

PROJET ELARGI DE GESTION DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES



EXPANDED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY

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A PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT REVIEW OF THE NIALAMA CLASSIFIED FOREST CO-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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I. Preface and Acknowledgements

The Performance Improvement Review (PIR) package (Lyons, *et. al.* 2000), on which our first PIR was based, was adopted to monitor and improve the quality and performance of the co-management program being implemented in the Nialama classified forest. In the coming months, the PIR package and process will be further refined and adapted to respond to the program needs of all current and future ENRMA-assisted co-managed forests in Guinea. The Performance Improvement Review responds to the need for improving the capacity of the partners in co-management—the local community members and the national forestry service—to design, implement, monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of their co-management program. We gratefully acknowledge our colleagues at the United States Agency for International Development for their vision and for financial support of this activity through the ENRMA cooperative agreement.

The authors would like to express their appreciation of Chris Kopp of Winrock International and Joyce V. Lyons of Initiatives, Inc. for their willingness to negotiate a contractual mechanism that allowed us to collaborate in this creative way. Not everyone shared our enthusiasm for adapting a tool originally designed for a reproductive health program to our forest co-management effort.

We would like to thank the staff at the ENRMA Labé office for the extra hours they put in as we were confronted with deadlines and hectic schedules. Morlaye Demba was instrumental in translating and finalizing the PIR instruments. Mamadou Laho Diallo and Mamadou Saliou Diallo dedicated many hours to refining the Pular translations of the instruments.

Our indebtedness extends to our colleagues from ENRMA, DNEF, and the Forest Committee who participated actively in the first Nialama PIR; we look forward to joining forces in the future to further test and revise the PIR process and instruments for the co-management activity.

II. Introduction

Participatory approaches to natural resource management have been gaining popularity over the past several decades throughout much of Africa. A wide range of strategies have been explored and tested in a vast array of social and environmental settings. With specific reference to participatory forest management, a variety of terms and approaches have been developed, such as “social forestry,” “community forestry,” “village forestry,” and “joint forest management.”

Collaborative Forest Management programs tend to share some common attributes (IUCN 2000: 7). Co-management is a pluralist approach that incorporates a variety of partners in a variety of roles, generally to the end goals of environmental conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and the equitable sharing of resource-related benefits and responsibilities. Co-management is a political and cultural process seeking “democracy” and social justice in natural resource management. In most cases, co-management is a complex, lengthy and sometimes confused process, involving frequent changes, surprises, contradictions and the need to retrace one’s own steps. In summary, co-management is rooted in efforts to intertwine equity and social justice with sustainable use of natural resources and community-based initiatives.

The specific context of the activity, however, is much more important than any externally devised terminology, approach or process. Co-management processes are invariably experimental and approaches and tools need to be adjusted and adapted to specific situations and environments. The co-management effort in Guinea is no different, and it is due to this need to “learn-by-doing” that we embarked on adopting a participatory *performance improvement review* (PIR) program. The background, objectives and results of our first PIR are the subjects of this report.

III. Background of the Co-Management Initiative in Guinea

Most of the classified forests in Guinea, of which there are 133, currently are being exploited as open access domains. The government of Guinea maintains state ownership and control over the forests that were classified during the colonial era. The state agency responsible for forest protection and management, the *Direction Nationale des Eaux et Forêts* (DNEF), however, has proved largely ineffective over the decades in deterring the use of most of these forest reserves due to limited financial and human resources. Local populations living in and around these forests have generally been ill-informed as to the reasons why the forests were classified, and do not know their use rights. Local residents and “outsiders,” primarily coming from urban and peri-urban areas, exploit the classified forests clandestinely, often bribing the government foresters assigned to manage the forest. As a consequence, the condition of the classified forests in Guinea has been declining steadily. Confronted with this state of affairs, the national forestry service grew interested in exploring alternative management strategies.

In recent years, the Guinean Government has recognized the need to adopt a more participatory approach to management of forest resources. Key policies and legal texts supporting this policy shift include:

- ?? The 1986 Decentralization Policy, which recognized the Communauté Rurale de Développement (CRD) as the lowest level of government;
- ?? The 1989 Tropical Forestry Action Plan, which outlines the government’s Forest Policy, and the Forest Code;
- ?? The 1991 Political Letter for Agricultural Development;
- ?? The 1996 joint Ministerial Declaration on sharing of forest revenues with local government; and
- ?? The 1999 law recognizing the legal right for communities to manage forests classified in the name of the local forest association.

Other policies supporting a more participatory approach to resource management include those pertaining to land and environmental issues, and international conventions that Guinea has agreed to support (Williams 2000).

In Guinea, forest co-management is a partnership between the local population living within or adjacent to the classified forest and the national government in the name of DNEF. Between 1994 and 1999, The USAID-funded Guinea Natural Resources Management Project worked to develop a pilot approach to forest co-management for the Nialama Classified Forest, situated in the Lélouma Prefecture. Based on numerous studies, legislative texts, legal recognition and the needs of the local population, a Forest Management Plan was prepared. On 13 April 1999, the government and the Nialama community signed a five-year contract for co-management, based upon the technical plan.

Implementation of the five year work plan began soon after ENRMA assumed the responsibility to facilitate and assist the co-management activity at the end of 1999. After almost a year of working with the Forest Committee, the local population and the DNEF, it was more than apparent that the quality of the co-management process and implementation needed to be assessed and improved. No system was in place to monitor, evaluate and assure quality implementation of the program. Furthermore, because the co-management effort in Guinea is evolving through a ‘learning-by-doing’ process, we deemed it imperative to develop tools that would allow the partners in co-management to identify program and implementation weaknesses and design a process through which to propose and follow-up on solutions. The Performance Improvement Review Package was adopted to respond to these concerns and needs.

IV. The PIR Process

Initiatives, Inc. originally designed the Performance Improvement Review Package as a quality assurance tool for community based family planning programs with the intention that it might be adapted for other community based programs. PIR was designed to provide NGOs and community organizations with the tools and guidance needed to carry out effective, internal, rapid reviews. These reviews include four principal steps: planning, data collection, analysis, and the development of program improvement plans. Thus, PIR is designed not merely as an evaluative methodology but a process through which program partners improve their capacity to identify program strengths and weaknesses, make concrete decisions to address program problems and take action to improve the quality and performance of the program. As a participative exercise that necessitates the involvement of all program partners, PIR also helps strengthen partnerships.

PIR provides a holistic perspective on program performance looking not only at technical issues but management, financial systems, community involvement and attitudes, and partnerships. PIR assesses five qualitative areas of program quality and performance in forest co-management programs: institutional management, financial management and marketing, sustainability, application of sound forest management practices and community commitment. PIR also incorporates quantitative results to complement information gained through qualitative data (See PIR conceptual framework, Appendix 1).

As a quality assurance tool, PIR is designed to assist program partners to develop and maintain high quality NRM and co-management through a routine process of progress assessments. PIR reviews are recommended at regular six-month intervals to enable partners to follow-up on previous problems and actions and develop new plans. Quality assurance in co-management programs focuses on achieving desired NRM outcomes and ensuring community and government satisfaction in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

The PIR conceptual framework and instruments were adapted to suit forest co-management programs. Ten instruments were developed for the co-management initiative:

Instrument 1: Record Review

Instrument 2: Local Forest Service Representative (Interview)

Instrument 3: Executive board of the Forest Committee (Group Interview)

Instrument 4: Members of the Forest Committee (Interview)

Instrument 5: Zone Supervisors (Interview)

Instrument 6: President of the Forest Protection Commission (Interview)
Instrument 7: President of the Forest Production Commission (Interview)
Instrument 8: Representative of the Inter-village Assembly (Interview)
Instrument 9: Community Members (Group Interview)
Instrument 10: Forest Observation

Winrock International invited representatives from all program partners to be part of the PIR team (see Appendix 5 for a list of team members). The four members of the Forest Committee executive board represented the community on the PIR Team. Both the *Chef de Section*, based in Lélouma, and the assistant *cantonnement forestier* in Linsan Saran participated on behalf of DNEF, although, unfortunately, the *chef section* was only available for part of the week. Mr. Dantily Diakité, the DNEF assistant national coordinator of the PEGRN, also participated in the first two days of the review and the summary meeting. PEGRN partners Winrock International, PRIDE Formation, VITA, and Land O' Lakes all provided representatives to the team. In addition, the local NGO subcontracted to assist the in the Nialama co-management activity, UGVD, was represented by its local agent, M. Mouctar Dramé.

Team members arrived on the evening of Monday, 2 October 2000. Tuesday morning the team gathered to discuss the PIR process, the review schedule and the PIR instruments. The team was divided into sub-teams to conduct interviews and observations in an efficient manner. Individuals and communities were selected for interviews and two zones were selected for observation (other individuals, communities and zones will be selected in future reviews with the hope that all will be thoroughly covered in three to four reviews). Individuals selected included: five separate members of the forest committee other than the executive board members, two zones (out of six) to be observed – zones 3 and 6, all supervisors of zones 3 and 6, 15 representatives (of 124) of the Inter-village Assembly, and 3 village communities for group interviews (see Appendix 3 for a detailed list of interviews).

On Tuesday afternoon, the teams began with Instrument 2, Instrument 3 and Instrument 4. On Wednesday, the teams continued with instrument 4 and conducted Instruments 5, 6, 7 and 8. On Thursday, the team concluded Instrument 8 and implemented Instrument 10 in zone 3. The team observed zone 6 on Friday and conducted community interviews in three separate villages. Each evening the team gathered to discuss the day's findings and assembled a list of problems and issues to be discussed at the summary meeting on Saturday.

The summary meeting took place from 9:30 to 4:00 on Saturday, 7 October 2000. The meeting was attended by 40 people including all team members, a majority of forest committee members and many zone supervisors¹, the sous-préfet of Linsan Saran, Dantily Diakité of the DNEF, Dr. Nguyen Son (USAID-Conakry) and Carl Gallegos of USAID-Washington. A transcriber was also provided to take notes in Pular so that the community could have a record of all the issues discussed during the course of the day.

The meeting began with words of encouragement from USAID, DNEF and Winrock International. The community and DNEF were praised for their pioneering effort on the first co-management program in Guinea and were urged to continue working to improve the program. Selected team members and chauffeurs then performed a role-play on good governance and communication. Following the role-play, the group discussed the issues

¹ While all committee members and zone supervisors were invited to attend the meeting, many did not attend for reasons that were not fully explained.

raised in the skit including: information dissemination, collaboration with partners, and equity in decision-making. For the remainder of the meeting participants collectively discussed individual problems and issues and created the performance improvement plan. For each problem the partners proposed concrete actions to address problems, defined persons responsible for seeing those actions through and designated a date by which the action should be accomplished (see Performance Improvement Action Plan, Appendix 2).

The community and other partners did an impressive job of focussing on developing solutions to problems and not making excuses for them. Nonetheless, this exercise was new to community members and other partners and some became tired and even frustrated with the process. Some community members complained that they were illiterate and could not follow the process. The community was reassured that notes would be available to them in Pular and that the UGVD representative was assigned to work with them to clarify any confusion and work on proposed actions. Despite the struggles encountered by some participants, the community and other partners developed a strong performance improvement plan to guide their activities over the next six months. Many community members and partners expressed great satisfaction with the process and it is expected that as partners become more experienced in this process they will gain confidence in their ability to analyze problems and propose solutions.

V. Review of Findings

A. Program Strengths

1. Community knowledge and interest in Natural Resource Management (NRM). The Forest Committee (*Comité Forêt*) and other community members demonstrated impressive knowledge of NRM, its benefits and practice. Many community members noted advantages of NRM such as: 1) assures ample resources for children and future generations and 2) facilitates equity in access and use rights of natural resources. Community members repeatedly noted that practicing controlled burning had greatly assisted them in protecting their fields and villages from wild fires. Many also noted that they were very satisfied with their newly gained access to land in the forest where they were allowed to practice agro-forestry. Selective logging was another activity about which many community members expressed enthusiasm. However, not much logging has been done and the actual remunerative benefits of logging may fall well below community expectations.
2. Successful NRM practices. Forest observations revealed that the community has respected forest use rules set out in the management plan and the contract, with only a few minor exceptions. Hectares under cultivation and the number of trees that have been cut are well within the established use limits. There were no signs of cutting or clearing in protected areas in either of the observed zones (3 and 6), although some of the fields identified by the Forest Committee and the forest service agent may exceed the maximum allowable slope.
3. Community Satisfaction. Community members expressed much enthusiasm for the co-management program. They are very happy with the access they have gained to farmland in the forest as well as the other rights and

responsibilities they have acquired under the co-management initiative. However, it should be noted that while many community members expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the rights and access they have gained to forest resources, few community members understand their role and the roles and responsibilities of their representatives in the co-management initiative (see section **B. 1. c.**)

B. Issues and Proposed actions

The Nialama community has taken important pioneering steps in implementing forest co-management in Guinea. While much time and effort has been put into preparing and training the community and its government partner, much work is still needed for the program to be successful. Through the PIR process a number of program weaknesses emerged. These problems and issues were raised during the summary meeting at which time partners discussed actions to address or rectify problems. Below is a summary of the problems raised and actions proposed for addressing these issues.

1. Institutional Management

a. Contracts and Agreements:

Issue: A review of the Nialama co-management contract indicates that sanctions may need to be revised in the future. While the sanctions against the Forest Committee and community members are detailed in the contract, those for the government partner are absent. In the future, co-management contracts should strive to achieve greater balance in their treatment of partners.

Proposed Action: The DNEF and the ENRMA staff working on the implementation of the co-management approach in other classified forests should follow-up on this issue. The lack of sanctions for the DNEF came to light not only in the document review, but also in the implementation of the Nialama program. When the forestry service agent assigned to the forest abandoned post, the Forest Committee was blocked from completing a number of important co-management activities due to the agent's absence and yet they did not feel that they had any clear recourse against their partner. If co-management is to be a true partnership between local resource users and the DNEF, both partners must be legally required to uphold their contractual obligations.

b. Knowledge about NRM and co-management:

Issues: While knowledge of NRM is generally good, both principal partners in the Nialama co-management initiative, the DNEF agents and community members, have a poor comprehension of the co-management approach and about the level of collaboration that is required between partners. The partnership between the DNEF and the community members remains in a nascent stage. Due to their lack of understanding of co-management, the forestry service agents have maintained an authoritative role in the co-management effort rather than sharing fairly in the management functions and

responsibilities of the forest. The enduring lack of trust between the partners has inhibited the development of a “common vision” and an effective collaborative relationship.

Proposed Actions: A partial solution to this weakness is to clearly determine and document the functions and responsibilities assigned to each institutional actor; the entitlements and benefits granted to each institutional actor; the procedures for negotiating on-going decisions and managing eventual conflicts; and the procedures for implementing and enforcing decisions. This set of tasks is to be completed before the end of December 2000 by UGVD and DNEF.

Continued efforts to inform (sensibiliser) the principal partners and the community members at large about the co-management effort and the roles and responsibilities of all actors in the process will help to build a “common vision” around the co-management activity. The PIR performance improvement action plan commits the partners to developing an extension program to address these issues (see Appendix 2). The forest committee and the *cantonnement* committed themselves to make greater efforts to incorporate all community members in co-management activities.

In collaboration with PEGRN, the national NGO, UGVD, will work with Forest Committee members to strengthen their knowledge of co-management. The committee, in turn, has agreed to hold more frequent meetings with the population to pass on information they need to understand co-management. The committee has also agreed to discuss installing an information table at the weekly market.

c. Roles, responsibilities and entitlements of the institutional partners

Issues: The functions and responsibilities assigned to each institutional actor have not been clearly defined and remain unknown to the actors themselves. As a result, partners are bewildered about what they are actually supposed to do. The forest committee members, zone supervisors, general assembly members and community members need to be clearer about their respective roles, responsibilities and entitlements in order to manage the forest effectively. Similarly, the *chef cantonnement*'s role and responsibilities, along with the roles and responsibilities of others within the DNEF, have not been clearly defined and documented.

Proposed Actions: The forest committee and DNEF have committed themselves, respectively, to develop and document the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of all the partners cited above. This task is to be completed before the end of December 2000. Once this first step is completed, the forest committee and the *chef cantonnement* will inform the general population about the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of the institutional partners.

d. Governance

Issues: The PIR revealed a general lack of decentralization in the governance of the co-management effort. This corresponds to a lack of communication

between partners and the absence of a program for conducting an informational campaign concerning the co-management effort. This concentration of information, knowledge and power, held within the hands of a few forest committee members and within the hands of higher-level DNEF cadres, does not adequately advance the objectives of democracy, social justice and active community participation. The lack of decentralization is related to the issues raised above in **B. 1. c.**

The current lack of a clearly defined and transparent policy for the distribution of agro-forestry fields between and within villages is a reflection of the concentration of power in the hands of some of the forest committee members who are controlling the process. Another example is the infrequency of general assembly meetings and village-level debriefings and consultations. On the side of DNEF, the desertion of the *chef cantonnement* puts the co-management activity in jeopardy since there is not adequate on-the-ground representation of this key partner. In addition, DNEF has yet to define and apply a clear administrative structure for the role of its agents in forest co-management.

Proposed Actions: Forest Committee members and the DNEF committed themselves to improve communication and the transparency of their activities so that all community members are informed and more fully involved in the co-management program. Also, the DNEF has committed itself to assigning a new *chef cantonnement* who will be dedicated to the co-management activity.

e. Documentation

Issue: Documentation of co-management rules, regulations, roles and responsibilities, as well as records of meetings and decisions were all deemed to be very weak or non-existent. Clearly, there is a need for consolidating all co-management related documents and for the exchange of reports between the various actors. Final and complete copies of the committee's statutes and internal regulations were not readily available nor had Mr. Dantily Diakité, DNEF-Conakry received the latest copy of these documents. Offences and sanctions remain imprecise and undocumented. The low level of literacy throughout the activity zone certainly contributes to the general weakness in the area of documentation. These are a particularly difficult challenge for a community with little background in record keeping and with low confidence about their own literacy. Other related problems that came to light include the absence of an up-to-date list of assembly members and zone supervisors. And, of immediate importance—the first work plan ends at the end of October, yet the Forest Committee had done nothing to develop a new work plan for Year 2

In addition to the issues related to the local community members, similar weaknesses exist on the side of DNEF. Most importantly, the DNEF field agent is currently working without clear and documented terms of reference. In addition, the *cantonnement's* reports and communications are distributed neither to the Forest Committee or the PEGRN/WI.

Proposed Actions: Currently PEGRN/WI will act as a bank for all Nialama co-management related documents and will assume responsibility for archiving the documents and making them accessible to all other interested parties. The NGO, UGVD, will ensure that all partners receive the most recent copy of the statutes, internal regulations and membership lists before the end of October 2000. In the coming months UGVD will be working with the Forest Committee to establish an adequate system for documenting co-management activities, including written details on all decisions made and complete meeting notes.

Partners have agreed to systematically exchange their written reports from this point forward. DNEF-Conakry is committed to writing up the *cantonnement's* terms of reference and will make these available to the PEGRN and to the Forest Committee. DNEF has yet to indicate a deadline for this task.

The PEGRN will assist in this domain by training a core group of trainers and Forest Committee members in writing Pular using the harmonized Arabic script alphabet. These individuals will be obligated, in turn, to train fellow villagers.

UGVD and the PEGRN will assist the Forest Committee to further refine and complete their statutes and interior regulations. This task is to be completed before the end of February.

In response to the cited infrequency of meetings, the committee will review their meeting policy and calendar and propose revisions. These revisions will be included in the statute and interior regulation modifications.

2. Financial Strategy and Marketing

a. Financial strategy

Issue: Although Forest Committee members received training in financial management and budgeting they have yet to demonstrate competence in these areas. Working budgets and a general financial strategy for the co-management effort are completely lacking for both the community partner and DNEF. The Forest Committee and the DNEF are working without approved budgets and have no financial plan under which they are to carry out the co-management activities.

Proposed Actions: The Forest Committee members must receive further training in financial planning and budget development. Training options will be discussed with Pride Formation and a training program developed for Forest Committee members before the end of March 2001. DNEF is committed to identifying income sources within the Nialama co-management activity. The Forest Committee will explore and propose various forms of self-taxing. A date for this activity has yet to be determined. Once the Forest Committee develops a budget it will be presented to the population and the General Assembly for approval.

Mr. Dantily Diakité assumed responsibility on the part of DNEF to explore and resolve the issue of the lack of a working budget for DNEF's participation in co-management. Viable, sustainable mechanisms need to be established if co-management is going to survive after exterior funding ends. Mr. Diakité has agreed to submit a report on the results of this undertaking before the end of December 2000.

b. Financial management

Issue: Related to the above, there exists an urgent need for training in financial management, with the establishment of a transparent financial plan that would allow for registering revenues and expenses related to co-management activities.

Proposed Actions: Pride Formation will be enlisted to respond to these training needs. The committee members have already undergone an initial training module in simplified accounting. What is needed now is a program tailored to their specific needs under the co-management activity.

c. Product sale and distribution

Issue: There is no technical plan for harvesting the *bani* to which the local communities have rights. Such a plan is urgently needed before the next cutting season. The plan needs to include, among other things, criteria for identifying the trees to cut, a plot rotation plan, and a systematic way of monitoring the cutting and sale of these trees. The plan also needs to detail who will cut the trees and how this activity will be financed. The proposed plan must be transparent and equitable.

There is also a need for a documented plan for selling the *bani*, as well as other forest products, and for training in issues related to commercialization.

Proposed actions: PEGRN/WI will bring in a consultant who will develop a technical plan for harvesting the *bani*. The consultant will complete this work before the end of February 2001. PEGRN/WI and UGVD will work with the Forest Committee to address the issues related to access to cutting rights and the financial questions.

LOL/FICA is committed to training the interested parties in issues related to commercialization of the forest products being harvested in Nialama. This task is to be completed before the end of April 2001.

3. Sustainability

Presently, the community appears to be exploiting the forest in a sustainable manner but the structure of the co-management effort between the community and the government needs considerable strengthening in a number of areas if the program is to be sustainable.

a. Partnerships

Issues: The community and the assistant DNEF field agent noted that they are pleased with their relationship to date. This is an important step in the co-management process. The partnership, however, needs strengthening in a number of realms. The need for more regular meetings between local community members and government agent has already been discussed, as has the need for clearer definition of the roles and responsibilities of each partner with regard to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of co-management activities.

Proposed Actions: Many of the actions proposed above aim to solidify and strengthen this important partnership between community members and the DNEF.

b. Strategies for sustainability

Issues: The lack of a financial strategy for the continuation of the co-management activity after the end of exterior funding puts the sustainability of the entire program into question. There is an urgent need to create a viable strategy that will enable the community and government to pay for program activities, such as training, monitoring and evaluation, NRM activities, etc. in the future.

Proposed actions: This issue was not directly addressed during the first PIR meeting because the community and government were confronted with too many other issues that needed immediate attention. This issue, however, has been ear marked to be brought up as a priority issue during the April PIR.

4. Application of sound forest resource management practices

a. Protection and forest management plans

Issues: With the exception of their recognition that annual controlled burning must take place, the communities do not have a comprehensive understanding of “protected areas” within the forest or a plan to ensure their protection. Many of those interviewed could cite certain positive management activities but few could explain the rationale for these activities. For example, many know not to cut along stream banks but they still argue that cutting along streams is imperative for increasing field productivity. Clearly, the land users do not adequately understand the ecological reasons for not cutting along watercourses.

Both the DNEF and the villagers complained about the lack of collaboration in, and coherent understanding of, early burning. There is also inadequate knowledge about protected animal species. Although the president of the forest protection commission knows that chimpanzees are a protected species, he also believes all monkeys are protected. Furthermore, people are not aware that the use of chemical products on their agro-forestry fields situated within

the limits of the forest is prohibited. In summary, the population's knowledge about technical forest management practices is insufficient.

The low-level of technical knowledge on the part of the DNEF field agent (*cantonnement*) risks having a very negative effect on the success of the co-management program in Nialama. This lack of technical knowledge severely limits the agent from executing his roles and responsibilities as required under the co-management contract and management plan.

Proposed Actions: Due to time restraints we did not adequately address these specific technical issues during the first PIR summary meeting. These are important subjects, however, and will be discussed, and solutions proposed, over the coming months between the Nialama co-management partners, the PEGRN and UGVD.

DNEF and Forest Committee members did commit themselves to working more closely and collaboratively during the upcoming early burning campaign.

Clearly, training for community members, Forest Committee members and the DNEF field agent(s) is crucial to the success of the program.

b. Agro-forestry land identification and distribution

Issue: Before the start of the Year 2000 agricultural season several Forest Committee members and DNEF agents identified land to be distributed as agro-forestry fields as indicated in the Nialama management plan. The number of hectares identified this year fell within the quota established under the management plan. After the fields were cleared it became clear that some protected areas had been cleared for cultivation. Furthermore, the criteria for field identification and rules for the use of the agro-forestry land are not widely known nor are they documented. During PIR interviews it also became obvious that there was not a clear plan for the distribution of the agro-forestry land between and within participating villages. Clearly, a technically sound program land identification and land use program needs to be developed, formalized and communicated to all the participants involved in the co-management effort. Furthermore, equitable and transparent rules and regulations related to the distribution of the agro-forestry land must be established without delay. Certain individuals expressed ill feelings and a sense of injustice related to the agro-forestry activity. Deliberate efforts must be made to eliminate these negative sentiments without further delay so as not to lose the confidence and interest of community members.

Proposed Actions: A concrete action proposed is the development of program for the identification and distribution of agro-forestry land to which community members can gain access. The forest committee, along with the zone supervisors and the DNEF agent, with assistance from UGVD, will develop a program for identifying and distributing agro-forestry land within the limits of the classified forest. The institutional partners are committed to completing this task before the end of November 2000. The program will include 1) technical NRM criteria for identifying field land; 2) rules about how

the land should be used (NRM criteria related to number of years the land should be cultivated and fallowed) including a standardized contract that will be signed by each person gaining rights to field land and indication of the amount of money the land user will pay for access rights; 3) details on how the total hectares available will be divided between zones; 4) a transparent mechanism, with documentation of the criteria, for distributing land between villagers; and 5) a written statement from each participating village on the method established for field distribution within the village. The proposed master plan must be discussed and approved by the General Assembly.

c. Exploitation of *bani*

Issue: Although cutting of *bani* is allowed under the management plan, the activity has yet to be properly programmed and technically analyzed. A technical plan for allowable cutting must be designed, taking into consideration what is known about *bani* regeneration and based on sound ecological principles. Designing a plan to monitor *bani* exploitation should be incorporated into the technical plan. Issues such as the length of the rotation between harvesting plots and the correct marking of trees should be addressed.

Proposed Actions: The PEGRN will bring in a consultant to study and propose a technical plan for the harvest of *bani* in the Nialama Classified Forest. Diverse training needs, for community members and DNEF personnel, will be identified at this time.

5. Community Involvement

Many of the issues related to community knowledge and involvement have been addressed in previous sections. Only several specific issues remain to be mentioned:

a. Knowledge of NRM versus understanding of the forest co-management approach

Issue: Although the PIR revealed that community knowledge of NRM is relatively good, community members tend to have little knowledge and a weak understanding of forest co-management. The notion remains vague and the approach has yet to be appropriated by many community members.

Proposed Actions: Many of the solutions proposed in above will improve this situation. The Forest Committee and the DNEF expressed a commitment to better communicate information about co-management. Well-developed and documented plans and programs related to the co-management effort that are disseminated widely to community members will do much to improve this situation.

b. Marginalized populations

Issues: The heretofore marginalization of women in the co-management activity could not be ignored during the PIR. Women interviewed during the

PIR were considerably more ignorant of and less involved in co-management activities. Women tended to have little or no comprehension as to the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of the various partners in co-management.

Proposed Actions: Efforts will be made to reach out to women in meetings related to the co-management activity. Separate meetings will be organized for women so that they will be more comfortable participating actively in decision making and information exchange.

6. Results

The PIR process includes the regular measurement of specified quantitative indicators but this was not part of the first review. In the future, quantitative indicators will be designed and incorporated into the co-management PIR process. Several consultants who will be working on technical issues related to co-management in the coming months will help to design appropriate indicators.

VI. Lessons Learned

1. The Fuuta Jalon has no pre-existing community organizations suitable for undertaking co-management. Consequently, these organizations have to be established and local committees and community members need substantial assistance in learning to govern democratically, communicate, manage finances and plan and implement co-management activities. Consistent training and refresher training are needed and communities require lots of encouragement during the initial phases of this process.
2. Illiteracy is an obstacle to democratic governance and planning. The population has expressed doubts about their ability to undertake co-management due to their illiteracy. Community members need to be encouraged and supported and a literacy program must be designed and implemented to address this fundamental need.
3. Governments need effective human resources and management systems to collaborate effectively in co-management programs. Currently the Guinean government has no clearly defined or active reporting or monitoring system for forest management in general or co-management specifically. Furthermore, DNEF has no budget for co-management activities so it remains unclear how the government plans to train and equip staff members assigned to co-management activities in the future. Roles and responsibilities of government agents in co-management initiative must be defined in order for them to do their jobs effectively and to be held accountable for fulfilling their job responsibilities.
4. As to date, neither the local DNEF agents nor the community members express a true sense of ownership of the co-management activity. Comprehensive extension and training programs need to be designed to address this situation. Appropriation of the process and the approach is not something that will occur overnight or even in a year, so a long-term vision is required by all who are involved in the effort.

5. In future co-management efforts the issues of sustainability and economic viability of the co-management activity must be addressed right upfront. Lack of attention to these fundamental aspects of the program put the entire effort in jeopardy.
6. Mistakes will be made. We are all learning. The co-management effort in Guinea, as elsewhere in the world, is a learning-by-doing process. Tolerance, flexibility, and a willingness to work together and learn from our mistakes are imperative for the success of the co-management program.

VII. References

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Appendix 1: Conceptual Framework: PEGRN Forest Co-Management Initiative

Instrument/Indicator	Institutional Management	Financial Management and Marketing	Sustainability	Application of Forest Management Practices	Community Commitment	Results¹
Instrument 1: Record Review	Contracts and Agreements Project Strategy and Sustainability Governance Monitoring Record Keeping	Financial Strategy	Partnerships			
Instrument 2: National Forest Service Representative	Knowledge NRM and FCM Collaboration Training and Experience Record Keeping and Reporting Project Monitoring		Project Strategy and Sustainability Partnerships Promotion of NRM			
Instrument 3: Steering Committee	Knowledge of NRM and FCM Instruction, Roles and Responsibilities Governance Record Keeping Monitoring	Financial Management and Sustainability	Partnerships Promotion of NRM Satisfaction		Community Involvement	
Instrument 4: Forest Committee Members	Knowledge of f NRM and FCM Instruction, Roles and Responsibilities Governance		Partnerships NRM Promotion and Activities Satisfaction		Community Participation	
Instrument 5: Zone Supervisors	Knowledge of Forest Co-Management		Satisfaction		Community Integration	

¹ Tentative, should be reviewed with and expert in Tropical Forestry

Instrument/Indicator	Institutional Management	Financial Management and Marketing	Sustainability	Application of Forest Management Practices	Community Commitment	Results¹
	Instruction, Roles and Responsibilities Monitoring Project Coordination and Collaboration					
Instrument 6 : Forest Protection Commission President	Knowledge of NRM and FCM Training Roles and Responsibilities Monitoring		Partnerships	Protection Plan and Management NRM Protection Activities		
Instrument 7: Forest Production Commission President	Knowledge of NRM and FCM Training Roles and Responsibilities	Financial Strategy	Partnerships	Exploitation Plan and Management Exploitation Activities		
Instrument 8: Inter-Village Assembly Representatives	Knowledge of NRM and FCM Roles and Responsibilities Governance		Project Coordination and Collaboration Promotion of NRM Satisfaction		Community Integration	
Instrument 9: Community Members			Community Satisfaction		Knowledge of NRM and FCM Community Involvement Community Support	
Instrument 10: Forest Observation				Management of Wildlife Areas Management of Water Courses and Bas-Fonds Status of Controlled Burning and Burned Lands Tree Cutting Management of Agroforestry Lands		

Instrument/Indicator	Institutional Management	Financial Management and Marketing	Sustainability	Application of Forest Management Practices	Community Commitment	Results¹
Statistics						1) % of land area Burned (Hectar limit = 100%) 2) % of Protected Zones Burned 3) % of land under cultivation (Hectar Limit = 100%) 4) % of protected land under cultivation ² 5) Natural Regeneration protected areas vs. Exploited areas 6) Chi-Carre? 7) Bani regeneration 8) Bamboo Regeneration

² For each of these quantitative indicators we need a viable methodology for measuring or estimating land area. It might be worth Winrock's while to hire someone to do this one a 6 month or yearly basis. Or perhaps it would be good to have someone train you and Saliou to do the necessary measurements. Different indicators might need to be measured at different times of year.