



## CHAPTER 10

# Consultation and Communication in Forest Sector Activities

**F**orests are the meeting point for the diverse interests of a wide variety of stakeholders. For the private sector, forests are a lucrative source of income and opportunity for investment. For the state, forests are a source of revenue and power. For forest-dependent households, the resource base is an important element of the household portfolio. For conservation entities, forests are repositories of biological diversity and critical habitat or ecosystems. This makes forest sector projects complex and multifaceted. The projects potentially have issues of conflicting vested interests, states unwilling to relinquish control of the resource, livelihood issues involving local forest uses and indigenous groups, as well as problems of illegal extraction and much more.

Consultation and communication in forest sector projects are important to build coalitions, manage risk, create transparency, and formalize mechanisms for participation and responses to stakeholder concerns. Consultation enables the involvement of indigenous groups and other marginalized and vulnerable groups (including women and youth). A well-designed communications strategy facilitates transparency while contributing to the long-term sustainability of a project. The two strategies are intertwined. Consultation requires communication and communication enhances and is reinforced by consultation.

The first section of this chapter addresses consultation in forest sector projects. The second section addresses communication. Although there are times when consultation and

communication may be stand-alone components of a project, they are generally part of an integrated approach in which safeguards play a critical role (see chapter 9, Applying Forests Policy OP 4.36). Furthermore, the terms of reference (TOR) provided in chapter 9 may be helpful in developing consultation and communication approaches. Chapter 12 describes the additional requirements when Indigenous Peoples are affected, including the need for free, prior, and informed consultations with affected communities leading to their broad support for the project.

## CONSULTATION

In this chapter, consultation refers to the inclusion of all representative groups of stakeholders. Another form of consultation is consultation among donors—sharing information and harmonizing projects. Though consultation among donors is an important part of a successful project, it is not addressed here.

Consultation with stakeholders in forest sector projects is not just a requirement—it is a strategic tool. Consultation creates opportunities to identify key issues that, if left undetected, can threaten the long-term success of a project. Consultation helps project teams, donors, government agencies, and project beneficiaries elaborate on and understand realities at the site. Consultations are opportunities for project designers to capture and build upon local knowledge by involving stakeholders in the design of the project. Further-

more, consultation is a way to ensure that indigenous and other vulnerable groups are involved in projects, and to ensure that equity issues are addressed.

The complex and multifaceted nature of forest sector projects can make them risky. Forest sector projects often have to address such issues as local access to the resource, the rights of indigenous groups, and other related livelihood issues. In such cases, consultation offers a means to manage these risks by creating transparency and clearly representing the approach and objectives of a project. Through proper consultation, stakeholders can be involved in project design, generating local commitment to the process and project. Stakeholders have a means to express concerns constructively, and an opportunity to help design solutions (box 10.1). In short, consultation builds a coalition (see box 10.2).

The benefits of consultation are not without costs, both human and monetary. Consultation requires trained personnel and takes time. The time and budgetary constraints can be managed with proper planning. Because the consul-

tation process and the project design should be shaped by and respond to stakeholder concerns, the consultation process can and should be flexible. The benefits of consultation far outweigh the costs, in spite of the additional planning and accommodation that consultation requires.

**CONSULTATION WITH WHOM?** No successful consultation can take place without first identifying key stakeholders. Stakeholders are individuals or groups directly affected, indirectly affected, or with an interest in the project. Though deceptively simple sounding, stakeholder identification is an essential step, and many long-term problems can be averted by identifying and including all key groups.

Once stakeholders have been identified, the next step is to undertake a stakeholder analysis (see chapter 9, Applying Forests Policy OP 4.36). This process groups stakeholders into categories on the basis of their relationship to the project (policy makers, potentially adversely affected people, Indigenous Peoples or tribal organizations, donor agencies,

#### Box 10.1 Liberia Forest Initiative: A Strategic Partnership that Enables Consultation

“Strategic communications and civil society consultations can help manage risks.”

—Communications Officer,  
External Affairs, Communication, and Network  
Anchor (EXTCN)

The Liberia Forest Initiative (LFI) is a partnership of government and international organizations and NGOs to support the rehabilitation and reform of Liberia’s forest sector and enhance cooperation and coordination of activities in Liberia for the promotion of sustainable forest management. Liberia is a post-conflict nation with many forest resources. These forest resources are in high demand to serve the nation’s economic growth through a process that accounts for community rights and equitably addresses distribution and environmental issues.

Actions in Liberia are under close scrutiny by national and international groups because there is a great deal at stake. In the recent past, an international NGO wrote a letter to the Forest Development Authority (FDA) of Liberia, a member of the LFI, expressing concern that the draft National Forestry Reform Law of 2006 failed “to adequately address the important issues of community rights and participation in decision making, forest management, and land tenure.”

Source: Adapted by author.

The managing director of the FDA prepared a response highlighting how the LFI has helped in making the process highly consultative. “We, too, are extremely concerned about these issues, and as a result we have been studying and debating them since the debut of this legal reform process in 2003... Currently, all actors involved in the forest sector reform process have been diligently working in a collaborative fashion to achieve this objective, and we strongly believe that the content of the draft law provides a far greater recognition of community rights and many more formal avenues for participation of communities in decision making about the use of Liberia’s forest resources than ever encountered in this nation’s history.”

Having the structure of the LFI in place allowed the international parties and the government to handle this situation in a constructive manner that did not escalate or paralyze the project. The framework for consultation was already in place. The LFI provided a place for outside parties to express concerns and a venue for response—thus assuaging fears and creating transparency. Ultimately, the external party was offered the opportunity of continued involvement and was folded into the project.

## Box 10.2 What Is the Necessary Level of Consultation?

Meaningful public consultation typically takes place at three different levels: conveying information to the public, listening to the opinions and preferences of the public, and involving the public in making decisions. The nature and size of the project, combined with both the nature and number of stakeholders and the status of national legislation, will largely define when, where, and what level of public consultation is required for an Environmental Assessment (EA) and its Environmental Management Plan.

For instance, if the aim is to inform the public about a project or important issues, the initial number of people to contact will be large, but the interaction may be limited. If public preferences are being sought, closer contact and dialogue will be required, but with a smaller number of people. If the public's direct input to decision making is being sought, ongoing discussions with a small group of representatives of stakeholder groups will likely be held. Site-specific factors, such as a history of local opposition to similar projects in the area, will also be important in determining the level of consultations.

Source: World Bank 1999.

media, NGOs, other interest groups, and so forth) (see box 10.3). For each category of stakeholders, three categories of information should be developed:

- *Defining characteristics*, including social dimensions, organizational strength, formal or informal power and authority, organizational capacity, and so forth.
- *Stake or interest in the project*, and the stakeholders' potential support or opposition to the project. This may include degree of commitment to the status quo, openness to change, and an assessment of whether the proposed project is aligned with the interests of the concerned stakeholders.
- *Influence* of each stakeholder group, and whether potential opposition from each of them—and the groups collectively—constitutes a high, substantial, medium, or low risk to the project outcomes.

**WHAT IS A GOOD CONSULTATION PROCESS?** A good consultation process is one that is carefully planned, with clear goals

and responsibilities agreed to by all institutions involved. The sequence of consultation steps should be well-planned from the beginning; public consultation should begin—where possible—before major decisions are made. Each stage of the project may require different consultation measures (see table 10.1). The scope of the consultation should also be appropriate to the project. For example, long-term projects involving diverse stakeholders may require consultation processes specific to each stakeholder group and repeated consultations during the course of the project.

Ultimately, a project's success depends on stakeholders understanding the project's purpose and committing to a plan for its success. Appropriate goals will vary by project and by phase within a project. For example, during the site selection phase of a protected area establishment, the goal might be to identify the concerns of local stakeholder groups regarding potential sites. During the implementation phase, consultation could contribute to identifying potential mitigation approaches to the challenges associated with implementation (see table 10.1 for a summary of consultation objectives at different project phases).

To ensure positive outcomes, responsibilities must be clearly defined and agreed to by all implementing institutions—whether international, national, or local. The consultation plan should clearly delineate who is responsible for particular monitoring and evaluation exercises, as well as for specific outputs.

To produce effective results, good consultation requires the provision of adequate resources before embarking on a project activity. Planning—skills required, scope, and level of consultation—should fit the budget. Budget constraints can lead to the temptation to conduct insufficient or cursory consultation, but inattention to stakeholder concerns can threaten the success of a project.

Furthermore, a successful project is sensitive to local issues. It builds upon existing networks (for instance, donor coordination groups or forest user groups). It identifies latent conflicts and deals with them proactively (see boxes 10.3 and 10.4). The consultation process should be designed to accommodate both national laws and international conventions. It should also consider site-specific sensitivities; for example, political and cultural issues like ethnic prejudice or restrictions on women, as well as geography, can have an impact on the process, so plans must be made accordingly. Values, particularly those of minorities, such as Indigenous Peoples, sometimes conflict with national ones (see box 10.5). For example, national desire for foreign exchange from timber sales can be at odds with use of forest resources for equitable improvement of local livelihood or sociocultu-

“Listen to your critics and learn from them.”

—Communications Officer, EXTCN

Lessons can be drawn regarding the importance of consultation and a clear communications strategy from the World Bank project in Cambodia on forest concession management that started in 2000. The project focused on (i) forest concession planning and inventory, (ii) forest concession control, (iii) forest crime monitoring and prevention, and (iv) project management and institutional strengthening. An inspection panel case on this project identified some shortcomings—including overlapping claims on timber and resin trees, lack of effective concessionaire controls over subcontractors, and restriction of access to livelihood resources—and provided some guidance on how these could have been addressed. These lessons are useful for projects with complex natural resource management issues.

*Shared Vision and Engagement with Other Stakeholders*

- In projects that address national resource management issues, it is important to map stakeholders' varying and, at times, conflicting interests and engage them early and throughout implementation.
- Advisory groups could be useful for ongoing feedback and guidance.
- Interactions with stakeholders should be managed

Source: Adapted from IBRD and IDA 2006.

with great care—ensuring expectations are clear, materials are available early and in an appropriate format, neutral facilitators are employed if necessary, and existing mechanisms such as technical working groups are used for ongoing dialogue with a range of stakeholders.

*Role of Local Communities, Including Consultations with Affected Communities*

- The World Bank should play a proactive role in encouraging early and sustained involvement of local communities in project design and implementation.
- Many crucial issues can be more effectively addressed at an earlier stage, thus lowering tensions and apprehensions on all sides and speeding the process of reform.
- When project implementation involves community consultation, the World Bank should work with the implementing agency to ensure appropriate identification of affected communities, the associated area of impact, and appropriate third parties (free from conflict of interest) to carry out environmental and social impact assessments.
- Mechanisms for monitoring compliance with planned consultation procedures should also be agreed upon in advance, and results of monitoring efforts should be made publicly available.

ral purposes. Where values conflict, the objective of the consultation process is for stakeholders to exchange information and perspectives and identify compromises.

**PLANNING TASKS.** Finally, there are some commonalities for successful consultation. Though every project will be unique in its needs, many (if not all) of these planning tasks will apply<sup>1</sup>:

- *Identify stakeholder groups* (see above).
- *Identify the key consultation issues.* One of the first critical steps is to identify the key issues around which the consultation will be oriented. Environmental and social issues, such as indigenous groups, resettlement, and spiritual uses of forests, often prove important.
- *Understand the decision-making process.* Next, understanding how environmental decisions are made is essen-

tial. Who makes which decisions at what point in the project cycle?

- *Determine the appropriate level of consultation.* (See box 10.2.) Consultation can occur at three different levels: conveying information to stakeholders, listening to stakeholder opinions, and involving stakeholders in decision making. How much consultation and at which level it should occur will depend on the scope and size of the project.
- *Identify timing for consultation.* Consultation before major decisions is essential. Consultation as part of research, planning, and development of mitigation plans is better. For the specific purposes of an EA, consultation is required at a minimum after an EA category has been assigned, and once a draft EA has been prepared.
- *Choose consultation techniques.* In general, it is essential to maintain good communication in consultations. Target

#### Box 10.4 Consultation in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Using Analytical Work to Start the Process

“Planning an effective consultation up front is easier than trying to ‘catch up’ or fix situations later.”

—Lead Forestry Specialist, Africa Region.

Forests are ubiquitous in the Democratic Republic of Congo; they touch the cultural and economic life of most of the population and have enormous global environmental significance. After years of conflicts and mismanagement, reconstruction is critical to improving living conditions and consolidating peace. At the same time, better roads and trade bring risks—threatening forests and biodiversity by facilitating logging, land conversion, and the seizure of forest rights by vested interests. Anticipating these threats, in 2002, the transitional government started a priority reform agenda. This was a politically charged agenda with supporting and opposing views.

Source: Adapted from Debroux and others 2007.

A recent analysis assessing the soundness of the priority reform agenda provided a vehicle for strengthening the relationship among groups that previously opposed one another. The study involved a consultative process to sharpen the analysis and test consensus on initial conclusions. The process also included consultations with government, national and international NGOs, industry, forest people, and donors. Field visits and meetings with local groups took place in September 2003 in Equateur province, in February 2004 in Eastern province, and in December 2005 in North Kivu. This study also benefited from a number of thematic workshops and from two International Forest Forums held in Kinshasa in November 2004 and February 2006. The overall process improved the working relationship among more than 10 partners.

groups must be clearly notified about collaboration opportunities. Extensive records of consultation events should be kept. Feedback should be provided to the public, clearly explaining project responses to their concerns (see box 10.6). The most effective consultation plan will likely use a range of listening techniques, a variety of methods for involving stakeholders in decision making, as well as several methods of conveying information (see tables 10.2 and 10.3). (For more information about techniques, see World Bank 1999).

- *Develop a budget.* Consultation is not without costs, and it is important that the consultation budget reflect the size and scope of the consultation plan (see box 10.7).
- *Define a communication methodology* (see next section of this chapter).

### COMMUNICATION

Development of a comprehensive communications strategy is essential to the long-term success of a project. Clear communications are especially important in challenging governance environments because they create transparency. Consistent, open communication is instrumental in developing the public and political support required for the long-term success of a project. Furthermore, communication is important in every phase of a successful project: initiating, planning, and presenting results. Communication and consultation are tools that work hand-in-hand to build strong,

effective projects—consultation is one form of instigating communication and communication is an important outcome of consultation.

Communication is a term that incorporates information dissemination, dialogue, transparency, feedback, responsiveness, and engagement. Communication requirements can be broadly classified into external and internal needs. External needs involve engagement with the media, political leaders, and civil society to build trust, credibility, reputation, and support for the program. Internal needs involve communication directed at clients, stakeholders, or partners to generate understanding, participation, or ownership of the program (see box 10.6). Internal and external communication needs are mutually reinforcing: transparent, clear, open communication will help win political and civil society support, and a broad alliance will help to increase the effectiveness of a project and its ability to reach stakeholders.

WHAT IS A GOOD COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY? In the interest of cohesion and transparency, the entire project team should discuss and eventually agree to the communication plan. The communications strategy should encompass and maintain oversight of all aspects of communications contained in the project—everything from speeches by government officials, to the information given to local people by local representatives of agencies responsible for investment in, and operation of, the development program. If this comprehensive aspect fails, disconnected communications



“The underlying issue was not actually the World Bank policy, but rather a local conflict.”

—Retired Senior Social Specialist

All over the world, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities have historically been pushed out of fertile flood plains into mountains and interfluvial areas where forests remain intact. Here they developed balanced and stable adaptations to forest environments, using resources in a relatively conservative fashion. Today, roads, globalized markets, and demand for timber, crop, and grazing land have pushed deep into forested areas and threaten the lifestyles of forest dwellers. At the same time, ethnic minorities—such as the Montagnards of Southeast Asia, the Pygmies of the Democratic Republic of Congo, many Indigenous Peoples of Brazil and the eastern Andes, and the Mayans and other Indigenous Peoples of Mexico and Central America—are undergoing economic and political awakening. International instruments such as the International Labour Organization Convention 169, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the World Bank Safeguard Policies, have helped strengthen the rights of Indigenous Peoples and have created tools they can use to push the envelope with regard to their rights to land and resources. That said, local laws, regulations, and political processes are still the preponderant influences on how well Indigenous Peoples and other minorities fare in the defense of territorial and other rights.

This picture changes somewhat when a multilateral actor like the World Bank comes on the scene as the financier of a development project. World Bank projects in forested areas may have different objectives, but usually they are aimed at raising incomes, helping secure land rights, and ensuring sustainable resource use. World Bank intervention carries the relatively new international charter of indigenous and minority rights. Indigenous Peoples and the organizations that support them are aware of this and use the policies of multinational organizations as leverage in their struggles for control over their land and resources. Often, however, the picture is more complex. Local conflict may not be articulated simply in terms of “the developers versus the natives.” Other issues may underlie the complaint, such as local political conflicts in the form of electoral politics, and intercommunity, interethnic, and even interpersonal rivalries and conflicts.

Indigenous Peoples often claim to occupy a higher moral ground as the primeval defenders of a pristine environment against the depredations of developers. These claims are powerful in national and international discourse on the use of forests, creating a strong bias in favor of the stands taken by Indigenous Peoples.

To comprehensively address concerns of Indigenous Peoples and preempt any local conflicts that may be manifested as a result of a forest project, it is important to do the following:

- Be aware of the *geographic and political context of Indigenous Peoples and minorities* in areas affected by a project. Pay attention to surrounding areas as well.
- Be familiar with the *legal framework*, especially in regard to rights to land and resources and help ensure compliance with these rights.
- Identify the *conflicts that exist in the project area*, being familiar with the actors and their political links. Upon becoming aware of a conflict or a potential conflict, be proactive in addressing it, even if it is not directly related to the project. This is the proverbial “ounce of prevention.”
- Consider how the project’s *interventions may create winners and losers* especially with regard to entitlements. Does it shift the balance?
- Try to ensure that *all legitimate representatives of Indigenous Peoples are included in consultations*; listen for sometimes poorly articulated demands and complaints, even if they do not appear to be related to the project. Keep in mind that “legitimacy” is a slippery concept and the task managers and their counterparts may not be the best judges of who legitimately speaks for a given group or faction.
- *Avoid consultants who give broad legal and historical surveys* and descriptive ethnographic tours but fail to describe the dynamics of what is happening on the ground.
- Read the consultant’s report, question him or her closely, and insist on a *full account of conflicts that may be occurring or may be latent*.
- Seek the right balance between people-oriented and ecosystem-oriented solutions.
- *Write it all down*; capture the above points in the Project Appraisal Document and safeguard compliance documents.

Source: Gross 2007 (Daniel), consultant and former World Bank social safeguards specialist.

## Box 10.6 Elements of Communication and Collaboration

Communications methods should be transparent and open to review. Some general principles for achieving transparency and openness include notification, record keeping, and feedback.

**NOTIFICATION.** The target groups must be notified how, when, and where they can participate. In general, effective notification is highly visible to the target audience, delivered early, uses more than one medium to reach the target groups, and is repeated shortly before major events.

**RECORD KEEPING.** A record of the types of consultation activities held, the target groups and numbers reached, the information conveyed, and the stage at which the information was provided should be kept and analyzed to reveal

*Source: World Bank 1999.*

- summaries of views by type of stakeholder;
- a summary of points of agreement, disagreement, issues raised, and options discussed;
- analysis of the validity of the concerns and issues raised by different stakeholders;
- recommended responses to valid comments; and
- discussion of the implications and options for decision makers.

**FEEDBACK.** Feedback should be provided to the public, clearly explaining the responses to their concerns, describing the decisions made, why they were made, and how the information they provided was used. Otherwise, participants may feel that their input had no impact on the decision; some of the benefits of the process may be lost, and effective consultation may become more difficult in the future.

## Box 10.7 Budgetary Issues: Cost Elements of Consultation

Providing adequate resources for a successful consultation depends on the complexity of the project, the diversity of the stakeholders, and the importance of the effects, as well as such constraints as the availability of skilled practitioners, availability of funds, and project deadlines. The principal cost elements vary widely according to the context of the project, but are likely to include some of the following:

- consultants' fees
- hiring and outfitting of meeting venues
- Public opinion surveys
- preparation and distribution of materials
- staff time preparing, attending, and keeping records of public meetings
- maintenance of channels of communication (telephone hotline, radio announcements, or other means)
- travel expenses

*Source: World Bank 1999.*

activities will, at best, fail to be of the highest possible quality and, at worst, cause confusion or mixed messages, undermining the effectiveness of the communications strategy (see World Bank 2005).

A successful communications strategy is based on research. As a first step, a team should undertake a comprehensive review of communications lessons learned from other programs in the country, as well as from relevant natural resource management projects in other countries. Information about stakeholder knowledge, attitudes, and practices informs the formulation of an effective communications plan. Further information about the link between communications, political analysis, and operational decisions is important to ensure that communication is a two-way street. Furthermore, expertise of outside consultants may be required when communications needs extend beyond skills available in-house (for example, reaching international mass media outlets, or generating video footage). Finally, an ideal communications strategy is developed in collaboration with stakeholders, perhaps through a workshop in which researchers summarize findings and stakeholders help to determine how to communicate them.

Though every project will be unique in its needs, a communications strategy and work plan comprises these planning tasks:

**Table 10.1 Consultation at Various Stages of an Environmental Assessment Project**

Stage in EA process	Consultation goals	Strategic consideration
Validation of environmental procedures and standards	Review national law and practice relating to consultation Ensure compatibility with World Bank requirements	Is there a need? Are there opportunities for capacity building?
Screening: Assign an EA category	Identify stakeholder groups; secure proponent commitment to consultation program Agree on extent and mode of consultation	Is there a commitment to consultation from project proponents and the relevant authority?
Scoping: Agree on EA TOR and schedule	Identify stakeholders  Disclose relevant project information  Determine stakeholder concerns and include them in the TOR	What resources are needed and available? Who is responsible for implementation and monitoring and evaluation? Are there potential conflicts between the needs of the developer and those of the public?
Environmental analysis and production of draft EA reports (including social assessment and resettlement plan, as appropriate)	Disclose information on study methods and findings Agree on proposed mitigation measures with stakeholders Let stakeholders determine whether their concerns are adequately addressed	What methods are appropriate for reaching different stakeholder groups?
Production of final report	Finalize mitigation plan and disclose to stakeholders	Are mechanisms in place to ensure ongoing consultation and compliance with agreements?
Implement the Environmental Management Plan (including environmental monitoring)	Inform the public about scheduling of potentially disruptive events Disclose results of environmental monitoring Maintain effective complaints procedures	What role can stakeholders play in monitoring?
Final evaluation	Assess effective consultation process  Consult stakeholders for their assessment	Were any lessons learned that might be transferable to other projects?

Source: World Bank 1999: 2.

Note: This table, extensively abridged, was adapted from the World Bank's *The Public Participation Handbook* (1996), which contains a full version of the table and extensive supporting text describing each tool.

- **Identify goals.** This component should detail issues to be addressed and desired outcomes, as well as the feasibility of those goals. Goals will vary with the scope, size, and phase of projects.
- **Assess target audience.** What motivates them? What are their needs? What are their stakes in the project? This component has obvious overlap with consultation and the results of stakeholder analysis (see consultation section above).
- **Develop key messages.**
  - The *content* will be based on previously identified issues and desired outcomes.
  - The *scope and timing* for the plan will depend on the scale and phase of the project (for worksheets helpful for developing timelines for communication projects, see Module 9 of the World Bank's *Strategic Communication for Development Projects* [Cabañero-Verzosa 2003]).
- **Define roles and accountability.** Clearly establish divisions of responsibility for which tasks will be handled by which agency (see annex 10A to this chapter for a checklist). This may entail an assessment of client capacity for communications tasks and opportunities for capacity building. Specific areas of assessment might include communications planning and management, research, communications material development and production, monitoring and evaluation, liaison work with mass media, and liaison work with large-scale outreach networks. (See Cabañero-Verzosa 2003 for guide questions to assess institutional capacity [module 7] and for a model TOR [module 4].)
- **Identify allies, barriers, options, and possible risks.** This identification could potentially be accomplished with communications planning workshops with stakeholders, using participatory methods.
- **Outline initiatives and tactics for communications plan.**



**Table 10.2 Listening to the Public**

	Key Points		Advantages	Disadvantages
Survey techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews, formed surveys, polls, and questionnaires can rapidly show who is interested and why.</li> <li>May be structured (using a fixed questionnaire) or nonstructured.</li> <li>Experienced interviewers or surveyors familiar with the project should be used.</li> <li>Pre-test the questions.</li> <li>Open-ended questions are best.</li> <li>Public seminars or focus groups create formal information exchanges between the sponsor and the public; may consist of randomly selected individuals or target group members; experts may be invited to serve as a resource.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show how groups want to be involved</li> <li>Allow direct communication with the public</li> <li>Help access the views of the majority</li> <li>Are less vulnerable to the influence of vocal groups</li> <li>Identify concerns linked to social grouping</li> <li>Give statistically representative results</li> <li>Can reach people who are not organized in groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor interviewing is counterproductive</li> <li>High cost</li> <li>Requires specialists to deliver and analyze</li> <li>Tradeoff between openness and statistical validity</li> </ul>
Small meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public seminars or focus groups create formal information exchanges between the sponsor and the public; may consist of randomly selected individuals or target group members; experts may be invited to serve as a resource.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow detailed and focused discussion</li> <li>Can exchange information and debate</li> <li>Provide a rapid, low-cost monitor of public mood</li> <li>Provide a way to reach marginal groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complex to organize and run</li> <li>Can be diverted by special interest groups</li> <li>Not objective or statistically valid</li> <li>May be unduly influenced by moderators</li> </ul>
Large meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public meetings allow the public to respond directly to formal presentations by project sponsors.</li> <li>Effective meetings need a strong chairman, a clear agenda, and good presenters or resource people.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are useful for medium audiences</li> <li>Allow immediate response and feedback</li> <li>Acquaint different interest groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not suitable for detailed discussions</li> <li>Not good for building consensus</li> <li>Can be diverted by special interest groups</li> <li>Attendance is difficult to predict</li> </ul>
Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical experts and representatives of interest groups may be brought together.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impart specialized technical information</li> <li>Promote data sharing and compromise</li> <li>Resolve technical issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time and effort needed to prepare</li> <li>Cost, if experts are hired</li> </ul>
Community organizers or advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These work closely with a selected group to facilitate informal contacts, visit homes or work places, or simply be available to the public.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mobilize difficult-to-reach groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential conflicts between employers and clients</li> <li>Time needed to get feedback</li> </ul>

Source: World Bank 1999: 6.

Note: This table, extensively abridged, was adapted from the World Bank's *The Public Participation Handbook* (1996), which contains a full version of the table and extensive supporting text describing each tool.

Table 10.3 Involving the Public in Decision Making

	Key Points	Advantages	Disadvantages
Advisory groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Task forces:</i> Set up task groups to focus on a single technical issue. Define the limit of the group's authority and lifetime; ensure that all interests are represented and that contact with the public is maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can address highly technical problems</li> <li>• Help prioritize and reach consensus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rarely represents all interested parties</li> <li>• May replace wider consultations</li> <li>• Often focuses too much on procedures</li> </ul>
Problem-solving techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Brainstorming:</i> Designed to enhance creativity and generate ideas quickly</li> <li>• Selection of the facilitator and participants is critical.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help groups break out of the obvious</li> <li>• Provide insights for decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to include a full range of views</li> <li>• May yield too many ideas to evaluate</li> </ul>
Consensus-building techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unassisted negotiations, mediation:</i> Voluntary processes by which representatives of affected organizations make decisions by consensus, to be ratified by parent organizations.</li> <li>• Parties either agree on decision-making procedures at the outset or use an experienced mediator.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a forum for jointly identifying solutions</li> <li>• Puts responsibility on the disputants to identify common ground</li> <li>• Can reach robust agreements with broad support</li> <li>• Can lead to quick resolution of contentious issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all parties will participate</li> <li>• Parties may drop out before the end</li> <li>• Requires good faith</li> <li>• May take too long</li> <li>• Highly skilled mediators are scarce</li> </ul>
Arbitration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A process by which conflicting parties seek a solution through an impartial mediator.</li> <li>• It can be binding, by prior agreement, or all sides may reserve judgment until the outcome.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides impartiality from an uninvolved party</li> <li>• Is difficult to oppose the arbitrator's recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parties must stand to gain</li> <li>• Difficult to identify an acceptable neutral party</li> </ul>

Source: World Bank 1999: 13.

Note: This table, extensively abridged, was adapted from the World Bank's *The Public Participation Handbook* (1996), which contains a full version of the table and extensive supporting text describing each tool.

- *Preliminary research* should include data on how people get their information (newspaper, radio, town caller, and others).
- Tactics should identify *appropriate methods for reaching specific groups or specific locations*. The most effective mode of information delivery may vary from place to place. For example, one project used different strategies to reach male and female stakeholders in Mali. Another broadcast information from a speaker on a moped in Bangladesh—a method that proved more effective than conventional media (see table 10.4).
- In the interest of transparency and effective external communication about the project, a plan should include mechanisms, like press briefings, for *proactive disclosure* of project details and policies to identify and correct misperceptions (see box 10.8).
- *Assess availability of resources* and other arrangements, including specialist advice and authority.
- *Create a communications implementation plan*. The implementation plan should detail specific events, measures for monitoring and evaluation, indicators, and potentially a training scheme and capacity-building component, as well as a budget and time line (see box 10.9). (For examples of communications plan budgets, see Module 10 of Cabañero-Verzosa (2003)). Plans should include feedback mechanisms for monitoring effectiveness of communications and adjusting as needed. (For indicators, see Module 3 of Cabañero-Verzosa (2003)). The proposed plan should be assessed to determine whether it is appropriate to the stated goals and whether it is feasible, given staffing, funding, and time.
- *Supervision during implementation*. Supervision should assess effectiveness, ensure adequate monitoring of inputs and outcomes, make corrective changes, and allow the plan to adapt to changing conditions. The supervision should involve experts and stakeholders. Key questions to be considered include the following: Are communications activities taking place? Are materials and messages reaching the target audience? Are they having the desired effect?
- *Evaluation*. An evaluation should address accomplishments, lessons learned, future improvements, and should evaluate and monitor results.

Table 10.4 Techniques for Conveying Information

Key Points			Advantages	Disadvantages
Printed materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Information bulletins, brochures, reports:</i> Text should be simple and nontechnical, in the local language where possible, and relevant to the reader.</li><li>• Provide clear instructions on how to obtain more information.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct</li><li>• Can impart detailed information</li><li>• Cost effective</li><li>• Yield a permanent record of communication</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demand specialized skills and resources</li></ul>	
Display and exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can serve both to inform and to collect comments.</li><li>• Should be located where the target audience gathers or passes regularly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May reach previously unknown parties</li><li>• Minimal demands on the public</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Costs of preparation and staffing</li><li>• Insufficient without supporting techniques</li></ul>	
Print media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Newspapers, press releases, and press conferences can all disseminate a large amount and wide variety of information.</li><li>• Identify newspapers likely to be interested in the project and to reach the target audience.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offers both national and local coverage</li><li>• Can reach most literate adults</li><li>• Can provide detailed information</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of control of presentation</li><li>• Media relationships are demanding</li><li>• Exclude illiterates and the poor</li></ul>	
Electronic media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Television, radio and video:</i> Determine the coverage (national or local), the types of viewer, the perceived objectivity, and the type of broadcast offered.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May be considered authoritative</li><li>• Many people have access to radio</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time allocated may be limited</li><li>• Costs can be high</li></ul>	
Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Useful for announcing public meetings or other activities.</li><li>• Effectiveness depends on good preparation and targeting.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retain control of presentation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May engender suspicion</li></ul>	
Formal information sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Targeted briefing:</i> Can be arranged by project sponsor or by request, for a particular community group, firm, or industry association.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Useful for groups with specific concerns</li><li>• Allow detailed discussion of specific issues</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May raise unrealistic expectations</li></ul>	
Informal information sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Open house, site visits, field offices:</i> A selected audience can obtain first-hand information or interact with project staff.</li><li>• Visits should be supported with more detailed written material or additional briefings or consultations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide detailed information</li><li>• Useful for comparing alternatives</li><li>• Immediate and direct</li><li>• Useful when the project is complex</li><li>• Local concerns are communicated to staff</li><li>• May help reach nonresident stakeholders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attendance is difficult to predict, resulting in limited consensus-building value</li><li>• May demand considerable planning</li><li>• Field offices can be costly to operate</li><li>• Only reach a small group of people</li></ul>	

Source: World Bank 1999; 10.

Note: This table, extensively abridged, was adapted from the World Bank's *The Public Participation Handbook* (1996), which contains a full version of the table and extensive supporting text describing each tool.

## Box 10.8 Managing Risks through Strategic Communication: The Case of Cambodia

“Transparency is essential.”

—Communications Officer, EXTCN

Strategic communications can help to manage risks in the forestry sector by making information about the project approach, collaborators, decisions, scope, and outcomes available in ways that are accessible and useful to people. This accessible information facilitates two-way communication and empowers local people, the media, parliament, and civil society to be actively engaged in the process and to provide feedback.

To this end, it is essential that a project have a clear, proactive communications strategy. Lessons learned in the World Bank project in Cambodia on forest concession management that started in 2000 (see box 10.3 for project details) provide important conclusions about development of a proactive communications strategy:

Source: Adapted from World Bank 2006.

- Clear, consistent communications are essential in challenging governance environments.
- Teams should first clarify the formal links among communications, political analysis, and operational decisions to ensure external information and questions are fed back into operational decision making.
- The communications strategy should be discussed and endorsed by the entire project team—and shared with the larger country team.
- The strategy should include a proactive disclosure policy (including press briefings at agreed intervals), mechanisms to promptly identify and correct errors and misperceptions, and plans and resources to translate information into local languages and disseminate it through a variety of media.
- Involvement of communications specialists in project design and implementation will help to ensure effective engagement.

## Box 10.9 Communications Implementation Plan

The following are elements within a communications implementation plan:

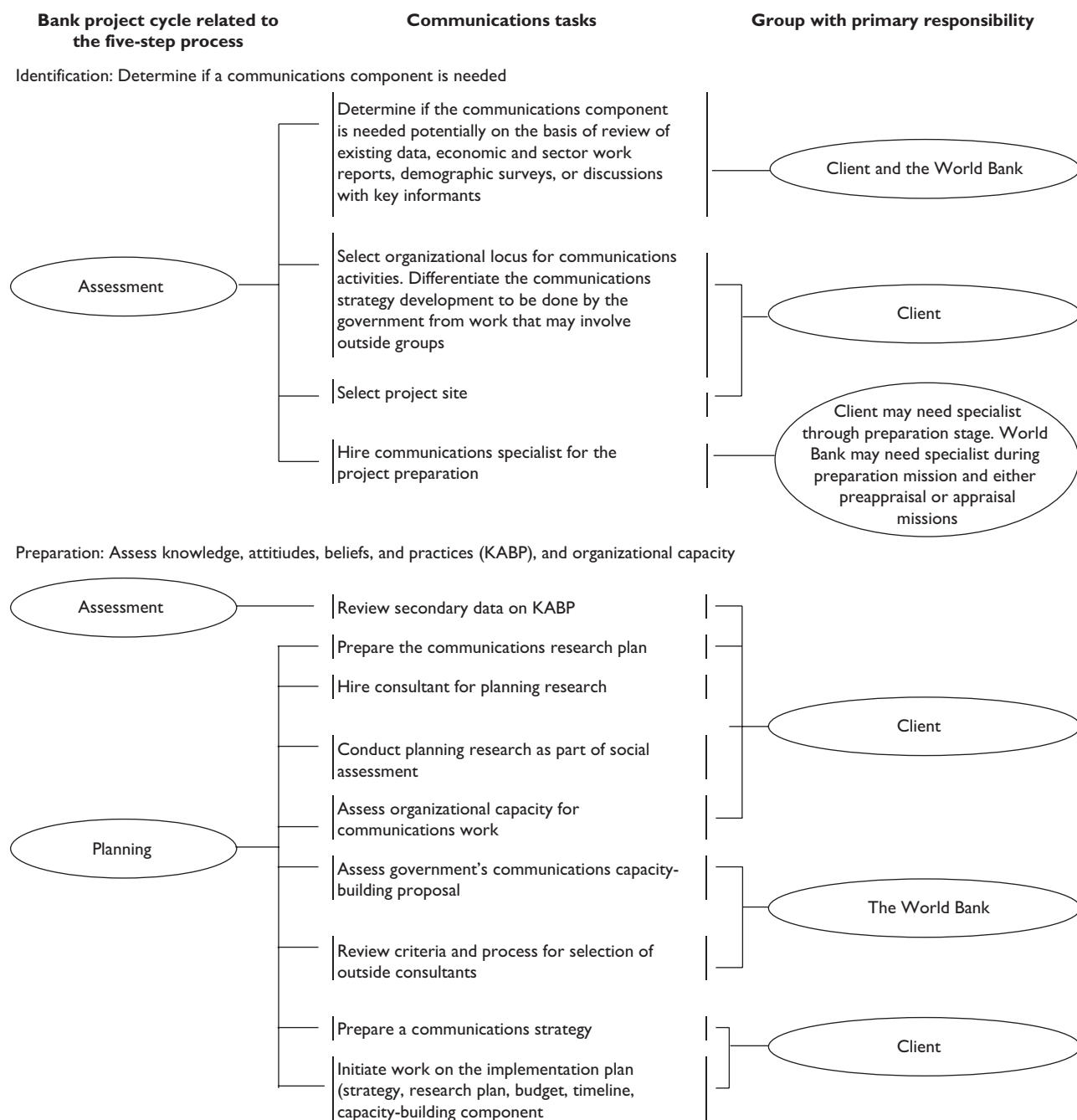
- A *strategic approach* defines (i) the goal(s) identified as feasible and effective in supporting the project's purpose, (ii) the type of response desired, (iii) the target audiences, and (iv) methods (print, mass media, group encounters, interpersonal communications) that will be used.
- A *training scheme* in skills needed to carry out communications activities is critical to the strategy.
- *Monitoring and evaluation activities* are designed for continuous monitoring of communications strategy and activities to provide timely information to improve judgments about action.

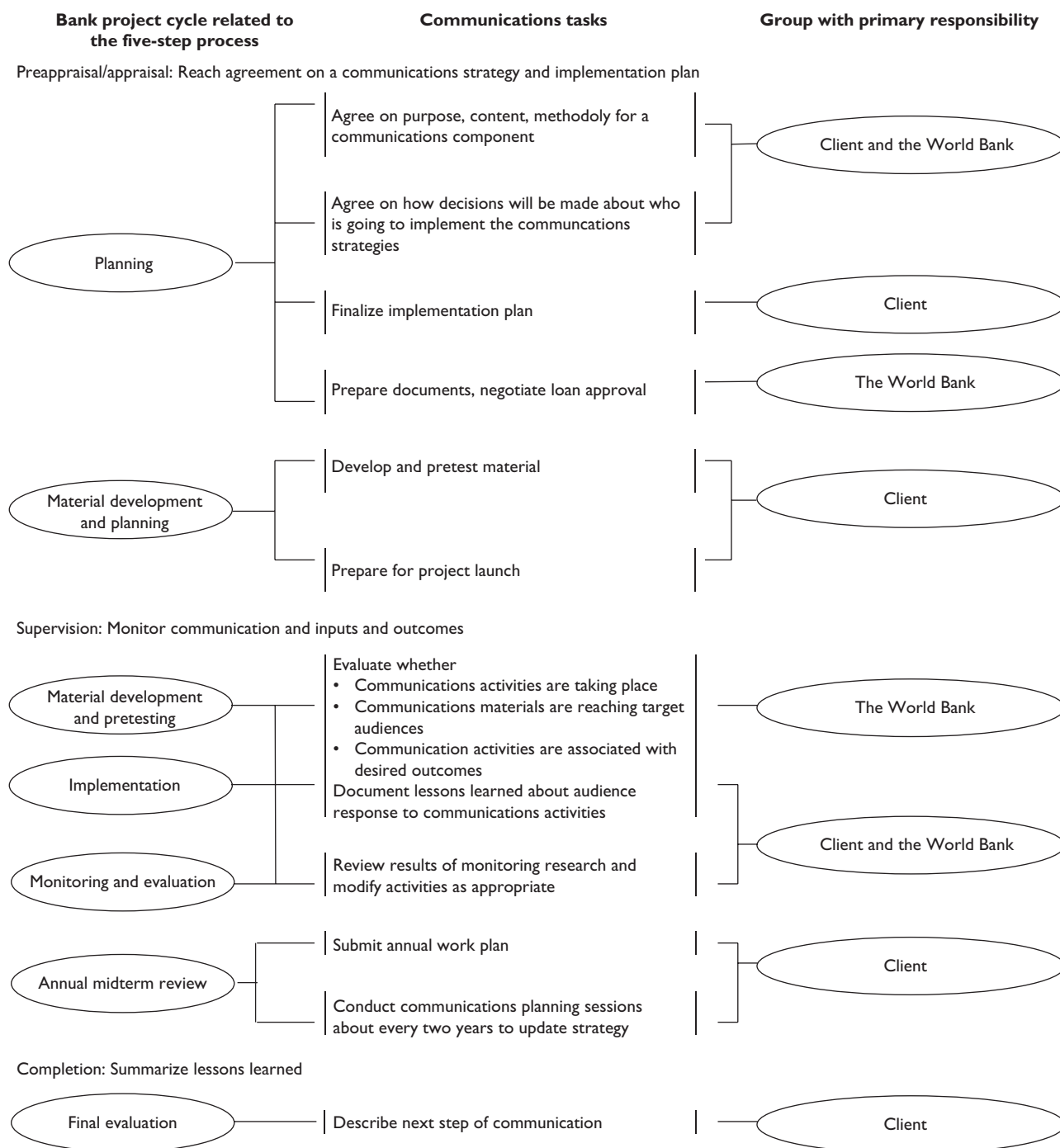
Source: Cabañero-Verzosa 2003.

- The *capacity-building component* is a plan to provide the infrastructure, staffing, and training on communications strategy development and management. It may investigate organizational systems, work performance indicators, and staff development opportunities that affect the quality of communications work.
- *Budget line items for critical elements* that affect the success of communications activities are needed, including the funding of communications research during the planning phase, as well as adequate funding for mass media dissemination costs and group communications activities.
- *Timelines* that allow for a participatory process of planning, implementing, and monitoring communications activities are necessary.



## ANNEX 10A CHECKLIST FOR TASK MANAGERS





Source: Cabañero-Verzosa 2003: 19–20.

## NOTE

1. For an example specific to environmental assessment that addresses the timing of these planning tasks, see World Bank (1999).

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