart of desk reviews. They are sometimes used to help with other methods (e.g., in framing questions for interviews or selecting samples to be surveyed).
- **People** provide primary data and are the main source of information for the most widely used assessment methods: expert consultations, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, and surveys.
- **Physical evidence** is used less frequently in governance assessments, but relates to information on the physical environment that is affected by governance.

Further information on each of these is provided in the subsequent pages. When looking for information sources, remember that governance is intangible, and you often have to measure it indirectly. Box 20 has more on the kinds of indirect information that assessments have used.

Written Materials

Written materials can provide a vital source of data. Some sources, such as government statistical offices, may have been using substantial funds to compile data regularly over long time periods. Other sources, such as official publishers of laws or government records, provide information that cannot be found in any other place.

Usually analyzed through desk reviews, written data sources can provide a low-cost method to gain significant information either as a background to an assessment or as an assessment in their own right. Useful data for your assessment may be found in a range of written sources:

- **Recent assessments by others.** Although not always available, these may have direct answers to questions that you are seeking to answer or contain findings that you can compare with your own to show changes in governance. Good assessments will explain how the authors arrived at their findings, which will point you to other sources of information.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 21: SEARCHING FOR DATA

Information relevant to governance comes in many different forms. Do not limit your search to assessments focused on governance. General assessments of the forest sector often include evaluations of governance components (such as policy or public expenditures). In addition, look for governance assessments in related fields to see how they obtained data. The approaches that they used may suggest ways to find forest sector information.

Look in the easiest places first. Reports and other data may be very easily accessible at government or NGO offices or online even if they are not presented in an ideal format. Searching in these places first will be cheaper than developing approaches to collecting primary data and will also encourage government and NGO staff that their information and systems are being used. Government websites, in particular, can contain a wealth of data (including reports, statistics, and organisational information) and can be a valuable starting point for data collection. (This was a starting point for research in the Grupo FARO case in Ecuador discussed in Annex I.)

- **Government forest inventories, censuses, and other compilations of statistics.** This is a varied group of information sources with many possible uses. If you have a non-specific, outcome-oriented indicator, like the rate of deforestation, you may be able to score it directly from these sources. Similarly, you may be able to find useful statistics on forest law enforcement (arrests, prosecutions, and convictions). Sometimes you can analyze government statistics in creative ways (see Box 22). Finally, these sources can provide data that facilitates your use of other sources and tools; for example, census data can help you design sampling plans for surveys.
- **Published laws and policies.** Sometimes these will yield a direct answer to one of your information needs. For example, one of the PROFOR tool's indicators asks whether the country has committed its forest policy to writing. Find a written forest policy and you have answered that question. More often, these will provide the basis of expert opinions on the adequacy of laws and policies as written or the beginning of an inquiry into whether laws and policies are being implemented fully.
- **Gray literature.** Government offices generate much information that is never officially published. This information may include licensing records, arrest records, internal

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 22: USING DATA IN DIFFERENT WAYS

With imagination and insight, assessments have used statistics collected for other purposes to throw light on governance. One approach has been to compare official harvest or trade figures with measures of consumption or demand to understand whether forest commodities are moving through lawful channels. For example, the Chatham House assessment of illegal logging (Lawson and MacFaul 2010) compared data on legal harvests with data on forest product use and demand to produce estimates of illegal logging. Similarly, an analysis of governance of charcoal production in Tanzania compared revenue collection for charcoal licenses with census data on household spending for charcoal to show that most of the charcoal trade escaped government regulation (World Bank 2010).

Sometimes changes in production or trade statistics over time demonstrate the impacts of changes in governance. A recent market analysis in Uzbekistan compared international trade figures on wild-grown liquorice roots with the dates of changes in law and policy to show how governance was influencing collection and trade (FAO report forthcoming).

evaluations, progress reports, and so forth. These are rarely indexed; people familiar with the internal workings of an agency, however, may be able to point you to rich sources of data buried in print and computer files.

- **Statistics compiled outside of government by NGOs, international development partners, public opinion firms, and others.** These have many of the same uses as government statistics. In particular, assessments have used measures of public opinion—corruption reputation polls, citizen report cards and the like—as sources of information about integrity and public trust in government agencies.
- **Budgets, organizational diagrams, staff lists, and other agency documents.** These are often used the same way as published laws and policies: as the basis for expert evaluation. An expert can give an opinion as to whether budgets and staffing are adequate and properly allocated. An expert can also use these as the beginning of an inquiry to see whether budgets are followed, officials are actually tending to the duties in their job descriptions, and so forth. The Liberia case (see Annex I) analyzed concession contracts to determine their level of compliance with laws.
- **Media reports.** These can be a rich source of anecdotes and illustrative examples. Beyond this, you can use techniques like content analysis[4] to draw rigorous inferences. For example, Chatham House did a content analysis of media reports to score coverage of illegal logging (Lawson and MacFaul 2010).
- **Academic studies of forestry or government.** These can be as valuable as recent assessments. They can also be a good source of information about the history and context of the forest sector.

4. See Box 26 and Annex II for sources describing the techniques of content analysis.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 23: EXAMPLES OF FINDING DATA IN WRITTEN MATERIALS

Suppose that you were looking for secondary data on governance of forest tenure, using indicators like those in Box 17. What written materials would you consider using?

- Published laws might be a rich source about how the tenure system appears on paper.
- Media reports might give you anecdotal evidence of strong conflicts over forest tenure.
- Academic literature, if you are lucky, might contain studies on tenure disputes.
- Statistical data from the courts or enforcement officials might provide information on the frequency of lawsuits or crimes tied to forest tenure conflicts.
- Grey literature (internal records) might give you information on the adequacy and accuracy of land tenure records.
- Government websites and organizational diagrams might suggest where you could find people to tap for primary data.
- If you are fortunate, a prior assessment will have information on forest tenure.

People

People provide an extremely rich source of information. Stakeholders in government, academia, business, NGOs, and civil society organizations hold knowledge that you can tap through use of experts, key stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, and surveys, as well as some of the minor methods described in Box 25 in Step 3 of this chapter.

A general point to remember when seeking out people as information sources is that people have biases. Assessments must try to balance or at least disclose the potential biases of their sources, where they are known or anticipated.

- **Government.** Much knowledge about governance resides in the brains of people working for the government. Many assessments have tapped government officials as experts and key information resources, as well as for focus groups and workshops. Finding government employees/officials is usually easy, especially if the government is cooperating with the assessment. However, perceptions from within government can be one-sided and often need to be balanced with the views of those outside government.
- **Academia.** Universities, institutes, and laboratories are often good sources of experts. Assessments have also included academics in group processes like workshops. If an academic is widely respected and seen as relatively neutral, he or she may make a good facilitator for workshops bringing together people of diverse opinions.
- **Business.** Businesspeople have distinct perceptions and knowledge and can be valuable

sources of information. For example, the recent World Bank assessment in Russia (Kuzmichev et al. 2012) used heads of forest enterprises and business associations among the experts it asked to score indicators. Some assessments have had trouble engaging businesspeople in lengthy processes (i.e., multi-day workshops), unless the businessperson was acting as a paid consultant or had a clear interest in the outcome of the process. It may be easier to get businesspeople to participate in short activities, such as surveys or stakeholder interviews.

- **NGOs and other civil society organizations.** People in these organizations can be quite knowledgeable and willing to cooperate in roles ranging from expert to survey participant. An assessment's stakeholder map, done early in planning, will point to valuable organizations. You can often find key people within these organizations through networking (for example, by drawing on the connections of the assessment's advisory group or by asking one key informant to suggest others to contact). As with other stakeholder groups, the views of these groups may also reflect the standpoint of their organization and so should be balanced by the views of other stakeholder groups.
- **Development and donor agencies.** People in development agencies may prefer not to express opinions or score indicators directly; they can be useful sources of background information, however, and can be used in vetting and validation of information They can also direct assessments toward key documents and knowledgeable people.

Other stakeholders. Some assessments may want to gain an understanding of forest governance from a broad cross-section of stakeholders (including those not in prominent positions; see, for example, the participatory governance assessment in Indonesia discussed in Annex I).

Accessing knowledge from a broader group of people will require you to consider technical issues, such as how to effectively sample a group (you could not, for example, ask every person living in a rural area their views). Designing an approach to sampling is covered briefly in Chapter 2 and in more detail in Box 33.

Physical Evidence

Extensive use of physical evidence is uncommon in governance assessments. Governance is abstract, and you cannot weigh it or measure its physical dimensions. However, some of the outputs and outcomes of governance (see Box 20) are concrete and can provide compelling information to frame discussions on governance or evidence of challenges or successes within a system. For example, information on existing levels of deforestation or forest degradation can attract considerable attention and can be compared against governance elements. At a more specific level, an assessment could make field visits to compare actual forest conditions with those set out in management plans or to inspect the quality of forest surveys and boundary markings. In theory, it could even conduct random inspections of transport and processing activities.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 24: EXAMPLES OF FINDING PEOPLE WHO CAN PROVIDE DATA

Suppose you were looking for primary data on governance of forest tenure using indicators like those in Box 17. What people could serve as sources?

A wide variety of stakeholders will have knowledge of forest tenure governance. Local users of forest products, based on their life experience, will be able to tell you whether the formal system of forest tenure allows them reliable access to resources, is consistent with informal tenure systems, is leading to unresolved conflicts, and so forth. You could gather this kind of information through focus groups, workshops, and surveys.

Several people may have detailed knowledge based on training or work experience. Lawyers could comment on the laws as written and as implemented. Government land managers may have data on how well property boundaries are located or how reliable government property records are. Private land owners could talk about the security of land rights. An NGO official might be able to give you a broader picture of the concerns of rural or indigenous peoples than you could get from speaking with a few of these people individually. You might also find an academic who has been studying tenure issues, or an official at a donor agency who has been tracking tenure problems. You could gather data from these people by retaining them as experts, through key stakeholder interviews, and through focus groups, workshops, or surveys.

One difficulty in using physical evidence is the cost of doing so on a scale that yields a full picture of governance issues. Inspecting a significant number of licensed forest operations, for example, would take time, would require staff with good technical backgrounds, and would end up being costly. Remote sensing, however, can cover large areas quickly at a reasonable cost, which might be a useful source of physical evidence of forest activity.

Step 3: Select Data Collection Methods

Your task in this step is to identify the general methods that you will use to obtain your data. Table 5: Common Methods of Data Collection provides an overview of the six most common methods. You can find more information on their strengths and limitations in Chapter 2, Step 2. Besides these six major methods, Box 25 also details some less common methods of information gathering.

TABLE 5: COMMON METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

	Description
Desk Reviews	Researching existing and available information (some effort may have to be put into collecting reports and documents from different sources).
Surveys	Asking questions and analyzing some or all the responses statistically. The term "survey" encompasses a range of tools, including structured and semi-structured questionnaires and field-based observations which can be administered on a range of scales (i.e., large or small numbers of respondents across a large or small geographical area) and which can collect quantitative or qualitative information.
Expert Analysis	Using one or a number of individual experts to provide analysis based on their own knowledge, research, or experience of the sector. Experts on forest governance may form key elements of your implementation team or can support the process through advisory groups, steering committees, or paid or unpaid consultations.
Key Informant Interviews	Interviewing key individuals who know about the specific areas of forest governance you are interested in. These interviews provide information on the sector and often point you to further information. Using a structured or semi-structured interview protocol can help you ensure you gain the information you want from the discussion and that there is consistency across interviews.
Focus Groups	Bringing together selected stakeholders to discuss specific issues in a form of group interview. The stakeholders can be experts or a sample of the specific social groups you are interested in. Focus group discussions often provide an opportunity to talk about positions and validate findings from other forms of assessment.
Workshops	Bringing together a broad range of stakeholders to share information and discuss key issues. Workshops tend to be longer events than focus group discussions and feature more complex agendas. Workshops offer a good opportunity to provide information to and to get information from a range of stakeholders.

BOX 25: LESS FREQUENTLY USED DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Testing. Engage in a governance process to evaluate its existence, effectiveness, or efficiency. Examples:

- Apply for licenses to collect firewood at several forest offices in order to evaluate the efficiency and fairness of licensing procedures, noting the time it takes to process applications and the adherence to legal standards in granting licenses.
- Ask for copies of government forestry documents to evaluate the implementation of transparency provisions; assess their availability, the time it takes to get the documents and the government's adherence to legal standards in deciding whether to release the documents.

Observation. Watch a process in action to evaluate its existence, effectiveness, or efficiency. Examples:

- Attend a public hearing or citizen workshop to assess how well it fosters stakeholder engagement.
- Observe trials of people accused of forest offenses to determine whether the process and outcomes are fair.
- Observe the auctions of forest concessions to determine if the proper rules are followed.

Field visits. These are like observations (and can be combined with them), but they aim at finding evidence of what has already happened. Go "in the field" to determine how actual conditions compare with conditions as described on paper. Examples:

- Visit sites of past forest harvest or other management activities to determine if actions were in compliance with management plans. (As noted in Step 2 of this chapter, such "field visits" might be done remotely through satellite imagery.)
- Visit sites subject to government reports or evaluation to verify that the reports and evaluations are accurate.

Story collection. Ask a large number of stakeholders to tell brief stories about their experiences with particular agencies or programs. Use content analysis (See Box 26) to find patterns and common threads. Story collection is something like a survey and something like a series of key stakeholder interviews, but the interaction with subjects is less structured. The structure comes instead from the coding and analysis of the collected stories. The charitable organization GlobalGiving uses this technique to evaluate the impact of development projects.* Examples:

- Ask local forest users to tell stories about their interactions with forest officers. Evaluate whether the stories tend to be positive or negative in overall tone, whether the officers and forest agency are viewed favorably or unfavorably, how frequently bribes or corruption are mentioned, and so forth.
- Invite local forest users to tell stories about conflicts that have involved the forest. Code the stories to identify the issue at the heart of the conflict (e.g., land ownership, right to participate in management planning, right to enter land or graze livestock), the parties in conflict, the persistence of the conflict, whether the conflict hampers sustainable management of the forest, whether a third party was asked to resolve the conflict, and so forth.

*See http://www.globalgiving.org/story-walk-through-4-vap/ (visited 24 January 2014).

The discussion below provides examples of how assessments have used particular methods to meet particular needs. It considers four broad data needs that assessments often face: getting background information, getting information on governance as it is designed to operate, getting information on decision-making processes, and getting information on governance as it works in practice. In deciding what methods to use you should consider the cost of implementing them, the time it will take to conduct the data collection, the capacity you have to implement the method, the persuasive value of the results, and how well the method serves the objectives of your assessment.

Finding Information on Background and History

All assessment reports need to include some background and history of governance issues. Without these, the reader cannot understand the need for the assessment or the options for dealing with any problems the assessment discovers. This is usually a small part of the data-gathering task of an assessment and is sometimes overlooked—but it is essential.

The background information does not need to be detailed and it does not need to bring new facts to light. Because of this, the two most common sources of background information are desk reviews and experts. In Uganda, the PROFOR pilot test (see Annex I) hired an expert to write a background report. The expert drew on the expert's own knowledge and on government reports and statistics. In Indonesia, the PGA report drew on the studies of academics, NGOs, and development partners (Situmorang et al. 2013). The report of the 2012 governance assessment in Russia (Kuzmichev et al. 2012) cites few sources but was clearly written by experts with working knowledge of Russian forests.

Finding Information on Governance Design

This information corresponds to Pillar 1 of the PROFOR-FAO Framework (see Figure 2 and PROFOR & FAO 2011, pp. 14–15). It covers what governance looks like "on paper"; for this reason, much of the information can be found through desk reviews of laws, policies, and organizational plans. However, almost any tool can shed some light on governance design.

Desk reviews and experts are natural sources of information. The Indonesia PGA, for example, relied on document reviews to score the "law and policy" components of its indicators. Assessments might turn some parts of a desk review, such as a review of the quality of the forest law, over to an expert in the area, in this case someone with expertise in law. Experts and key stakeholders are also useful indirect sources of information who can often suggest where to find the desired documents to review.

Assessments have also used focus group discussions and workshops to develop data on governance design. Some assessment tools (e.g., those developed by PROFOR (Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012) and USAID (USAID 2013)) get almost all their information from group processes, including information on governance design. Indeed, some information on design will be subjective—for example, whether the distribution of forest access under the law or policy is equitable—and the best way to get such perception-based information is through contact with stakeholders. That suggests interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, and/or surveys.

Finding Information on Planning and Decision-making Processes

This category corresponds to the second pillar of the PROFOR-FAO Framework (PROFOR & FAO 2011, pp.15–16). Information here concerns the extent and impact of public participation, the transparency of decision-making processes, and the roles of stakeholders and the media generally.

If these decision-making processes leave a paper trail, desk review of that trail may provide useful data. The more common approach among assessments, however, is to contact the people involved in the process through interviews, focus group discussions, and workshops. Surveys might also be used, along with the (less common) approaches of testing, observation, and story collection (see Box 25).

Finding Information on Implementation

This category corresponds to the third pillar of the PROFOR-FAO Framework: how governance works in practice (PROFOR & FAO 2011, pp. 17–18). Here, again, a desk review might provide answers to specific questions. In a study of governance of charcoal production in Tanzania, for example, a World Bank study was able to compare licensing and revenue collection records (amount of charcoal legally produced) against household surveys of demand (amount of charcoal actually used) to show that most charcoal production was happening outside of legal controls (World Bank 2010). The Chatham House illegal logging study performed content analyses of media reports to compare trends in illegal logging in chosen countries (Lawson & MacFaul 2010). A desk review may also be able to shed light on whether inventories and plans are current, whether budgets are followed, whether key staff positions are filled and similar issues that involve well-documented facts.

There are, however, many subjective issues here—for example, whether budgets are adequate and appropriate to the problems at hand, whether government agencies coordinate, whether the rule of law is consistently followed, and whether the resulting implementation is equitable. Assessments generally reach these issues through interviews, focus group discussions, workshops, and/or surveys.

Step 4: Develop Tools for Each Method

A method is a general way to gather data; a tool is a specific application of a method. Step 4 will help you progress from having identified you methods to developing a working tool. Even if you are starting out with an existing tool for your assessment, you might need to take some steps to customize it for your particular use.

To achieve this you will need to start by undertaking an initial review of:

- **Which method will cover what elements of data collection** (against the information needs you identified in Step 1). For example, you may decide to use a desk review to gather background information, expert

analysis to evaluate the laws and policies as written, focus group discussions to evaluate implementation, and a stakeholder workshop to review and refine the findings of the other methods. Note that using multiple overlapping methods is one way to validate the information you are gathering. (See the process point at the end of this chapter for more about validation.)

- **Your timeline** (discussed in Chapter 2). You will want to fill in more detail about data gathering. If you are using experts, for example, how long will you give yourself to write terms of reference and locate the experts? How long will you give the experts to complete their tasks?
- **Your budget** (discussed in Chapter 2). You may want to divide the general allotment of funds to specific data collection tasks, or you may want to revise your budget entirely.
- **How you intend to analyze and use your data** (discussed in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6). Early consideration of how you will use your data will help you ensure that you collect the right information in the right formats to use. This will not only impact what information you are asking for but also how you collect it and store it (e.g., coded responses that are entered into a spreadsheet for use in graphs versus anecdotal stories presented as part of a narrative report to provide a human story to key issues).

The next planning decisions depend on the particular methods that you intend to use. Table lists some of the decisions you may need to make for each method. In each case the first step is to develop a clear description of the task that the tool must accomplish (i.e., its desired outputs).

If you are going to employ the tool yourself, an informal description will be enough. If other staff are eventually going to use the tool, you may want to write a formal description of the tool's task now. This will be useful later on when you are writing a data collection manual (the next step in this chapter) or are training staff (the first step in the next chapter). If you are going to give the task to an outside expert (e.g., commissioning an expert analysis) or to a consultant, then a full written description of the desired output of the task will be useful when you write formal terms of reference. In each case the description should include the formats in which information will be collected and supplied to you. This will help ensure the standardization of data collection across groups and that information collected by one person or group is accessible for use by others in your assessment team and in the future.

The remaining discussion in this step covers these choices dealing with each method sequentially. The references for further information lead to Babbie (2010), a widely used American text on social research, and to Bryman (2012), a widely used British text. See also the coverage of tool design resources in Annex II.

TABLE 6: PLANNING AND DESIGN CHOICES FOR THE USE OF DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Method	Method-specific Planning	Possible Design and Implementation Choices
Desk Reviews	Will you just gather data or perform new analyses?	Content analysis techniques
Expert Analysis	Kinds of experts, and perhaps terms of reference	Terms of reference and choice of experts
Key Informants	Means of selection; interview type	Interview structure, questions, and coding
Focus Group Discussions	Sampling and stratification; means of convening	Interview questions and coding
Workshops	Sampling, stratification, workshop tasks	Identifying participants, structuring tasks, and choosing facilitators
Surveys	Sampling and stratification; sample size	Question design and coding

Desk Reviews

Desk reviews of written material fall into three rough categories:

- **Information collection.** Collecting documents and material to gain access to the facts (be they statistics, historical information, or even the results of a prior assessment) that the material contains and that the assessment can use directly.
- **Qualitative information analysis.** Collecting documents and material that are then analyzed qualitatively. An example is a desk review of the forest law where the review goes beyond the facts that are directly stated and draws conclusions based on an evaluation of the law.
- **Quantitative information analysis.** Collecting documents and material that is then coded to undertake quantitative analysis. An example is the Chatham House review (Lawson & MacFaul 2010), which analyzed news stories on illegal logging to develop an assessment of the problem in five countries (e.g., frequency of reports of violent conflict over forest resources).

These categories of review require different levels of expertise and preparation from both the reviewers and you as the assessment organizer. To collect information on the history of the forest sector might require a bright student, an outline of the information needed, and a bit of oversight. To evaluate the quality of a law or policy or the adequacy of a published budget, however, would take someone with a bit more knowledge. You might need to specify exactly the type of skills the person will require through a terms of reference. To design and carry out a quantitative content analysis of media reports takes researchers with another form of specialized ability. If you do not have the capacity to perform a complex desk review on a particular topic, you may need to shift the task to experts—or you may need to allow extra time and budget to gain the capacity to carry out the review.

For further information on content analysis see Box 26 and the discussion of coding in this chapter and Chapter 4. For more on using existing data, see Babbie, pp.344–50; Bryman, chs. 5, 14 & 23.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 26: CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is a term that covers many ways of systematically analyzing communications. Those communications are usually documents (in past assessments, things like laws, policies, logging contracts, and news reports), but they could also be other kinds of communications (e.g., e-mail, web pages, audio or video recordings, and transcripts of interviews).

Qualitative Analysis

As mentioned in the main text, assessments often analyze documents qualitatively. Typically, that analysis draws upon an analyst's specialized skill (e.g., knowledge of law). If several people will be performing qualitative analysis independently, good practice requires giving them some guidance so that each performs a similar analysis. The guidance could be a set of specific questions to answer or indicators to score. If only one person or a small, closely coordinated team is performing the analysis, assessments may provide oral or informal guidance; the better practice, however, is to set out guidance in writing. If nothing else, this written guidance will be valuable to any subsequent assessment.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative content analysis is more complex. The analyst begins with a set of communications. The analyst codes each communication using agreed-upon guidance and then analyzes the resulting scores. For example, an analyst might go through a set of court records for forest offences and code the offence, the outcome, and the sanction imposed for each case. This would allow the assessment to make findings about the conviction rate and the average sentence. The coding could also note the magnitude of the crime to allow the assessment to analyze whether both petty and grand offenses were being enforced.

Quantitative content analysis can also code more subjective variables. For example, an analyst could review recordings of key informant interviews to score whether the informant's view of the forest agency was strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, neutral, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable. By also assigning the informants to groups (forest officers, small business managers, large business managers, local government officials, NGO officials, rural residents, and so forth) the assessment could make findings on how the perception of the agency varies among different stakeholders.

For more on content analysis, see Babbie, pp.333–344; Bryman, ch. 13.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 27: USING TECHNOLOGY IN DATA GATHERING AND MANAGEMENT

Developments in technology provide exciting opportunities for data collection tool development. Technology can change how you engage your respondents (e.g., e-mail or online surveys such as SurveyMonkey or QuestionPro as opposed to face-to-face meetings), how that data is collected e.g., via text messages or web-based forms), how that data is stored (e.g., on computers as opposed to paper), and how that data is displayed (e.g., use of graphics, video, or presentations).

A number of benefits and challenges of using new technology are listed below. You should carefully consider context, technical focus areas, existing skill sets, budgets, and related issues when deciding how to use technology within your assessment.

Benefits

- Can provide a cost effective way to access large numbers of people (e.g., online surveys, email surveys).
- Can provide a mechanism to engage with distant groups and sustain engagement (e.g., online surveys, e-mail, Skype, and text-message-based information updates).
- Can provide financial savings (due to reduced travel time or need for multistage data entry).
- Can increase honesty of responses if there is a feeling of anonymity.
- Can increase speed by allowing for rapid data collection and efficient data management.

Challenges

- Can create a bias within an assessment by only being accessible to those who are technologically literate, have access to relevant devices (e.g., computers, mobile phones), and are motivated to respond.
- Can require significant technical expertise and limit flexibility (if reliant on an external specialist).
- Can be subject to practical challenges (e.g., limited battery life of laptops, vulnerability to weather conditions).
- Can lead to data sets or collection tools becoming unusable because of changes to software or hardware.
- Availability of existing tools or programs in relevant languages (e.g., SurveyMonkey is available in 16 languages, but most of these are European languages).

Provision of up-to-date guidance on specific tools within this area is difficult due to the rapid pace of change. Many development agencies and NGOs are, however, expanding their focus on the use of technology within governance work. Many maintain web portals with new reports and case studies, such as the World Bank's IC4D - *Information and Communications for Development* site. Some relevant recent publications include *Forest Governance 2.0: A primer on ICTs and Governance* (Castrén & Pillai 2011) and *ICT Applications for Data Collection and Monitoring and Evaluation* (World Bank 2013) (the latter of which includes information on a number of tools).

Expert Analysis

Step 2 identifies some of the locations in which experts can be found. It is now time to consider how many experts you intend to consult and what you expect them to do.

The potential for bias should be considered in deciding how many experts you will consult and from what organizations. You may want to follow the example of the World Bank assessment in Russia (Kuzmichev et al. 2012) and seek experts from government, business, NGOs, and academia so that you get opinions from varied perspectives. Alternatively, you may decide to try to attract experts who will be seen as inherently neutral, such as people from outside the country, academics, or retired professionals. Or you may want to vet the selection of experts with stakeholders, such as via a stakeholder advisory committee (see the process point on vetting at the end of this chapter).

In considering what an expert will do, review the existing methods noted here. Will your expert be responsible for undertaking one of these methods (e.g., undertaking a desk review), be a subject for one (e.g., as a key informant or a participant in the Delphi Method—see Box 28)? Will you give the expert some freedom to choose methods or design tools? Will your expert be involved in the assessment beyond the data-gathering phase and into analysis or dissemination?

Whatever task you assign to an expert, you must make sure that the expert understands the objectives of the assessment, the information that you are interested in, and exactly what role you want the expert to play. You can do this both informally, through discussion, and formally, through the development of clear terms of reference that set out the nature of the assessment and the expert's role within it (including outputs, timelines, and responsibilities to work with others).

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 28: THE DELPHI METHOD—A SPECIALIZED WAY TO USE EXPERTS

The Delphi method is a paper-based exercise originally developed for forecasting using experts. You can adapt it to other purposes, such as scoring indicators.

To use the Delphi method in an assessment, locate a set of experts and ask each independently to score indicators or answer questions about governance, including comments explaining their scores or answers. Take these responses and summarize them, keeping the experts anonymous. The summary should point out where the experts agree and disagree. Give the summary back to the experts and ask them to react. Allow them to revise their scores or earlier comments or make new comments. They can also comment on the whole process. Summarize these new responses.

Repeat this process of scoring, summarizing, and revising until the group reaches consensus or until it becomes clear that further rounds will not produce new insights.

The idea is to get some of the benefits of a focus group discussion—group interchange and sharing of reasoning—while reducing the role that egos and personalities play in the process.

See Annex II for references on the Delphi method.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 29: RULES OF THUMB FOR DESIGNING QUESTIONS

- Keep questions relevant to the assessment: cover what you need to know and don't waste questions.
- Make questions short.
- Use clear, simple words.
- Ask about one thing at a time.
- Be careful in structured interviews with very general questions: they may be misinterpreted and the responses may be hard to code.
- Avoid biased language.
- Avoid leading questions (i.e., ones that suggest to the subject that you are looking for a particular answer).
- Put questions in a positive form. Experience shows that people can easily mistake a negative question in an interview for one with the opposite meaning.
- With closed questions, offer a balanced set of possible responses.

Sources: Bryman, pp.254–59; Babbie, pp. 255–62.

Key Informants

In planning to use key informants, the first decisions to make are the kind and number of people you need to consult, for what information, and in how formal a style. Some of these questions are much like the questions that you face with experts. You want to avoid bias, so you want to hear from a variety of informants. Usually this is easier to do with informants than with experts because you are tapping into a larger pool of people.

The formality of style is a matter that has implications for planning and management of the assessment. Some assessments use participants quite informally. For example, the PROFOR Uganda assessment (Annex I) used people to vet the results of the assessment. The interviews were unstructured, with participants told a summary of the draft results and allowed to react. The Indonesia PGA (Annex I) used semi-structured interviews. Deciding on which approach to use will be guided by both technical considerations about how you intend to use your results and practical considerations such as how long you have to collect them.

If you are going to use more formal interview approaches you will need to develop interview questions, which form part of your *interview protocol* (see Box 31). Depending on how you plan to process the outputs of the interviews, you may need to develop protocols for *content analysis* or *coding* of the responses (see Boxes 26 and 32). Once developed, questions and coding may also need to be pilot tested (Box 35 also has points that apply by analogy to piloting interview protocols). If several researchers will be using the same protocol, you should expect to monitor their first uses to assure consistent application. You might also want to invite researchers to make suggestions for improving the protocol after their initial experience with it. All this design, testing, and revision takes extra skill and time, and planning needs to take that into account.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 30: OPEN AND CLOSED QUESTIONS

Open questions are questions without set responses. "Tell me about how you use the forest" is an open question. Closed questions are questions with set responses (e.g., yes or no, multiple choice, or numbers on a scale). "Do you use fuel wood for cooking?" is a closed question.

Open questions can bring out unexpected information. They can be less likely to suggest to the subject what answer the interviewer might be looking for, and thus less likely to introduce bias. On the other hand, the responses from open questions can be harder to code and analyze in a standard way.

Open questions are most useful when you don't quite know what answer to expect or what information you need. You might use open questions in semi-structured interviews with key informants or in some focus group situations.

Formal interviews and surveys tend to use closed questions. In developing a survey, though, you might create a draft with open questions, try it out (pilot it) on a few subjects, and let the responses suggest how to create closed questions for the actual survey. For more on creating possible answers for closed questions, see Box 32 on coding.

For more on open and closed questions, see Babbie, pp.256–57; Bryman, pp.246–47.

BOX 31: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS AND STRUCTURE

In key informant exercises, focus groups, and many surveys, researchers tap knowledge through interviews. These interviews may be informal, semi-structured, or structured. In each case, the interviewer should go into the interview with a protocol. In an informal interview, this may just be an outline of points to cover. In a semi-structured interview, the protocol may include a guiding set of questions, which often include *open questions*. In a formal interview, the protocol tends to include more *closed questions* and tends to be followed more rigidly. (See Box 30 for more on open and closed questions.)

A protocol typically calls for an introductory phase in which the researcher tells the participant about the assessment and the nature and purpose of the interview. This might include information about the length of the interview and topics to be covered. The protocol should allow the person to ask questions about the assessment and the interview. The participant may have concerns about attribution and confidentiality, so the researcher should bring these up and come to a mutual understanding. (See the discussion of ethics at the end of Chapter 4.) If the researcher is recording the interview, the researcher should get the informant's permission to do this.

A protocol usually has a second phase for collecting information about the participant. This may include the person's full name, contact information, official position, and background in the sector.

A protocol's central phase deals with gathering information. The protocol provides questions that the researcher should ask. In informal and semi-structured interviews, the researcher should have some freedom to adapt the questions to the circumstances. It may make sense to ask questions in a different order or to omit questions in areas where the participant clearly has no knowledge. In a structured interview, the interviewer generally follows the protocol carefully, so that every interview subject has a comparable experience.

Finally, the interview should close with another opportunity for the participant to ask questions, an expression of thanks for the person's cooperation, and a request to be able to contact the person again to confirm answers or to get additional information. It should also be discussed if the participant will have an opportunity to review the assessment report before it becomes public.

For more on structured interviewing, see Babbie, pp. 274–279; Bryman, chapter 9. For more on semi-structured interviewing, see Bryman, chapter 20.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions are essentially group interviews with key informants, and they share some of the same planning issues: How many focus groups will you convene? What kinds of people will participate? What information will you seek, and how formal a style will you use? In planning focus groups, you need to think about how group interactions will affect the responses. For example, you may want to talk with junior and senior forest officers separately, or the junior officers might not be candid about problems that put the senior officers in a bad light. Similarly, you may want to separate villagers from local officials.

Preparation of specific tools to implement focus groups is like preparing for key informant interviews (see Boxes 29 and 31 on design of questions and interview structure), with the main phases of the interview process followed. The main information-gathering phase of a focus group session is, however, usually more structured—providing questions with specific procedures to answer them. For example, some questions might be answered by asking the group to brainstorm, thus producing multiple responses. Some might be answered through inviting and recording individual opinions. Some might be answered through a voting exercise, and some by asking the group to arrive at consensus.

If the plan is to conduct the same exercise with different focus groups, the protocol should call for the moderator to ask the same questions, in the same order, of each group. The moderator should have some flexibility, however, if the group clearly has no expertise to answer a question or if time is limited and some questions must be omitted.

The final phase should be similar to that of an interview. It should give the participants another chance to ask questions, to clarify their ongoing role (if any) in the assessment, and to thank them for their cooperation.

For more on focus group discussions generally, see Babbie, pp.322–23; Bryman, chapter 21.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 32: CODING OF INTERVIEW AND SURVEY RESPONSES

Coding means assigning responses to categories to allow analysis. You need to consider coding when you design questions, and your team needs to be aware of coding when they collect data (Chapter 4).

Closed questions (see Box 30) tend to be "pre-coded," meaning that the categories are set out as possible responses for the respondent to choose. For example, a closed question of whether a benefit-sharing system is equitable might ask the respondent to choose a number on a five-point scale, where one is very equitable and five is very inequitable. (For more on using indexes and scales, see Babbie, chapter 6.)

Open questions tend to be "post-coded," meaning that a researcher ends up assigning the response to a category. A researcher might ask, "Tell me about the benefit sharing system; is it fair?" and take down notes on the response. Later, the researcher will assign the response to categories (e.g., "yes," "mixed," or "no").

A good coding for a question has three properties.

- The categories (possible responses for a closed question) don't overlap.
- The categories are complete (they cover all possible responses).
- The rules for assigning responses to categories are clear.

For the best coding of responses, the questions themselves must be clear and easy to understand. Sometimes that means the question needs to be carefully explained to the subject, and sometimes that means that the interviewer needs careful instructions as to how to record responses. For example, if the response to a yes-or-no "Do you eat bush meat from the forest?" is "Not very often," the interviewer needs to know whether to record that as a yes or a no—and all interviewers need to follow the same set of guidelines for recording such responses.

Chapter 4 has more on data collection and coding. For more on question design, see Iarossi (2006), chapter 3; Bryman, chapter 11; Babbie, chapter 9.

Workshops

For planning purposes, you should be able to state how many workshops you will conduct, with what groups participating, how long they will take, and what information you expect them to produce. You may also want to consider whether to hire an independent facilitator to run the workshops. If you are going to be discussing sensitive topics or are aiming for a consensus finding, then a neutral, experienced facilitator can be a useful addition to your team.

Once you have decided on these elements, you will need to devise a protocol (sometimes simply called an agenda). Many of the guidelines for designing focus group sessions apply to workshops. However, workshops tend to be longer and more varied in organization than focus group sessions, and they can involve more people. Workshops can also include educational and ceremonial components.

Workshops may start with some sort of formal welcome from the sponsors. Often, then, the leaders (facilitators) of the workshop discuss the purpose and agenda and any ground rules for participants. The facilitators may also discuss matters of confidentiality and attribution of remarks.

The next step is, sometimes, to present introductory remarks on the topic at hand. These might, for example, provide background on the nature of the forest sector in the country. Keep these remarks neutral; avoid saying things that might prejudice the data that you are about to gather.

As with a focus group, the data-generating phase of a workshop can take many forms. You can have short presentations, open discussions, brainstorming, mapping exercises, strengths-weakness-opportunities-and-threats (SWOT) evaluations, voting exercises, consensus exercises, or any of dozens of tools and variations to capture the thoughts of the participants. When dealing with large numbers of participants, you can break into smaller groups and conduct parallel processes, coming back to the plenary to report results.

The conclusion of the workshop often involves some kind of summing up of the event, often by either a sponsor or a facilitator. On occasion, there is a ceremonial closing speech by a sponsor.

If a workshop is to be repeated in different regions or with different stakeholders, the basic structure should largely remain the same. You may have to adjust the length of the workshop, or the number of breakout groups, or the key speakers. However, the tools used and the problems addressed should be similar.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 33: FACTORING IN SAMPLING AND STRATIFICATION

Chapter 2 introduced the concepts of sampling and stratification. You will use sampling if your assessment uses key informants, focus group discussions, workshops, or surveys. You cannot contact every possible key informant, include every stakeholder in a focus group or workshop, or survey everyone in the country. You have to take samples.

For some assessments, especially those using surveys, sampling is a quantitative problem. You need randomness and a large enough sample size to be able to draw conclusions from your results with confidence. You need to deal with these matters in detail when you design your survey, and your data collection plan should reflect that you will have to spend time and effort on sampling. Chapter 4 of Iarossi (2006) covers practical issues of survey sampling.

Most assessments must deal with sampling qualitatively. Indonesia (Annex I) and Russia (Kuzmichev et al. 2012) provide good examples. Both involved large countries. Neither could afford to gather data throughout the country. The solution was to select representative provinces to study. The selections reflected the desire to get information from a variety of places that fully reflected conditions throughout the country—but they were not strictly random.

Sampling is not limited to country-wide assessments. In Liberia, for example (Annex I), the assessment chose to sample seven communities affected by logging concessions.

Stratification (dividing samples into "strata" and measuring each separately) is another concern. Stratification can help to improve the accuracy of a survey or other sampling technique for a given sampling size, and it can allow details to emerge about individual parts of governance. If, for example, you have more than one agency managing forests, you may want to gather data about them separately (e.g., score the same indicator separately for each agency). If different regions of the country are likely to have different governance problems, you may want to assess each region separately. If you think that junior staff will have different perspectives on agency problems than senior staff, you may want to sort them into separate focus groups. Stratification may require extra time and resources, so you should begin to consider it during this planning step.

Surveys

In planning for a survey, you should allow time and budget to develop a sampling plan, design the questions, test the questions, administer the survey, code the responses, and analyze the results. This will require careful planning and awareness of the logistical and operational challenges within the areas in which you are working.

You will also need a survey instrument or questionnaire. The wording of the survey questions, the order in which they are asked, whether they are asked in person or over the phone, and the attitude of the survey taker are some of the many factors that can affect the outcome of a survey so it is important that these factors are both considered and standardized.

Survey questions should be *brief, objective, simple, and specific* (BOSS) (Iarossi, pp.30–43). Being *brief* and being *simple* both have the aim of avoiding confusion and misunderstanding. Ask about one thing at a time, and don't load questions with assumptions. For example, don't ask a household if its access to forest resources is fair before you ask if they want and have access to forest resources. Try not to ask long questions, but don't make questions so short that they become confusing. Use language that your respondents will understand.

Being *objective* means avoiding biases. Don't ask questions that favor a particular answer (either because of the way the question is phrased or because of the possible responses offered). Don't give the respondents biased background information and then expect an objective response. Avoid emotionally charged wording. Try not to give an impression that a particular answer would be more polite or friendly than another. Be sensitive to the culture of your subjects and try to ask questions that will get honest, not just polite, responses.

Being *specific* means avoiding language that's loose or subject to more than one meaning. For example, "Do you often go on the public forest land?" depends too much on what a person thinks is "often."

Box 29 restates these and a few more rules of thumb that apply to survey and interview questions.

The style and order of questioning can affect answers. For example, given a list of questions with similar options for responses, people have a slight tendency to answer them all identically. Studies have shown that people may tend to favor positive responses over negative ones and that position may affect choice when there is a long list of possible responses. People usually don't like questions that are irrelevant to them, that are hypothetical, that invade their privacy, or that might make them look bad.

Other considerations in survey design include the survey length, the physical layout of the survey forms (see Box 34 for some practical tips), and the translation of the survey into local languages. If the data collectors have limited skills in the local language, this too may be a consideration. The questions must be simple enough for the collectors to explain them and to understand the answers.

Babbie, chapter 9, and Bryman, chapters. 10 and 12, have more information on survey planning and design. Iarossi (2006) is a book-length resource and is available for download online.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 34: DESIGNING DATA COLLECTION FORMS

Design of forms for recording information from interviews, focus groups, or surveys is an art in itself. Iarossi (2006), pp.81–85, offers some practical advice:

- Give each form a unique identification number so you can tell if any become lost.
- Number each question on the form; don't skip or repeat numbers or restart numbering in each section. This will help the interviewer to avoid skipping questions and help later in transferring the data.
- Leave ample space for answers and notes. Don't crowd.
- Include instructions. Use different formats to distinguish instructions for the interviewer from instructions to be read to the subject.
- Use bold printing in questions to show the interviewer **which words to emphasise**.
- Use boxes and other symbols to guide the interviewer in the entry of standardized responses, such as yes-or-no, multiple choice, or numbers.
- Use arrows in instructions to indicate skips (e.g., "If the answer to this question is no, →Skip to Question 10").

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 35: PILOTING SURVEYS

Many weaknesses in question design can come to light in piloting. Piloting can also give you an idea of how long it will take to administer the survey and how skilled your survey-taking team is.

People use four different approaches to test surveys. In conventional piloting, the team gives the survey to a few people from the target audience and then asks them about problems with the survey (e.g., were there questions that were hard to understand or did you have answers that weren't among the choices offered?). In behavioral piloting, an expert observes the survey being given and notes problems. In cognitive piloting, respondents are asked to report everything that comes to their minds while taking the survey. In desk review piloting, experts in survey design evaluate the survey documents. Each of these piloting approaches can bring different problems to light. Although conventional piloting is the most common, you may want to try one or more of the other approaches as well.

Assessments also use piloting to improve the questions used with key informants and focus groups. Indicators, like interview questions, can be misunderstood or off target. When assessments devise their own indicators, they may pilot them among experts to make sure they are clear and relevant.

For more on piloting, see Babbie, p.267; Bryman, pp.263–64; Iarossi (2006), pp.10–12 & 86–94.

Step 5: Finalize Your Work Plan and Develop a Data Collection Manual

Now that you have identified in more detail what information you need (Step 1), who you will get it from (Step 2), and how and who will get it (Steps 3 and 4), you can update your work plan (see Chapter 2) to be more specific in terms of both technical and operational details. If you have identified the need to develop specific protocols for key elements you should also finalize these and link them to the work plan to ensure that there are no discrepancies. For example, if your survey protocol says that you will do five surveys a day in rural areas and you need twenty surveys, you will need to ensure that the right number of days are allocated in the work plan and allocate time for transport between areas and for rest days.

As noted in Step 4, developing clear guidance for using tools is important, especially if the tool will be applied many times by many different people. In recognition of this, some assessments prepare data collection manuals to guide collection and assure uniformity.

Unlike a data collection plan, which forms part of the work plan and which is written for project managers, the data collection manual is written for the people actually collecting data in the field. Sometimes those people will be making sampling choices. For example, your plan may call for surveying 10 households in each sampled village, but the task of identifying the households is left to the researcher in the field. The data collection manual should explain how to make a random selection (for example, by getting a complete list of the households in the village and using a random number table or lottery to pick the households to be visited).

For a survey, the manual may include a script to follow in asking the questions. It may provide tips on answering questions that subjects asked during the piloting of the survey. It may provide instructions on how to report the data or forms to capture the responses. If it is necessary to protect the identity of those surveyed, it may include instructions on how to do that.

For key stakeholder interviews, the manual may include a protocol listing the questions to ask. These interviews tend to be much less structured than survey interviews. The interview subjects often tell stories that yield information out of sequence to the protocol or information that is completely unexpected. The manual needs to include not only a protocol listing the questions but also an explanation for the interviewer on what the objective of the interview is and to give the interviewer some freedom to improvise.

For workshops and focus groups, the manual may give instructions on determining who to invite, the basic agenda to use, and the basic method to use to collect information. On the last point, for example, the manual might direct the assessors to simply allow free discussion and capture the variety of opinions, to conduct a voting exercise, or to try to get the participants to reach consensus on scoring an indicator.

For desk reviews, the manual may instruct the researchers on what sources to use, what format to use to record the data, and what information to collect about the source to allow citation or verification.

In each case the manual should not only provide guidance on the collection of data but also on its storage and management. This is critical to ensure that information is not lost between collection and analysis. More information on this is provided in Chapter 4.

Points on Process
Vetting the Methods

Vetting is a process of inviting constructive criticism from stakeholders. Almost all assessments use vetting at some stage. Probably the most common is to allow comments on the results of the assessment. However, using vetting early and often during an assessment has benefits. You tap the collective wisdom of the stakeholders. You increase the transparency of the assessment. You encourage stakeholders to buy in to the process of assessment and make it more likely that they will accept the results.

When to Vet

You can use vetting at each of the steps outlined in this chapter.

Vetting your description of what to measure can yield surprising results. People have different interests and values, and these lead them to see the world differently. What is a matter of forest governance depends greatly on your point of view.

For example, you may want to perform a general assessment of forest governance, focusing on the forest department, and you may develop your description accordingly. When you vet the description with stakeholders, you may hear from the forest officers that they have real problems coordinating enforcement with prosecutors and courts, so the assessment must look beyond the forest agency and capture this problem. You may hear from rural communities that they have issues with land tenure, and the assessment should evaluate such things as conflict resolution, land use policy, the location of new roads and communication towers, and other pressures that lead to conversion of forest lands to non-forest uses. You may learn of problems with revenue collection, unfair administration of timber sales and licensing, corruption, and other issues that were simply outside your original scope. Similarly, you may find that your focus on some aspect of budgeting or staffing is relatively unimportant.

Vetting an indicator set can point out gaps in your planned assessment. For example, it may be that you have forest law enforcement as a criterion, but no indicator addressing forest officers' authority to make arrests. This may be a major issue with local communities, or with the forest officers themselves, and may deserve its own indicator.

Vetting at this stage may also disclose that stakeholders are misunderstanding the purpose of the assessment. This will allow you to clarify what the assessment aims to achieve.

Vetting your methods can expose bias or impracticality. Stakeholders may point out that your methods do not treat all stakeholders fairly or that they entirely exclude some voices. They may point to the need to expand your expert panel, to translate materials to local languages, to hold regional focus group sessions, and so forth.

How to Vet

Vetting employs some of the same methods used in gathering data but is generally more informal. For example:

- Rather than recruiting experts, you might simply send a draft of your scope to several interested people and invite them to comment.
- Rather than hold an organized focus group discussion, you could invite several stakeholders to an informal workshop.

- Rather than have a carefully written interview protocol, you could informally visit some representative stakeholders, explain what you were planning, and invite their reactions.

Ideally, you have already identified the key stakeholders as part of your planning and you know who to contact. You must take care not to introduce bias through your selection of stakeholders. You should aim for a representative sampling of interests. You do not want to exclude views; you may even want to issue some sort of public invitation to comment on your proposed methods.

As a matter of transparency you might be routinely posting documents of your review on the web or making them available in government offices. As part of this, when you post information about scope or methods, you could provide an e-mail address for people to send you comments. Be aware, though, that only the most motivated and technologically capable stakeholders may participate this way. To assure broader participation, it is better to actively recruit people to comment.

Another tool that assessments have used in vetting is to tap existing advisory committees. If the forest agency has a citizen advisory board that represents many different stakeholders, or if there is an association of academic foresters that could offer technical comments on sampling and measurement, you can invite these bodies to give advice. For more specific ideas, see the process note at the end of Chapter 1 for a discussion of engaging other stakeholders in planning.

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SECTION II:
IMPLEMENTING YOUR ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

- Section 2 provides guidance on implementing your assessment. It focuses on collecting your data and then processing it to produce outputs that can help you achieve your objectives. The Section is divided into two chapters: the first (Chapter 4) is on *Data Collection*; the second (Chapter 5) is on *Interpretation and Analysis*.
- Chapter 4, *Data Collection*, covers the steps you need to take to acquire your data. These include assembling and training a data collection team, collecting data, and taking steps to assure its quality as well as taking note of some of the ethical considerations that come with data collection activities.
- Chapter 5, *Interpretation and Analysis*, covers moving from raw data to providing more useful findings and conclusions. These steps include processing the data from the field so that it can be displayed and visualized in a way that is relevant to your target audience, analyzing the data to make sure you draw clear conclusions from it, and making recommendations that will help your assessment have an impact and provide a clear path forward. It also notes the value of having your data vetted and validated by a range of stakeholders to increase acceptance of the assessment's findings.
- While this section is presented in a sequential order, planners and implementers will need to consider many of the elements concurrently. Clear links need to be identified within your assessment between how data is collected and analyzed to ensure data formats are usable and contain the information needed. This section also has strong links to both preceding and subsequent sections. Users should not lose sight of their objectives and target audience (discussed in Chapters 1 and 2). Links between tool design (Chapter 3) and data collection are paramount. You will need to continually review design during implementation to ensure that it is efficient and effective. How you interpret and analyze your data also has a strong relationship with how you plan to use that information, which is linked to both your objectives and your dissemination strategy (Chapter 6). Finally, it's never too early to think about self-evaluation and improvement (Chapter 7), which should happen throughout the process.

4 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection begins with recruiting a collection team. Collection itself can take a number of forms. Most assessments use more than one data collection method. Once you have data, you will want to make sure that it is accurate and complete.

STEP 1

ASSEMBLE AND TRAIN A DATA COLLECTION TEAM

The team can be a few researchers or a large number of survey takers. It all depends on your tools and budget.

STEP 2

COLLECT DATA

Collection can take many forms, from mining existing (secondary) data to acquiring new (primary) data through experts, key informants, focus groups, surveys, or workshops.

STEP 3

ASSURE DATA QUALITY

Once the data are in hand, you will want to make sure the data are accurate and complete. You may spot-check that the data collector actually made the measurements according to the protocol. You may try to confirm the data by comparing it with similar measurements. You may comb through the data and investigate what appear to be data-entry or other obvious errors.

POINTS ON PROCESS: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION

When you collect data from people, your subjects must trust you. To earn trust, the project must be trustworthy. Following some basic rules of ethics and safety will avoid misunderstandings, improve the project's reputation, protect participants, and, in the end, give you better results.

Step 1: Assemble and Train a Data Collection Team

Assessments vary on the number and skills of people they need to collect data. Part of the variation depends on the scale of the assessment and part depends on the tools being used. For example, the PROFOR assessment in Uganda (Annex I) gathered its data in a single national workshop and used six people: one national expert, one national facilitator, two international experts, and two people proving administrative support. The NAFORMA assessment (Annex I) used sixteen field teams to survey thousands of households via interviews.

The amount of training that data collectors need depends on the scale of the assessment, the size and existing skills of the team, and the tools used. A large assessment using a large team faces a challenge in keeping data collection uniform. This is especially true if the team is using tools that rely on interviewing people and coding their responses. In the NAFORMA case, the assessment gave the data collectors a full month of training. In the PROFOR case, where the tool indicators were scored in a single national workshop, the national consultants needed only short, informal training on the use of the tool. In every case, however, it is important to ensure that training covers both the overall goals of the assessment and the technical basis, the specific task a team member will need to play, and the basic logistical and operational requirements.

Team Composition

Establishing a team to undertake the assessment will require consideration of the resources you have available in terms of time, human capacity, budget, and the methods you have chosen. A small team will be easier to manage but may lack certain skills or may be unable to undertake an assessment at the scale needed (e.g., conducting 200 interviews). As a team expands it will require more coordination and management, and the role of the team leader or manager should not be underestimated. Table 7 provides an indicative list of positions within an assessment, although even large projects may not require individuals in all these roles. Some people in your team may take on more than one role, and sometimes people will share roles. Large teams almost always designate specific people as leaders or managers; small teams may be less hierarchical.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 36: IDENTIFYING GOOD TEAM MEMBERS

UNDP (2007) offers some specific points to keep in mind when selecting people or organizations to collect primary data:

- They should have reputations for trust and integrity, especially among the people they will be interviewing. Sources must be comfortable talking with the data collectors.
- Their knowledge should be adequate for their roles. They should be familiar with the subject matter. If they are working in the field, they should be familiar with the local geography.
- They should be reasonably impartial. Every data collector carries values and biases into the process. These should not be so great that they slant the data.

TABLE 7: KEY ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS

Position	Role	Skills
Assessment Manager	The managers will coordinate the effort. They should be familiar with the task in all its aspects, including the data collection design, overall objective of the assessment, and budget. The manager should know the local context where data will be collected and also the administrative context of the assessment, including the expectations of sponsors and initiators.	This person should have skills in managing both data and people. Sometimes the data collection manager is also responsible for recruiting the team.
Researcher	Depending on the design of the data collection, researchers may have the task of collecting secondary data from agency records, libraries, and the Internet, or they may be collecting primary data through interviews, focus group discussions, or surveys. They should understand the nature of their assignment and should have the capacity to do the research.	Researchers should be reliable and able to follow directions. If they are doing tasks like interviewing, they should be good at communicating and building rapport—and potentially have good language skills. Because research seldom goes exactly as planned, they should be resourceful and able to respond to challenges.
Logistics Coordinator	The logistics coordinator will manage many of the operational elements and will ensure that activities are carried out in a timely and safe manner. Key jobs might include arranging travel, renting meeting space, tracking expenses, securing support personnel, and so forth. This is particularly relevant in a large field-based assessment; logistical support may also be relevant for smaller assessments that require workshops and other group activities to be organized.	They should be familiar with the local context and, ideally, have experience running similar activities in the past. They must be well organized and able to communicate effectively with team members.
Data Manager	The data manager is responsible for taking the data from the researchers, assuring its quality (see Step 3 in this chapter), and keeping it in forms accessible to others working on the assessment.	The data manager should have excellent organizational skills and a high level of attention to detail. Within certain assessments, they may also have experience using statistical or other data management software.
Facilitator	Facilitators can be used in focus group sessions and workshops to assure a well-run, unbiased meeting with free and full participation. The facilitator may sometimes also have the task of recording the data; other times, a separate researcher will have that task.	A facilitator should have skills in running group processes, experience in remaining neutral, and, ideally, have the respect of the people they will be facilitating.

Training Needs

Ensuring that the team is appropriately trained is critical to an assessment. Here is a list of some topics that data collection training might cover.

- **Explanation of the assessment.** The collection team should understand the underlying objectives of the assessment and its overall approach. Team members will have to make decisions in the field about many things, from subject selection to coding of responses. Anticipating all these questions will be impossible. Sometimes you have to rely on the team member's judgment. The better the team member understands the objectives of the assessment, the more likely it will be that the team member makes decisions that further these objectives.
- **Selection of subjects.** If the data collectors are responsible for selecting subject for surveys, focus group, or workshops, they need to understand the procedure and standards for subject selection. They may need to understand how to conduct a random sampling

of a community. They may need to know how to document their selection decisions so that reviewers or analysts can know how to treat the data.

- **Interviewing and facilitation**. Interview and facilitation training should cover two areas. The first is good practice in interviewing and facilitation. The next step in this chapter talks a little about general good practice in these areas. The second is good practice in the specific types of interviews or group events to be conducted: how formal they will be, how much freedom the team member will have to deviate from the script, how the team member should explain questions if the subject appears to misunderstand them, how to ensure all participants in a group are fully engaged, and so forth.
- **Coding.** The data collectors need to write down responses in a consistent way. You may need to train them on how to handle ambiguous responses or responses that don't fit the expected categories. The next step talks more about issues of coding.
- **Ethical practices.** Data collectors need to keep themselves and their subjects safe. They need to keep promises made to subjects, such as promises to keep responses anonymous. The point on progress at the end of this chapter has more to say about data collection ethics.

You should not limit training to written materials and lectures. Team members should have exercises, including role-playing ones, so that they can practice their skills and get feedback from their instructors.

Step 2: Collect the Data

If you have designed your tools well and written a careful data plan (both activities covered in Chapter 3), you should have a clear idea of how to collect the data. This step and the next cover a few practical points about data collection. This step has tips on interviewing and recording data in the field. The next step discusses handling the data that comes from the data collectors and assuring its quality.

Interview Techniques

Many assessments rely on interviews. It is part of working with key stakeholders, focus groups, and survey subjects. Box 37 has some basic practice tips for interviewers. The discussion below goes into more detail for conducting survey interviews, where the quality of technique often determines the quality of the resulting data.

Facilitation Techniques

Leaders of workshops and focus groups need facilitation skills. A facilitator applies many of the same practices as an interviewer, including good manners and good listening skills, but group interactions make facilitation more complicated than interviewing.

A facilitator must be able to manage a meeting's order and timing. This entails setting and applying ground rules with the group, getting agreement on an agenda, and keeping the meeting on schedule.

A facilitator must be aware of both individual behavior and group dynamics. Every participant should understand what is under discussion. Every participant should feel comfortable engaging in the process. To conduct a discussion that

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 37: PRACTICAL TIPS FOR INTERVIEWERS

A good interviewer:

- Honors basic courtesy.
- Remembers participants' names and titles and uses appropriate forms of address.
- Uses body language and eye contact appropriately to engage with participants.
- Spends most of the interview listening rather than talking.
- Uses active listening, follow-up questions, and other techniques to assure that answers have been correctly understood and to encourage people to contribute complete information.
- Keeps the purpose of the interview in mind and uses good judgment to achieve that purpose (even if it means deviating a bit from the protocol).
- Remembers to thank participants.
- Does not raise undue expectations about what participants input or the assessment will deliver.

is open and understood by all, sometimes the facilitator must know something about the participants' capacities, interests, and relationships prior to the meeting.

At times, a facilitator must manage conflict and encourage consensus. The facilitator should be able to handle angry participants, to get participants to step away from positions and talk instead about their underlying interests, to reframe issues in ways that blunt controversy, and to act impartially.

Survey Administration

Interviewers administer most surveys in forest governance assessments. Surveys administered through paper or electronic copies have a built-in bias toward educated respondents.

Ideally, you want everyone identified in your sample to respond to your survey. To increase the percentage of people who respond, interviewers can contact people more than once, perhaps beginning with a letter or visit to explain the coming survey and then timing interviews to avoid holidays and other inconvenient times. (You can also take steps in the design of the survey to increase participation, such as offering incentive payments, crafting shorter surveys, or making the survey content interesting to your respondents. You must, however, also make sure not to raise undue expectations by overstating the potential impacts of the survey and the assessment more broadly.)

The way interviewers present themselves can also encourage participation. Interviewers should be appropriately dressed, well prepared, likeable, happy, sensitive to the mood of the respondents, honest, patient, and willing to answer questions.

The interview subjects should feel that the interviewer is impartial and not trying to influence their responses. Occasionally, governments want to send minders to accompany interviewers. Discourage this practice if it will cast doubt on the neutrality of the process.

If the interviewer needs to bring along an interpreter, the interpreter should have traits similar to a good interviewer. Don't forget to train your interpreters on good practice.

With each respondent, the interviewer should begin with introductions. The interviewer should show the respondent the interviewer's official identification and should explain the purpose of the survey, the potential benefits of participating, and the confidentiality of responses.

At this point, the interviewer may be faced with a reluctant participant. Some training in persuasion, especially in the face of common reasons for not participating, will increase the interviewer's success in getting people to take the survey.

Some survey protocols require the interviewer to read only the text of the questions as written. Others give the interviewer some flexibility. For example, some allow the interviewer to ask a follow-up question about what appears to be a partial or non-responsive answer from the respondent. The interviewer should have clear instructions on points like these.

Some surveys use two interviewers: one to ask questions and one to take notes. Some surveys use one interviewer with an electronic device to record the interviews. In the latter case, the interviewer should also try to take notes at the interview, as recording devices sometimes fail or become lost.

At the end of the interview, the interviewer should thank the respondent for participating, answer any questions about the assessment that may have occurred to the respondent during the survey, and get permission to contact the respondent again if necessary to verify or clarify responses.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 38: DATA COLLECTION AND ENTRY

When undertaking data collection, it is easy to feel that you and your team have a full grasp of exactly what information is being collected. However, when you return to that information later in the office, or provide it to another team member responsible for data entry, you may realize that you cannot remember key points, have missed details, or have different interpretations of key facts. Good practice is critical to ensure that both the right data are collected and the information can be easily used. Here are a few rules of thumb.

Before collection:

- **Standardize response formats where possible.** This goes back to tools design (Chapter 3). Standardization may vary, from giving interviewers bullet points on a blank sheet of paper to guide note taking to providing a full set of closed questions (see Box 30). Standardizing does not necessarily limit opportunities for further detail to be added; it does, however, provide you with a clear baseline for analysis and helps to reduce the subjectivity of interpreting information.
- **Give teams clear instructions.** This goes back to training. Interviewers should understand what data the interview or survey need to capture, how to handle non-responsive answers, and how and when to prompt reluctant subjects or probe for more details.
- **Identify roles.** Identify who will ask questions, who will take notes on what issues, and who will enter the data. Having clear roles helps ensure information is collected in every area and managed effectively.

During collection:

- **Remember to capture some basic information.** This basic information includes who (is interviewing and being interviewed), *how* (is the data being collected), *where* (location), and *when* (time and date). These can be used to help clarify data and may have a bearing on your analysis.
- Write clearly. Illegible handwriting can mean that data is lost or requires considerable time to enter.

After collection:

- **Enter it early.** The sooner you enter the data into a final format (whether a master spreadsheet or your own compilation of interview notes) the more likely you are to remember any points you forgot to note down or how to interpret your own notes. Quick data entry will also help you identify any limitations in your approach early as opposed to after undertaking all your data collection and only then realizing you have missed a key point.
- **Encourage feedback.** Have data collectors report back on what worked and what did not work in the field. You may find you need to adjust wording of frequently misunderstood questions or add further questions to bring out details. Consider, too, whether you are really getting the data you need. Assessments sometimes must revise their survey instruments or interview protocols when they discover that they are not collecting the data they need to fulfill their objectives.

Coding

The term "coding" refers to translating information into a form suitable for analysis. The kind of coding that you need depends on the kind of data that you collect and how you intend to analyze your data. For example, if you are only going to use interviews to provide illustrative examples, you may be able to code your research as a set of narrative answers to standard questions. The case studies in Annex I show information coded in this informal way.

Another informal example of coding frequently happens with the input from vetting sessions. A common practice is to make a table of the comments that you receive with columns for the source of the comment, the substance of the comment, and the response of the assessment team to the comment.

In contrast, coding of survey answers is more formal. The design of a system of formal coding begins when you design your tool. For example, if you design a closed survey question (see Box 30 in Chapter 3), you have already described all the valid responses to the question. The coding job of the interviewer is to assign the survey subject's answer to one of the valid responses.

Having multiple coders opens the possibility of inconsistent coding for even the simplest questions. To increase consistency in coding, you can to establish rules in your data collection manual (Chapter 3) and provide training for handling cryptic and blank responses (Step 1 of this chapter). After a non-standard response, you may want to direct the survey taker to ask again, reading off the list of possible responses. If the reply is still cryptic, you may want to give the survey taker the option of coding the response as "response not understood," "did not respond," "not applicable," "did not know," or "refused to answer," depending on the nuance of the response.

Another option is to have a single coder for the ambiguous responses. To do this, when people in the field encounter an ambiguous response, they record it exactly, either in writing or via audio or video, and flag it for the coder. A single coder acts as referee, looking at the recorded response, interpreting it, and filling in the forms. Although body language and other information may not come across in the recorded response, having a single referee assures some uniformity in how the assessment treats cryptic responses. A few assessments take this a step further and have a single person review and code every response, not just the questionable ones.

If a tool uses open questions, or—like content analysis—looks at material not prompted by specific questions, the coding task is more subjective. Here you will usually want to come up with coding categories when you design the tool. (For example, for the question, "Does the community have fair access to fuel wood from the forest?" you could code the responses as positive (fair), neutral, or negative (unfair).) As you pilot the question, you may decide that you need to add coding categories (e.g., "not sure," "it's different for different people in the community," or "it varies").

Once you define a coding system, generally you will want to give your data collectors forms that are consistent with that system. Particularly if the system is formal, data collectors will be able to code the data in the field. Design of forms to avoid errors in entering data in the field and transcribing data in the office is an art in itself. Box 34 offers some practical tips for form design.

Obviously, this discussion only introduces the topic of coding. For more on coding in surveys, see Iarossi (2006) p.187 and Bryman (2012) pp.247–49; for coding in content analysis, see Babbie (2010) pp.338–42 and Bryman (2012) pp.298–304, 576–78.

Step 3: Quality Assurance

Quality assurance encompasses the steps you take to make certain that data collection is correct and complete.

In some circumstances, quality assurance is aimed at preventing harm to data. You might be concerned about the integrity of the data as it travels from the researcher collecting it to the data manager. These days it is usually fairly easy to send the data directly, through e-mail, with little chance of it being altered. However, if the data is going to pass through multiple hands, including the hands of people who might have an interest in the outcome of the assessment, you may want to consider methods to safeguard the data. These might include sealing the data in a tamper-evident envelope, documenting the chain of people with custody of the data, or sending the data by trusted courier.

In most assessments, the emphasis of quality assurance is to check the data already collected. Assessments can take four kinds of these actions: editing, cleaning, verification, and triangulation.

Editing

Editing includes steps to make sure the data from the field are complete and readable. The data manager should review all the data coming from the data collectors. If the manager finds problems, the manager can check with the data collector to resolve them. For example, survey questionnaires may come back without answers entered for some questions. The manager can ask the survey taker if this was a failure to ask the question, a failure to record a clear response, or a decision not to record an unclear response. Handwritten notes from an interview or workshop may be difficult to read. The manager can go over unclear portions with the note taker.

During editing, the data manager may also spot problems with accuracy or consistency in scoring. This may call for improvements in coding (discussed in Step 2).

Cleaning

Cleaning begins during editing by flagging data that stands out or raises suspicions of an error (either because of the way they were collected or because the values are so different from other data). If the data manager can determine that the method of collection was irregular, the data can be set aside or reported with an accompanying caution. If an entry is obviously flawed (for example, a six reported on a scale of one to five, or a missing entry, or a "yes" recorded for an entry that should have a numerical value), sometimes the data manager can trace the error and correct it.

If a piece of data is simply an outlier, the situation is more delicate. Almost every group of measurements is likely to include some outliers. To throw those out automatically would introduce bias and make your findings look more certain than they actually are. Investigate how the outliers were collected. If you find irregularities in circumstances or procedures, document them and pass the information on to the analysts to decide how to treat the anomaly.

Data editing and cleaning can also include "tidying up" the appearance of the data: standardizing spelling and capitalization, correcting typographical errors, checking for the same data unintentionally entered twice, and so forth. In these cases, the cleaning should not actually change the values of the data.

Verification

Verification includes steps to check that the data was properly collected and transmitted. It may be as simple as comparing a sample of the data received against the copy kept by the researcher. The data manager may review recordings to make sure that the researcher followed the protocol and coded the responses accurately. The data manager may contact participants to be sure they actually did participate, or may send participants summaries of their responses and ask them to confirm the accuracy. In some cases, the data manager can repeat the measurement. With secondary data, the manager can go to the secondary sources and verify the data there.

Triangulation

Triangulation is an attempt to confirm the measurements by finding another source that has made similar findings. Finding identical measurements is rare; some sources, however, may have information close enough to suggest if the new data is consistent with what is already known. The data manager can also pass findings by experts or well-informed stakeholders to see if the new findings are consistent with accepted understandings. If they are not, it does not automatically mean that the new data is flawed, but it invites the data manager (or, later, the data analysts) to explore the reasons for the differences.

When you collect data from people, they must trust you. Otherwise, they may withhold information or even lie. To gain that trust, you must be trustworthy. To be trustworthy, your actions must be open, honest, and ethical.

The following are some ethical and practical considerations in data collection. In the end, they are simply steps to avoid harm to the public, the collection team, the reputation of the assessment, and the quality of the results. You may wish to incorporate some of them in your data collection manual or stress them in your training.

Be more than transparent—practice outreach. There is a range of formal and informal notification steps that could can take to let people know exactly what the assessment is doing. It is sometimes mandatory to get permission from national or local government to collect data, and it is almost always a matter of courtesy to let leaders of affected groups know what you are planning. This may mean going to the national government, the local government, community leaders, and even to business leaders if you will be working with their people or talking about their lands. In some cases this may result in leaders suggesting respondents or ways of working. While this can help to ensure you gain insight from the best people in a culturally appropriate manner, it may also restrict your access and bias your findings. As such, care should be taken to maintain representative samples and participation by a range of stakeholders.

Beyond getting official permission, people who *might* be contacted by your team (as well as, in some cases, the community as a whole) should know what you are doing and why. Do not give rumors a chance to start. For example, if you are paying people compensation to participate in a survey, you want people to know that participation is by invitation, not according to who shows up to meet you.

Gain consent from participants. People who participate directly in data gathering should give their prior informed consent to participation. Sometimes this will be a formal matter, with the assessment documenting that it received consent. Sometimes it will be informal or implicit. For

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 39: PROVIDING COMPENSATION

Providing financial compensation to survey, workgroup, or focus group participants is a complex and politically charged process. It may enable you to access respondents who would not normally have the time or inclination to participate in an assessment, thus giving you a more representative sample—but it also raises ethical and practical considerations relating to levels of compensation, how it is paid, and who has access to it (for example who from an organization should be invited). Approaches to addressing these challenges vary widely by country, region, and organization. Seek advice from others on this matter. Check with your funders, political/institutional sponsors, and other implementers (see Chapter 2, Step 3) to identify what an appropriate approach might be.

example, you may send out invitation packets to a workshop explaining all about the event and its role in the assessment. If people accept the invitation, there may be an implicit grant of consent, though you may want to discuss it further with the participants at the start of the workshop to make sure there is no misunderstanding.

Consider, discuss, and respect confidentiality. If confidentiality is an issue, you should come to an understanding about it with participants and honor the expectations that you create. People who are taking part in a survey should know whether people in power could find out if they participated or how they answered. People at group events should similarly know whether their remarks could be attributed to them. Bring the topic up and make sure that you and the participants share the same understanding.

If discussing confidentiality might not be enough to take care of participants' concerns about the consequences of being candid, you must take reasonable steps to reassure them. If responses could be affected by the presence of an observer from an agency, from local government, from a local business, or anywhere else, do what you can to exclude that observer. If participants might change their answers because they see that a government employee is conducting the event, see if you can get a neutral party to be the data collector, such as a researcher from the local university or a field worker from a trusted NGO.

Keep everyone safe. If it appears that participation in the data collection could somehow later cause problems for the participants, take extra caution. Consider if there might be additional ways to protect the participants. Consider whether their consent to participate was truly given freely. In the end, even with consent, safety should be your primary consideration. If you cannot assure the safety of participants, do not involve them in the assessment.

Have a similar concern about the safety and integrity of your team. Be sure they are isolated from outside pressures to produce particular results. When you send people to the field, make sure they have adequate transport, communication, training, and security to assure their safety.

Guard the integrity of the data. Be aware of your own biases, and do not let them affect data collection. Do not distort people's comments or take them out of context. Do not alter or invent data. If it does not impinge on confidentiality, keep records of your raw data so that it can be used later to verify findings.

You may also want to have researchers take steps to make it easier for the data manager to check the quality of the data. These steps include having the researchers document how they collected the data, keep recordings of interviews and meetings, and keep copies of all the data they submit.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 40: ETHICAL RULES OF THUMB

- Be candid with everyone.
- Get people's informed consent to participate.
- Honor reasonable expectations of privacy and confidentiality.
- Keep participants and your team safe.
- Guard the integrity of the data.

5 INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

At this point, depending on the tools you have used, many assessments have already begun to process and analyze their data. Almost all assessments, however, have further interpretive work to do. The interpretive portion of an assessment has one, two, or three steps, depending on the nature of the assessment. The first step is common to all assessments: organizing and processing the data. The second step is common to almost all assessments: analyzing the data. The third step is found in many assessments: making recommendations for action.

STEP 1

PROCESS THE DATA

Assessments often produce complex data sets. You must process the data to make it more readily understood. This may mean aggregating the data, calculating composite measures, or presenting the data graphically.

STEP 2

DO THE ANALYSIS

Once you have the data in an understandable form, you can analyze it. For example, you might make comparisons over time, among regions, or between institutions.

STEP 3

MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS

Having analyzed the data, you can identify priorities and make recommendations for action.

POINTS ON PROCESS: VETTING AND VALIDATION OF ANALYSIS

You should go to experts and knowledgeable stakeholders to vet and validate your analytic work.

Interpretation takes three steps with progressively broader visions:

- *Processing the data, which involves dealing with individual data points and, often, producing basic summaries of it.*
- *Analyzing the data, which involves seeking patterns and meaning.*
- *Making recommendations, which involve placing patterns and meaning in the larger context of governance and drawing inferences about how to improve governance.*

The distinctions between these steps—and sometimes between data gathering (Chapter 4), interpretation (Chapter 5), and dissemination (Chapter 6)—can blur, and the steps can overlap. For example, the workshop in the PROFOR case study in Uganda (Annex I) not only scored indicators but also prioritized them, taking on tasks in Chapters 4 and 5. The cleaning of survey data (Chapter 4, Step 3) may take place during data entry and require an understanding of which data points are suspiciously far from the average response, an understanding that only comes after processing some of the data (Chapter 5, Step 1). And analysis (Chapter 5, Step 2) should produce results geared to the target audience for dissemination (Chapter 6). For that reason, you should read this chapter in conjunction with Chapters 4 and 6.

This chapter ends with a discussion of the vetting of data processing and analysis methods. You should keep track of your methods. You will have to explain them if you vet the methods with stakeholders, and probably again in any assessment reports that you produce (Chapter 6).

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 41: DRAWING ON INTERPRETIVE TECHNIQUES FROM OUTSIDE THE FOREST SECTOR

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 begin with planning steps (which require specific understanding of the forest sector), move to gathering steps (which tend to apply to governance assessment in many sectors), and end with interpretive steps (which apply to many kinds of evaluation activities and social research). As you work on interpreting your data, be aware that you can get ideas from cases and tools outside the forest sector and even outside the field of governance assessment.

Step 1: Process the Data

Assessments commonly process raw data in three ways. They organize the data, they summarize the data, and, in the case of quantitative data, they describe it statistically. Often, they put the data in a visual form for easier comprehension. In all three steps, for all but the simplest data sets, assessments frequently use computers.

Data Organization

It is possible to organize paper copies of data, but assessments usually enter data into digital form. Digital records are easier to access, share, and edit than paper records. With the power of computers, digital entry often makes summarizing and visualizing the data easier as well.

Assessments use word processors to organize text, such as interview notes and transcripts, reports of experts, and summaries of outputs from focus group sessions and workshops. The assessment analysts can then search the entered text for keywords, copy and paste passages to group together text addressing similar subjects, or copy quotations for use in reports.

Assessments use spreadsheet and database applications to handle both qualitative and quantitative data. For example, if an assessment used the same protocol in several key interviews, it could enter summaries of the interviews in a spreadsheet (with each row devoted to a single respondent and each column devoted to a single question in the interview protocol). This would make it easy for an analyst to look at all the responses to one question.

Sometimes, as with the PROFOR Uganda case (Annex I), the tools produce indicator scores. Spreadsheets are then a handy way to record and organize the scores. If the assessment has scored the indicators more than once—for example, by regions as in the World Bank Russia assessment (Kuzmichev et al. 2012)—a spreadsheet allows easy comparison of the scores.

Assessments can find computer applications specifically designed for qualitative data entry and analysis. Babbie (2010), pp.406–13, lists several and gives an introduction to use of NVivo 8 (formerly NUD*IST).

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 42: ASSURING QUALITY IN DATA ENTRY

Data entry can introduce errors. The data manager should apply a quality assurance method to catch errors of transcription, even if the method is as simple as proofreading the entries.

A common error is to fail to enter a particular interview or survey response at all. Keep careful track of the number of items to be entered and compare them against the number of items actually entered. Give each survey or interview a unique identification number to make it easier to see if an item has been entered twice or if an item is missing.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 43: SEARCHING FOR SOFTWARE

The text in this section provides an outline of only a few of the different software applications available to manage both quantitative and qualitative data.

Web searches for "qualitative data analysis software" or "statistical packages" will produce links to many other applications, some of them free and open-source and some of them web-based. The site http://solutionscenter.nethope.org/ profiles ICT products for international humanitarian work, including database, analysis, and monitoring and evaluation products.

Take time to review the options available and seek advice where possible on which will be the most practical. Iarossi (2006, pp. 191–95) gives advice on selecting and using software for data collection in survey work.

For quantitative data, assessments can also find computer applications specially designed to facilitate data entry and analysis. For example, the NAFORMA study (see Annex I) used Open Foris, a set of applications under development by FAO through the FAO-Finland Forestry Programme. FAO is designing the applications specifically to support forest biophysical, socioeconomic, and governance assessments. Open Foris Collect is a data entry and management application that also assists in quality assurance and cleaning (Chapter 4, Step 3). Open Foris Calc (as of February 2014, not officially released) will perform common quantitative data processing calculations. The Open Foris web page is at http://www.fao.org/forestry/fma/openforis/en/.

A large number of free and proprietary applications for data entry and statistical analysis are available. See Box 43 for some suggestions for locating them. Bryman (2012), chapter 16, offers a detailed introduction to one commonly used application (the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), currently marketed by IBM).

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 44: ARCHIVING

The data manager will want to select a stable format and place to archive electronic data so that they are available to other researchers, to critics, and to others doing similar assessments in the future. If the data are to be accessible over several years, the best formats are ones in wide use. A format used by a specialized program is more likely to become obsolete than the format used by a popular word processing, spreadsheet, or database application; many specialized applications, however can export data in common formats for sharing and archiving.

If the data volume is large, the manager may want to use a compression application to reduce the size of the archive. Again, the safest choice is to use a method currently in wide use.

For stability, an institution is probably a better keeper of the data archive than an individual. Actually, it is better to have multiple copies stored in multiple places. Stable businesses, international development organizations, NGOs, government agencies, or university libraries are possible homes; so too are online storage facilities (often referred to as "the cloud"), which will hold data and allow access by different groups. If parts of the data are sensitive or confidential, the manager will want to establish rules for access and will want to find storage sites willing to apply these rules.

Data Summary

If you have a complex set of data, you will want to capture its meaning in a simpler form. What that means depends on the kinds of data, the methods, and the tools you have used. You can summarize the outputs of some tools most easily in words. With loosely structured key stakeholder interviews, for example, you can write a few paragraphs capturing the key points of the interview or the responses to key questions. Some tools, including surveys and tools using content analysis, produce outputs that need quantitative processing. Some tools, such as expert scoring of indicators, produce outputs that already include analysis. Depending on how those outputs are structured, they may be open to further quantitative comparison (see, for example, the World Bank assessment in Russia, Kuzmichev et al. 2012) or better suited to qualitative treatment.

Qualitative processing. Assessments can use various means to make qualitative data easier to grasp and summarize. One option is the addition of keywords to the margins or text of qualitative data (i.e., interview transcripts). Adding keywords is a form of coding, a concept introduced in Chapter 4 in the context of entering survey answers. If you are using indicators, the keywords can correspond to indicators or the components that the indicators reflect. Adding keywords makes locating relevant passages easier.

You can also add more detailed marginal notes to transcripts. These may be simple summaries of the content, cross-references to similar or contrasting content, or the start of a more thorough analysis of the data.

Quantitative processing. The full statistical treatment of quantitative data is a subject beyond the

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 45: CODING WRITTEN MATERIALS

Unlike survey coding, where you set the codes when you write the questions, you may write or revise the codes for interview transcripts and other textual material after the material is collected. Bryman (2012), pp.576–77, offers some tips for this kind of coding:

- Code as soon as possible after your data are collected.
- Read through the full set of documents once without stopping to take notes.
- Read the set again, this time indexing significant remarks and observations. These will be the basis for your coding.
- Look at your index entries and try to sort them, connecting them to your narrative framework or components and indicators. Assign a standard code to each group of sorted entries.
- Remember that you can assign a single passage to more than one group.
- Don't worry at first about having many potential codes; as you sort, however, aim to combine groups to highlight connections among related materials. You may find that you can reduce the number of codes without compromising your understanding of the documents.
- Remember that coding is only a first step. You will still have to analyze the coded data.

scope of this guide. Libraries and the Internet offer many guides to statistics. Most of the data entry and analysis applications referred to above have built-in capability to perform statistical analysis.

No statistical method is appropriate for all situations. Use only statistical methods that you understand. Beware of using statistics to give your findings a false appearance of validity.

This guide will touch briefly on the topic of averaging, a basic way to summarize data and one that has come up in assessments to date. Box 46 provides a quick overview of the concept of averaging. The key lesson is that there are three kinds of averages and that they can yield different results. Most people are familiar with the kind of average known as the mean, but assessments can may report medians and, less commonly, modes.

Averages can also be weighted. That is, the components being averaged can be multiplied by a weight, then summed, and then divided by the sum of the weights to calculate a weighted mean. If the sum of the weights equals 1.00—for example, the weights are a set of percentages that add to 100—then the final step of division is unnecessary.

As an example, a local governance assessment in Paraguay assigned weights to its indicators (UNDP 2009, pp.86–89). The three most important indicators, dealing with service delivery, had weights of seven percent. The 17 least important indicators had weights of two percent. The remaining 11 indicators had weights between two and seven. The total weights summed to 100 percent.

Besides assigning weights to indicators, an assessment could assign weights to provinces or regions if data were collected regionally, or to agencies, if separate data were collected to rate the performance of each agency. If the data collection is stratified (see Chapter 3), each stratum can have its weight in determining a score for the whole.

If using weights, you should decide on them before you collect data or you should allow stakeholders or experts to set the weights as part of the data collection process. Setting the weights later, after you know the initial scores of the items to be weighted, opens the door for bias.
If you intend to calculate a composite score based on the scores of several indicators or the scores of several provinces and you decide not to use special weighting, you have made a tacit judgment that all the scores are worthy of the same weight. In other words, you cannot escape making a judgment by deciding not to use weighting. You may wish to make this judgment early in the process, as early as when you are designing the data collection tool.

Visualizing Results

A visual representation of data can help people grasp them more easily. Many spreadsheet programs can quickly turn quantitative data into graphs and charts. For creative ideas about presentation of quantitative data, see sources like Gapminder (http://www.gapminder.org/), Tufte (2001), and other resources listed in Annex II.

Qualitative data can sometimes be translated into quantitative formats and displayed visually. In a recent forest governance assessment in

LANGUAGE CHECK

BOX 46: THREE WAYS TO REPORT AVERAGES—MEANS, MEDIANS, AND MODES

Three common aggregates are kinds of averages: the mean, the median, and the mode.

Say you surveyed a village and asked about income. You found that 10 households made $1,000/year, 10 made $2,000/year, 15 made $3,000/year, and two made $50,000/year.

The mean income is what most people think about when they hear "average." It is the sum of all the income divided by the number of households. In this case, that's $4,730/year.

The median income is the level that has half the households earning as much or more and half earning as much or less. Among the 37 households, the median income would be $2,000/year.

The mode is the most common income level: $3,000/year.

In this case, just reporting the mean might seem to make the villagers better off than they actually are. Only two households in the village earn as much or more than the mean. Just reporting the median or mode would hide the fact that the village has some high-income people. Reporting both the mean and the median—the mean income is $4,730, but more than half the households in the village earn $2,000 or less per year—gives a fuller picture of income in the village.

Russia, for example, the analysts came up with a percentage representing the difference between "ideal" forest governance and the scoring of their indicator set in Russia. They presented it as a pie chart, analogous to the one in Figure 3.

Assessments have used simple color schemes (red=poor, yellow=fair, green=good) or shading to convey the meaning of large groups of indicator scores. Figure 4 presents a shaded visualization. For an example of how color can quickly convey scores on large tables, see the annexes of the Indonesia PGA (Situmorang et al. 2013).

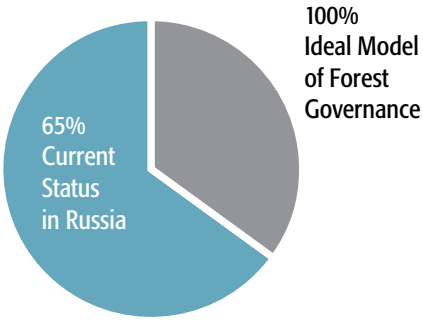
Figure 5 is from a report on governance assessment in Liberia. It conveys the value of indicator scores by both color and bar height. Tall, red bars are poor scores. Short, green bars are good scores. Items with no bars at all are best scores. This method allows the reader to quickly see the difference between the actual score, represented by the colored bar, and the ideal score, which has no bar at all.

Radar or spider graphs can also show the difference between the actual situation (the inner line) and the ideal situation (the outer line). Figure 6 is a radar graph showing the part of the indicator scoring in the PROFOR Uganda case (Annex I). The assessment used a spreadsheet chart-making function to create this graph.

Techniques like word clouds can convey a general sense of the key issues discussed in a report or workshop. Side-by-side placement of word clouds generated from outputs of different focus groups or workshops will show the differences in the concerns that they discussed and emphasis that they gave to them. Figure 7 offers an example.

If the audience that you want to reach has limited literacy, you may want to convey results through symbols other than numbers or words. You can devise icons for various attributes: a coin to represent budgets, a pair of shaking hands to represent conflict management, a speaking figure to represent public participation, and so forth. These can be shown in different colors, numbers, or sizes to indicate importance.

FIGURE 3: GRAPHIC CONVEYING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IDEAL SCORING AND ACTUAL SCORING OF FOREST GOVERNANCE INDICATORS IN RUSSIA



Source: Kuzmichev et al. 2012, p.85.

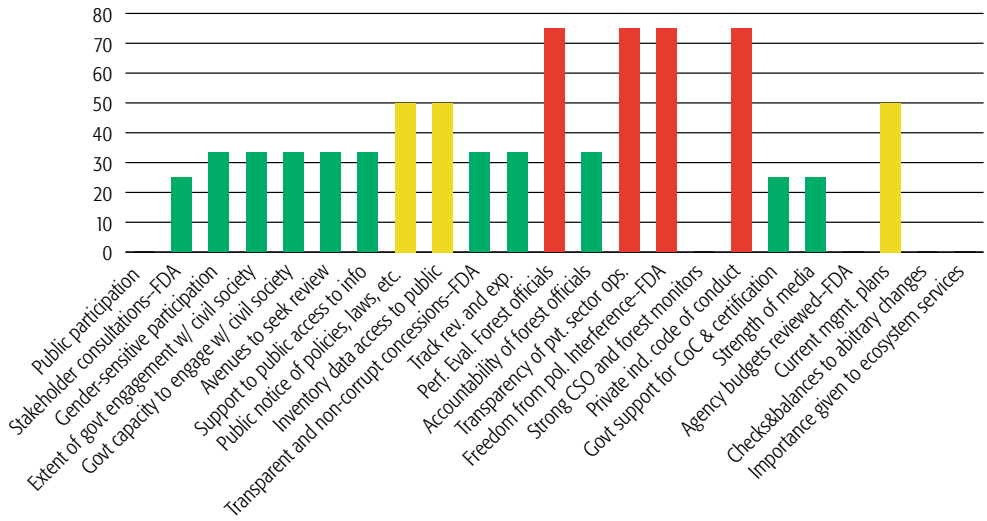
FIGURE 4: EXAMPLE OF A TABLE USING SHADING TO CONVEY THE RELATIVE QUALITY OF SCORES

Indicators scores on a zero-to-four scale.

Under 2 is poor, between 2 and 3 is fair, 3 or better is good.

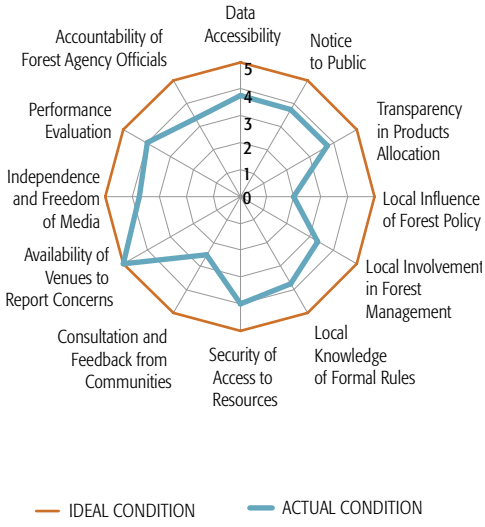
Government rating for …	Province A	Province B	Province C	Province D
Forest Planning	3.6	2.5	1.8	2.6
Agency Capacity	2.9	1.9	1.7	2.8
Adequacy of Budgets	2.2	1.0	1.0	3.0
Conflict Resolution Effectiveness	2.6	1.0	1.0	1.1
Parliamentary Engagement in Forest Issues	2.0	1.6	1.4	2.0
Average	2.66	1.6	1.38	2.3

FIGURE 5: USING COLOR IN A BAR GRAPH TO DISPLAY INDICATOR SCORES FROM LIBERIA



Source: Halton et al. 2013.

FIGURE 6: RESULTS FROM SCORING INDICATORS IN UGANDA PRESENTED IN A RADAR GRAPH



Source: Kishor and Rosenbaum 2012.

FIGURE 7: HOW WORD CLOUDS COULD BE USED TO COMPARE CONCERNS RAISED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (TOP) AND NGO OFFICIALS (BOTTOM).

Source: Generated by the authors of this guide using Wordle.net.

Step 2: Do Analysis

An assessment needs to distill the mass of data into something that makes sense within the local context. You may have calculated the average response to your survey questions or the average scores that stakeholders gave your indicators, but what does this mean for the country's forest sector?

You can apply analytic frames to turn your data into more easily understood information. Here are some suggestions (based in part on Babbie (2010), pp. 394–95, citing Lofland et al.):

- **Score your indicators.** If your tool has not produced indicator scores directly, use the data to score your indicators and report the scores. Indicate the ideal score for each indicator and compare the actual score with the ideal.
- **Use your data to apply a political, social, or economic theory or framework.** For example, use what you have learned from interviews with key stakeholders to evaluate the principles from the PROFOR-FAO Framework (PROFOR & FAO 2011), such as transparency and accountability. Discuss how the actual situation compares with the ideal, or with the practically achievable situation (i.e., a sort of gap analysis).
- **Construct a history.** Use the data to illustrate the changes in governance over time and to show the trends. This is a useful approach if information from prior assessments is at hand.
- **Report frequency.** Present evidence on the frequency of problems, such as illegal trade or lack of forest access.
- **Report magnitude.** Present evidence of the size or relative importance of problems.
- **Show structure and relation.** Use the data to explain what different types of governance problems exist and how they influence each other. For example, explain how lack of coordination among ministries may explain poor customs control or lack of successful prosecution of forest crimes.
- **Show process.** Identify patterns in the problems and how one problem might tend to lead to another. For example, discuss how lack of control over corruption may lead rural people to seek illegal access to resources rather than to ask for official permission, leading to lack of government control over the resources.
- **Show cause and effect.** Identify conditions that may be contributing to poor governance. Use the data to strengthen the argument that these conditions are truly causes of the problems. For example, show how small budgets are limiting an agency's capacity to engage stakeholders.
- **Show outcomes.** Use the data to identify the outcomes that follow from poor governance. For example, compare regional governance scores with reported deforestation rates.
- **Make comparisons.** If you have used stratification (Chapters 2 and 3), comparing strata can offer insights. You may be able to compare regions within your country or agencies within your government.
- **Note the unexpected.** Unexpected patterns or values in data can lead to new understanding. For example, if a survey of market prices shows that charcoal prices in one city are consistently higher than in others, this then invites a discussion of possible reasons tied to governance. If one and only one region has had no convictions for forest offenses in the last year, that fact invites explanation. It could be simply a lack of forests, but it could be a failure of enforcement.
- **Use anecdotes.** Anecdotes serve two functions in analysis. One is to illustrate points

established by more robust analysis. Stories simply carry more rhetorical weight than numbers. (Take care to use anecdotes responsibly, and do not use them as rhetoric to cast doubt on valid findings.) For example, if the collected data show good coordination between the forest administration and other sectors, an example of how the forest agency and the communications ministry worked together to site a radio tower could make the point stick in the minds of readers. If the data show poor coordination, a story of waste or working at cross-purposes would also make the finding more memorable.

The second role for anecdotes is to deal with significant occurrences that are too rare to address by other means. If a war in a neighboring country has sent an influx of refugees onto public forests, you may lack measures to capture the extent of the problem statistically. Your next best option may be to discuss it anecdotally, with stories you have taken from news reports or directly from affected stakeholders. Similarly, if a crisis (e.g., fire, wind, flooding, insects, or disease) has overwhelmed the ability of the forest administration to cope, your data tools may not be tuned to pick out the details of the problem. The best way to add detail may be through anecdotes.

Step 3: Make Recommendations

Not every assessment starts with the purpose of making recommendations for reform, but recommendations can be a first step to turn findings into action (a process discussed further in Chapter 6).

Making recommendations can be the most subjective and controversial part of the analytic phase of the assessment. Recommendations often represent a particular point of view and have political implications.

If the assessment was designed as a reform or advocacy tool and the organizers have been transparent about their point of view from the beginning, then controversy is not really a concern. If an NGO is organizing the assessment, the recommendations can be consistent with its advocacy. If the government is organizing the assessment, then the recommendations can be consistent with the government's standing policies or political philosophies.

If the assessment is designed as a neutral evaluation, it may want to be more circumspect in its recommendations to avoid charges that it is pushing a political agenda. One approach is to place the task of coming up with recommendations in the hands of respected and independent experts. Another is to give the task to a committee representing diverse interests and ask them to reach a consensus.

Two common kinds of recommendations are identification of priorities and suggestions for action.

Priorities

Priorities are the areas of governance needing improvement most urgently. Identifying priorities makes it easy to report the assessment's findings in summary form, because the priorities flag the main conclusions that the summary should feature. Making a list of "top 10 priorities for reform" is a simple way to highlight findings for decision makers.

The assessment team may identify priorities based on its own expertise, or it could consult stakeholders to ask them to prioritize the issues identified in the analysis of the assessment's data. A priority-setting exercise is relatively easy to perform in a short workshop or by survey. As an example, the PROFOR tool (Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012) has stakeholders select a small set of high-priority indicators that can be used to monitor the progress of reforms.

Some items may be priorities because they lay the groundwork for other improvements. For example, if a country has defects in its forest policy, reform of the policy should ordinarily come before reform of laws and institutions implementing the policy. If poor revenue collection is starving the budget of the forest agency, this could be the cause of many governance problems and should be promptly addressed.

Some items may be priorities because they touch on strongly held cultural values or political commitments. A failure of the government to provide indigenous peoples their traditional access to forests, for example, might be a higher priority than a failure of the government to maintain permanent forest inventory sample plots.

Actions

To identify good recommendations for action, consider the SMART criteria introduced in Chapter 1. Good recommendations should be:

- **Specific.** They should point to concrete changes. Priorities can be general, but actions should be specific.
- **Measurable.** People should be able to track and verify implementation.
- **Achievable.** They should fit the available capacity and resources of the people who will implement them.
- **Realistic.** They should fit the context, including the politics.
- **Time-Bound.** They should come with a deadline for implementation.

Points on Process
Vetting and Validation of Analysis

You should vet or validate two aspects of your analytic work. The first is your choice of methods for processing and presenting data. The second is your draft analysis and recommendations.

Validating data processing methods. Your choices of methods for processing data are going to be technical ones, but they could have policy implications. For example, you can shade your results by what weights you give the components of averages and even by how you design graphs and diagrams. You will want to validate your methods, particularly if they are of your own design and are not part of a standard approach.

Assessments tend to validate these methods among technical peers (e.g., seeking criticism from colleagues within your own organization, asking for review by an academic expert, or consulting the assessment's technical review panel, if it has one).

Because these choices may have policy implications, you could offer stakeholders the opportunity to comment. If stakeholders have enough interest and resources, they can seek assistance from outside experts to review the methods so that they can be sure the assessment is treating them fairly.

If you do not vet your methods as a separate step, stakeholders will still have an opportunity to comment on methods later in the process (when they see your findings, recommendations, or conclusions). By then, however, it will be more difficult for you to make changes in response to comments, and might require you to reprocess your data—at some cost.

Vetting analysis and recommendations. As discussed in the preceding chapters, stakeholder involvement is central to both assuring the quality of the assessment and securing support or acceptance of your findings. You should vet your analysis and recommendations. As with other kinds of vetting, you have many options concerning when and how you do it.

LANGUAGE CHECK

BOX 47: VETTING AND VALIDATION

The dictionary definitions of *vet* and *validate* show that the words overlap. To vet is to examine closely and critically. To validate is to check for truth, accuracy, and acceptability.

In assessment work, *vetting* usually refers to opening your work to outside scrutiny and criticism. Criticism from vetting may be objective but it often explores matters of values and opinion. *Validation* usually refers to examination of work on objective points—is this data collection method sound, are the collected data accurate, and do the findings follow from the data? The terms are used loosely, however, and they do overlap.

When to vet. Some assessments vet as they go along. This option fits well with assessments that use stakeholders to develop data. For example, the PROFOR tool pilot in Uganda (Annex I) developed its basic findings in a stakeholder workshop. It then shared these findings with other stakeholders in a series of interviews. This effort was part triangulation (getting information on the same issues from a second source) and part vetting (getting the second source's reaction to the findings of the workshop). If you want to do both triangulation and vetting, you should get the second source's views on the issues before you reveal the first source's views. Otherwise, you risk influencing the second source's views, making it not a truly independent triangulation.

Some assessments vet when data collection and the initial analysis are complete but before the report is written. For example, the Indufor assessment in Kenya (Indufor 2011) developed its findings through secondary data analysis and expert interviews, then vetted them in a stakeholder workshop.

Some assessments put off the vetting of analysis and interpretation until the vetting of the draft report (Chapter 6).

How to vet. The examples above have suggested a few common ways to vet. The options are similar to other options for reaching out to stakeholders or experts. Some assessments release written copies of findings and seek written responses. Some make oral presentations in meetings or workshops and take oral feedback. Some assessments vet narrowly, for example to a representative sample of stakeholders, to an advisory group, or to a group of professional peers. In doing so, they must take care not to introduce bias or favoritism through the selection of reviewers. Other assessments vet their findings widely, most often through publication and invitation to comment orally or in writing.

SECTION III:
USING YOUR ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

Section III provides information on how best to use the results of your assessment through active dissemination as well as how to continually learn and improve throughout the assessment process through active evaluation. The section builds on the work done as part of the preceding chapters to help you use knowledge of your objectives, target audience, and results to develop and implement a dissemination strategy (Chapter 6). It also provides guidance on how to continually learn from the assessment process to both improve its quality and learn lessons for further assessments (Chapter 7).

- Chapter 6, *Application of the Results*, discusses how to get your results into the hands of people who can use them to improve governance. Usually this means writing a report, although you will want to have a complete strategy for dissemination—and it may call for the results to go out to different audiences in different forms. You will also want to begin setting the stage for the next assessment, even if that will happen at some unknown date. This means finding ways to institutionalize the assessment process.
- Chapter 7, *Learning and Improvement*, describes ways to capture lessons from your assessment to make the next assessment better.

A short postscript, about improving the art of forest governance assessment, follows Chapter 7.

6 APPLICATION OF THE RESULTS

To have an impact, you must communicate the results of your assessment to decision makers, stakeholders, and others. Often, simply writing a technical report is not enough. You must write reports that your target audiences can use, and you must help your audiences find and use your reports. Finally, you should think about how to build upon your work by laying the groundwork for the next assessment.

STEP 1

DECIDE ON A DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Create a plan on when to disseminate results and how to craft reports or other outputs and distribute them.

STEP 2

IMPLEMENT YOUR STRATEGY

Create your report or other outputs, vet them, publish them, and let people know about them. Spread the word.

STEP 3

INSTITUTIONALIZE FURTHER ASSESSMENT

Some assessments are designed as limited exercises; others are intended as the start of ongoing or periodic assessments. If this is the case with your assessment, you may want to find a permanent "home" for the assessment process and a base of supporters. Having an institution take ownership of the task of doing assessments will make it more likely that records of this assessment will be preserved and that future assessments will happen.

POINTS ON PROCESS: FACILITATE USE OF YOUR FINDINGS

Build the capacity of decision makers and other stakeholders to understand your findings and apply them to forest sector problems.

Once you have completed your analysis, you want to communicate the results to others in order to maximize its impact. At this stage you should again review your objectives and the planning you undertook in Chapter 2 to consider what you want to achieve through the results and who your target audience is. For example, if your objectives include encouraging reform in response to the results, you must think about how to sow the seeds of change.

Although assessments have many options for reporting results, most assessments first produce a written summary of findings (i.e., a report). Most assessments vet their report internally through peer review or externally with stakeholders.

You may consider several other ways to communicate findings, including short versions of the report aimed at particular users, electronic versions, and audiovisual versions. When the report is first released, the assessment team may also hold briefings for senior officials, stakeholders, or the press, or hold workshops to discuss and present the findings and discuss what could happen next.

After you release your report, you may want to think about ways to amplify its impact. These could include helping stakeholders to make better use of the report and institutionalizing the process of assessment to assure that future assessments build on your work.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 48: THINKING BEYOND THE REPORT

Assessments have made the mistake of seeing the report as the end of the process. This is especially common if the assessment is given over to a consultant whose "deliverable" is the report. From the beginning, dissemination and communication should be part of the work plan (Chapter 2).

Step 1: Decide on a Dissemination Strategy

When you first wrote a work plan and budget for your assessment (Chapter 2), well before you had any findings, you began to think about dissemination. As you complete your analysis, you will want to revisit your initial plans and polish your dissemination strategy. What outputs will you use to report your results and how will you get those outputs to your intended audience?

A dissemination strategy is for the internal guidance of your team. It does not need to be lengthy or elaborate.

In devising or revising your strategy, begin by restating the objectives of your assessment, which should be clear from your initial planning (Chapter 1). Those objectives will point to a target audience for your work. You can then consider whether this group is still the most relevant given your results or whether other target groups need to be added.

The target audience are the people you hope will read the assessment and be influenced by the results. If you did a political economy analysis as part of your early planning, the results of that analysis may be helpful in identifying your target audience (and you can revisit the analysis now).

You may have many target groups—from high-level politicians to rural stakeholders—and they will have different levels of sophistication. Even within particular groups, your audience will vary. For example, senior officials in the forest department will have different technical strengths and use a different technical language than targeted officials in sister agencies dealing with law, finance, or trade.

Next, consider if there are any constraints or requirements in place regarding how you disseminate your results. The constraints you face will commonly come from three sources:

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 49: RETHINK AND REVISE

Even if your initial work plan already includes a detailed dissemination strategy, you should consider revising it before you start to produce outputs. The context of the sector may have shifted since you began work. For example, a change in leadership, a scandal, or a natural disaster may have made the government more interested in specific kinds of reforms. That may suggest a new emphasis for your report or publicity plan. You may have learned new things about your target audience that suggest better ways to reach it. You may have encountered new constraints of time or budget that require changes in dissemination approaches. You may have new insights on how to organize or present your findings. In any case, as the time to write up your findings approaches, you will want to think again about dissemination.

- **Directives.** For example, an assessment done to fulfill a requirement related to REDD must produce a report that meets that requirement. An assessment funded by an outside donor probably must present a report to the donor. An assessment done by a government or organization with more than one official language may face a requirement to produce its report in more than one language.
- **Limited resources.** You may lack the budget to produce specialized summaries of the report or to conduct regional workshops on it for stakeholders. You may lack the capacity to support a website after the assessment wraps up and the assessment team moves on to other assignments. From the available options, you must choose the best way to spend your limited resources.
- **Constraints of authority** (particularly if you are working within a government or large institution). A government office may lack the authority to brief elected officials unless the elected officials request the briefing. Local law may prohibit an educational institution from engaging in activities that appear to be political. Organizational rules may prohibit technical staff from sending out press releases.

These constraints should have been considered during the planning stage but may need to be revisited now, particularly if your results are relevant to a target audience that you had not previously considered.

Once you are clear on the objectives, the target audience, and the constraints, you should try to answer three questions: what kind of outputs the assessment will produce, how the assessment will make the outputs available, and how the assessment will draw attention to the outputs.

Kinds of Outputs

Box 50 lists some frequently used output formats. You should pick outputs that match your target audience. If the target audience is varied, your outputs should reflect that. For example, say that the primary objectives of your assessment are to prepare a report to the cabinet on the status of forest governance and to encourage improvements in governance. You will need to produce a main report for the cabinet. Your actual target audience, however, will be broader and include elected officials, technical staff at the forest agency, and influential stakeholders. You may want your main report to contain technical

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 50: SOME OUTPUT FORMATS

Most assessments prepare some sort of detailed written report. In addition, you may want to think about:

- Summary versions for decision makers.
- Summaries aimed at key stakeholders.
- A website reporting the results.
- Versions in multiple languages.
- Versions on compact disk.
- Audio or video summaries.
- PowerPoint presentations.

details to be convincing to the scientifically minded along with an executive summary or chapter summaries that will communicate to the less technically minded. You may want to prepare separate summaries of the report, perhaps each a few pages long, aimed at particular stakeholder groups. If your target audience includes rural people, you may want to consider steps such as preparing report versions geared to their level of education and preparing versions in local languages. If you audience includes international actors, such as funders, you may want to provide report summaries in the funders' languages.

Making Outputs Available

In considering how to distribute your outputs, you should again think about your objectives and target audience. Printed copies of materials are useful for formal presentation to decision makers and sponsors. They are essential to reach people who lack access to computers and the Internet. Electronic copies are less expensive and easier to produce as needed. Oral presentations reach fewer people, but they assure that you have the attention of your audience. Box 51 offers some distribution ideas.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 51: POSSIBLE WAYS TO DISTRIBUTE THE ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

- **Printed copies**

  These can be sent to:
  - All stakeholders involved in the process.
  - Key decision makers.
  - Members of the press.
  - Libraries.

  or
  - Made available at low or no cost on request from a central location.
  - Made available at low or no cost on request at district offices.

- **Electronic copies**
  - Having the key results on the project's own website.
  - Having the full report downloadable.
  - Having the full report on compact disks and distributing them like printed copies.
  - Having video or audio (podcast) summary versions available online.

- **Oral "copies"**
  - See "Educational Outreach" (Box 52).

Remember that techniques can build on each other. For example oral presentations or summaries may pique interest in reading the full report.

Drawing Attention to the Findings

You should also think about appropriate ways to let your target audience know that the report exists and that they can get copies of it. These may include press strategies, electronic media strategies, and educational outreach. See Box 52 for some specific ideas.

After considering objectives, constraints, and options, you do not need to write out a separate dissemination strategy if you decide that all you will do is produce a single version of your report and send it to decision makers and stakeholders. If you have decided on a strategy that involves more than one or two steps, however, or if you have arrived at a more detailed idea of what you want your outputs to be, you should capture that in a short memo for later reference by yourself and the team.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 52: POSSIBLE WAYS TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Publicity

- Traditional press strategies
  - Press release sent to interested journalists.
  - Press briefing for interested journalists.
  - Appearances on radio call-in programs or TV public affairs programs.
  - Paid notices or advertisements.
- Electronic media strategies
  - Postings about the findings on blogs.
  - Postings on discussion boards.
  - Postings on social media.
  - E-mails to interested groups through their list servers.
  - Postings on Twitter accounts.

Educational outreach

- Talks, presentations, or briefings for the general public or target groups—especially for key decision makers and stakeholders.
- Scholarly papers and conferences.
- Workshops aimed at particular targets, such as timber operators or rural community leaders.
- An educational website.

Step 2: Implement the Strategy

The following are the typical steps for implementing your dissemination strategy:

- Create a draft of your main or most comprehensive output.
- Vet the draft.
- Revise it to produce a final main output.
- Produce supplemental outputs.
- Publish your outputs.

Create a Draft of your Main Output

Quite often your main output is a report. Writing takes a major commitment of staff time. Assessments may spend a third of total staff hours writing outputs, and your budget (Chapter 2) should reflect that. If you have already written up your findings as part of vetting your analysis (Chapter 5), you may be more than halfway toward finishing your output. If not, expect to spend a significant amount of staff time in writing.

Writing an assessment report is much like writing any other report. The previous step in this chapter mentioned the key consideration: keep your objectives and target audience in mind. Write for that audience, using language and examples that they will understand.

Quite often the team members responsible for analyzing the data will be involved in writing up the findings. They may not be skilled writers. Do not hesitate to bring in a good writer to help them, either as a co-author or an editor. The writer needs enough of a grasp of forest governance and assessment to deal with the material accurately and fully. In addition, having a person unfamiliar with the specific assessment as an editor can sometimes help the writers avoid a common mistake: assuming that the average reader knows more than the reader actually does.

LOOKING DEEPER

BOX 53: EXAMPLES OF REPORTS

Here are three web pages that include links to assessment reports. These are mostly "high end" reports, aimed at an educated audience, with professional layout and editing. Not every report needs to be so sophisticated or elaborate.

- PROFOR assessment in Burkina Faso: http://www.profor.info/knowledge/assessing-forest-governance-burkina-faso.
- World Bank assessment in Russia: http://www.profor.info/notes/results-are-assessing-forest-governance-russia.
- Indonesia Participatory Governance Assessment: http://www.undp.org/content/indonesia/en/home/library/environment_energy/participatory-governance-assessment--the-2012-indonesia-forest--.html.

Vet the Draft and Revise

How you will vet the draft report depends on the extent of prior vetting of your findings. Some assessments use the draft report as the vehicle for major stakeholder vetting. In that case you will want to follow the same sort of steps discussed for validation of results in Chapter 5. These may include internal peer review, external peer review, key informant interviews, general release to stakeholders for written comments, and/or stakeholder workshops.

If you use face-to-face meetings to vet your report, consider whether to use a neutral facilitator. If the subject matter is sensitive, people may feel safer dealing with a neutral party and having some promise of non-attribution of their comments. If the subject matter is emotional, the discussion will be easier to conduct if the cause of the anger or fear is not leading the group. In addition, a trained facilitator will know how to acknowledge and diffuse emotional tensions.

If you have already vetted your findings, you may just need some internal or external peer review. Going to stakeholders too many times for vetting can result in "vetting fatigue," and you may have trouble getting people to give you their full attention. If the report's findings are likely to be controversial or touch on sensitive matters, however, you may nevertheless want to do full outreach to stakeholders. You may also need to follow your organization's procedures for reviewing documents prior to publication.

Create Supplemental Versions or Outputs

Once you have a final version of your main report, your strategy may call for producing summaries, translations, or simplified versions. The timing of production of these can vary, and you may want to produce some after release of the main report. In fact, based on how people react to the main report, you may come to see that additional versions would be of value. Different stakeholder groups may see different parts of your findings as key—rural communities, for example, may be particularly interested in your findings on access to forest resources or benefit sharing—and you may want to produce notes or summaries aimed at them and highlighting these findings. You must take care, though, not to appear to be an advocate for one group or another unless that is your acknowledged role.

Publish your Outputs

Remember that publication is more than delivery of a printed copy to whoever commissioned the assessment. See Box 51 for ways to distribute your report. Publication should typically include building awareness of the report's availability.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 54: PROTECT YOUR SOURCES

If you promised confidentiality to key informants or participants in workshops and focus groups, be sure to honor that promise in your report. Do not attribute quotations to people promised anonymity. Omit details that might point to a source of the information.

If you gathered some data with the understanding that it was "off the record," do not report it at all unless you have a separate "on the record" source.

See Box 52 for ideas on publicizing the report's availability. Your dissemination strategy should be your guide.

Timing of your publication can be important. If your report has political implications, releasing it before a key vote or before an election might give it more impact than releasing it afterward. Similarly, a report showing flaws in the governance of forest concessions will have more impact if released before a major concession auction than after. If you want your report to draw press coverage, it may be better to release it mid-morning early in the week rather than on a Friday afternoon.

Sometimes you can link publication to an event that is already drawing attention. For example, you might be able to present the report when a new, reform-minded minister or agency head takes office. Or you might release the results at an international conference where it could catch the eye of potential donors who might otherwise overlook it.

You may wish to publish your report simultaneously in multiple formats and link them. A printed report can refer people to a website for updates and specialized information for particular audiences. The website can allow visitors who have not seen the full report to download it.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 55: TRUST AND IMPACT

People may try to assign ulterior motives to the assessment and cast doubt on its conclusions as biased. Countering this depends on trust; building trust begins with transparency and candour in initial planning (Chapter 2) and continues through data collection (Chapter 4), analysis (Chapter 5) and dissemination.

Step 3: Institutionalize Further Assessment

Some assessments are designed as one-time events—but the impact of assessment is greater if assessment is a regular exercise. The first assessment then serves as a baseline for the second, allowing you to discuss trends. The collective experience from prior assessments can provide a base of institutional knowledge that makes the next assessment better than its predecessors (see the discussion of evaluation in Chapter 7 for more discussion on this topic). For this to happen, however, some institution should commit to serve as a permanent home for the assessment process; the assessment process should have some wider base of support, in law, from institutions, or from stakeholders; and leaders should emerge to champion the process.

An Institutional Home

The institutional home of the assessment can maintain the records, including the data from prior assessments. It may be able to house key members of the assessment team as long-term employees.

It should be able to plan and budget for the next assessment and raise funds if necessary.

The ideal situation is to establish the institutional home as early as possible. In other words, this is a question best settled when dealing with issues of who will sponsor and carry out the initial assessment (Chapter 2)—or even before that. Then, as the first assessment proceeds, the institutional home will be closely involved, building institutional ownership of the process (see A Base of Support, below) and in-house infrastructure and capacity.

If the government conducts the assessment, then a government agency with an established monitoring and evaluation division is the natural home. This could be a forest agency, a planning agency, a statistical agency, or an internal oversight agency.

If the assessment is conducted by an NGO, then the NGO is a possible home—but stability of long-term funding could be an issue. If the original host cannot promise ongoing funding, it may be better to associate the assessment with another civil society organization, possibly even a foundation or university, with a stable financial base. The new host could express its commitment to maintaining the assessment through a binding contract with some of the other participants. (See Chapter 2 for more discussion of who should conduct the assessment.)

If no one will assume responsibility for doing periodic assessments, the next best institutional safeguard is to find someone to serve as keeper of the current assessment's data and records. That way, if a new host emerges, some of the documents and memory of the assessment will be available to tap. Universities, research institutions, and libraries are possible document repositories.

A Base of Support

To assure that people will devote the funds and energy needed to conduct the next assessment, the process needs a base of support. That base must be strong enough to ensure that when the time for the next assessment arrives something will actually be done.

In a rule-of-law society, that assurance can come from a statute, a regulation, or other binding mechanism. It may be impractical, however, to establish such a legal mechanism. The report may point to the need, but the people organizing the assessment are rarely in a position to create a binding mechanism by themselves.

A parallel influence is social support for assessments. When a binding mechanism can be put in place, social support works to bolster it. Where there is no binding mechanism, social support becomes the best hope for continuing assessments.

Social support can be built throughout the process, using transparency and stakeholder engagement to educate potential supporters. If you have engaged stakeholders well, as suggested in Chapter 1 and throughout this guide, support may emerge automatically. Stakeholders will come to see the assessment as a way to voice their concerns, to be heard and even to have a measure of power over the course of forest sector decisions. They will want to have future assessments.

Good publicity (Step 2 of this chapter) can also strengthen stakeholders' interest in holding future assessments. Showing people how specific findings link with policies they wish to influence or actions they favor can make them supporters of assessments.

Leadership

Stakeholders as a whole may like the assessment but give it only passive support. It will often take the actions of a leader to persuade people, to organize groups, and to catalyze action.

Leadership is hard to guarantee over time. Individuals come and go. The best course is often to seek leadership from institutions. A respected donor or NGO that cannot serve as home to the assessment could still become a leading advocate for assessment. The host institution itself can become a champion for the next assessment if it has the respect of decision makers and stakeholders.

The full process of recruiting institutional commitments is beyond the scope of this guide, but it begins with engaging individuals within the institutions. These must be people who know how to bring their own institutions to make commitments.

Do not stop at a single supporter or leader. The assessment process will be best served if it has many supporters, with effective leaders to galvanize that support.

Points on Process
Facilitate Use of Your Findings

This guide does not intend to go beyond assessment into the details of policymaking. This chapter des offer a few ideas, however, on making the assessment more valuable in the succeeding steps of policy development. If you have followed Steps 1 and 2 above, you have already helped facilitate action by creating outputs that are geared to your target audience, making the outputs available, and publicizing them.

If you developed a theory of change during your planning (Chapter 1, Step 3), now is the time to revisit it. Think about how you envisioned your outputs leading to outcomes and think about what you can do now to advance those outcomes. The needed actions may be as simple as delivering your outputs into the right hands.

You may, however, need to do more. For example, your target audience may need additional capacity. Stakeholders may lack capacity to fully understand the assessment and its implications. They may lack capacity to engage effectively with decision makers or otherwise act on the assessment's findings.

You may want to assess what additional capacities your audience needs. A capacity needs assessment at its most formal is as elaborate a process as a governance assessment, but at its most informal it is just a few steps.

- **Identify the ideal.** What capacities should stakeholders have to take full advantage of the assessment? This is largely a desk exercise, based on your knowledge of stakeholders, the assessment, and the local context, but you will want to verify your understanding of the ideal by discussing it with some stakeholders and/or experts.
- **Identify the real.** Go out and determine the capacities of the stakeholders, usually by talking to key informants and experts. You may already have data on this; some governance assessments view stakeholder capacity as a measurable subcomponent of governance.

Once you have identified the gap between the ideal and the real, you can begin to design training or other measures to fill the gap. You should try to pilot your measures before you roll them out full-scale.

Other steps that you might be able to take to facilitate use of findings:

- Identify stakeholders and potential leaders to follow up on needed changes.
- Work with these key stakeholders to develop a common vision (in effect, a revised theory of change or roadmap of next steps).
- Foster communication among people interested in change. Beyond stakeholders in the country, these may include stakeholders in other countries in the region facing similar issues, international civil society organizations, or international donors and development partners. Consider meetings, workshops, and social media.

7 LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

This chapter will help you make this assessment and the next assessment better. An assessment should be a learning process for the assessment team. Through evaluation, you can capture lessons learned along the way to improve your current effort and lessons after the assessment is over to improve future work. Evaluation can strengthen the skills of your team members and help them in their next assignment, whatever it may be.

STEP 1

BEGIN SELF-EVALUATION DURING THE ASSESSMENT

Collect feedback from your team, from stakeholders, and from other participants as you go along.

STEP 2

HOLD AN EVALUATION AFTER THE ASSESSMENT

As soon after the assessment as you can, while the experience is still fresh in people's minds, arrange an evaluation. This can be a team self-evaluation or an evaluation conducted by an outsider.

STEP 3

MAKE THE EVALUATION RESULTS AVAILABLE

Store it in an archive where it will be available for the next assessment team to use; publish it in an open journal where others can learn from it.

STEP 4

KEEP THE DOOR OPEN TO RECEIVE FURTHER FEEDBACK

The impact of the assessment will not be apparent right away. Establish some way to collect ongoing feedback on the effort.

POINTS ON PROCESS: CONDUCTING A TEAM SELF-EVALUATION

You can "do it yourself": hold a workshop with your team to capture lessons learned from your work.

Step 1: Begin Evaluation During the Assessment

The previous chapters have already mentioned that an assessment can get feedback by vetting and piloting its methods, validating data and vetting results. Here are some further methods for getting feedback.

Steering or advisory committee. The assessment can establish an independent group of professionals or stakeholders to oversee its work and periodically make recommendations for improvement. The committee can meet to give joint recommendations or can give their opinions as individuals.

Post-event evaluations. At the end of focus group discussions or workshops, you can ask the participants to fill in a brief evaluation form or to give oral feedback on the event. See Box 56 for sample event evaluation questions.

Web forms. If you have participants or stakeholders who have access to the Internet, you can set up a web page where people can leave comments and feedback on the assessment.

Internal channels. You can provide ways for team members to report problems and make suggestions during the assessment (e.g., regular feedback meetings, back-to-office memos). You should keep a record of these submissions. Even if you cannot address them during the assessment, they may identify areas to explore in a post-assessment evaluation.

Step 2: Hold an Evaluation After the Assessment

Post-assessment evaluations are productive ways to capture lessons from the assessment experience in order to make the next assessment better. You should include a post-assessment evaluation in your work plan and budget (Chapter 2).

After you have finished the assessment, several things will be certain.

- You will know more about the process of assessment than when you began.
- The new knowledge will be spread among the team that did the assessment. No one person, even the manager, will know it all.
- You will have made some mistakes, some of which you might not be aware of but could profit from recognizing.

Through a post-assessment evaluation, you can capture some of this knowledge. Some of the knowledge will make the next assessment better. Some will relate to practices like stakeholder outreach or report dissemination and will be useful in many other projects.

Who will conduct the evaluation? You can conduct the evaluation using people on your team, someone in your organization who did not participate in your team, or someone outside of your organization. Table 8 summarizes some of the pros and cons of these options.

BOX 56: SAMPLE EVENT EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Here are samples of questions to give participants at the end of a workshop or other group event. Many of these are open questions (see Box 30). You can turn them into closed questions to make it easier to analyze the responses, however you should leave a few broad open questions (like the last one) to catch concerns that you might not think to ask about specifically.

- How well did someone explain the event to you before you came? Was the event what you expected?
- If you received written information before the event, was it useful? How could it have been better?
- Rate the overall process (the organization, the agenda, the presentations, the moderation, and so forth) on a scale of 1 (=very good) to 5 (=very poor).
- Was the event too short, too long, or just about right?
- If you had run the event, would you have spent more or less time on:
  - Introductions and background presentations.
  - Plenary exercises and discussions.
  - Small group exercises (break outs).
  - Breaks and meals.
- Did you have an opportunity to express yourself? Do you think people paid attention to what you had to say?
- If you had run the event, would you have invited different people to participate?
- If you had run the event, what topics would you have spent more time on? Less time on?
- How could we have improved the facilitation or moderation of the event?
- How could we have improved the logistics of the event (meeting space, refreshments, and so forth)?
- Do you think that this was a worthwhile use of your time? What would have made the event more valuable to you?
  - What else could we do to make the next event better?

TABLE 8: WHO WILL CONDUCT THE EVALUATION?

Option	Pros	Cons
Team self-evaluation	Least expensive (and often the fastest) option.	Greatest probability of biases and blindness to faults. Greatest tendency of people not to speak candidly. Team may have little experience in project self-evaluation.
Evaluation run outside the team but inside the larger organization	Likely to be more objective than Option I and less expensive than Option III. May be able to use people with expertise in evaluation.	May carry institutional biases and blindness. Occasionally becomes tainted by personal or organizational conflicts.
Independent evaluation	Usually brings in people with special expertise in evaluation. Likely to be impartial. More likely to draw candid responses from those involved.	Often the most costly.

PRACTICE TIP

BOX 57: KEY QUESTIONS FOR A PROJECT EVALUATION

Key questions to ask:

- What did we do well that we don't want to forget?
- What did we learn?
- What should we do differently next time?
- What still puzzles us?

Source: Kerth (2001).

If time, budget, and organizational constraints allow you to use an independent evaluator, then that is your best option. Even if you must put together a quick effort with your own team, however, doing some evaluation is better than doing none.

If you are hiring an independent evaluator or working with an evaluator outside your team, then let the evaluator take charge of the effort. Instruct your team to cooperate and be supportive. If you are doing an internal team self-evaluation, the next few pages will offer some suggestions.

What will the evaluation cover? Box 57 suggests four general questions for project evaluations. Box 58 suggests some questions and exercises for self-evaluation.

The precise focus of your evaluation should depend on the experience and problems that you encountered. The best practice is often to let the assessment team help design and set the focus of the evaluation, including the questions to be asked (Patton 1997, pp.29–31). The team can point out what kinds of information will be useful to the people conducting the next assessment.

Step 3: Make the Evaluation Results Available

Evaluations teach lessons to the people who participated in the assessment, but the more important audience may be the people who will participate in the next assessment. For that reason, you must put the evaluation results in writing and store them in a place where the next assessment will easily find them.

The evaluation results may also be of use to other people doing similar assessments. These may include people doing governance assessments outside the forest sector in your country and people doing forest governance assessments in other countries. For that reason, you should consider publishing the evaluation where it can be widely available. That may mean preparing a scholarly paper, making it available through your organization's website, or publicizing it through social media.

Step 4: Keep the Door Open to Ongoing Feedback

One source of information will be missing from any early evaluation: the feedback from actual users of the assessment findings. The assessment report should invite readers to submit feedback. You may get ideas about new and useful criteria, new indicators to assess, and better ways to assess them.

The usual way to do this is to identify a point of contact for feedback in assessment publications. The contact could be one of the lead authors, but authors typically move on to other projects and may even change institutions. A better practice is to set up a permanent institutional contact, within an office in a government or NGO. A good choice is the institutional home of the assessment (discussed in Chapter 6, Step 3). That office can commit to collect, archive, and perhaps also analyze the feedback. The office can also keep contact information for the assessment team and key stakeholders so that they are easy to locate if their insights and evaluations are needed.

Another thing that cannot be covered in an early evaluation is the assessment's impact. You may want to conduct a review some months or years after conducting the assessment to determine what impact it had and how the next assessment could be more effective.

A good practice is to find an institution that is likely to be active in the area for several years and ask it to commit to sponsor a future evaluation of the assessment's impacts. If an external donor funded work on the assessment, the donor may be interested in long-term impacts. If the key sponsor of the assessment is a government agency or NGO, you may look into ways to get a follow-up evaluation put into the sponsor's long-term planning or budgeting.

Points on Process
Conducting a Team Self-Evaluation

The best time to conduct an initial self-evaluation is soon after the assessment is complete (although you can also conduct a quick evaluation midway through the assessment, looking for things that need correction). The process will still be fresh in people's minds. Finding the team members and other participants will be easiest before they have moved on to other positions and tasks.

The key questions to ask are in Box 57. You can use any of the methods for collecting qualitative data in Chapter 4 to answer them. For example:

- **Key informant interviews.** In this case, the key informants are the people on your team, the stakeholder representatives who participated in the process, and perhaps people who had roles funding, supporting, or overseeing the team.
- **Focus groups.** You can conduct focus group discussions with your team members or with stakeholders.
- **Workshops.** An evaluation workshop may be little more than an extended version of a focus group discussion. Some managers, however, prefer workshop-based evaluations structured as a retreat or a team-building exercise, particularly if the team will remain together to take on future assignments.

Box 58 offers some tools to use in these settings.

- **Encouraging candor.** A good evaluation is going to depend on two things: that people think carefully about the work being evaluated and that people speak candidly about what they think. Assuring candor is often the greater challenge. This is especially true in team self-evaluations. People may fear damaging their relations with their colleagues, superiors, or funders.

Two ways to encourage candor are to protect the sources of information and to control the focus of the discussion. Here are some approaches to protect the sources of information:

- **Confidentiality.** Establishing shared expectations with participants about information use and confidentiality may make people more likely to be candid. You may want to assure people that you will not identify the sources of information in your evaluation report. Addressing confidentiality should be one of the first things you do in any evaluation interview or group meeting.
- **Full or partial anonymity:** You may want to allow people to comment without revealing their identity to the evaluator or to colleagues. The evaluation could accept unsigned written comments (either on paper or electronically). In a group setting, managers could be excluded when the group discusses their actions.
- **Atmosphere of non-retaliation:** The management of the organization can create an atmosphere of non-retaliation. They can be candid about admitting their own shortcomings. They can be gracious in accepting criticism. They can promise to protect whistleblowers, and they can reward people who make good suggestions for improvements. They should foster this atmosphere from the beginning of the assessment.

BOX 58: SOME EVALUATION EXERCISES AND TOOLS

Here are a few ideas for exercises to use in evaluation interviews, focus groups, and workshops.

Charting the timeframe (Kerth 2001). This exercise encourages individuals or groups to begin thinking deeply about the assessment process. Take a large piece of paper, whiteboard, or chalkboard. Draw a horizontal line representing time and mark the milestones in the project: initiation, initial planning begins, the team is recruited, data collection begins, and so forth. The vertical axis will be the person's satisfaction with the process at that point. Ask the person to take a pen and trace a line indicating when he or she was feeling good about the process and when he or she was feeling worried, unhappy, or dissatisfied. Then ask the person to explain the highs and lows in the line. If this is done in a group, people can use different colored pens, chalk, or markers and each draw his or her own line on the same chart.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). The SWOT tool is often used in workshops and is adaptable to focus group discussions and interviews. The individual or group is asked to analyze the assessment by identifying its strengths and weaknesses and discussing opportunities for improvements and threats to future work. In a setting of self-criticism, some people may be uncomfortable speaking of weaknesses and threats. Instead of a traditional SWOT analysis, you might reframe the exercise as seeking answers to the four questions listed in Box 57.

Paired lists. In this tool, the individual or group is given a pair of complementary questions, such as "What did we do well and want to repeat next time?" and "What do we want to do differently next time?" Another question pair might be, "What do we know now about assessments that we didn't know before?" and "What do we still need to learn?" Place each question at the top of a sheet of paper or on a board, and record multiple responses under each question.

Plus-Delta. A variation on paired lists, this exercise is potentially useful midway through the process. The idea is ask each person to respond to four questions. On the plus side: What is the assessment doing well? And, more specifically, what has the respondent done personally that worked well? On the delta (change) side: What needs to change in the assessment? And, more specifically, what has the respondent been doing that needs to change? Ask people to respond in writing or collect oral answers during a group discussion.

Here are some approaches to change the tone of discussion and make it less threatening to participants:

- **Appreciative inquiry.** Some evaluators believe that the most productive way to improve performance is to focus on what went right rather than what went wrong and to encourage people to repeat and even expand the good parts of the process. Rather than see past performance as a collection of problems needing solutions, appreciative inquiry focuses on setting goals and finding ways to achieve those goals. You can find more about this approach at http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/.
- **Presumption of good faith.** The evaluation can adopt a presumption of good faith—that every team member was doing the best he or she could with the information and resources available at the time (Kerth 2001). This tends to turn the process away from looking for scapegoats.

POSTSCRIPT

Forest governance assessment is a developing art. It has grown from the publication of the IIED (2005b) "Pyramid" tool to the many tools and examples available today. People have borrowed from other fields, experimented, and shared their experiences. The result is a rapidly evolving practice.

The aim of this guide is to provide an overview of planning and conducting an assessment as the art is practiced today. This guide cannot hope to stay current or complete forever. However the basic information on planning and implementation should be useful for several years.

The sponsors of this guide hope to see the field of forest governance assessment advance through the sharing of practical experiences. If readers have suggestions for improving future versions of this guide or if they would like to share their own lessons learned and outputs from their assessments, the sponsors encourage them to e-mail assessment@forestgov.info.

ANNEX I: CASE STUDIES

This annex describes five recent assessments:

- *A national forest, land, and REDD+ governance assessment in Indonesia with regional components, using multiple data-gathering methods to score over 100 indicators and with high stakeholder involvement.*
- *A broad national forest inventory in Tanzania that included a governance component, which has six indicators, scored using data from a survey of 3500 households and key informant interviews.*
- *A national assessment in Ecuador, intended to be repeated as periodic monitoring as part of an effort to create forest transparency report cards for multiple countries.*
- *An assessment in Liberia focused on governance and benefit sharing in seven forest concessions, scored using surveys and secondary data.*
- *A national assessment in Uganda, intended as an initial diagnostic, using a stakeholder workshop to score over 100 indicators.*

The descriptions of each case parallel the organization of the chapters of this guide. That is, the descriptions begin with objective-setting and early planning, then cover tool design and data collection, then analysis and dissemination, and finally evaluation and learning.

Case Study: Indonesia

Piloting the Participatory Governance Assessment (PGA) for REDD+

Thumbnail description: Indonesian stakeholders, facilitated by the UN-REDD Programme, conducted the first pilot Participatory Governance Assessment (PGA) for REDD+ from 2011–2013. The process was entirely stakeholder-led, with additional stakeholder consultations conducted throughout the process at the national and sub-national levels. The assessment was based on three components of governance used to categorize 117 indicators measuring forest, land, and REDD+ governance.

What the case illustrates: This case illustrates how to engage stakeholders in the assessment process by putting assessment planning and oversight in the hands of an expert stakeholder committee and involving wider groups of stakeholders in verification and vetting. In terms of data collection, the PGA demonstrates how to carry out geographic sampling in a large country and how to collect baseline data for future comparisons. It also shows how to use both qualitative and quantitative data to develop and score indicators and how to use assessments to develop specific policy recommendations.

What the case does not illustrate: This case does not provide an example of rapid assessment or how to work within a strict budget of time and resources. It does not show how to plan and conduct an assessment with little governmental or international support.

Web link for reports or further information: http://www.id.undp.org/content/dam/indonesia/docs/envi/PGA%20Report%20English%20Final.pdf.

I. Setting Objectives

Defining the "Why"

Indonesia's national policymaking and international REDD+ commitments both demanded robust and credible baseline data on forest, land, and REDD+ governance as a first step toward improvements. The UN-REDD Programme agreed to pilot its "Participatory Governance Assessment for REDD+" in Indonesia based upon the interest expressed by relevant government and key civil society actors to actively contribute throughout the process.

Considering Context

In 2009, Indonesia's president committed to reducing the country's greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by 2020. Indonesia had received significant external support from UN agencies and foreign governments to advance Indonesia's REDD+ efforts, including a national climate and forest strategy. Some forest governance data was already available, but it was incomplete. The national REDD+ strategy and the Ministry of Forestry's 2010–2014 Strategic Plan include forest and REDD+ governance as core objectives, and Indonesia's Safeguards Information System (SIS) requires complete and credible forest governance data to meet international reporting obligations.

Setting Objectives

The objectives for this PGA were to gather robust and credible data to support REDD+ readiness and Indonesia's international climate change commitments, to improve forest governance generally and to inform policymaking in other sectors that affect forests. At the same time, the PGA aimed to bring together different stakeholders to assess stakeholders' capacities to support

REDD+ readiness initiatives and implementation and to establish baseline data against which to measure progress. Additionally, the PGA was seen as a potential data source for Indonesia's larger Safeguards Information System.

POINT ON PROCESS: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN OBJECTIVE SETTING

The PGA process was stakeholder-led; objectives were set by the multi-stakeholder Expert Panel and through broader stakeholder consultations.

II. Developing a Work Plan

Identifying the Scope of the Assessment

This PGA was conducted to assess forest, land, and REDD+ governance in Indonesia at the national level, in 10 provinces, and in 20 districts. Setting the scope of work required consensus among members of the multi-stakeholder Expert Panel, which was composed primarily of government agency and civil society representatives, as well as academia and private sector representatives.

Identifying the General Methods

The PGA used a range of methods, such as document review, content analysis for newspapers (coding key terms each time they appear, providing a quantitative measure for the occurrence of these terms in the newspapers), semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions.

Identifying Who Would Conduct the Assessment

Indonesian government and civil society actors equally led the PGA process via their participation in the multi-stakeholder Expert Panel. A PGA Coordinator, who sat in UNDP Indonesia, was recruited by the UN-REDD Programme to facilitate the PGA process. The coordinator prepared the work plan, was responsible for stakeholder communication and was in charge of the financial aspects of the PGA process. Three government agencies were heavily involved: the Ministry of Forestry, the Presidential Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight (UKP4)/ REDD+ Task Force, and the National Planning and Development Agency (Bappenas). National NGOs, including the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN), the Indonesian Forum on the Environment (WALHI), and the Association for Community and Ecology-Based Law Reform (HuMa), were also actively involved. After preliminary stakeholder consultations, all stakeholders agreed that the data collection process should be based on joint agreement of data collection methods and conducted by a third party to ensure the results' objectivity and the report's credibility.

Figuring Out How Much t Would Cost

The PGA Coordinator determined the necessary PGA budget for the data collection phase by estimating how many people would need to be hired, including data collectors, consultants to conduct media analysis, consultants to input and transcribe data, and a coordinator for the whole process. In total, approximately 45 salaries were included in the budget, as well as meeting costs and transportation to and accommodation at the intended PGA locations. This part of the budget was estimated to be approximately $130,000 when the Request for Proposal for third-party data collectors was sent out.

Figuring Out How Long it Would Take

The Expert Panel did not establish a strict timeline for the first PGA phase, although it expected the process to take approximately two years based on UNDP Oslo Governance Centre estimates, upon which much of the PGA approach relies. It was estimated that attaining stakeholder buy-in and support would take two to three months, but this

stage lasted nearly six months. Developing the PGA framework and indicators also took a long time; the Expert Panel held meetings to discuss all of the indicators. The actual data collection period lasted five months and drafting the report lasted four to five months. In total, it took approximately two years to complete the baseline PGA.

Writing a Work Plan

The PGA Coordinator developed a five-step plan for the PGA project cycle, adapted from the Indonesia Democracy Index[6]: (1) develop the indicator set and select data collection methods; (2) produce the index; (3) disseminate results; (4) repeat #2; and (5) repeat #3. In the original work plan, only the first two steps, to be completed in 2011 and 2012, were detailed. In 2013, the Expert Panel planned how to approach step three.

POINT ON PROCESS: COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS

One of this assessment's successes was its participatory approach. The UN-REDD Programme held a series of meetings with government, civil society, international partners, and the private sector to identify potential Expert Panel members, who were then assessed and approved by all stakeholder groups.

The UN-REDD Programme held consultations nationally and sub-nationally with all stakeholder parties throughout the PGA process. The PGA Coordinator met regularly with core stakeholders, including NGOs and government officials, to inform them on the PGA's progress.

6. The Indonesia Democracy Index is a country-led assessment of democracy development at the provincial level. It is a joint initiative of Bappenas and UNDP.

III. Refining the Data Collection Method

Defining What to Measure

There were 117 indicators, reflecting six governance principles agreed upon by the Expert Panel: participation; transparency; accountability; effectiveness; capacity; and fairness. Each indicator also fit into one of six forest governance issue areas: forestry and spatial planning; regulation of rights; forest organization; forest management; law enforcement and control over legal processes; and REDD+ infrastructure. The Expert Panel reviewed each of the indicators to ensure their relevance, differences between the indicators and data availability. The SMART criteria (see Annex V on developing indicators) were also used to review the indicators. All of the indicators were categorized into one of three components: law and policy; actors' capacity; or performance of various actors. The capacity component was broken into four subcomponents: government capacity; civil society capacity; business capacity; and community capacity (of Indigenous Peoples, women, and local communities).

Identifying Potential Sources of Information

The PGA used government-issued legal and policy documents from the national, provincial, and district levels for document analysis where accessible; the PGA also used media analysis, interviews, and focus group discussions. The Expert Panel identified key sources at each location early in the process, and the data collection team at the Institute for Social and Economic Research, Education, and Information (LP3ES) used its networks to gain access to other data sources.

Selecting Data Collection Methods and Considering a Sampling Plan

The PGA used a mix of methods to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. The assessment was organized into different levels of government administrative structure, namely central, provincial, and district. The data collectors gathered data at 31 assessment locations: at the national level; for 10 provinces (those that declared themselves REDD+ pilot provinces and had the most forested area per capita); and for the two best and worst districts within each of the 10 provinces (according to forest conditions and population density in and around the forests). Data collectors, in consultation with the Expert Panel and the PGA Coordinator, chose focus group participants based on whether (a) they were key sources of information at both the provincial/district and central levels; (b) they were representativeness of different stakeholders, accounting for gender and equity issues; and (c) they had already been interviewed.

Developing Data Collection Tools/Methods

The assessment hired a consultant to identify the data collection methods to be used for each indicator, and the Expert Panel discussed and agreed to the methods.

Creating a Data Collection Manual

The same consultant created a draft data collection manual, which included material on how to conduct interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, and media analysis. The interview guide listed questions to ask, directed data collectors to inform the interviewee that questions could be asked off the record, and so forth. The PGA Coordinator worked closely with the consultants at LP3ES to finalize the manual. This process would have proceeded more smoothly if the same consultant(s) had been hired to follow the method identification process through to data collection.

POINT ON PROCESS: VALIDATING METHODS

Once a consultant developed a draft of methods, the PGA Coordinator reviewed the draft in coordination with LP3ES. In December 2011, stakeholders reviewed and discussed the methods at a national consultation. The methods went to the Expert Panel for final discussions and ultimate approval.

IV. Data Collection

Recruiting and Training Data Collectors

The Expert Panel chose LP3ES, a credible and experienced NGO, as the third-party data collection team, based in part on LP3ES's networks and familiarity with the topic. LP3ES and the Expert Panel held intensive meetings to review the data collection manual and discuss methods.

Collecting the Data

All 117 indicators were assessed at each of the 31 locations. For content analysis, LP3ES first determined whether the documents were available and then analyzed them for relevance. At some locations, archiving had not been properly conducted, so interviews were used instead. The data collectors were unable to interview some government employees due to bureaucratic barriers. Focus groups allowed the data collectors to gain more accurate data because group members would discuss the issue together and often come to a consensus.

Besides scoring the indicators, the focus groups identified which indicators pointed to the highest priority areas for reform, which government entities had the most control over reform in those areas, and which stakeholders could best support reform in those areas.

Assuring Quality of Data

The finalized data collection manual served as a guide for field data collection. Data collectors all used the same form and the same coding system. There was also a second person present at interviews to transcribe.

The coding system was checked by external experts in data management and data collection, and at random by the PGA Coordinator. Resources posted or e-mailed by stakeholders were coded based on the location and components and stored both in hard copy form and on external hard drives.

The PGA used multiple data sources. Conducting interviews allowed for a cross-comparison of responses, and focus group discussions led by the Expert Panel were used to validate data obtained in interviews. The Expert Panel also looked at the central and provincial media reports and checked soft and hard copies of government documents.

POINT ON PROCESS: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION

Some private sector stakeholders were concerned about the information provided to data collectors about illicit money exchanges in the forestry sector, particularly at the subnational level. The PGA Coordinator and data collectors discussed with the Expert Panel how to deal with this sensitive issue.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

Processing the Data

The Expert Panel assessed the data, guided by a scoring system; data were scored on a scale of 1 (insufficient) to 5 (very good) according to a matrix outlining the ideal conditions for each indicator. Each indicator could be measured using more than one "item"; these item scores had equal weightings and were averaged to calculate the indicator score. The indicators in each component category were then averaged to arrive at a composite component index score. The Expert Panel calculated an average index value for each of the 31 locations, and averaged these to arrive at an overall index value of forest, land, and REDD+ governance in Indonesia.

Analyzing the Processed Data

All of the indicators were composites, which the Expert Panel used to create composite index scores that could be compared across provinces and districts and among the central, provincial, and district levels. The final product was an overall PGA index calculated using all of the indicators. After calculating indicator and index scores, the Expert Panel used statistical analyses to examine relationships among the components and among the good governance principles.

Making Recommendations

The Expert Panel identified key issues from its data analyses (which included consideration of the priority areas for reform that focus groups identified) and used the results to determine which indicators were strong, which were weak and which needed to be addressed. They drafted five main recommendations: technical policy recommendations, which were formulated using the focus groups' insights, and macro policy recommendations that would enable the realization of the technical policy recommendations.

POINT ON PROCESS: VETTING FINDINGS

The Expert Panel's suggestions and drafts were talked over by key stakeholders. In October 2012, the UN-REDD Programme invited key district and province level stakeholders to a soft launch organized to validate the PGA's findings.

VI. Spreading the Results

Deciding on a Dissemination Strategy

The five-step PGA project cycle planned for a dissemination strategy, which was elaborated upon in 2013. The detailed strategy was informed by discussions with the Expert Panel and by the Indonesia Democracy Index's experiences with results dissemination at the province level.

Disseminating the Results

The Expert Panel launched the PGA report in Bahasa Indonesia at the Ministry of Forestry in Jakarta in May 2013 and the English version in June 2013 during an information session for the UN-REDD Programme. Later, province-specific findings from the larger report were pulled out together with province-specific recommendations. The PGA Coordinator and PGA Expert panel presented the findings to each of the four key stakeholder groups in each province from July to October 2013. The panel will use the results and recommendations to conduct workshops for key stakeholders in government and NGOs on how to use the data to improve the planning process. It also plans to work with NGOs to translate the reports from Bahasa Indonesia.

Institutionalizing Further Assessment

The Indonesian Government established a new REDD+ Agency in late 2013, replacing the previous REDD+ Task Force, which will work in collaboration with all government agencies involved in REDD+ to collect data and make it accessible to stakeholders. This agency will also be in charge of measurement, reporting, and verification and work to integrate the findings and recommendations of this PGA into Indonesia's Safeguards Information System. The agency is well situated to ensure regular measurement of and updates to the PGA indicator set.

POINT ON PROCESS: MOVING FROM RESULTS TO ACTION

During the dissemination process in the provinces, some additional stakeholder feedback was received. The UN-REDD Programme is holding policy discussions to identify the actions needed to address the PGA's findings. It is also holding workshops to build government capacity to use the data for policy making and NGO capacity to use the data for policy advocacy. They want to continue to provide technical assistance and are seeking partners and donors to look more deeply into some of the issues.

VII. Learning and Improvement

Self-evaluating During the Assessment

Data collectors noted where they thought an indicator or question was unclear or irrelevant. They also provided feedback in their field notes.

Evaluation After the Assessment

Several meetings have been held to discuss the process. The Expert Panel prioritized and streamlined the indicators for the second PGA cycle, reducing the number of indicators to approximately 32 based on lessons learned and a desire to make the data collection process less costly.

These indicators were validated in meetings held with various stakeholders. Data collection instruments have also been revised accordingly. The objective is for the government to take responsibility for the PGA after the 2014 assessment, during which they received continued technical support from the UN-REDD Programme.

Sharing Lessons Learned

The UN-REDD Programme expects to release a public five to seven page self-evaluation document that will share key lessons from the PGA process.

Keeping the Door Open for Further Feedback

At the province visits, the PGA Coordinator left business cards and encouraged stakeholders to send e-mails if they disagreed with the results.

POINT ON PROCESS: CONDUCTING INTERNAL GROUP EVALUATIONS

The team sat down together in August and October 2012 for informal evaluations. For instance, when the data collectors submitted their first reports, they were asked to present them one by one. They also discussed the completeness and quality of field data, barriers faced by data collectors, and the data collection timeline.

Case Study: Tanzania

The Governance Component of Tanzania's National Forestry Resources Monitoring and Assessment (NAFORMA)

Thumbnail description: NAFORMA is a large-scale, field-based study of Tanzania's forest resources as well as their uses and management. It is the first ground-based inventory of biophysical and socioeconomic data that covers the entirety of mainland Tanzania. NAFORMA is designed to be a multi-source forest inventory, allowing for combining of biophysical field data with remote sensing imagery to produce accurate data for small areas. This assessment has piloted the FAO-led Open Foris Initiative's open-source software tools (http://www.fao.org/forestry/fma/openforis/en/) and has been planned, funded, and supported by the Tanzanian government, the Finnish government, and FAO.

What the case illustrates: This case illustrates how to conduct a forest governance assessment as part of a large-scale data collection process for forest monitoring and assessment meant to inform national planning, policies, and priorities and to establish baseline data. NAFORMA is an example of a field-based approach that provides guidelines for data collection and makes use of more than 4000 household surveys and key informant interviews. It demonstrates use of the open-source Open Foris data collection and statistical software.

What the case does not illustrate: The socioeconomic and governance sample for NAFORMA followed the biophysical sampling design; therefore,

the sample is not representative of the Tanzanian population as a whole. NAFORMA is not an example of a separate forest governance assessment; forest governance issues were incorporated into the socioeconomic survey as a supplementary section. NAFORMA does not illustrate how to conduct in-depth qualitative research, nor does it provide an example of how to engage multi-stakeholder groups in project design and validation.

Web link for further information: http://www.fao.org/forestry/17847/en/tza/.

I. Setting Objectives

Defining the "Why"

The Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) Agency, which is part of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT), conducted the National Forestry Resources Monitoring and Assessment (NAFORMA) to capture biophysical and socioeconomic data about the country's forest resources. Knowledge of the extent, condition, and uses of the forest was needed as the first step toward sustainable forest management. The insights from NAFORMA will provide baseline data, inform national policy, strategies, and planning, and help Tanzania meet international reporting obligations.

Considering Context

NAFORMA was originally going to be a biophysical and socioeconomic forest resources inventory, without a separate governance component. During a mid-2009 needs assessment, however, stakeholders pointed out that Tanzania should collect data that could be used in a possible REDD process. During 2010, a separate study was made to determine to what degree the original NAFORMA socioeconomic component addressed REDD+ preparedness. The conclusion was that adding an additional section on governance would make the inventory more useful for REDD+ preparedness. The separate section was added in January 2011. The governance work had to fit within the larger inventory effort.

Setting Objectives

One of NAFORMA's goals was to develop a robust biophysical and socioeconomic assessment of Tanzania's forest resources and forest-adjacent communities (communities living in or next to forests). These baseline data would guide national forest resource management decisions with the primary aim of providing a sound platform for informed decision making and for the development of policies and plans concerning the country's forest resources. NAFORMA data can also help inform Tanzania's Safeguards Information System and feed into the national REDD+ strategy. Objectives also included creating a national database and maps of the assessment's data and strengthening the capacity of TFS and MNRT to collect, analyze, and update information about Tanzania's forests.

POINT ON PROCESS: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN OBJECTIVE SETTING

NAFORMA conducted stakeholder consultations with government agencies, research agencies, NGOs, and the private sector in mid-2009 to develop the information needs assessment which provided the foundation for the indicators included in the initial survey.

II. Developing a Work Plan

Identifying the Scope of the Assessment

NAFORMA was designed as a broad national forest resources inventory, gathering physical, biological, social, and economic information. The governance questions covered six indicators, which mostly concerned government capacity and accountability.

Identifying the General Methods

Household surveys and key informant interviews were the core methods used for NAFORMA's socioeconomic and governance components. The national stakeholders sought to produce data that could both be used at subnational level (preferably the district level) and be useful in preparing for REDD+. The sampling design had to be developed with these goals in mind, so NAFORMA ended up with a larger field component than foreseen in the original project document and budget. In order to accommodate this more ambitious scope, an additional $3 million and eight months were added to the original project agreement, which included a budget of $3 million over three years. The selected statistical framework was double sampling for stratification. The country was divided into 18 strata based on predicted growing stock (as assessed from satellite imagery), accessibility (based on road network), and elevation (based on a digital elevation model). This created a layout of the sample clusters with a higher sampling intensity in areas where the growing stock was predicted to be high and lower where the growing stock was predicted to be low. Data collection proceeded according to Tanzania's seven agro-ecological zones, which are also used in the management structure of TFS as the forest resources in each zone are managed via a zonal office.

Identifying Who Would Conduct the Assessment

NAFORMA was funded by the governments of Tanzania and Finland and implemented by the Tanzania Forest Services Agency under MNRT with technical support from FAO. A National Project Coordinator and Chief Technical Advisor are responsible for day-to-day operations, and a Steering Committee composed of government agency officials, national and international actors, and academics meets occasionally to make key decisions. The National Project Coordinator, Assistant Project Coordinator, Chief Technical Advisor, heads of the four technical working groups, and national consultants form the Project Technical Unit.

Figuring Out How Much it Would Cost

The cost of adding governance to NAFORMA was small. NAFORMA had already planned and budgeted for sending teams to the field, so the project planner did not calculate additional costs for the governance assessment. Most extra costs came from spending slightly more time in the field conducting surveys and more time entering and analyzing data.

Figuring Out How Long it Would Take

The original work plan for the inventory (see below) allowed 14 months for survey data collection. This estimate reflected how many households were to be interviewed, how many teams would be working, how many interviews each team could do in a week (considering interview time and travel), and when the teams could work. For various reasons, from longer than normal rainy seasons to scheduling conflicts, data collection took 26 months.

The governance component comprised 15–20 minutes of each 90–120 minute household interview.

Writing a Work Plan

The Project Technical Unit drafted a work plan for the whole process in 2009. They have modified the work plan several times since due to such unforeseen factors as competing TFS priorities, late appointment of staff, restructuring within MNRT, and delays in access to field sites and equipment delivery caused by prolonged rains in 2010 and 2011. The preparatory phase lasted 13 months rather than the predicted nine, and the implementation phase took 26 months instead of 14 (as predicted in the original project document). In 2010, NAFORMA's project

duration was extended by eight months, to December 2012, for a total of 44 months; later, an 18-month extension phase was added, extending NAFORMA into mid-2014.

POINT ON PROCESS: COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS

The work plan incorporated stakeholder consultations into the inception phase and involved stakeholders in a Steering Committee that met on occasion.

III. Refining the Data Collection Method

Defining What to Measure

The NAFORMA team based its decisions of which governance indicators to measure on the results of a December 2010 technical workshop during which attendees considered data collectors' preliminary feedback and the recommendations of the unpublished study, "Measuring Forest Governance for REDD+." In January 2011, NAFORMA added a section on governance, which included 19 questions covering six indicators, to the socioeconomic survey. The indicators address accountability; conflict and dispute management; transparency; monitoring and enforcement; equity; and access to governance assistance/incentives for land-use alternatives. Indicators were based on the Chatham House, World Bank, and UNFCCC Social Safeguards frameworks.

Identifying Potential Sources of Information

NAFORMA was developed as a national inventory with the aim of promoting more sustainable management of the nation's forest resources; it always included a socioeconomic field survey. After a literature review and consultations, an unpublished study on "Measuring Forest Governance for REDD+," and expert meetings, the NAFORMA team determined that the survey should further consolidate the governance data collected by the socioeconomic component by allocating a separate section (Section K) on governance to the interview protocol.

Selecting Data Collection Methods and Considering a Sampling Plan

The governance survey was part of the socioeconomic survey and followed its overall sampling design and work plan for fieldwork.

In the original project, NAFORMA had intended to use the National Forest Monitoring and Assessment (NFMA) plot design. However, a 2009 study concluded that, by revising the design, the sampling could be done more quickly, more households could be sampled, and the statistical accuracy of the findings would improve. The new sampling design was based on 18 strata.

NAFORMA's biophysical data collection plan sampled heavily forested areas more intensely than lightly or non-forested areas. NAFORMA limited its socioeconomic data collection to households lying within a two-kilometer radius from the center of the biophysical clusters. As a result, most interviewees were from forest-adjacent communities, meaning that NAFORMA's socioeconomic findings are not based on a random sample of the whole of Tanzania.

Balancing the available funds for the fieldwork with the need for accuracy, the NAFORMA sampling design ended up with approximately 3,400 clusters containing about 32,000 biophysical plots. Twenty-five percent of the clusters are meant to be permanent (i.e., for future measurements for monitoring and updating of the findings), while 75 percent are now regarded as temporary. The percentage of permanent clusters, however, may change.

The sampling plan called for conducting household surveys at only half (1,700) of the clusters—at all of the permanent clusters and one-third of the temporary clusters. Before entering the field, data collectors were to identify and map the four households closest to each sampling unit's center and three additional "back-up" households.

In addition to the household surveys, the teams were to try to interview two key informants for each cluster where they conducted household surveys. The data from key informants would complement and triangulate the data from households.

The new sampling design reduced time available to cover each cluster, and the team had to reduce the length of the socioeconomic component so that both it and the biophysical measurements could be completed in one day (in the conventional NFMA design there were four to five days available on average per cluster for the southeast component).

Developing Data Collection Tools

FAO consultants developed the socioeconomic survey field forms (questionnaires) in early 2010, based on the NFMA protocol. They created one questionnaire and data collection protocol for household surveys, and a second questionnaire and data collection protocol for key informant interviews. The NAFORMA Project Technical Unit conducted field-testing and revised the field forms from May to December 2010; the team added governance questions to the household survey in January 2011.

Creating a Data Collection Manual

FAO and NAFORMA staff created a field manual for socioeconomic data collection between November 2009 and March 2010. The current manual is called NAFORMA Document M05-2010, the Socioeconomic Field Manual, and is available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/23485-0c45f59c134a7d94ee53613174fab93bb.pdf. It describes the identification of households for interviews and provides a protocol and code of conduct for socioeconomic field data collection, instructions for filling out field forms, the field forms for the household survey, and the key informant survey.

POINT ON PROCESS: VALIDATING METHODS

The field manual and field forms were tested over six months in the field. They were revised based on feedback from the field teams and on an unpublished study on additional indicators needed to consolidate the governance component.

IV. Data Collection

Recruiting and Training Data Collectors

The data collection team, which consisted of government employees from MNRT and local government authorities (such as District Forest Officers), conducted both the biophysical and socioeconomic surveys. Data collectors received one full month of training between November 2009 and March 2010.

Collecting Data

Sixteen NAFORMA field teams collected the data. Before going into the field, data collectors would try to contact the village executive officer and explain the project. They would also explain the purpose of the project to interviewees before conducting interviews.

In total, the field team conducted socioeconomic interviews in 3,493 households in 1,066 clusters. Interviews were only conducted in 1,066

clusters instead of the planned 1,700 (about half of the total number of clusters) because some clusters were uninhabited.

Data collectors also interviewed 1,120 key informants, who were selected by the team leader with the help of forestry authorities, government employees, and NGO representatives. Key informants included village elders, local property owners, forestry officials, NGO representatives, and other individuals knowledgeable about local forest use.

One complicating factor with data collection involved language. The data collectors intended to use a Kiswahili version (the official language of Tanzania) of the questionnaires to ensure that data collectors, household members, and key informants all had the same understanding of the questions. However, due to errors in the translated field forms, the team ended up using English field forms and translating the questions to Kiswahili during the interviews.

Assuring Quality in Field Data Collection

Four individuals reviewed the data before it was analyzed:

- Data collectors rechecked and signed their field forms, confirming that the forms were correctly and completely filled out.
- Field team leaders verified that the entered data were correct and complete. The field team leader would then sign the form and submit it to the data management team.
- One member of the data management team would enter the data into the NAFORMA database.
- Another team member would clean the data to ensure they were error free and ready for analysis.

When filling out the field forms, data collectors noted the numbers to code each response and wrote any notes in English, making it easy for data cleaners to code and record the field forms' data.

The database application was gradually improved and logical checks built in to capture obvious errors. Two quality assurance teams double-checked biophysical data for about 10 percent of the clusters; the complexity of finding household respondents made it impractical to recheck the socioeconomic surveys.

Key information interview questions overlapped with household survey questions; these questions served to help triangulate the data.

The original field forms are stored systematically on shelves in data management rooms and organized by zone, district, and cluster number. All of the data entered are stored on a server and backed up digitally offsite (i.e., at FAO HQ) and via Dropbox.

POINT ON PROCESS: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION

Road safety was the biggest practical concern in field collection. In terms of interview ethics, the interviewees had to be at least 18 years old. One concern about data quality is that interviewees may have been hesitant to answer all the questions honestly, especially regarding sensitive issues such as illegal forest resource use, because the data collectors were government employees.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

Processing the Data

The data management team based at NAFORMA's office at MNRT cleaned and entered the data

from the field forms. The FAO-Finland team at FAO Headquarters in Rome coordinated with the Tanzania-based team to develop and continually improve FAO-Finland's open-source data management application, Open Foris Collect.

Analyzing the Processed Data

NAFORMA analyzed the governance data using another of FAO-Finland's software tools, Open Foris Calc. It is statistical analysis software that produces averages, percentages, error estimates, and other statistical data, as well as graphs and tables. Results of queries can be exported to Excel for further processing by the user. As of September 2013, Open Foris Calc was still under development. During 2013, the NAFORMA team compared results of statistical analysis to other studies and local knowledge of conditions on the ground.

Making Recommendations

Staff at TFS and FAO-Finland are jointly compiling the final report. The key findings of NAFORMA will feed into the review of Tanzania's National Forest Programme.

POINT ON PROCESS: VETTING FINDINGS

MNRT held a final workshop in May 2013 to present and discuss provisional findings. Each section of the final NAFORMA report is being compiled by the national consultants and their counterparts at TFS. The draft sections are being sent to the Chief Technical Advisor for review. The sections will then be compiled into a final document, which will be circulated among the NAFORMA/FAO-Finland team for comments.

VI. Spreading the Results

Deciding on a Dissemination Strategy

The NAFORMA data-sharing guidelines and communication strategy were developed in 2013 through a process of stakeholder consultations and national endorsement.

Non-sensitive data will be available for free access:

- Processed data and .pdf versions of maps will be available in a free and transparent manner.
- Raw data will only be shared where written agreements exist between TFS and a collaborating institution and only where the collaboration is contributing to a more sustainable management of the forest resources.

Sensitive data, include data that may compromise national security or privacy, disclose locations of red-listed species, disclose plot locations, and so forth, will not be accessible.

Disseminating the Results

FAO Finland is supporting the development of a self-service web platform where the public can access and query NAFORMA data and results in Open Foris Calc. If the budget permits, MNRT will also conduct some targeted efforts to get the NAFORMA findings into the media.

Institutionalizing Further Assessment

NAFORMA is meant to be institutionalized as a routine assessment conducted by TFS's Forest Resources Monitoring and Assessment Section. TFS is awaiting the release of NAFORMA to use as a baseline to guide revision of the National Forest Programme, which expired in 2010.

POINT ON PROCESS: MOVING FROM RESULTS TO ACTION

NAFORMA will feed directly into the review of Tanzania's National Forest Programme as a baseline on the state and extent of forest resources.

VII. Learning and Improvement

Self-evaluating During the Assessment

The NAFORMA team held a mid-term evaluation of its objectives and progress to date in May 2011. At this meeting, data management was identified as an area in need of attention due to a data entry backlog. FAO proceeded to recruit 13 data entry clerks to help clean field data and conduct data entry.

Evaluation After the Assessment

The final NAFORMA report, to be jointly released by FAO and Tanzania's MNRT, will include an evaluation of the process and lessons learned.

Sharing Lessons Learned

TFS has accommodated visit requests from neighboring countries, such as Kenya and Malawi, and has sent field staff to Zambia to assist in training staff there in conducting Integrated Land Use Assessments. It has also held workshops and will release a report on lessons learned for designing and implementing the socioeconomic survey. The National Project Coordinator and the Chief Technical Advisor participated in an information-sharing consultation at FAO HQ in March 2013 with other FAO-Finland pilot countries.

Keeping the Door Open for Further Feedback

The NAFORMA team is currently developing a data-sharing policy, a communication strategy, and a web-based platform for dissemination. The website will include a mechanism for providing feedback.

POINT ON PROCESS: CONDUCTING INTERNAL GROUP EVALUATIONS

The team management has used informal conversations to identify problems and spread lessons learned.

Case Study: Ecuador

Grupo FARO's Forest Transparency Report Card for Global Witness' "Making the Forest Sector Transparent" Initiative

Thumbnail description: In August 2010, Grupo FARO joined the international initiative "Making the Forest Sector Transparent," led by international NGO Global Witness. From 2010–2013, Grupo FARO used the ***Forest Transparency Report Card*** to annually monitor Ecuador's forest-related legal, policy, and regulatory frameworks, as well as the availability, disclosure, and dissemination of forest sector information (i.e., forest management plans, logging permits, revenues, and infractions). This ***Report Card*** is the first global tool to assess transparency and access to information in the forest sector in forest-rich countries and is a partnership between eight NGOs.

What the case illustrates: This case provides an example of using periodic assessments to monitor changes in specific aspects of forest governance. It demonstrates how to tailor an assessment to the country context while collaborating with global partners and how to make use of stakeholder coalitions. It also exemplifies how to use a qualitative approach to scoring indicators that contributes to building a global baseline.

What the case does not illustrate: Grupo FARO's ***Forest Transparency Report Card*** does not illustrate concrete linkages between transparency and forest governance, which is a contested ground globally. Greater in-depth analysis is required to understand and explain linkages. Also, as its focus is on national institutions and agencies, it does not provide an example of how to evaluate forest transparency at the local or regional level.

Web links for further information: http://www.foresttransparency.info/ecuador/2012/ http://www.grupofaro.org/sites/default/files/archivos/publicaciones/2012/2012-05-29/op-mvillacis-dyoung-echarvet.pdf.

I. Setting Objectives

Defining the "Why"

"Making the Forest Sector Transparent" is an international initiative aiming to improve forest sector policy and practice in seven forest-rich countries: Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala, Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The assessment focuses on assessing forest transparency and using the results to advocate for improvements. Grupo FARO looked specifically at the availability of and access to information and public participation in decision making in Ecuador.

Considering Context

In 2009, Global Witness piloted the ***Forest Transparency Report Card*** with partners in four countries, three of which were in Africa and one in Latin America. When expanding the project in 2010, Global Witness sought to better represent Latin American countries. Global Witness chose Ecuador because its legal frameworks and institutional structures were amenable to assessment via the ***Report Card*** mechanism. It asked Grupo FARO to be its Ecuadorian partner in light of the organization's expertise in monitoring transparency, compliance, and access to information.

Setting Objectives

The international initiative's main objective was to assess transparency and access to information in the forest sector in Ecuador and other forest-rich countries. Grupo FARO was concerned primarily with the legal and regulatory frameworks of the forest sector and with examining the public finance commitments to forest sector regulation. It aimed to use the results to advocate for better forest governance; to make the Ecuadorian government more responsive and accountable to the public; and to build civil society's capacity to access information and participate in decision making.

POINT ON PROCESS: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN OBJECTIVE SETTING

Grupo FARO established an informal coalition of 15 to 20 other organizations working on forest governance and access to information. Grupo FARO identified many of these through stakeholder mapping. The coalition was involved in the whole project. Although, the main objectives where already set by the international project, Grupo FARO and national stakeholders had the opportunity to decide on the actions to take to achieve the key objectives.

II. Developing a Work Plan

Identifying the Scope of the Assessment

Global Witness's ***Forest Transparency Report Card,*** which acted as the diagnostic tool, defined the technical scope of the assessment. Grupo FARO chose to apply the tool to national agencies and institutions. It collected data from over a dozen agencies to determine the status of 20 indicators.

Identifying the General Methods

Grupo FARO and Global Witness determined that Grupo FARO could score the indicators by using stakeholder mapping to identify key stakeholders in the Ecuadorian forest sector, engaging in a desk review of available data from forest-related agencies and conducting structured interviews with key informants.

Identifying Who Would Conduct the Assessment

Grupo FARO coordinated and conducted the in-country technical work, including data collection and analysis. It received technical support from Global Witness and funding from the UK Department for International Development (DfID).

Figuring Out How Much it Would Cost

Grupo FARO estimated the project budget in coordination with Global Witness. In order to estimate the budget, Grupo FARO calculated the costs for two full-time employees' salaries, field collection (holding meetings, conducting interviews, and travel expenses) and analysis (fees for peer reviewers and workshop expenses). Approximately half of the $100,000 annual budget was dedicated to mini grants that aided small organizations in capacity building. For instance, the Ecuadorian Center for Environmental Law (CEDA) conducted workshops with government officials and civil society to gauge their knowledge about the transparency law and build their capacity to use it.

Figuring Out How Long it Would Take

Grupo FARO planned for the whole assessment, from preparation to dissemination, to take two to three months. Due to the amount of coordination and actors involved in the assessments, however, each annual assessment took more than six months.

Writing a Work Plan

Grupo FARO and Global Witness designed a three-year work plan, which covered conducting assessments through 2012. The groups reviewed and adjusted the work plan annually.

POINT ON PROCESS: COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS

Grupo FARO used the stakeholder coalition to keep stakeholders informed and to provide general feedback throughout the process.

III. Refining the Data Collection Method

Defining What to Measure

Global Witness and partner NGOs in the four pilot countries (Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon, and Peru) designed the report card in April 2009. Each country partner developed and used different indicators and methods based on its country's context, with the goal of contributing to a common data set. Indicator scores were based on yes-no questions, meant to be objective and straightforward and supported by evidence collected in-country. The first common ***Forest Governance Report Card*** template, which included 70 indicators covering 15 components, was refined at a May 2010 workshop based on lessons from the pilot countries.

In 2011 and 2012, the report card focused on 20 indicators at the core of forest governance: 12 "framework indicators" to assess whether the legal, policy, and regulatory frameworks include provisions for forest sector transparency and good governance, and eight "data indicators" to assess whether key documents and data on forest sector activities are comprehensively and regularly published. Grupo FARO tailored the indicators to the national context and its focus on access to information.

Identifying Potential Sources of Information

A stakeholder mapping exercise identified 13 institutions that were relevant to Ecuador's forest governance. Grupo FARO employees then looked through the institutions' websites to assess the data available and either requested additional data or requested interviews with key informants at these institutions.

Selecting Data Collection Methods and Considering a Sampling Plan

Grupo FARO primarily used desk reviews to collect data, relying on direct government sources and information published by other stakeholders through official channels. Primary data collection, mainly in the form of interviews, was done via contact with stakeholders directly involved in forest-related policy and decision making and complements the secondary data.

When Grupo FARO joined the initiative in 2010, it assessed the three national-level agencies with direct forest sector involvement and nine others with indirect forest sector responsibilities. In 2012, this was expanded to 20 institutions.

Developing Data Collection Tools

Grupo FARO chose which data to collect based on the ***Report Card*** indicators. It wrote an interview protocol, which it then validated with Global Witness.

Creating a Data Collection Manual

Due to the nature of its data collection methods, Grupo FARO did not create or use a data collection manual for its ***Forest Transparency Report Card***.

POINT ON PROCESS: VALIDATING METHODS

Global Witness worked closely with Grupo FARO throughout the assessment process, which included validating the data collection tools and methods.

IV. Data Collection

Recruiting and Training Data Collectors

There was no need for external data collectors. Internal collectors received informal guidance and feedback from the Global Witness team.

Collecting Data

In addition to searching institutions' websites, Grupo FARO made use of Ecuador's legal and regulatory measures to access institutions' documents and assess their transparency. To do so, it invoked Article 91 of the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution and Article 7 of the 2004 Organic Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information (LOTAIP). It also used external search engines, such as Lexis's legal regulation search engine, which required payment of a licensing fee.

When conducting interviews, Grupo FARO's two data collectors followed their interview protocol. They explained the assessment's goal and methods before showing key informants the data they had been able to publicly access. The interviewees then validated, added to, or expanded upon the data.

Assuring Quality in Field Data Collection

There were only two data collectors; they used an interview protocol when conducting interviews with key informants from relevant agencies. Grupo FARO always sent the information to the key informants who had been interviewed in order to validate the information before it was published. In addition, Grupo FARO shared findings with the stakeholder coalition, which pointed the researchers to additional data sources.

Grupo FARO used the online program Zotero to record the information that it collected from the web. This tool allows the taking of screen shots of the visited websites in order to have a backup.

POINT ON PROCESS: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION

The data collection methods posed no practical or ethical concerns.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

Processing the Data

Taking qualitative findings about agency transparency, Grupo FARO applied its own method, developed in 2005, to arrive at composite scores for several agencies involved in forestry. These scores are expressed as percentages. Also, using the Global Witness ***Report Card*** protocol, Grupo FARO assigned a red, yellow, or green dot to convey a visual sense of the score of twenty transparency indicators, and assigned one of five symbols to convey whether the indicator's score had significantly improved, improved, not changed, worsened, or become significantly worse.

Analyzing the Processed Data

The two full-time staff dedicated to the ***Report Card*** analyzed the data they had collected using the assessment's definition of good governance. After their draft analysis was complete, it was sent to their supervisor for comment before being sent to the key informants for validation. Grupo FARO then held a meeting with the stakeholder coalition and sent the recommendations to three core forest governance experts for feedback before providing the analysis to Global Witness for review.

Global Witness compared the national report cards to look at global trends in indicators to see whether they had improved or worsened. Its editing team then wrote a first draft of the analysis, which the country teams enriched with their more-detailed knowledge of the context on-the-ground.

Making Recommendations

Grupo FARO used its analysis to develop recommendations; it then followed the same review process. It made separate recommendations for the national government, the national assembly, civil society, and international donors.

POINT ON PROCESS: VETTING FINDINGS

As described under "Analyzing the Processed Data," Grupo FARO vetted the findings with key informants, the stakeholder coalition, and Global Witness.

VI. Spreading the Results

Deciding on a Dissemination Strategy

The dissemination strategy was partly determined by Global Witness, which created a website dedicated to the program and all seven countries' report cards: www.foresttransparency.info. See "Disseminating the Results" for a more complete list of dissemination activities.

Disseminating the Results

Grupo FARO hosted a public launch of the reports in Quito, issued a press release with Global Witness, and mailed copies of the reports to key stakeholders and the provinces. It also made use of its networks and was invited to present the ***Report Card*** at such events as a Forest Roundtable with GIZ, Solidaridad Internacional, and others; a regional conference in Guatemala on transparency in infrastructure; and Transparency International's International Anti-Corruption Conference in December 2012. Grupo FARO has also collaborated with other organizations and the government, publishing a collection of articles about forest governance with its 2012 ***Report Card***.

Institutionalizing Further Assessment

Grupo FARO and regional partners are seeking funding and general support to continue the monitoring activities. The initiative was framed as a pilot, with the intention of refining it and replicating it in other Latin American countries.

POINT ON PROCESS: MOVING FROM RESULTS TO ACTION

Through its Report Card assessments, engagement of government officials, and other capacity-building work, Grupo FARO has raised awareness about how to improve forest transparency in Ecuador. With partners in Guatemala and Peru, Grupo FARO is exploring funding opportunities to build on this work.

VII. Learning and Improvement

Self-evaluating During the Assessment

Grupo FARO held internal meetings every month to assess its progress and three review meetings a year with the larger stakeholder coalition involved in the project. Global Witness gathered all of the country partners annually to evaluate the project. During a May 2011 workshop in Cameroon, for instance, the partner NGOs agreed on a reduced indicator list.

Evaluation After the Assessment

Global Witness hired an external evaluation team in 2012 to conduct an evaluation of the entire ***Forest Transparency Report Card*** process. The evaluators contacted project partners, government officials, and others involved in any part of the project process. The team then provided recommendations to Global Witness and the civil society organizations with which it collaborated.

Sharing Lessons Learned

Global Witness has published the results of its evaluation: http://www.foresttransparency.info/report-card/2012/lessons-learnt/.

Keeping the Door Open for Further Feedback

Grupo FARO is always open to receiving feedback from the general public through meetings, e-mail, or any other means.

POINT ON PROCESS: CONDUCTING INTERNAL GROUP EVALUATIONS

Sometimes evaluations must take place on multiple levels. This project had three levels of organization—the Grupo FARO data collection team, the larger stakeholder coalition, and the international Global Witness effort—and each held reviews. As noted above, Grupo FARO organized periodic reviews on the first two levels and Global Witness organized annual reviews on the top level.

Case Study: Liberia

Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) Independent Forest Monitoring to Produce the First Social Audit of the Forestry Sector

Thumbnail description: This assessment, by the Forest Governance Program of SDI and the Civil Society-Independent Forest Monitors (CS-IFM), examined how community benefit-sharing and governance mechanisms were working in Liberian logging concessions. It focused on a sample of seven concessions and consisted of a social audit of the communities and a fiscal audit of the revenue records.

What the case illustrates: This case illustrates how third-party observers have conducted a focused audit of a government forestry program, using community input gathered through surveys along with data from government documents and records.

What the case does not illustrate: This is not a national assessment or a broad examination of all aspects of forest governance.

I. Setting Objectives

Defining the "Why"

The purpose of this work was to assess whether logging concessions were helping to meet the national forest policy's objectives of economic development, equitable forest access, and stakeholder participation. In particular, the assessment was to measure the impact of the concessions on poverty reduction through contributions to communities and contributions to government revenues. A secondary objective was to set a baseline to help document the social effects of implementing the Liberia-EU Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

Considering Context

The Liberia-EU voluntary partnership agreement includes provisions for civil society monitoring. It was through this provision that the study was funded.

Setting Objectives

As well as providing baseline data, the hope was that the information contained in the social audit would influence government policy and highlight areas that need new regulation or modifications to existing regulation. Visiting communities to conduct the interviews provided an opportunity to share information with them and to keep them updated on relevant forest governance developments.

POINT ON PROCESS: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN OBJECTIVE SETTING

Other NGOs and the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) were involved in the Making the Forest Sector Transparent project. This assessment followed from that project.

II. Developing a Work Plan

Identifying the Scope of the Assessment

The geographic scope was limited to communities affected by seven logging concessions. The subject matter scope covered four main areas: whether the concessions were fulfilling their legal requirements; whether the communities have access to forest management planning

documents; whether the communities receive benefits; and how well the communities manage the receipt of community benefits.

Identifying the General Methods

The main method of social data collection was surveys conducted by interview. The interview subjects were community members, particularly members of community forestry development committees (CFDCs), local government officials, and local leaders. The assessment used stakeholder workshops to validate the information from the social audit.

There was also a desk-based component. This included a fiscal audit, using data on forestry tax payments provided by financial updates from SGS, a private consultancy verifying timber harvests and revenue collection for the government. Contracts and other forest management documents, such as environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs), were also used to obtain information on the level of compliance that each concession had with forestry law.

Identifying Who Would Conduct the Assessment

The assessment was conducted by the Civil Society-Independent Forest Monitors, led by members of the SDI Forest Governance Program. The assessment was funded by the European Union and the UK Department for International Development (DfID).

Figuring Out How Much it Would Cost

The Civil Society-Independent Forest Monitors' program head and finance manager wrote the budget. The resources were obtained through EU and DfID funding to undertake civil society monitoring of the VPA. The initial estimated costs were:

- Transportation and field trips: $3,500
- Data entry: $1,250
- Data analysis and report writing: $8,000
- Publishing and printing costs: $6,000

Figuring Out How Long it Would Take

The assessment estimated that the entire project would take one year, including data collection, analysis, report writing, and report publication.

Writing a Work Plan

There wasn't a work plan specifically for the social audit itself, but there was one for the larger project. It covered things like reporting and vetting findings with stakeholders before publication.

POINT ON PROCESS: COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS

The assessment included a stakeholder meeting to discuss the initial findings and to provide feedback, which was then incorporated into the final report.

III. Refining your Data Collection Method

Defining What to Measure

The assessment wrote out a set of questions that it needed to answer, laid out under four main objectives or themes.

Identifying Potential Sources of Information

The assessment needed to understand the legal duties of the government and concession holders and the rights of the communities. These it found in the forestry laws. It needed to learn about benefit-sharing in practice. The information source for this was the community members and the public records kept on the concessions. To validate some of the information, the assessment sought official documents from the Forest Development Authority and other agencies.

Selecting Data Collection Methods and Considering a Sampling Plan

The assessment used survey interviews, workshops, and desk studies.

The assessment selected areas with active concessions. The surveys took place only in communities that were affected by the concessions and that had CFDCs. The assessment chose interview subjects from among CFDC members, local government officials, and traditional community leaders. These people were more likely to have a greater understanding of forest governance issues than the community at large. The assessment set out to interview 10 people per affected community, although it was not always possible to interview this many people due to logistical and transportation issues.

Developing Data Collection Tools

The assessment developed a survey questionnaire for interviews, with 36 questions under four main themes. The questionnaires were mainly yes/no questions, but interviewees could add information if they needed to. In addition, the assessment used templates for collecting desk-based data.

The decision on which type of analysis to use wasn't made until after most of the data collection had been done. In retrospect, the surveys collected a combination of qualitative and quantitative data; this made analysis more difficult. The CS-IFM team will improve the template for the next social audit. There will be separate quantitative and qualitative sections, making the data easier to analyze.

Creating a Data Collection Manual

The assessment did not create a data collection manual.

POINT ON PROCESS: VALIDATING METHODS

The assessment did not seek separate validation of its methods, but the assessment plans to do this for an upcoming social audit to ensure a robust study design that will be relatively straightforward to analyze.

IV. Data Collection

Recruiting and Training Data Collectors

All the data collectors were members of the Civil Society-Independent Forest Monitoring team. The survey team was trained in interview skills.

Collecting Data

The survey interview process involved making a series of visits to affected communities to conduct the interviews. Notes were taken on the questionnaire, and these notes were transcribed into the questionnaire templates. This information was collated and recorded in tables.

The tax payment data were obtained directly from the SGS financial updates.

Data on legal compliance were obtained, where available, directly from contracts and official documents.

The three strands of information were used to analyze the situation within each affected community in relation to each of the four objectives.

Assuring Quality in Field Data Collection

The data collection team members were all trained in interview techniques. The questionnaire and assessment template was designed according to SDI's experience in the sector,

knowing what to look for and what breaches of the law there have been in the past.

Every effort was made to follow the sampling plan; due to the interviews being carried out in remote parts of Liberia, however, it was not always possible for all targeted interviewees to be contacted.

The data collectors transcribed the raw interview data into the templates; the forms were then checked for any inconsistencies and errors and corrected before the data was collated and analyzed. The data forms were organized into files and folders for easy access. These were stored on a number of computers to ensure that the data would not get lost.

As mentioned above, the assessment used stakeholder workshops to validate information from the social audit. To an extent, the assessment also validated the field data by looking for consistency with information from laws, contracts, official documents obtained from government agencies, and tax payment documents and receipts.

POINT ON PROCESS: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION

There were no practical or ethical concerns, or worries about the safety of data collectors.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

Processing the Data

The assessment did counts on the responses to ascertain the patterns within each community and between the different affected communities. It used the tax data to make calculations that were relevant to the assessment—the total amount due, the total amount paid, and the total amount owing. This was then further broken down into the amount that was due to communities (as the study focused on community benefits).

Analyzing the Processed Data

Because the assessment had a small sample size for each of the concessions it assessed, it wasn't meaningful to statistically analyze the data. As a result, the assessment used the counts for analysis and conclusions (e.g., the number of people attending community meetings versus the number of people not attending community meetings).

Making Recommendations

The assessment found some striking patterns in all of the concessions. It made recommendations based on these patterns. It also held a stakeholder meeting to discuss the findings, and the inputs received during this meeting were useful in refining the recommendations.

POINT ON PROCESS: VETTING FINDINGS

The assessment held a stakeholder meeting on the findings and gathered feedback and comments. It also contacted partner organizations and obtained feedback on the entire assessment.

VI. Spreading the Results

Deciding on a Dissemination Strategy

The assessment was slated to publish its report in late 2013. It was organizing an official launch, inviting stakeholders, drafting press releases, and inviting the press. The assessment was also preparing briefing papers on the findings to be released alongside the report. It will also be producing community specific versions of the social audit to highlight relevant issues to rural communities.

The assessment will call on international and national partner organizations to publicize the report on their websites and newsletters and will also arrange meetings with relevant government agencies to discuss the findings and next steps (i.e., in terms of policy change and implementation of current legislation).

Disseminating the Results

Not yet done at the time the case study was written.

Institutionalizing Further Assessment

Not done.

POINT ON PROCESS: MOVING FROM RESULTS TO ACTION

The organizations conducting the assessment will be meeting with relevant government ministries and agencies to discuss next steps. They will also be educating communities and assisting them in organizing their responses to the findings and relevant developments in light of the issues highlighted by the social audit.

VII. Learning and Improvement

Self-evaluating During the Assessment

This will be done during the process of making adjustments to the assessment template and questionnaire (which will be done before the next set of data collection begins).

Evaluation After the Assessment

None yet.

Sharing Lessons Learned

The assessment expects to produce a lessons learned document that can be disseminated to partners and published on its website.

Keeping the Door Open for Further Feedback

The e-mails of the report authors will be included so that readers are able to give feedback and ask further questions. The stakeholder meeting during the launch will also provide space for feedback on the assessment.

POINT ON PROCESS: CONDUCTING INTERNAL GROUP EVALUATIONS

As noted above, this will be part of the process of reevaluating the social audit design and improving the process of data collection.

Case Study: Uganda

The World Bank Piloting of the PROFOR Diagnostic Tool

Thumbnail description: The World Bank/PROFOR developed a forest governance diagnostic tool based on its "Roots for Good Forest Outcomes: An Analytic Framework for Forest Governance Reforms." The tool used a set of about 130 indicators, scored in a consensus-oriented stakeholder workshop. The case, in Uganda in 2010, was the first pilot test of the tool.

What the case illustrates: The case is an example of taking an off-the-shelf tool, adapting it to local conditions, and using it. Because the PROFOR tool relies on stakeholder scoring of indicators, the case illustrates one avenue for involving stakeholders. It is also an example of a fairly quick assessment that does not require a great deal of data processing and management skill.

What the case does not illustrate: The case does not offer examples of use of surveys or quantitative analytic tools, or of complex data management. Because the case used an off-the-shelf tool, many of the choices about scope and method were decided beforehand. The case does not provide a good example of post-assessment implementation of recommendations.

Web page for further information:
http://www.profor.info/events/workshop-forest-governance-reforms-uganda.

I. Setting Objectives

Defining the "Why"

This was a pilot test of a new governance assessment tool. The "why," therefore, had two parts: (1) to conduct a general diagnosis of forest governance in Uganda, and (2) to learn more about the diagnostic tool itself.

Considering Context

The key element of country context was the willingness of the Government of Uganda to participate in the diagnostic exercise. The World Bank had looked into using a number of countries to test the tool, and Uganda was among the first to agree to participate. The country's willingness was due partly to the importance of forestry to the country's national development plans. In addition, a pair of corruption scandals had recently hit the National Forest Authority. The scandals raised awareness among all stakeholders of the need for reform. Because one of the scandals affected use of donor funds, international development partners had frozen grants and lending to government forest projects. The government was eager to move past these problems, and the diagnostic assessment seemed a good way to start.

Setting Objectives

The primary objective of the pilot project was to conduct a broad, diagnostic assessment of forest governance in Uganda and to identify priority areas for improvement. The secondary objectives were to field-test the new PROFOR diagnostic tool and to foster consensus about reform among stakeholders. Fostering stakeholder consensus is a generic secondary objective built into the PROFOR tool, which scores its indicators in a consensus-oriented workshop.

POINT ON PROCESS: INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS IN OBJECTIVE SETTING

PROFOR set the piloting objective. The government invited PROFOR and the World Bank to conduct a broad assessment. PROFOR and the government did not consult other stakeholders in setting the objectives.

II. Developing a Work Plan

Identifying the Scope of the Assessment

The PROFOR tool uses a broad definition of forest governance that has about 130 indicators. It is possible to alter the scope by adding or removing criteria or indicators. After review by local experts, the assessment added a few indicators (e.g., one on honoring human rights in the enforcement of forest laws) and thinned the full set to about 100 key indicators. This did not narrow the breadth of the assessment, but it did slightly reduce its depth and complexity.

Identifying the General Methods

The PROFOR tool comes with a basic method, which users can vary as needed. The Uganda pilot test was to follow the basic method. A local expert wrote a background paper on the sector and customized the indicator set for Uganda. A local facilitator conducted a stakeholder workshop to score the set of indicators, by consensus if possible, and to identify a smaller set of priority issues. Local stakeholders then reviewed and validated the findings of the workshop. The local expert and the facilitator prepared the report on the findings.

Identifying Who Would Conduct the Assessment

The World Bank, under an invitation from the Ministry of Water and Environment of Uganda, sponsored and conducted the assessment.

Figuring Out How Much it Would Cost

The exercise had a budget of roughly $60,000. This included the cost of bringing two tool designers to Uganda from Washington to participate in the stakeholder workshop.

Figuring Out How Long it Would Take

Once the local expert and facilitator were hired, the diagnostic design called for completion in six weeks. The expert review of the sector and customization of the indicators was to take three weeks. The stakeholder workshop was to take one week. Tabulation of results and vetting was to take two weeks.

Writing a Work Plan

The testing of the tool in Uganda was part of a larger project to develop the tool. That project had a work plan (a "concept note"). The Uganda pilot did not have a separate work plan.

POINT ON PROCESS: COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS

The local expert prepared a list of stakeholders in the sector. From the time they were invited to participate in the scoring workshop, stakeholders knew about and played a central role in implementing the assessment.

III. Refining your Data Collection Method

Defining What You Intend to Measure

The World Bank had developed a five-building-block model of forest governance, with each block broken into components and subcomponents. The subcomponents formed the initial criteria. (Note that the current version of the PROFOR tool now uses the PROFOR-FAO Framework three-pillar model as the basis of

its criteria.) A pool of experts at the World Bank had developed indicators for each criterion. The Uganda expert helped customize these indicators for Uganda.

Identifying Potential Sources of Information

The tool design called for stakeholder scoring at a single workshop. A key task was to identify a representative group of stakeholders. The local expert and local facilitator compiled lists, in consultation with assessment coordinators at the World Bank. The tool design also called for preparation of a background paper on the forest sector in Uganda. The local expert wrote this paper using published sources and his own knowledge.

Selecting Data Collection Methods and Considering a Sampling Plan

The tool called for a stakeholder workshop to score the indicators, with the general results to be vetted through interviews with key stakeholders not at the workshop. The selection of people to invite to the workshop therefore constituted the sampling plan. Post-workshop vetting took place in Kampala, drawing upon stakeholders who were readily available in the city.

Developing Data Collection Tools

The primary tool (the indicator set and workshop format) was already developed. The local facilitator, in consultation with local and World Bank experts, designed the scoring workshop.

Creating a Data Collection Manual

The assessment did not have a data collection manual; each indicator did, however, include notes explaining its rationale and how to interpret it. The object of these notes was to avoid misinterpretation of the indicators by the workshop participants.

POINT ON PROCESS: VALIDATING METHODS

The method was set without consulting stakeholders; the project did, however, seek stakeholder feedback on the approach during the workshop.

IV. Data Collection

Recruiting and Training Data Collectors

The key data collectors were the workshop facilitator, the local expert, and the World Bank experts who designed the tool. The administrative staff of the World Bank office in Kampala provided the data collectors with logistical support. The facilitator and local expert already had the skills to conduct the workshop. Through reading the tool and discussing it with the tool designers, they learned what they needed to know to use the workshop to score the indicators. In a way, the participants at the workshop were data collectors when they scored the indicators in their breakout groups. The workshop included a session explaining the tool and how to score the indicators.

Collecting the Data

The assessment collected the data in a two-day stakeholder workshop. The workshop participants scored the indicators and then selected fifteen indicators that they considered to be the highest priorities.

Assuring Data Quality

The tool includes detailed notes on each indicator. The participants in the workshop were given the indicators and the notes in advance and were able to consult them as they scored the indicators.

The data were simply the scores of the indicators. Data transcription and storage were not major concerns. The workshop report included all the data that the scoring workshop produced.

POINT ON PROCESS: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION

The team sought to be transparent about what it was doing (in terms of collecting data) and why. The ground rules of the stakeholder workshop required the participants not to attribute remarks to individual speakers or their organizations.

V. Analysis and Interpretation

Processing the Data

The scores from the workshop did not need extensive processing. The team did devise ways to display the scores graphically, including in spider web diagrams.

Analyzing the Processed Data

The spider web diagrams allowed the team to plot the actual scores against the ideal scores. (All the PROFOR indicators are normative and have ideal scores.) The workshop itself did some analysis by identifying the highest priority issues.

Making Recommendations

The PROFOR indicators are all actionable—that is, low scores suggest actions in response. The local expert wrote up a set of recommendations based on the indicator scoring.

POINT ON PROCESS: VETTING FINDINGS

Because stakeholders developed the findings themselves, the results did not need a great deal of additional vetting. However, there could have been biases in the findings if the selection of participants at the scoring workshop was biased. To test the workshop findings, the project team discussed them with stakeholders who were not at the workshop.

VI. Spreading the Results

Deciding on a Dissemination Strategy

The plan called for a workshop report and an annex with recommendations. However, because the key stakeholders were at the scoring workshop and the workshop was open to the press, the raw results were spread by word of mouth.

The primary target audience was decision makers within the government. International development partners who control funding of key forestry projects, were also an important audience; so too were nongovernmental stakeholders generally.

Disseminating the Results

There were two official reports. In addition, there was considerable "word of mouth" from people who attended the scoring workshop. There were also informal discussions after the workshop between the tool implementers and target audience members.

Outside of Uganda, PROFOR discussed the Uganda pilot when it released the guide to its tool and the people who worked on the tool and the assessment have discussed it in scholarly publications.

Institutionalizing Further Assessment

Although the assessment identified priority indicators that the government could use to monitor its progress in governance reform, actually institutionalizing future assessment was beyond the scope of this pilot test.

POINT ON PROCESS: MOVING FROM RESULTS TO ACTION

Beyond supplying the recommendations to the government, the project had no follow-up geared toward implementation.

VII. Learning and Improvement

Self-evaluating During the Assessment

A portion of the workshop was devoted to evaluation of the assessment tool.

Evaluation after the Assessment

The team did not do a formal self-evaluation exercise, but members did discuss the experience among themselves. These discussions influenced subsequent use of the tool.

Sharing Lessons Learned

The workshop report included the participants' critique of the tool. The guide to using the tool, which PROFOR published in 2012, reflects lessons learned.

Keeping the Door Open for Further Feedback

The people who worked on the pilot project continue to follow governance activities in Uganda. There is, however, no formal mechanism for feedback.

POINT ON PROCESS: CONDUCTING INTERNAL GROUP EVALUATIONS

As noted above, the project team did not conduct a formal post-assessment self-evaluation.

ANNEX II: METHODS, TOOLS, GUIDANCE, AND REFERENCES

This annex lists materials that may be of use in planning and carrying out assessments. It begins with a set of materials that provide general information on data collection, forest governance, and governance assessment and improvement. It then lists materials that may be useful in applying specific methods.

If you are seeking more information on a method discussed in the guide, check the chapter entries that follow the general references. These offer more specific reference works and citations to specific pages within some of the general references.

General References

About Data Collection and Analysis in the Social Sciences

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H. Russell Bernard. 2006. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Fourth Edition. Lanham, Maryland: AltaMira Press.

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About Forest Governance Assessment and Improvement

Crystal Davis, Lauren Williams, Sarah Lupberger, and Florence Daviet. 2013. *Assessing Forest Governance: The Governance of Forest Initiative Indicator Framework.* Washington: WRI. http://www.wri.org/publication/assessing-forest-governance.

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IIED. 2005b. *The Pyramid: A Diagnostic and Planning Tool for Good Forest Governance.* http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Engaging/docs/pyramid_tool_english.pdf.

Jens Friis Lund, Helle Overgaard Larsen, Bir Bahadur Khanal Chhetri, Santosh Rayamajhi, Øystein Juul Nielsen, Carsten Smith Olsen, Patricia Uberhuaga, Lila Puri and José Pablo Prado Córdova. 2008. *When Theory Meets Reality—How to Do Forest Income Surveys in Practice*. Forest & Landscape Working Papers No. 29-2008, 48 pp. Forest & Landscape Denmark, University of Copenhagen, Hørsholm. http://curis.ku.dk/ws/files/20573307/workingpapersno29.pdf.

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About Other Kinds of Governance Assessment and Improvement

Arild Angelsen, Helle Overgaard Larsen, Jens Friis Lund, Carsten Smith-Hall, and Sven Wunder. 2011. *Measuring Livelihoods and Environmental Dependence: Methods for Research and Fieldwork.* London: Earthscan.

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J. Hinton and M. R. Hollestelle. 2012. *Methodological Toolkit for Baseline Assessments and Response Strategies to Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining in Protected Areas and Critical Ecosystems*. Published under the Artisanal and Small-scale Mining in and around Protected Areas and Critical Ecosystems (ASM-PACE) project of WWF & Estelle Levin Ltd. http://www.asm-pace.org/projects/methodological-toolkit.html.

IUCN. 2013. *Governance of Protected Areas: From Understanding to Action*. http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/gpap_home/gpap_people/diversity_and_quality_of_protected_area_governance_2/.

Kate O'Neill, Erika Weinthal, Kimberly R. Marion Suiseeya, Steven Bernstein, Avery Cohn, Michael W. Stone and Benjamin Cashore. 2013. Methods and Global Environmental Governance. Annu. Rev. Environ. Resour. 38:11.1–11.31.

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UNDP. 2009b. *Planning a Governance Assessment: A Guide to Approaches, Costs, and Benefits*. http://www.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/presscenter/events/2012/November/regional_governance_week/_jcr_content/centerparsys/download_8/file.res/Planning%20a%20governance%20assessment.pdf.

UNDP. 2009c. *Practice Note on Supporting Country-Led Democratic Governance Assessments*. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/democratic-governance/oslo-governance-center/governance-assessments/supporting-country-led-democratic-governance-assessment-a-undp-practice-note/UNDP_Oslo_Eng_1.pdf.

UNDP. 2007. *Governance Indicators: A Users' Guide.* Second Edition. http://gaportal.org/sites/default/files/undp_users_guide_online_version.pdf.

USAID. 2013. *Guidelines for Assessing the Strengths and Weaknesses of Natural Resource Governance in Landscapes and Seascapes*. Washington: USAID. http://frameweb.org/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=10650&lang=en-US

Chapter References

Chapters 1 & 2: Objective Setting and Work Plan Development

- Context Analysis
  - **Method**: Political Economy Analysis (PEA) Political economy analysis is a qualitative method used to identify factors that may promote or hold back changes in forest governance. Interviews and triangulation form a key component of PEA, which requires strong country and sector knowledge, access to key stakeholders, and the ability to communicate with people in their native languages.
    - » **Tool**: Political Economy Assessment
      This is a tool for analyzing formal and informal institutions and identifying stakeholders' underlying interests and incentives.
      - o **See:** The World Bank. 2011. *Political Economy Assessments at Sector and Project Levels.* http://gsdrc.org/docs/open/PE1.pdf.
    - » **Tool:** Force Field Analysis
      Force field analysis helps identify the forces or factors that are likely to drive or hold back a desired change in forest governance.
      - o **See:** ODI. 2009a. *Management Techniques: Force Field Analysis*. http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/5218-force-field-analysis-decision-maker.
    - » **Tool:** Drivers of Change Analysis
      The Drivers of Change tool looks at how and why change occurs in specific contexts. It can be used to examine the institutions and structural features that drive or hinder change in forest governance.
      - o **See:** Debbie Warrener. 2004. *The Drivers of Change Approach*. (ODI Synthesis Paper 3). http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/3721.pdf.
    - » **Tool**: Net-Map
      Net-Map uses interviews to produce a diagram showing actors, how they are linked, what their influence is, and what their goals are.
      - o **See:** "How Net-Map Works" and the links on the web page. http://netmap.wordpress.com/about/.
    - » **See for general guidance:** DFID. 2009. *Political Economy Analysis How To Note*. (A DFID practice paper.) http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-documents/3797.pdf.
    - » **See for general guidance:** Daniel Harris and David Booth. 2013. *Applied Political Economy Analysis: Five Practical Issues.* (ODI Politics and Governance note.) http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/7196-applied-political-economy-analysis-five-practical-issues.
    - » **Reference:** Verena Fritz, Kai Kaiser and Brian Levy. 2009. *Problem-driven Governance and Political Economy Analysis: Good Practice Framework.* http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTPUBLICSECTORANDGOVERNANCE/Resources/PGPE_book_8-25-09.pdf?resourceurlname=PGPE_book_8-25-09.pdf.
    - » **Reference:** Daniel Harris. 2013. *Applied Political Economy Analysis: A Problem-Driven*

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» **Reference:** European Commission. 2008. *Analysing and Addressing Governance in Sector Operations.* (Tools and Method Series, Reference Document Number 4.) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/europeaid/documents/149a_governance_layout_090306_en.pdf.

– **Method**: Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA)

Poverty and Social Impact Analysis provides a way to analyze the social and economic impacts that policy reforms may have on forest governance stakeholders, particularly those who are poor and vulnerable. PSIA is a qualitative method that can provide an analysis of why changes should or should not be made.

» **Tool:** Poverty Impact Assessment

This tool analyses the social impacts of an intervention, such as a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), with an eye to reducing risks and enhancing positive impacts. It combines a number of different methods, including qualitative and quantitative analyses.

o **See:** Forest Trends. 2012. *Poverty Impact Assessment for Reducing Social Risks and Enhancing Pro-Poor Outcomes of Voluntary Partnership Agreements.* (Forest Trends Information Brief No. 4.) http://www.forest-trends.org/publication_details.php?publicationID=3267.

» **Reference**: The World Bank. 2003. *A User's Guide to Poverty and Social Impact Analysis*. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPSIA/Resources/490023-1121114603600/12685_PSIAUsersGuide_Complete.pdf.

– **Method:** Institutional and Context Analysis (ICA)

» **Reference:** UNDP. 2012. *Institutional and Context Analysis Guidance Note.* http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/oslo_governance_centre/Institutional_and_Context_Analysis_Guidance_Note/.

– **Method:** Participatory Mapping

This method uses an open and participatory process to produce maps that visually represent local communities' knowledge, including information about forest resources and resource management practices.

» **Reference:** U.S. NOAA's Coastal Services Center. 2009. *Stakeholder Engagement Strategies for Participatory Mapping.* http://csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/sites/default/files/files/1366314383/participatory_mapping.pdf.

» **Reference:** IFAD. 2009. *Good Practices in Participatory Mapping*. http://www.ifad.org/pub/map/pm_web.pdf.

» **Reference:** PPGIS.net. Open Forum on Participatory Geographic Information Systems and Technologies. http://ppgis.iapad.org/.

» **Reference:** Rainforest Foundation. 2011. La Cartographie Participative: Guide pour la Production des Cartes avec les Communautés Forestières dans le Bassin du Congo (Participatory Mapping Guide for forest communities in the Congo Basin). http://www.mappingforrights.org/files/Guide%20methodologique%20pour%20la%20cartographie%20participative%20final%20Low%20Res.pdf.

    - **Reference:** Mapping for Rights. Video Training for Participatory Mapping. http://www.mappingforrights.org/video-training.
- Preparation
  - **Method:** Timeline and work plan development
    The work plan is a key tool to guide forest governance assessments from preparation through to report dissemination. It is often based on a logical framework.
    - **See:** The sample outline of a basic work plan in Annex IV of this guide.
    - **See:** The Nature Conservancy (TNC). *Conservation Action Planning Handbook.* "Step 8: Develop Work Plans" & "Step 9: Implement Work Plans" in TNC. 2007. *Conservation Action Planning Handbook: Developing Strategies, Taking Action and Measuring Success at Any Scale.* The Nature Conservancy, Arlington, VA. http://www.conservationgateway.org/Files/Pages/8-develop-workplans-basic.aspx & http://www.conservationgateway.org/Files/Pages/9-implement-workplans-bas.aspx.
    - **See:** An example of a relatively detailed work plan with timeline for the assessment of the institutional structure of the UN: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/swe_review-workplan.pdf.
  - **Method:** Development of a background document
    Developing a background document is a useful method for objectively and concisely presenting sector background and the current state of forest governance. Contextual analysis methods and a literature review may be used to inform the background document.
    - **See for an example:** Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012 (general reference list, beginning of this Annex): "Prepare Background Materials," pp. 11–12 & Appendix VII: "Sample Outline for Forest Governance Background Paper," pp. 109–10. http://www.profor.info/sites/profor.info/files/docs/AssessingMonitoringForestGovernance-guide.pdf.
  - **Method:** Project Budgeting
    Creating and following a project budget and making the best use of available resources are key to project success. The following resources provide guidance on how to estimate and manage a project budget.
    - **See:** Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management (SSWM). "Budget Allocation and Resource Planning." (Web page.) http://www.sswm.info/category/planning-process-tools/implementation/implementation-support-tools/project-design/budget-al.
    - **See for general guidance:** John Cammack. 2013. Project Budgeting How to Guide. http://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/project_budgeting_how_to_guide.pdf.
    - **See for general guidance:** Mango. Undated. Guide to Financial Management for NGOs. (Web page.) http://www.mango.org.uk/Guide/GettingTheBasicsRight.
- Setting Objectives
  - **Method:** Logical Framework Approach
    The logical framework approach is useful in early project planning. It helps project planners think logically about what they want the project to achieve.

- » **Tool:** Logical Framework (Logframe) Matrix
  The logframe matrix includes the forest governance assessment's objectives, indicators for measuring project progress, where to gather data that confirms each indicators' progress, and external factors that may impact project progress. It uses a table to present this information in a clear, concise, and logical form.
    - o **See for general guidance and an example:** University of Wolverhampton. Undated. *A guide for Developing a Logical Framework*. http://www.hedon.info/docs/logical_framework-CentreForInternationalDevelopmentAndTraining.pdf
    - o **See:** SSWM. "Logical Framework Approach". (web page.) http://www.sswm.info/category/planning-process-tools/implementation/implementation-support-tools/project-design/logical-f.
    - o **See for general guidance:** BOND. 2003. *Logical Framework Analysis* (Guidance Notes No. 4). http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/logical-fa.pdf.
    - o **See for general guidance and an example:** Government of the Republic of Serbia and EU Integration Office. 2011. *Guide to the Logical Framework Approach: A key Tool for Project Cycle Management.* (Second Edition.) Ch. 2, pp. 27–49; Template and Example, pp. 70–72. http://www.evropa.gov.rs/evropa/ShowDocument.aspx?Type=Home&Id=525.
    - o **Reference:** NORAD. 1999. *Logical Framework Approach: Handbook for Objectives-oriented Planning.* (Fourth Edition.) http://www.norad.no/en/tools-and-publications/publications/publication?key=109408.

- Stakeholders
  - – **Method:** Stakeholder Analysis
    Stakeholder analysis is a qualitative method best suited for the planning phase of a forest governance assessment. It is used to identify the stakeholders in forest governance and to characterize how these stakeholders interact with each other, the roles they play in forest governance, and the influence they have over programs, policies, and reforms in the forest sector.
    - » **Tool:** Stakeholder Influence/Interest (or Influence/Importance) Matrix
      Once relevant stakeholders have been identified, listed, and categorized, stakeholder influence/interest matrices can aid project planners in planning how to engage different types of stakeholders.
      - o **See:** ODI. 2009b. *Planning Tools: Stakeholder Analysis.* http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/5257-stakeholder-analysis.
      - o **See:** UNDP. *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results*. "2.2. Stakeholder Engagement" (web page). http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/ch2-2.html.
      - o **See:** The World Bank. Undated. "Stakeholder Analysis Guidance Note."http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/politicaleconomy/November3Seminar/Stakehlder%20Readings/CPHP%20Stakeholder%20Analysis%20Note.pdf.

- » **Tool:** Four Rs
  The Four Rs is a tool to examine stakeholder roles that is best used as a participatory process aided by a neutral facilitator. It can be used after conducting context analysis to clarify, negotiate, and strengthen the roles and responsibilities of stakeholder groups and the relationships among them.
    - o **See:** IIED. 2005a. *The Four Rs.* http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Understanding/docs/four_Rs_tool_english.pdf.
- » **Tool:** Conflict Assessment (also called Conflictology)
    - o **See for general guidance:** DFID. 2002. *Conducting Conflict Assessment: Guidance Notes*. http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/Conducting_Conflict_Assessment_Guidance.pdf.
    - o **See for general guidance:** Conflict Sensitivity Consortium. 2012. *How to Guide to Conflict Sensitivity.* http://www.conflictsensitivity.org/sites/default/files/1/6602_HowToGuide_CSF_WEB_3.pdf.
    - o **See for general reference:** FAO. *Conflict Management* (web page with links to FAO publications on the topic). http://www.fao.org/forestry/conflict/56824/en/.
- » **See for general guidance:** Robert Nash, Alan Hudson and Cecilia Luttrell. 2006. Mapping Political Context: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations. Ch. 8, "Stakeholder Analysis." http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/186.pdf.
- » **Reference:** Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid and Trocaire. Undated. *Monitoring government policies: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations in Africa.* Ch. 3: "Identifying Policy Stakeholders," pp. 29–33, 36. http://www.commdev.org/userfiles/files/1818_file_monitoringgovernmentpolicies.pdf.
- » **Reference:** IIED. 2005c. *Stakeholder Power Analysis*. http://www.policy-powertools.org/Tools/Understanding/docs/stakeholder_power_tool_english.pdf.
- » **Reference:** Michael Richards, Jonathan Davies and Gil Yaron. 2003. *"Economic Stakeholder Analysis' for Participatory Forest Management"* (ODI Forestry Briefing Number 4). http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/810.pdf.

– **Method:** Stakeholder Engagement
Stakeholder engagement tools are used to enhance relationships and trust among those conducting the assessment and various stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement should follow stakeholder analysis and context analysis and forms the core of participatory approaches to forest governance assessments.

- » **Tool:** Multi-stakeholder Workshops
  Multi-stakeholder workshops bring together a range of stakeholders to perform such tasks as refining indicators, validating data, and validating assessment findings. A neutral facilitator is often recruited to lead these workshops, which may include breakout sessions.
    - o **See:** PARIS21. 2003. *PARIS21 Workshop Guide: A Reference Manual for Running a Stakeholders Workshop*. http://paris21.org/sites/default/files/18.pdf.
    - o **See for an example:** Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012 (general reference list, beginning of this Annex): "Hold a Stakeholder Workshop," pp. 13–15.

- » **Tool:** Focus group discussions
  Focus groups normally bring together stakeholders from one group to gather their point of view on an issue or validate findings. A facilitator is often recruited to lead these discussions, which are based on predefined questions or goals.
    - o **See for general guidance:** Eliot and Associates. 2005. "Guidelines for Conducting a Focus Group." (Posted on the web site of the Office of Assessment, Duke University.) http://assessment.aas.duke.edu/documents/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf.
    - o **See for general guidance:** Richard A. Krueger. 2002. *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. http://www.eiu.edu/~ihec/Krueger-FocusGroupInterviews.pdf.
    - o **See:** CARE. 2009. *Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis Handbook*. "Field Guide 1: Facilitation Tips", pp. 30–32. http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/adaptation/CARE_CVCAHandbook.pdf.
    - o **See:** J. Hinton and M. R. Hollestelle. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of this annex) "Tool #4c: Focus Groups and Exercises", pp. 55–62.
    - o **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of this Annex) "Chapter 21: Focus Groups", pp. 500–19.
    - o **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of this Annex) "Focus Groups", pp. 322–23.
- » **See for general guidance:** Hilary Coulby. 2009. *A Guide to Multi-stakeholder Work: Lessons from the Water Dialogues.* "Section 4: Bringing Multiple Stakeholders Together", pp. 29–37; "Section 7: Building and Sustaining Multi-stakeholder Processes", pp. 51–65; "Section 8: Organizing and Conducting Multi-stakeholder Meetings", pp. 66–71. http://www.waterdialogues.org/downloads/new/Guide-to-Multistakeholder.pdf.
- » **See:** International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). 2007. Spectrum of Public Engagement. http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf.
- » **See:** FAO. *Enhanced Stakeholder Participation in National Forest Programmes* (web page). http://www.fao.org/forestry/participatory/63974/en/

- Scope
  - – **See:** "Deciding What Aspects of Governance to Assess," under resources for Chapters 3 & 4.

Chapters 3 & 4: Data Collection, Planning, and Implementation

- Deciding what aspects of governance to assess.
  These references are encompass two categories. The first few are general works on data concepts in social research. The rest contain methods or tools that use frameworks or indicators relevant to forest governance.
  - **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of this annex). "Concepts and their measurement," pp. 163–67.
  - **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of this annex). "Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement," ch. 5, pp. 124–59.
  - **Reference:** PROFOR & FAO. 2009. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
    - » **See for an example:** Kishor and Rosenbaum. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
  - **Reference:** Crystal Davis *et al*. 2013. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
  - **Reference:** World Bank. 2009. *(general reference list, beginning of this annex).*
  - **Reference:** Montréal Process. 2009b. *Technical Notes on Implementation of the Montréal Process Criteria and Indicators: Criteria 1–7*. Third Edition. Criterion 7, pp. 67–77. http://www.montrealprocess.org/documents/publications/techreports/2009p_2.pdf.
  - **Reference:** International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). 1998. *Criteria and Indicators for the Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests.* Criterion 1: Enabling Conditions for Sustainable Forest Management & Criterion 7: Economic, Social, and Cultural Aspects.
  - http://www.itto.int/policypapers_guidelines/.
  - **Reference:** Global Witness. 2010. Making the Forestry Sector Transparent: *Transparency Indicators 2010*. http://www.foresttransparency.info/cms/file/387.
  - **Reference:** IIED. 2005b. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
  - **Reference:** FAO. 2013. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
  - **Reference:** Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). 2013. *Quality-of-Governance Standards for Carbon Emissions Trading: Developing REDD+ Governance through a Multi-stage, Multi-level and Multi-stakeholder Approach*.
  - http://pub.iges.or.jp/modules/envirolib/upload/4658/attach/Discussion_paper_Final_20130617_FLC.pdf.
  - **Reference:** Transparency International. 2011. *Analyzing Corruption in the Forest Sector.* http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/analysing_corruption_in_the_forestry_sector_a_manual.
  - **Reference:** Mercy Corps. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
  - **Reference:** USAID. 2013. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
- Tips on using indicators
  - **See:** UNDP. 2009b. (general reference list, beginning of this annex). "Section 7: Indicators—Existing vs. New Indicators," pp. 23–27.
  - **Reference:** UNDP. 2007. (general reference list, beginning of this annex).
- Identifying potential sources of information (existing and new)

  - **See:** CARE. 2005. *Tips for Collecting, Reviewing, and Analyzing Secondary Data*. http://pqdl.care.org/Practice/DME%20-%20Tips%20for%20Collecting,%20Reviewing%20and%20Analyzing%20Secondary%20Data.pdf.
- Selecting from among the possible data collection methods
  - **See:** UNDP. 2009b. (General reference list, beginning of annex). "Section 5: Types of Data and Data Collection Methods," pp. 16–18.
- Deciding who to ask (sampling issues)
  - **See:** UNDP. 2009b. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Section 8: Sampling—The Basics," pp. 28–29.
  - **See:** Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid and Trocaire. Undated. *Monitoring Government Policies: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations in Africa.* "Unit 6.2: Gathering Evidence on Policy Implementation," pp. 74–75. http://www.commdev.org/userfiles/files/1818_file_monitoringgovernmentpolicies.pdf
  - **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Chapter 4: Sampling: Who, How, and How Many?" pp. 51–70.
  - **See:** Giuseppe Iarossi. 2006. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Chapter 4: A Practical Approach to Sampling," pp. 95–146.
  - **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Chapter 8: Sampling," pp.183–206.
  - **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Chapter 7: The Logic of Sampling," pp. 187–228.
- Designing/applying tools for each method
  - Secondary data collection (Desk review)
    - » **Tool:** Literature Review
      Literature reviews may be conducted during the preparation and data collection phases of a governance assessment. The purpose of this qualitative tool is to review the existing research and literature on the topic(s) of study, including indicators.
      - o **See:** Hinton and Hollestele. 2012 (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Tool #1b: Conducting a Literature Review," pp. 23–24. http://www.asm-pace.org/projects/methodological-toolkit.html.
      - o **See:** CARE. 2005. *Tips for Collecting, Reviewing, and Analyzing Secondary Data*. http://pqdl.care.org/Practice/DME%20-%20Tips%20for%20Collecting,%20Reviewing%20and%20Analyzing%20Secondary%20Data.pdf.
      - o **See:** Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid and Trocaire. Undated. *Monitoring Government Policies: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organizations in Africa.* "Unit 2.3: How you can access policy information" & "Unit 2.4: Collecting policy documents," pp. 22–25. http://www.commdev.org/userfiles/files/1818_file_monitoringgovernmentpolicies.pdf.
      - o **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Chapter 5: Getting started: Reviewing the Literature," pp. 97–127.
      - o **Reference:** Cornell University Library Guide. "Critically Analyzing Data Sources." (A web page on qualitative selection of sources with reliable content.) http://guides.library.cornell.edu/criticallyanalyzing.

        - **Reference:** Sarah Boslaugh. 2007. Secondary Data Sources for Public Health: A Practical Guide. Cambridge U. Press. Excerpt viewable on web: http://analysis3.com/An-Introduction-to-Secondary-Data-Analysis-download-w173.pdf.
        - **Reference:** British Library for Development Studies. "Resources for Developing Country Researchers". (A web site with many pages of guidance on research.) http://blds.ids.ac.uk/about-us/resources-for-research/resources-for-developing-country-researchers.
    - **Tool:** Content analysis
      Content analysis is a quantitative tool used to analyze the themes and terms found in chosen documents and media.
        - **See:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 13: Content Analysis," pp. 288–308.
        - **See:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex). *"Content Analysis,"* pp. 333–343.
- Primary data collection:
  - **Method:** Surveys
    Surveys are employed to collect quantitative or quantifiable data that can be used in statistical analysis. Using this method requires posing questions that can be coded for a significant number of respondents (individuals or households).
    - **Tool:** Interviewer-administered Questionnaire (Structured Interview)
      Data collectors use this tool to gather data in person. They pose the same closed questions directly to individual respondents and note responses in a uniform field form.
        - **See:** Giuseppe Iarossi. 2006. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Chapter 3: How Easy It Is to Ask the Wrong Question," pp. 27–94; "Chapter 5: Respondent's Psychology and Survey Participation," pp. 147–86.
        - **See for general guidance:** FAO. *Marketing Research and Information Systems.* "Chapter 4: Questionnaire Design" (web-based publication). http://www.fao.org/docrep/w3241e/w3241e05.htm
        - **See:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 9: Structured Interviewing," pp. 208–30.
        - **See:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "*Interview Surveys,"*, pp. 274–278.
    - **Tool:** Self-completion Questionnaire
      A self-completion questionnaire can be distributed to respondents via a variety of means. Data quality depends on respondents correctly following instructions and filling out the forms.
        - **See:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 10: Self-completion questionnaires," pp. 231–44.
        - **See:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex) *"Self-Administered Questionnaires,"*, pp. 267–273.
    - **Tool:** Mini Survey
        - **See:** USAID. 2006. Conducting Mini Surveys in Developing Countries (revised edition). http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnadg566.pdf.

- » **Tool:** Household Surveys
  - o **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 7: Designing the Household Questionnaire," pp. 107–26.
- » **Tool:** Citizen Report Card
  - o **See:** Public Affairs Centre (PAC) & Asian Development Bank (ADB). Undated. *Citizen Report Card Learning Toolkit.* (Web-based training course.) http://www.citizenreportcard.com/.
- » **For general guidance on designing questions and using surveys:**
  - o **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Chapter 11: Asking Questions," pp. 245–66.
  - o **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex). "Chapter 6: Indexes, Scales, and Typologies," pp. 160–186 & "Chapter 9: Survey Research," pp. 253–294
  - o **Reference:** Giuseppe Iarossi. 2006. (general reference list, beginning of the annex)
  - o **Reference:** Work Group for Community Health and Development, University of Kansas. 2013. *The Community Toolbox*. "Section 13: Conducting Surveys" (web-based publication).
  - o http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1048.aspx
  - o **Reference:** UNDP. 2009b. (general reference list, beginning of annex). pp. 14–15, 17–18.
  - o **Reference:** Jens Friis Lund *et al.* 2008. (general reference list, beginning of the annex).

– **Method:** Use of experts (expert analysis)

Experts are people with specialized knowledge of governance. They may be commissioned to prepare reports, score indicators, or otherwise provide information on governance.

- » **Tool:** Expert panels
- » **The World Bank Land Governance Framework uses small expert panels to score components of a governance framework.**
  - o **See:** Klaus Deininger *et al*. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex), "Expert Panels," pp. 47–48.
- » **Tool:** Delphi technique

  The Delphi technique involves submitting the same questions to several individual experts, giving summaries of the collection of answers back to the experts, and allowing each to revise his or her answers. This repeats until the experts reach consensus or the answers stop changing.
  - o **See:** Better Evaluation. 2014. "Delphi Study" (web site of resources for evaluation tools). http://betterevaluation.org/evaluation-options/delphitechnique
  - o **Reference:** RAND Corporation. Undated. "Delphi Method" (website from the group that invented the technique in the 1950s; includes a brief description of the tool; some of the linked reports on the page have insights into the tool's use). http://www.rand.org/topics/delphi-method.html.

- **Method:** Key informant interviews
  These are interviews with people who, by training or experience, have special knowledge of the inputs, processes, or effects of governance. They may be officials, advocates, or just citizens who use forest resources. They tend to be more loosely structured than survey interviews, but the sources cited above about survey questions and interviews contain advice that often also applies =to key informant questions and interviews.
  - » **Tool:** Semi-structured interview
    The semi-structured interview is primarily used to gain qualitative data about interviewees' opinions or experiences. It provides the data collector with flexibility to pose open-ended questions.
    - o **See for general guidance:** Tools4dev. 2013. "How To Do Great Semi-structured Interviews" (web page). http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-do-great-semi-structured-interviews/.
    - o **See:** SSWM. Undated. "Semi-structured Interviews" (web page). http://www.sswm.info/category/planning-process-tools/decision-making/decision-making-tools/gathering-ideas/semi-structure.
  - » **Tool:** Guide to conducting the interview (protocol)
    Protocols are used to ensure the validity and reliability of data collected in interviews. They provide data collectors with a general guide to how to interact with interviewees, obtain prior consent and conduct the interview, as well as the questions to ask.
    - o **See for general guidance:** Stacy A. Jacob and S. Paige Ferguson. 2012. "Writing Interview Protocols and Conducting Interviews: Tips for Students New to the Field of Qualitative Research" in *The Qualitative Report,* 17: T&L Art. 6, 1–10. http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ990034.pdf.
  - » **See:** Giuseppe Iarossi. 2006. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Conducting the Interview," pp. 178–85.
  - » **See:** J. Hinton and M.R. Hollestelle. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex). "Tool #4b: Preparing for Interviews and Interview Guides," p. 53.
  - » **See:** FAO. Undated. *Marketing Research and Information Systems*. Marketing and Agribusiness Texts-4. "Chapter 5: Personal Interviews" (web document). http://www.fao.org/docrep/w3241e/w3241e06.htm.
- **Method:** Workshops
  - » **See:** Stakeholder Workshops, this annex, above, under resources for stakeholder engagement, Chapters 1 & 2.
- **Method:** Focus Groups
  - » **See:** Focus Groups, this annex, above, under resources for stakeholder engagement, Chapters 1 & 2.

• Choosing and training data collection staff
  - **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of the annex). "Chapter 9: Preparing for the Field: Managing AND Enjoying Fieldwork," pp. 147–62 & "Chapter 10: Hiring, Training, and Managing a Field Team," pp. 163–74.

- **See:** Hilary Coulby. 2009. *A Guide to Mult-istakeholder Work.* "Choosing the Right Research Team," pp. 79–82. http://www.waterdialogues.org/downloads/new/Guide-to-Multistakeholder.pdf.
- **See:** Jens Friis Lund *et al*. 2008. (general reference list, beginning of the annex). pp. 17–21.
- **See for interviewer training:** (all from the general reference list, beginning of the annex) Giuseppe Iarossi. 2006. "Training," pp. 159–64. **Also:** Earl Babbie. 2010. "Coordination and Control," pp. 278–79; Alan Bryman. 2012. "Training and Supervision," pp. 225–26.

- Data Collection
  - **Method:** Interviewing
    - **See:** Resources cited above on primary data collection methods, especially under surveys and key informant interviews.
  - **Method:** Coding
    - **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Coding in Content Analysis," pp. 338–339 and "Coding," pp. 400–04.
    - **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Open or Closed Questions?" pp. 246–52; "Basic Operations in Qualitative Data Analysis," pp. 575–78.
  - **Method:** Use of ICT
    - **Reference**: World Bank. 2013. *ICT for Data Collection and Monitoring & Evaluation: Opportunities and Guidance on Mobile Applications for Forest and Agricultural Sectors.*
    - **Reference:** NetHope Solutions Center. ICT tools for international development work. http://solutionscenter.nethope.org
- Data Management & Quality Assurance (Editing, Cleaning, Triangulation etc.)
  - **See:** Giuseppe Iarossi. 2006. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) Chapter 6: "Why Data Management is Important," pp. 187–217.
  - **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Chapter 11: Getting Quality Data," pp. 175–89. and "Chapter 12: Data Entry and Quality Checking," pp. 191–207.
  - **See:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Error in Survey Research," pp. 205–06; "Missing Data," p. 333; "Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research," pp. 389–98.
- Verifying data
  - **See:** J. Hinton and M.R. Hollestelle. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Tool #6: Reporting Back and Stakeholders' Recommendations," p. 62.
  - **Reference:** Jens Friis Lund *et al*. 2008. (general reference list, beginning of the annex).
- Ethical standards
  - **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "The Challenges of Field Research," pp. 28–31.
  - **See:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Chapter 6: Ethics and Politics in Social Research," pp. 130–55.

- **Reference:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 1979. *The Belmont Report*: *Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research*. " (although this report was written for biomedical applications, the basic principles in Part B have wider application). http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html.
- **Reference:** Kimberley A. Barchard. 2003. Ethics in On-Line Data Collection. http://faculty.unlv.edu/barchard/onlinedatacollection/ethics_in_online_data_collection_Barchard.pdf.
- **Security Risks:** J. Hinton and M.R. Hollestelle. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex). "Tool #1d: Assessing and Preparing for Security Risks," p. 28; Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. *(general reference list, beginning of the annex)* "Personal Safety," pp. 158–61.

Chapter 5: Analysis

- Data processing
  - **Method:** Data entry
    - » **Tool:** Open Foris Collect
      - o **See:** FAO. 2014. Forest Monitoring and Assessment Software Tools (web page). http://www.fao.org/forestry/fma/openforis/en. (Wiki) http://km.fao.org/OFwiki/index.php/Main_Page
    - » **Tool:** SPSS
      - o **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Chapter 16: Using IBM SPSS for Windows," pp. 353–75.
    - » **See also:** "Use of ICT" under "Data Collection" tools.
    - » **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Computer Programs for Qualitative Data," pp. 406–13.
    - » **Reference:** Guiseppe Iarossi. 2006. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Electronic Data Entry," pp. 191–95.
- Data analysis
  - **Method:** Simple techniques (averages, tables, and more)
    - » **See:** Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid and Trocaire. Undated. *Monitoring Government Policies: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations in Africa.* "Analysing Survey Data and Other Coded Information," pp. 77–83. http://www.commdev.org/userfiles/files/1818_file_monitoringgovernmentpolicies.pdf.
  - **Method:** Qualitative and narrative analysis
    - » **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex) *"Chapter 24: Qualitative Data Analysis," pp. 564–89.*
    - » **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex) *"Chapter 13: Qualitative Data Analysis," pp. 393–420.*
    - » **Tool:** Regional or international comparisons
      - o **Example:** Sam Lawson and Larry MacFaul. 2010. Illegal Logging and Associated Trade: Indicators of the Global Response. London: Chatham House. www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/CHillegalloggingpaperwebready1.pdf.
  - **Method:** Statistical analysis

- » **Tool:** Open Foris Calc. (prototype).
  - o **See:** FAO. 2014. Forest Monitoring and Assessment Software Tools. (web page) http://www.fao.org/forestry/fma/openforis/en. (Wiki) http://km.fao.org/OFwiki/index.php/Main_Page.
- » **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 13: An Introduction to Data Analysis," pp. 209–26.
- » **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 15: Quantitative Data Analysis," pp. 329–52 and "Using IBM SPSS for Windows," pp. 353–75.
- » **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Chapter 16: Statistical Analysis," pp. 466–504.
- » **Reference:** Statsoft, Inc. 2013. Electronic Statistics Textbook. Tulsa, OK: StatSoft. http://www.statsoft.com/textbook.

Chapter 6: Reporting & Dissemination

- Reports
  - **Reference:** Alan Bryman. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Writing up Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Research," pp. 692–703.
  - **Reference:** Earl Babbie. 2010. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Writing Social Research," pp. 521–27.
- Dissemination strategies
  - **See:** UNDP. 2009b. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Section 10: Communication and Dissemination of the Results," p. 33.
  - **See:** Hilary Coulby. 2009. *A Guide to Multistakeholder Work.* "Section 10: External Communications," pp. 88–92. http://www.waterdialogues.org/downloads/new/Guide-to-Multistakeholder.pdf.
  - **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of annex) "Reaching the Audience," pp. 230–32.
  - **Reference:** IAP2. 2006. Public Dissemination Toolbox. http://www.dvrpc.org/GetInvolved/PublicParticipation/pdf/IAP2_public_participationToolbox.pdf.
- Visualizing data
  - **See:** Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid and Trocaire. Undated. *Monitoring Government Policies: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations in Africa.* "Tool 22: Creating Tables or Charts to Summarise Data," pp. 79–80. http://www.commdev.org/userfiles/files/1818_file_monitoringgovernmentpolicies.pdf.
  - **See:** Arild Angelsen, *et al*. 2011. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Results," pp. 237–40.
  - **Reference:** John Emerson. 2008. *Visualizing Information for Advocacy: An Introduction to Information Design*. Open Society Foundation. http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/visualizing-information-advocacy-introduction-information-design.
  - **Reference:** The books of Edward Tufte. http://www.edwardtufte.com/tufte/index.

- Institutional and follow-up actions
  - **See:** Hilary Coulby. 2009. *A Guide to Multistakeholder Work.* "Moving from Research to Policy," pp. 103–05. http://www.waterdialogues.org/downloads/new/Guide-to-Multistakeholder.pdf.
  - **See:** FAO. 2012. (general reference list, beginning of the annex) "Institutional Embedding," pp. 26–27.
  - **Reference:** The Access Initiative. 2010. Advocacy Toolkit. http://www.accessinitiative.org/node/625.

Chapter 7: Learning and Improvement

- Post-project evaluation
  - **Method:** Self-evaluation
    - » **Tool:** Appreciative Inquiry
      Appreciative inquiry is an evaluation technique that focuses on the positive aspects of a project or program and encourages their expansion or continuance. For resources, **see** Appreciative Inquiry Commons (web site). http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/.
    - » **Tool:** Retrospectives
      This is an approach for project reviews; it was developed for computer software writing projects but has wider application. **See:** Kerth, Norman L. 2001. *Project Retrospectives: A Handbook for Team Reviews*. www.retrospectives.com.
  - **Reference:** This is a guide to project evaluation as practiced by a particular foundation. Many of the techniques are elaborate, and the guide covers many of the same topics (planning, data collection, analysis) as this forest governance assessment guide does. Much of it is not applicable to quick team self-evaluations, but it has some useful ideas and further references: W.K. Kellogg Foundation. 1998. *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook*. http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook.aspx.

ANNEX III: CREATING BUDGETS

Assessments vary so much that it is impossible to provide a sample budget that will serve all purposes. This annex presents steps to creating a budget, a checklist of costs to consider in a budget, and a list of references with further information.

Budgeting Steps

The following steps are based on Cammack (2013):

- **Recall your objectives.** You should have already set your objectives by working through the steps in Chapter 1. Always keep in mind why you are doing the assessment and what you want to achieve.
- **Gauge your resources** (see Box 5). It's especially important to be aware of the limits of your funding. If your dreams exceed your funding, you will either have to scale back your aspirations or find additional funds. You should work out your funding challenges before you commit to spending money.
- **Gather information.**
  - If someone has done a similar assessment, see if you can get a copy of that assessment's budget.
  - If you know you are going to have particular costs (e.g., travel, meeting room rental fees, mobile phone fees, hiring of survey-takers), see if you can find information about the usual rates for these expenses.
  - Be aware of monetary costs. If you know that you will be changing currency, get the exchange rate. If you expect costs to change due to inflation, hedge for that.
- **Consider income.**
  - Think about grants and donations, and list only those that you are sure about.
  - Consider support from budgets of other programs and organizations. For example, a government agency or civil society organization might second a professional to work on the assessment. Another organization might lend an administrative assistant to coordinate travel logistics.
  - Look for in-kind support. The assessment may be able to borrow vehicles or have access to office space and computers. A stakeholder may be able to provide meeting space.
- **Consider costs.** The next section of this annex provides a checklist of common costs.
- **Construct a budget.**
  - You should typically break up expenses into time periods (i.e., time periods that sync with the budgeting practices of your host organization or your funder). For example, if your host organization tracks its finances quarterly, you should project your spending by quarter. If the funder wants to see your projected costs in each of the fiscal years that the donor uses for its accounting, you should project your costs by fiscal year. If you have multiple conflicting demands for formats, you may have to make multiple versions of the budget—but the overall income and expenditures for the assessment should be the same.

  - Some donors are interested in the cost per activity or output, for example, how much will it cost to hold each regional assessment workshop or to conduct each regional survey. In that case, you may want to prepare an "input" version of your budget to gauge your costs by category of expense and an "output" version to show costs per output.
  - Some donors may be interested in funding only a part of the assessment and want to see (or even approve) a budget for their part. If you have multiple donors, you may need to make separate sub-budgets for, say, data gathering funded by Donor A and dissemination funded by Donor B.
- **Seek approval**
  - You may need budget approval from the organizations that are providing funds or other support for the assessment.
  - You may need budget approval from the organization that will be overseeing spending and taking responsibility for ensuring that the funds are properly spent.

Checklist of Common Costs

- **Labor and participant costs**
  - Salaries for managers, data gathers, support staff, and assistants.
    - » Benefits such as pension contributions, continuing education support, health insurance, and holiday pay.
  - Consultant fees.
  - Honoraria for experts and other participants.
- **Office expenses**
  - Rent (or, if the office is owned, the costs of taxes, depreciation, and so forth.).
  - Furniture (rental costs or depreciation of owned furniture).
  - Telecommunication, postage, and Internet charges.
  - Office insurance.
  - Photocopying.
  - Utilities (e.g., electricity, water).
  - Office equipment (e.g., phones, computers, routers, printers).
  - Computer software.
  - Office supplies (e.g., stationery, printer ink, toner).
  - Supplies for office kitchens and restrooms.
  - Books and other publications.
  - Legal, bookkeeping, and other professional services.
  - Housekeeping, maintenance, and security services.
  - Government fees and licenses.
  - Bank fees.

  Note that if the office is part of a larger organization, that organization may charge "overhead" to cover many of the services and supplies listed above.
- **Travel costs**
  - Vehicle rentals, insurance, and fuel.
  - Local transportation (e.g., taxis, buses).
  - Tickets (e.g., bus, rail, airline, ferry).

  - Travel agency fees.
  - Lodging and meals. Governments and international development partners publish tables of standard per diem rates for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses.
  - Shipment of equipment, excess luggage, and so forth.
  - Travel health care and insurance costs.
  - Travel document fees.
- **Field equipment**
  - Voice recorders.
  - Laptops, tablets, and clipboards for data entry.
- **Meetings**
  - Rental space.
  - Interpreters.
  - Printing and distribution of background and follow-up materials.
  - Signage (e.g., banners, table tents, name tags).
  - Meals and coffee breaks.
  - Promotional materials (e.g., pads of paper, folders, pens, stickers)
  - Travel, honoraria and other support for participants.
- **Publication and dissemination.**
  - Consultant fees for editing, translation, and design.
  - Printing.
  - Mailing.
  - Website hosting.
  - Publicity and launch events.
  - Training.

  Note that staff time (salaries) for publication and dissemination is usually included under the "Labor and Participants" category at the top of this checklist. The rough rule of thumb is that report creation can take a third of total staff time in any project whose primary output is a report.

- **Follow-up.**
  - Self-evaluation activities.
  - Collection of feedback from users.
  - Documentation of methods and lessons learned.
  - Archiving of data, methods, and lessons learned.
- **Oversight.**
  - Audits or other oversight and reporting activities required by donors.
  - Oversight or reporting activities required by government.
  - Costs associated with transparency, such as maintaining a project website, responding to public requests for information, or publishing periodic reports or newsletters (if not included under staff and/or office and publication expenses).
- **Contingency.**
  - You may wish to budget a reserve to cover unanticipated costs.

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Mango. Undated. "Guide to Financial Management for NGOs" website. http://www.mango.org.uk/Guide/GettingTheBasicsRight.

Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management (SSWM). "Budget Allocation and Resource Planning" web page. http://www.sswm.info/category/planning-process-tools/implementation/implementation-support-tools/project-design/budget-al.

ANNEX IV: SAMPLE WORK PLAN OUTLINE

- **Introduction (*or* Executive Summary)**
- **Background and Context**
  - Nature of the country's forests.
  - History of forest conservation and development in the country.
  - Current situation and broad concerns.
- **Assessment Objectives**

  Goal:
  - To increase levels of transparency within the Forest Sector.

  Outcomes:
  - To increase awareness of forest sector transparency.
  - To increase capacity to address issues of forest sector transparency.

  Outputs:
  - Forest Sector Transparency Report Card widely disseminated amongst key stakeholders.
  - Increased number of organizations working on forest transparency.
- **Assessment Timeline**
  - Estimated to take approximately six months.
  - Assessment to be repeated on an annual basis.
- **Scope of Assessment**
  - Technical scope will focus on forest transparency, especially the legal element of transparency.
  - Geographical scope will be the national level, with a focus on national institutions.
  - Social scope will focus on national-level actors and be based primarily in the nation's capital.
- **Assessment Methods**
  - Develop a transparency "report card" using desk reviews of information plus key informant interviews.
  - Give small grants to other organizations to generate further quantitative and qualitative information to triangulate findings (as well as to build capacity).
- **Groups Involved**
  - Project finance will come through an international NGO and a bilateral donor agency.
  - Technical assistance will come from these same two sources.
  - Primary work and coordination will be the responsibility of the national NGO.
  - Supporting work and triangulation will come from government offices and small NGOs receiving grants administered by the national NGO.
  - National NGO will approach a variety of stakeholders to participate as key stakeholders.
- **Budget**

  Total budget estimate: $100,000 per annum.
  - Cost of data collection plus dissemination = $50,000
    - » Smaller portion to cover national NGO core staff team.
    - » Larger portion for dissemination, including to run workshops and events to further raise awareness of forest sector transparency (using the report card as a tool).
  - Cost of small grants to other organizations = $50,000

- **Assessment Outputs**
  - A Forest Sector Transparency Report Card. This will be aimed at stakeholders generally and will also become part of the basis of the international NGO's global report on transparency.
  - A technical report explaining the report card, aimed at government officials, the press, international donors, and technically oriented stakeholders.
  - A press conference to release the report card.
  - Four regional dissemination workshops.

ANNEX V: CONCEPTS TO HELP IN DEVELOPING INDICATORS

This annex offers background and guidance on developing specific indicators, and is designed to be used after you have defined your scope in terms of components of governance. As Chapter 3 suggests, a good way to begin developing indicators is to look at what others have done. The concepts in this annex will help you understand some options that you have in developing indicators and may help you adapt existing indicators to your needs or create new indicators.

Qualitative vs. Quantitative Indicators

Indicators can be quantitative or qualitative. A quantitative indicator yields an amount—a number, often with associated units. For example, the area of forest lost to deforestation last year, the number of arrests for forest crime, or the percentage of rural households in a survey that say they have fair access to forest resources all could be quantitative indicators.

Qualitative indicators can take several forms. They can be true-or-false (Boolean): Does the country have a written national forest policy? They can be multiple choice: Do appointed forest officers hold the qualifications called for in their job description (a) always, (b) usually, (c) sometimes, or (d) never or almost never? They can use indexes or scales: On a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how well have forest officers been trained in crime prevention and detection? Or they can be open, allowing narrative responses: Describe the adequacy of training of forest officers.[7]

Broad vs. Narrow Indicators

From the above you can see that, like criteria, indicators can be broad or narrow. For example, the Montréal Process (2009a) has a single descriptive indicator for forest law enforcement: "Enforcement of Laws related to Forests" (Indicator 7.3.b). Its equivalent in the PROFOR-FAO Framework, "Forest Law Enforcement," is a component (Component 3.2) with eight separate subcomponents under it, each of which could give rise to one or more fairly narrow indicators.

As with criteria, using several specific indicators instead of a single general one gives you a more organized and replicable assessment. It may also lead you to pay too much attention to specifics while missing some element important to the larger picture, and it may add to the cost of the assessment. You will have to keep this in mind and strike a balance between detail and organization on the one hand and flexibility and cost on the other.

7. For more on scoring of subjective indicators, see UNDP (2007), Section III.

Single vs. Multiple Values

An indicator's score may be a single amount, but indicator scores can also be sets of values.

For example, say you were measuring forest incomes. Rather than measuring the average income of a forest dependent community and getting a single number, you could divide the population of the community into five groups depending on income: the lowest fifth, the second lowest fifth, the middle fifth, and so on. Get the median income for each fifth. This set of five numbers would tell you more about income distribution and poverty than the single average. Get this information for 10 representative communities and you have 50 numbers allowing you to compare distribution of income in these communities. Track one community over time and you have another set of numbers that might tell whether incomes are rising or falling and whether income distribution has become more or less skewed.

Qualitative indicators can also have sets of values. For example, you could score the trust that rural people place in the honesty of field officers at three agencies as low, moderate, or high and get the following three scores: Forestry Department, low trust; Wildlife Department, moderate trust; Agriculture Department, high trust.

Measure these scores in several provinces, or by separately reporting the scoring of different experts, or by repeating the scoring periodically over time, and you have a larger set of scores conveying more information about the level of trust.

Inputs, Processes, Outputs, and Outcomes

Forest governance is an abstract concept. Measuring abstract concepts can be difficult: they do not have weight or physical dimension. You can measure some abstract ideas in terms of conventional units, like measuring monetary value in terms of the national currency. However, there are no conventional units for governance.

As a result, most quantitative and qualitative measures of forest governance are indirect. We cannot throw a tape measure around forest law enforcement, but we can try to quantify how many officers are in the field, how many hours of training they have, how much money is spent on enforcement, how many arrests are made, how many cases are prosecuted, how many hectares of forest are lost or degraded, how much tax money goes uncollected, or even how much potential private investment is discouraged due to the risks posed by crime. For activities that do not generate records, such as corruption or human rights abuses, the indirect indicator may have to be several steps removed from the actual activity. A common way to track these is to measure reputation or public perceptions—for example, using opinion polls or focus group discussions to measure the reputation of the forest agency for resisting corruption.

When trying to come up with a range of possible indicators, it helps to think in terms of inputs, outputs, and outcomes. To take the forest law enforcement example again, officers in the field, training,

and budgets are inputs. Arrests and prosecutions are outputs. Areas of degraded forest, lost tax revenues, and lost investments are all undesired outcomes.

Assessments regularly use all three kinds of indicators. No type is inherently better than the other, and you do not need to have all three types for a single criterion. Thinking about each of these three aspects separately, however, will help you to brainstorm more possible indicators.

You may come across another category term: process indicators. People do not all use this term in the same way. Some people use it as an umbrella term covering both input and output indicators. Under this view, many of the input and output examples above would be considered indicators of how well the process of enforcement is going. Alternatively, some people reserve the term "process" for indicators that combine input and output data to show the efficiency of producing outputs from particular inputs. As such, they would consider the number of arrests per officer to be a process indicator. Still others use the term for indicators of the existence of a process. To them, "Do people have practical access to fair and rapid forums to resolve forest-related conflicts?" is not about inputs and outputs—it is about process (and would thus be a process indicator).

Neutral vs. Normative Indicators

Some indicators just describe things as they are, without judging—for example, "Area of Forest Under Local Community Ownership or Control." Any question of whether the resulting measurement is good or bad may not be apparent from the measurement. It may come out in the analysis when this indicator is compared with others, or it may come out over time as the indicator changes.

Some indicators carry an inherent sense of good or bad results. For example, "Does the government have adequate capacity to address forest-related crimes and illegal activities?" (from the PROFOR tool) clearly has favorable answers and unfavorable answers. This is a normative indicator. Some normative indicators take things a step further. If there is an unfavorable answer, that implies the need for action that is in the power of the government or another party to take. These are "actionable" indicators.

If your objective is to appear neutral, and to describe without judging or casting blame, you may want to use mostly neutral indicators—and use normative indicators only when there is no likely controversy associated with the norm. If your objective is to promote reform, normative indicators can be natural tools to point out needed change. You could, however, also introduce norms during analysis and use neutral indicators to draw normative conclusions.

Defining a Good Set of Indicators

Indicators must be good individually and good as a working set or portfolio. To decide whether a single indicator is worthwhile, you can use a variation of the SMART test used in Chapter 1. A good indicator should be:

- **Specific.** It should be clear and well-defined.
- **Measurable.** You should be able to assign a description or value to it.
- **Achievable.** You should have the resources to make that measurement and, if necessary, verify it.
- **Realistic.** The country context and other factors outside of your control should not stand in the way of an accurate assessment of the indicator.
- **Time-bound.** You should be able to make the measurement during the time frame of the assessment.

You may not know whether an indicator passes some of these tests until you actually try to measure it. It could be that a seemingly difficult indicator has already been scored as part of a routine government data collection process or a recent parallel assessment. It could be that what you thought was a simple indicator actually is quite difficult to score. You can get early warning of these kinds of problems by pilot-testing your indicators. (See Box 35 on pilot testing.) Whether you pilot-test or not, you may have to adjust your indicators somewhat as new information comes to light.

In addition, to be good an indicator must be suited to the task at hand. If you are conducting a one-time assessment, it may not help to know the area of land with forest cover; if you are planning a multi-year monitoring effort, however, this could be a key outcome indicator to watch. If you are trying to diagnose problems with governance, it could be good to use normative indicators, although you can introduce the normative element later in your analysis.

You should look at the quality of your indicators individually and also as a set. Taken as a set, the indicators must serve the objectives of the assessment. In particular, a good indicator set should be:

- **Comprehensive.** It should cover all aspects of forest governance that need to be examined to meet your objectives. It should be detailed enough to give you the information you need.
- **Consistent.** The individual indicators should avoid overlap. If they are normative, they should reflect consistent values.
- **Organized.** The organization of the indicator set should make it easy to see that the indicators are comprehensive and consistent. If individual indicators are going to be scored in different ways, this might be reflected in how they the set is organized (i.e., to make it easy to see that scoring the set will be achievable and realistic).

What to Avoid in Choosing Indicators[8]

In choosing indicators, here are some traps to avoid:

- **A biased indicator set.** Indicators will always cover some issues better than others. Your aim should be to have the set cover the most important issues well. Some indicators could show embarrassing results. These findings often turn out to be highly useful. Select indicators because they will provide important information, not because they will provide what people want to hear.

8. *Source:* FAO, forthcoming.

- **Too narrow an indicator set.** An indicator set should reflect the scope of the assessment. It should give weight to all the issues of concern, and not ignore the concerns of any particular stakeholders.
- **Indicators that don't really reflect your objectives.** To take an example, it may be easy to measure the number of people who work for the forest agency. It may be true that, with too few people, the forest agency cannot perform well. However, an increase in employees may be poorly correlated with specific things that matter, like fairer allocation of permits, better collection of public revenues, or more responsiveness to stakeholders. Therefore, an "easy" indicator like this is really a poor indicator. Select indicators that really tell you about what you need to know.
- **Measuring X when the real issue is the trend in X.** Some indicators that are fine for continuous monitoring are not good for one-time assessments. For example, it may be of little interest to measure forest area, biological diversity, or rural incomes if what you are really interested in is changes in those variables over time. This is especially true if little baseline information is available. It might be worthwhile, however, to measure and establish a baseline now for the benefit of future assessments.
- **Indicators that cannot be scored.** Assessments have been known to ask questions that cannot be answered with existing data, or which would take a great deal of time and money to answer well. For example, accurately scoring the access of rural communities to several forest resources in a large and varied country might require extensive surveys in remote areas. A narrower indicator, such as access to wood fuel, might be more practical to score—and existing survey data or reliable expert opinion to score that indicator might be available at low cost. Sometimes the perfect indicator must be set aside and a more practical indicator adopted.
- **Too many indicators.** It is possible to come up with a hundred or more potential indicators to score and analyze. In some cases, it may be practical to consider that many indicators, but in other cases it may be too costly. Some initial screening and selection will have to come first, with care not to introduce bias.

Strengthening Your Indicators

You can strengthen individual indicators and indicator sets by adding some instructions, explanations, or examples to help score them. For example, the Montréal Process (2009a, 2009b) indicators come with rationales explaining why each indicator is included. The ITTO indicators for sustainable management of tropical forests come with detailed reporting forms that break each indicator down into more specific questions and include instructions for supplying supporting documentation and descriptions of specific factors that fall under the indicator. The PROFOR indicators come with three scoring aids. The first is a brief statement of the rationale behind the indicator (i.e., the indicator is intended to be actionable, and the rationale states the norm reflected in the indicator). The second is a set of notes from the indicator's authors explaining in more detail what they intended the indicator to mean. The third is a form that offers a set of multiple-choice options to score the indicator.

ANNEX VI: GLOSSARY

Approach: The way different **methods** are brought together to complete an assessment; the overall path an assessment takes to plan, gather data, and arrive at results.

Assessment: "Appraisal based on careful analytical evaluation" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31).

Closed Question: A question in an interview or survey with a limited set of possible answers. Examples include yes-or-no, true-or-false, and multiple-choice questions. Compare to **open question.**

Coding: The process of turning an actual response or other raw data into a recorded, often standardized form (i.e. assigning responses to categories to allow analysis). (See Babbie 2010, p.G2).

Components: "Essential elements of a **pillar**" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31). Used in the development of **indicators.**

Criterion: An element of governance used in the development of **indicators**. This guide prefers the terms **components** and **subcomponents.**

Data Collection: The systematic gathering of information.

Diagnosis: "Examination to identify or determine the nature and characteristics of a system or aspect of a system" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31).

Evaluation: Study or measurement, often with an aim to compare the current situation with a past situation or a desired goal.

Indicator: "A quantitative, qualitative, or descriptive attribute that, if measured or monitored periodically, could indicate the direction of change in a governance **subcomponent**" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31).

Measurement: The size, amount, extent, status, or degree of something, or the act of finding the size, amount, extent, status, or degree of something. As used in this guide, it can apply to both **quantitative** and **qualitative data collection**.

Method: A way for undertaking an activity—for example, data collection or stakeholder engagement. Methods lay out a specific set of actions to take to guide you in how to undertake them.

Monitoring: "Systematic tracking or scrutiny for the purpose of collecting specified data or information" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31).

Open Question: a question offered in an interview or survey without a list of possible responses. Compare to **closed question.**

Outcomes: The changes in conditions or behaviors that result from the delivery of **outputs.**

Outputs: In the context of an assessment, its specific products or services (i.e. what the assessment directly produces).

Participatory Approach: An **approach** that engages stakeholders throughout the development, implementation, and evaluation of an **assessment**.

Pillars: "Fundamentals of good forest governance" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.31). Used in defining governance and designing **indicators**.

Piloting: Testing a **method** or **tool** on a small scale, with the aim of improvement.

Primary Data: New data that an assessment generates.

Qualitative Data: Data expressed as words, not numbers—for example, expert opinions, focus group preferences, workshop findings, and anecdotal information such as individual stories, examples, or cases that illustrate a point. (Note that If you gather enough qualitative opinions in a public opinion poll or content analysis, you may be able to produce **quantitative data**—for example, 70 percent of people believe X, 20 percent of media reports state Y).

Quantitative Data: Data expressed in numbers—for example, income levels, percentages, or budget figures.

Research: Data collection with a particular aim to shed light on specific questions.

Sampling: Measuring part of something to arrive at an estimate about the whole.

Secondary Data: Existing data (e.g., from prior assessments, censuses, scholarly studies, and so forth) that an assessment can use.

Stakeholders: "Any individuals or groups who are directly or indirectly affected by, or interested in, a given resource and have a stake in it" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.32).

Stratification: Dividing a diverse collection of things into groups of similar things (strata) to make measurements more accurate and informative.

Subcomponent: "An identifiable element of a governance **component** and an important aspect of forest governance by which a **component** may be assessed" (PROFOR & FAO 2011, p.32). Used in the development of indicators.

Terms of Reference: A description of what is expected from an employee, consultant, contractor, or project. This is typically the scope of work and the products or services to be delivered; it sometimes also includes the skills required and time, budget, or other constraints that may apply.

Tool: A specific protocol for implementing part or all of a **method** or even an entire **assessment**. For example, a set of questions can be a tool for implementing a series of interviews or a survey. Some publications (e.g., USAID 2013, Kishor & Rosenbaum 2012) present tools for implementing an entire **assessment**.

Triangulation: Obtaining information on the same issues from more than one source to cross-check findings.

Validation: Objective examination to affirm quality. It may refer to **verification** of data and also to review of the **methods** of **data collection** and analysis. Done with outside scrutiny, it becomes a limited form of **vetting**.

Verification: Confirming with a data source that data are accurately represented.

Vetting: Opening work to outside scrutiny and criticism. Note that vetting can go beyond **validation** to include subjective and value-based criticism.

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But when you have bad governance, of course, these resources are destroyed: The forests are deforested, there is illegal logging, there is soil erosion. I got pulled deeper and deeper and saw how these issues become linked to governance, to corruption...

—Wangari Maathai (Recipient, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize)

I have been struck again and again by how important measurement is to improving the human condition.

—Bill Gates (Founder, Microsoft Corporation)

FOREST GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT IS AN EXPANDING PRACTICE. PEOPLE ARE USING ASSESSMENTS TO WATCH FOR DEVELOPING PROBLEMS, DIAGNOSE NEEDS FOR REFORM, MONITOR PROGRESS OF PROGRAMS, AND EVALUATE IMPACTS. GOVERNMENTS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS, DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, ACADEMICS AND COALITIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS HAVE ALL PERFORMED ASSESSMENTS IN RECENT YEARS.

IN 2012, AN EXPERT MEETING AT FAO HEADQUARTERS IN ROME RECOMMENDED THE CREATION OF A GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICES IN FOREST GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT AND DATA COLLECTION. UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A DIVERSE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS, FAO AND PROFOR HAVE OVERSEEN THE PRODUCTION OF THIS PRACTICAL MANUAL.

THIS GUIDE PRESENTS A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH TO PLANNING A FOREST GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT, DESIGNING DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TOOLS, COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA, AND MAKING THE RESULTS AVAILABLE TO DECISION MAKERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS. IT ALSO PRESENTS FIVE CASE STUDIES TO ILLUSTRATE HOW ASSESSMENTS HAVE APPLIED THE STEPS IN PRACTICE, AND IT INCLUDES REFERENCES AND LINKS TO DOZENS OF SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION.

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