SEMINAR ON COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY REPORT

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by

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Abstract

This report provides a summary of a one-day seminar on Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) held on May 15, 1998, sponsored by the Global Environment Center of the U.S. Agency for International Development and hosted by the International Resources Group (IRG). The intent of this seminar was:

- To provide a summary of a week-long World Bank Workshop on CBNRM for USAID staff and partners who could not attend;
- To review some of USAID's experience with CBNRM and related approaches; and
- To recommend actions that USAID could take to more effectively apply the lessons it has been learning about CBNRM.

First a brief overview of the World Bank workshop is presented in this summary. Next the presentations and discussions of the one-day USAID seminar are reviewed. Finally, actions and recommendations for next steps that emerged from the seminar are presented.

This brief report is not intended to be comprehensive summary of either the World Bank CBNRM workshop or USAID's one-day CBNRM seminar. Rather, it was written to stimulate thinking among staff in AID/W and the field about how the lessons from the Agency's long and broad experience working with rural communities to foster the sustainable use and management of natural resources can better inform future strategic planning, program implementation, and evaluation.

Overview of the World Bank Workshop on CBNRM

The Economic Development Institute of the World Bank held a five-day International Workshop on Community-Based Natural Resource Management from May 10-15, 1998, in Washington, D.C. The workshop was organized in collaboration with IDRC, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and a number of other organizations. Organizers issued a call for case-studies that focused on "institutional innovations" with respect to one or more of the four organizing themes of the workshop. The four themes (and some key words that describe them) were:

- **Enabling Policy and Institutional Environments** (tenure reform; recognizing local rights to local resources; legislation establishing rights and responsibilities toward resources; decentralization and devolution)

- **Effective Community-Based Groups** (local leadership; organizational capacity; catalytic institutions; training and technical support; building human/social capital)

- **Linkages that Transcend Communities** (stakeholders at all levels; economic incentives for sustainable NRM; contracts and management agreements between local groups, private sector, and government agencies)

- **Conflict Management** (recognizing competing resource uses; managing conflicts within communities; managing conflicts between stakeholders at all levels)

These themes provided the conceptual framework for the workshop, and can be thought of as general categories of hypothetical "enabling conditions" for successful CBNRM. They were identified by workshop organizers as areas where more systematic **accumulation**, **evaluation**, and **dissemination** of knowledge is needed.

Nearly 400 proposals were submitted in response to the call for case studies, a level of interest that greatly surprised the organizers, who had expected only about 100 proposals. Only 20 papers could be presented at the workshop, and those were selected to give a balanced representation of the four workshop themes, geographic regions, and resource types (agriculture, pastoralism, forestry, wildlife, and marine resources). The cases provided a rich source of detail to illustrate the wide range of conditions in which CBNRM is being developed. Around 250 people from 64 different countries attended the workshop, enriching the discussions following case study and plenary presentations with the diversity of their experience and knowledge.

In addition to the case study presentations, plenary sessions allowed the participants to discuss the workshop themes and other broad conceptual issues in general terms. Norman Uphoff of Cornell University presented the opening plenary talk, which provided a framework for the entire workshop. Paraphrasing Uphoff, community-based natural resource management is the sustainable management of natural resources which recognizes the primary stake and role of local resource users, **and** appropriate rights and responsibilities of stakeholders at all levels, from international to local. CBNRM doesn't mean that:

- Benefits from resources go only to local groups;
- Management decisions are made only at the local level;
- Costs are borne only by local groups; or that
- The resources involved are common-property resources only.

The issue of the appropriate scale for action, and of the need for linkages from the local to the international level was the subject of much interest at the workshop, and so the focus was not only on communities. "Co-management" and "joint management" were frequently discussed, not only management by local people at the local level. Conflict management was another topic of much interest at the workshop. A number of the 20 case studies illustrated the need for, and importance of, conflict management in enabling sustainable natural resource management. The case studies and plenary presentations also highlighted the linkages and synergies between natural resources and other development sectors and issues, including population, health and nutrition, women in development, democracy and governance, economic development, and humanitarian relief.

A general conclusion of the workshop seemed to be that there can be no **blueprint** for CBNRM, and that flexible, adaptive management is required to enable it to work.

On the final day of the workshop, regional working groups met to develop recommendations to governments and public agencies, and to the World Bank and other donors. These recommendations have relevance for USAID. Recommendations that emerged from more than one regional group included:

- Increase the level of technical and financial support for CBNRM including training, monitoring, research and implementation;
- Promote cross-learning between donors, governments, and the World Bank, through holding regional follow-up workshops and information exchange and networking;
- Lengthen the "incubation period" for CBNRM activities and allow greater flexibility in the duration of CBNRM projects; and,
- Develop donor and intra-agency coordination for CBNRM activities.

There are clear parallels between these recommendation developed by working groups at the World Bank workshop and the suggestions for action/possible "next steps" developed by participants in the one-day USAID seminar on CBNRM (see below).

Further information on this workshop can be obtained from the Workshop Coordinator, Dr. Christopher Gerrard, Economic Development Institute, The World Bank, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20433 USA Tel: (202) 473-0026
Information is also available on the World Wide Web at:
http://www.worldbank.org/html/edi/conatrem/index.htm

Summary of the USAID Seminar on Community-Based Natural Resource Management

The Global Environment Center of USAID sponsored a one-day seminar on CBNRM on Friday, May 15, 1998, immediately following the World Bank CBNRM Workshop. The meeting was hosted by the International Resources Group. The objectives of this one-day seminar were to:

- Summarize the World Bank CBNRM Workshop for a larger audience of USAID staff and partners;
- Review some of USAID's experience with CBNRM and related approaches, and relate this experience to the World Bank workshop;
- Present a prototype framework or "matrix" for organizing and analyzing information about CBNRM experiences that is being developed by the Africa Bureau; and,
- Engage participants in discussion of important issues and developments related to CBNRM.

About 50 people attended the morning sessions of the seminar, and around 25 stayed through the afternoon to participate in discussions and working groups. Many of those attending were USAID staff, but there were also a significant number of participants from NGOs and consulting firms.

David Hales, Director of USAID's Global Environment Center, gave the introduction to the workshop. He emphasized that while USAID has long-term experience promoting sustainable natural resources management involving communities all around the world, the knowledge of what works and what doesn't based on this large body of experience is often lost, or is not disseminated in way that informs other related activities. He also pointed out that while there are regional differences in the conditions required for successful natural resources management, there are some important commonalities across countries and regions that we can't afford to ignore.

A brief summary of the World Bank CBNRM Workshop was presented by Bruce Byers. A panel consisting of Marilyn Hoskins (USA), Taparandava Maveneke (Zimbabwe), and Tri Nugroho (Indonesia) then addressed some specific themes brought up during the Bank's CBNRM workshop. Mike McGahuey of the Africa Bureau and Philip DeCosse of IRG then presented a "matrix" for organizing and analyzing information about natural resources management that has been under development by the Africa Bureau. This matrix organizes information into general categories that are linked in a causal way, at least hypothetically. These categories include:

- "Enabling **conditions**" that affect natural resource management practices;
- The **practices** themselves; and
- The **impacts** or **outcomes** of the practices, including environmental and social (e.g. economic, governance) impacts.

The potential of this matrix, or a similar information-organizing "tool," for helping USAID to learn from it's own experience with CBNRM was emphasized. Interest in expanding the matrix to

include worldwide experience also was explored.

Asif Shaikh of IRG and John Heermans, a consultant, then challenged the audience with some reflections on CBNRM and its role in USAID's international sustainable development efforts.

A large world map showing dozens of representative CBNRM activities supported by USAID throughout the world, as well as locations of the 20 case studies presented at the World Bank Workshop, had been prepared by the Environmental Information Clearinghouse (EIC) at PADCO, Inc. This map was displayed in the conference room, and during the lunch break participants in the seminar added other cases with which they were familiar to this simple geographical data base by putting pins in the map and filling out cards with basic information identifying the activity.

After lunch there was a discussion of issues that had arisen during the morning sessions. It was noted with some concern during this discussion was the lack of participation by democracy and governance (DG) staff of the Agency at the CBNRM seminar. Agency DG staff should be involved in future discussions because effective CBNRM involves linking the natural resources management (NRM) and democracy and governance (DG) sectors. The matrix presented during the morning session was developed by the Africa Bureau, and there was some discussion of how that information-gathering framework could be adapted and used in other regions. It was noted that other regional bureaus within the Agency may have their own needs and approaches, but that it nevertheless was important and useful to understand the common principles of successful CBNRM worldwide.

The seminar participants then broke into three working groups, which were to try to apply the Africa Bureau's CBNRM "matrix" and the World Bank's CBNRM conceptual framework "themes" to some real cases and situations to test their completeness and generalizability. India, Indonesia, and Zimbabwe were the cases considered. Working groups received brief written summaries of these cases as presented at the World Bank workshop. We wanted the working groups to suggest refinements to the analytical and planning framework and "tools" that would better identify key enabling conditions, practices, and impacts of CBNRM.

These working groups then reported back to the plenary, making many constructive suggestions for revising and improving the Africa Bureau "matrix" that had been presented. The general feeling of the group was that the matrix provided a useful starting point for trying to develop an information-gathering framework, but that it needed further refinement. It was also noted that the "matrix" for gathering information about CBNRM needed to link to a broader conceptual or theoretical framework, one that would help place it in a broader context of environment and development. What many participants seemed to argue for was linking the information-gathering matrix to a conceptual framework that could be used for strategic planning purposes.

After this discussion Barbara Belding presented some possible "next steps" that had been suggested during the seminar and before. Those and other suggestions are presented in more detail below. David Hales read a list he had compiled during the day of "ways to fail" in

CBNRM. Representative examples from this list include:

- Assume that CBNRM will always be funded by donors;
- Carry out CBNRM activities without concern for an explanatory theory; and,
- Collect as little data as possible, and don't share what information you do have.

The last two "ways to fail" relate directly to the objectives of both the World Bank workshop and the USAID seminar, and suggest directions for possible "next steps" the Agency could take.

After some brief discussion, the seminar closed.

Suggestions for Action/Possible "Next Steps"

The ultimate objective of the CBNRM Seminar on May 15 was to recommend actions that USAID could take to more effectively apply the lessons it has been learning about CBNRM.

A general summary of the suggestions made during the seminar is that it would be useful to:

- **Involve** the regional bureaus and other key development sectors (DG, population, health) in a process that would;

- **Emphasize** and **promote** the usefulness of "capturing" experience and information about CBNRM (and related NRM activities) in a form that enables comparative analysis (such as the Africa Bureau's "matrix");

- **Link** that information-gathering tool to a broader strategic planning framework (like the Africa Bureau's FRAME) that is **adaptive** and **flexible**, rather than rigid and prescriptive.

Specifically, it was suggested that USAID could:

- Collaborate with the World Bank in follow-on activities, such as regional workshops;

- Revise the Africa Bureau's information-gathering matrix based on the many constructive comments made at the seminar on May 15, and on possible follow-on discussions with staff from other regional bureaus than Africa, and staff from other relevant sectors, such as democracy and governance, population, and health;

- Promote the adoption of a tool for gathering information on CBNRM like the Africa Bureau "matrix" in other regional bureaus of USAID. Such a tool should guide missions in identifying what information is essential for analyzing, planning, monitoring, and evaluating CBNRM. It was suggested that the Global Bureau Environment Center or its Office of Environment and Natural Resources would be the appropriate initiator of such a cross-regional initiative.

- Take the revised matrix "on the road," travelling to selected missions to present the matrix and get help from field staff in capturing their own experience in matrix form. This "road show" idea arose from the view that actively involving missions in a participatory process for enrichment of the matrix and for collaborative hypothesis testing is needed. It was suggested that to capture experience-based information from the field, missions could **not** simply be asked to "fill in" the matrix as if it were a questionnaire and send it to Washington. Rather, an interview process would be needed, in which someone familiar with CBNRM and the matrix framework took it to missions, explained it to them, and worked with them to capture the qualitative information and nuances from their experience and to ensure that information from diverse missions is recorded in a comparable way.

- Promote a better understanding of intersectoral linkages and synergies between CBNRM

and other development sectors in general, and in particular gain endorsement of the linkage between CBNRM and democracy and governance (DG) efforts within the Agency. For the latter, a dialogue between NRM and DG staff from the Global and regional bureaus is needed; DG staff were conspicuously absent at the CBNRM seminar on May 15.

- Link the matrix to a larger strategic planning framework or process--like "FRAME" in the Africa Bureau--to help answer question of **when** to use CBNRM, not just **how** to make it work. Avoid a process that would come up with rigid, "definitive" prescriptions for CBNRM, or USAID-only solutions that are not developed in collaboration with regional and local stakeholders and partners.

- Circulate to appropriate USAID mission and regional bureau staff a list of **all** of the case studies submitted to the World Bank in response to the call for case studies, not just those selected for presentation at the Bank CBNRM workshop. This would enable USAID staff to contact others in their region doing CBNRM work that they may not know about.

Other conclusions expressed by seminar participants are:

The World Bank has raised the profile of CBNRM by holding this workshop. If we can't provide more clear evidence that CBNRM is effective soon, it may fall out of fashion with donors and governments. USAID now has an opportunity to give CBNRM some renewed attention, at a time when regional bureaus and missions are engaged in developing strategies to take them beyond the year 2000. This is an excellent time to be taking a new, hard look at CBNRM and what we have learned from experience.