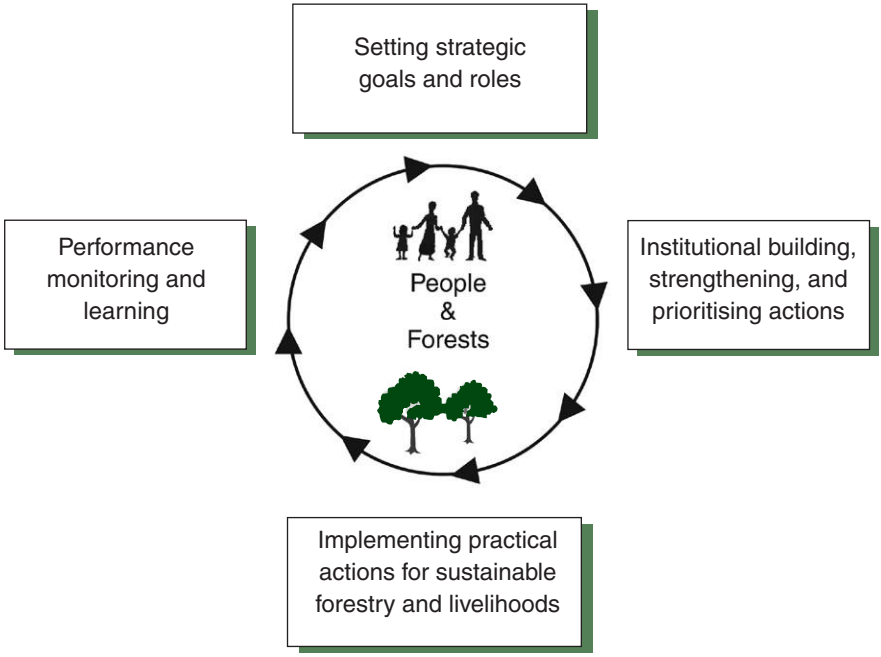
Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Area Development Committee
ANRMC	Area Natural Resource Management Committee
CBFM	Community Based Forest Management
CBO	Community Based Organisation
COMPASS	Community Partnerships for Sustainable Resource Management
CURE	Coordination Unit for Rehabilitation of the Environment
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DDP	District Development Plan
DEAP	District Environmental Action Plan
DEC	District Executive Committee
DED	German Development Service
DESC	District Environmental Sub-Committee
DFO	District Forestry Office(r)
EPA	Extension Planning Area
FA	Forest Assistant
FD	Department of Forestry
FES	Forestry Extension Services
FG	Forest Guard
FMA	Forest Management Agreement
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FRIM	Forestry Research Institute of Malawi
GoM	Government of Malawi
GVH	Group Village Headman
Ha	Hectare
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IFM	Indigenous Forest Management
IGA	Income Generating Activity
MAFE	Malawi Agroforestry Extension Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCFW	Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife

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FOREWORD

Forestry in Malawi has been undergoing a process of devolution, that is transferring power closer to the people who live with and depend on trees and forest resources for their day to day household and economic needs. This has been achieved through forestry policies and legislation that both recognise and encourage greater involvement of rural communities in the conservation and management of trees and forests, and sharing the resources and environmental benefits that they provide. In addition, Central Government is decentralising powers and functions to Local Authorities to devolve administrative and political authority to the District level through the District Assemblies, with the aim of being more responsive and improving service provision to the people of Malawi.

The Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources & Environment also recognises the role of non-governmental organisations, the private sector, faith-based organisations and other civil society groups in supporting rural communities with natural resource management activities as a means of improving the livelihoods of individuals, households and communities through sustainable management of trees and forests.

Much experience has now been gained with implementing this new approach to forestry in Malawi, generally referred to as **Participatory Forest Management (PFM)**. Many field projects and programmes have developed guidelines, documented lessons and highlighted best practice, to assist practitioners with facilitating and supporting communities with their forestry related activities. Different service providers have followed different approaches and used different 'incentives' to promote community forestry. It was considered timely to review the lessons and ensure that a consistent approach is followed by all practitioners in the sector.

The Department of Forestry as the regulatory and planning authority for forestry in Malawi, has in consultation with key sector practitioners, produced this set of national guidelines to guide the practice of promoting community based management of forest resources both on customary land and in Forest Reserves,

but also establish standards for forestry extension service delivery and improved forest management. The guidelines contained within this document build on the experience of the forest sector and put forward what is now considered 'best practice' as minimum service standards in promoting improved and sustainable forest management in support of rural livelihoods and sustainable development in Malawi.

The *PFM Standards and Guidelines* have been developed to provide a framework to guide forest extension service providers such as District Assemblies, and field extension staff (Government and non-government), but also to provide an objective and transparent tool to assist the monitoring of the quality of participatory forestry services supplied through these service providers. The PFM standards therefore should be applied and followed by all in the forest sector (Central Government, Local Government, civil society – NGOs & CBOs) in planning, regulating, promoting, and providing forest services in support of National Policies in Malawi.

Initially the Standards are introduced as a code of practice for the sector, but following adoption and refinement, will become mandatory for those who wish to provide participatory forestry services in Malawi. The aim is to ensure that the forest dependent and resource poor communities, disadvantaged groups and others receive quality services from forest extension providers both Government and non-government.

I therefore urge all forestry practitioners, planners, regulators and policy makers to adopt, support and apply these *PFM Standards and Guidelines* to improve the quality of service delivery to individuals, households and rural communities, to improve their livelihoods through the sustainable management of trees, forests and forest ecosystems.

HF Chimunthu Banda MP
Minister for Mines, Natural Resources & Environment

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department of Forestry has for some time wished to bring together all the learning, experience and best practice from the many projects, programmes and other interventions in the forest sector into one document that will encourage and guide forest extension agents, both in Government and outside of Government. It has also wished for a practical means with which to assess the impact of forestry policies and other instruments to ensure that these meet the needs of both the people and the forests of Malawi.

This document is the product of a lengthy process of information gathering, analysis, discussion and peer review meetings, along with development and testing of Standards to ensure that these meet the challenges and realities of those planning and providing forestry services to individuals, groups, households and communities.

Many individuals representing many agencies, organisations, projects and programmes have contributed to the drafting, development and field testing with practitioners and communities, over the last 18 months. Organisations involved in the development and review process included: Sustainable Forest Management Programme; Malawi College of Forestry & Wildlife; Bunda College of Agriculture; Mzuzu University, Forest Research Institute of Malawi; Training Support for Partners; CURE; DED Malawi; Rural Foundation for Afforestation, Wildlife & Environment Society of Malawi. Detailed comments were also received from Janet Lowore and Duncan Macqueen in the United Kingdom.

Organisations participating in the testing included: GoM/EU Public Works Programme (Ntcheu & Lilongwe); Nkhotakota DFO; Nkhata Bay DFO; Ntcheu DFO; Bwanje Valley Rural Development Organization; Information Centre for Food & Fuel Security Promotion, Mulanje; Mount Mulanje Conservation Trust; Mulanje DFO; Total Land Care (Nkhotakota); Malawi College of Forestry & Wildlife, World Vision (Nkhotakota). Field testing was conducted by each of the participating organisations as part of their normal activities in selected sites within their districts/impact areas.

Although many individuals have been involved, I would like to specifically mention and thank for their efforts: Wellings Simwela for initiating and driving the process of developing the national standards and guidelines, Alastair Anton as the lead technical adviser and author, Mrs Stella Gama as the coordinator for the process and Nicholas Chimzukila for leading the field testing. We also recognise the contribution of the late Tony Seymour towards the development of community based forest management in Malawi.

Such a process would not have been possible without the support both technical and financial from the USAID Malawi through COMPASS II, the European Union, NORAD, DIDC, as well as experiences from many other donor supported initiatives.

Improving service delivery is an ongoing process. The Department of Forestry welcomes comments and contributions on these Standards and Guidelines, and will support an ongoing process of further testing and refining to ensure that the final beneficiaries receive quality support and services from the sector.

KM Nyasulu
Director of Forestry

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document sets out to guide the practice of promoting **participatory forestry management or PFM**, but also establish standards for forestry extension service delivery and improved forest management as a means to support poverty alleviation in Malawi. This covers: community based forest management on customary estate (afforestation and indigenous forest management), co-management of forest reserves, community involvement in the management of State plantations and other forest extension activities.

With the devolution of forest extension service delivery functions and responsibilities to District Assemblies and the increasing involvement of non-governmental organisations and development programmes in forestry activities, there is need for a consistent approach to ensure that the intended beneficiaries receive quality support in their forestry endeavours. Standards are also needed to support monitoring the implementation of the National Forest Policy, specifically related community based management of forest resources.

This document provides guidance and direction on taking forestry activities to a logical stage, highlighting where individual activities fit in the overall process of promoting participatory forestry and community empowerment. It highlights the requirements of the Policy & Legislation for legal agreements & management plans, including Forest Management Agreements for customary land forests, Co-management Agreements for partnership arrangements within State Forest Reserves and Plantations, as well as Forest Plantation Agreements for areas of afforestation. These provide economic and legal empowerment through devolving powers and security of tenure and importantly, the right to trade in forest products.

Promoting participatory forestry should be considered as a process, a cycle of working in partnership, planning, and implementation, of monitoring and learning to continuously improve the practice and provision of services to improve the well being of people and forests. Unfortunately, many groups, communities and their VNRMCs are only being taken part of the way down the path to empower-

ment. Seedlings are being raised and trees planted, with little consideration of the institutional issues, sharing of future benefit and revenues. Village forest areas (VFAs) have been demarcated and protected, but with limited advice on sustainable utilisation and legal protection for commercial harvesting. Income generating activities (IGAs) have been promoted, but technical support has concentrated on production with little attention to the processing and marketing aspects where the 'income' is generated. There is urgent need to strengthen the capacity of management institutions to plan and function effectively if livelihoods are to be improved and trees, forests and forest ecosystems are to be managed sustainably.

There is no blueprint approach to promoting participatory forestry. However, this document provides information and guidance on appropriate approaches for various practical actions to regulate the use and management of trees and forests as individual, group, common pool or State resources, as well as the appropriate institutional arrangements to set rules and govern use and access to these areas.

For participatory forest management to take place, local institutions should be accountable to the people they represent. This includes decision-making, rule making, implementation of activities, resource access and allocation (benefit sharing), enforcement of rules and dispute resolution, all in a transparent and equitable manner. This document outlines the process and approaches that should be followed in order to empower individual, groups and communities to benefit in a meaningful and tangible manner from their surrounding natural resources.

Development of national forestry standards is the lead responsibility of Central Government under the decentralisation of forest management responsibilities implementing the Local Government Act 1998, and the National Forestry Programme, 2001. The PFM service standards contained within this document have been developed as a definitive statement of agreed 'best practice'. These have been compiled from review of relevant literature and monitoring and evaluation

reports, as well as from the knowledge and experience of those engaged in planning and providing participatory forestry services throughout the country. PFM standards have been developed to ensure that there is consistency in forest extension service provision across the sector, but also to ensure that the 'client' the beneficiaries of the service, receive quality support and direction, and as such are empowered in the manner intended by the policy and legal framework. A total of seventeen service standards cover the various steps, stages and practical actions of the generic participatory forestry process and comprise elements that are currently considered 'best practice'.

The process of assessment of compliance with the Standards may be formal or informal, be conducted within a project, organisation or agency as part of routine supervision, by the Department of Forestry as part of its regulatory and monitoring function, or through a process of self assessment by the extension staff and other practitioners themselves. What is important is that the assessment is viewed as a process of learning, of sharing knowledge between the assessor, the responsible extension worker and the beneficiaries.

The PFM standards are therefore needed both to guide field practice and set benchmarks for service delivery to assist the monitoring of the implementation of the policy and legal framework that apply to natural resources management in Malawi. It is hoped that the adoption of Standards & Guidelines for PFM will address many of the gaps in terms of promoting practical actions for achieving sustainable forestry in support of rural livelihoods.

INTRODUCTION

Many guidelines, field manuals and extension kits have been prepared in the past, most of these have highlighted technical aspects and specific approaches to promote forestry extension and social forestry. The guidelines contained within this document are primarily 'process' guidelines to support planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of participatory forest management. These cover more of the 'what to' do rather than the 'how to do' which are already available in a variety of formats, produced by various projects, programmes agencies and organisations. It is expected that over time, these 'how to do' documents and other material will be reviewed and revised to complement the PFM guidelines in support of the PFM standards.

What is the policy context?

The Government of Malawi recognises the importance of forests and other natural resources as highlighted in the Constitution. To this effect, it has come up with a number of national instruments: the National Forest Policy, 1996 and Forest Act, 1997, which recognise the importance of people as well as the welfare contribution of forests in Malawi. They direct a change away from the 'command' style of forestry towards approaches that encourage greater community involvement and recognises other actors, including civil society and the private sector. The National Forestry Programme, 2001, was formulated as a mechanism to guide the implementation of the Policy, 'to translate good intentions into real results', through 12 strategies each with a set of prioritised actions, with the overall goal of "sustainable management of forest goods and services for improved and equitable livelihoods".

Natural resources and forests in particular, are a key element in the Government strategy for poverty reduction as highlighted in the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) 2002.

"In natural resources, community-based management will be promoted in order to ensure conservation and sustainable utilisation of natural resources as an additional off-farm source of income."

Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002

In the course of implementing the National Forest Policy in involving communities and other stakeholders in the sustainable management of forest resources, a number of gaps were identified. To address these gaps, a supplement to the National Forest Policy titled 'Community Based Forest Management' dated July 2003 was produced.

The policy goal for community based forest management is to empower rural communities to conserve and develop Malawi's forest resources for the economic and environmental benefit of the present and future generations.

CBFM Supplement to National Forest Policy, July 2003

This document draws heavily on the CBFM Policy Supplement of 2003 and the associated draft guidelines (unpublished). It should be viewed as providing both the practical direction and quality aspect of implementing community based forest management in Malawi.

Why practice participatory forestry in Malawi?

Participatory forestry is now considered an effective approach to encourage sustainable management of forest areas as well as support the sustainable livelihoods of forest dependent communities. It promotes local stakeholder involvement in decision making over the management of forest resources with the aim of: alleviating poverty by improving rural livelihoods; promoting more effective local control over forest resources; more sustainable land management; developing partnerships between rural people, state, civil society and private sector; as well as providing a mechanism to solve conflict over control and flows of natural resources in rural areas.

take responsibility, and promote collective action, for the protection, management and sustainable utilisation of their surrounding forest areas. It is implicit that this will enhance security of land tenure, enhance incomes and improve participation in land-use decision-making.

Community organisation and mobilisation for collective action depends greatly on the equity, transparency and representation of community institutions such as the Village Natural Resource Committees. In recognition of this, and in view of the new policy focus, the 'modern' extension worker must not only possess knowledge of the science of indigenous forest management and afforestation, but also a new range of skills, attitudes and understanding, in order to empower communities to manage their surrounding forest resources sustainably in support of their livelihood strategies.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

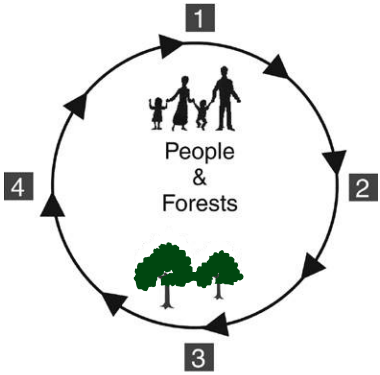
A wealth of information generated through field experience exists within Malawi. Much of this document is based on such experience, but readers and practitioners are recommended to refer to such material for more in-depth guidance. Key documents will be referred to throughout the text and a list of some of the many important local documents can be found in the references.

What is the participatory forest management process?

Promoting participatory forestry should be considered as a process, a cycle of working in partnership, planning, and implementation, of monitoring and learning to continuously improve the practice and provision of services to improve the well being of people and forests. The following generic process has been compiled following a review of relevant field documents, existing guidelines and manuals as well as the National Forestry Programme, 2001. The aim is to assist the practitioner and planner with a framework to guide the process of assisting individuals, groups and communities with the management of trees and forests, on both customary land and State land.

Four main stages of PFM have been identified which are captured in the following diagram:

1. **Setting strategic goals and roles:**
   Strategic planning, forming partnerships and agreeing roles and responsibilities
2. **Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions:** Identifying stakeholders, strengthening their capacity to analyse and plan according to local priorities.
3. **Implementing practical actions:** Promoting the intervention best suited to the situation, beneficiaries, and esource.
4. **Performance monitoring and learning:** Assessing the impact and sharing the learning

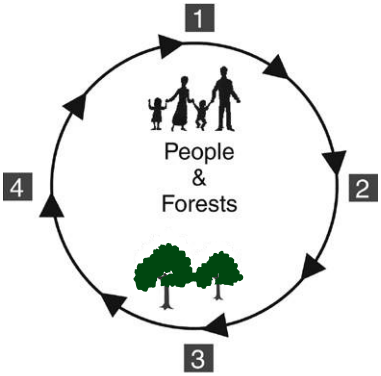


Each of the four main stages of PFM are further divided into a number of steps which follow a logical process to lead the practitioner through the various aspects of PFM.

To guide the reader through the PFM Standards & Guidelines, each stage in the PFM cycle will be considered in turn and form the basis of the main chapters of this document.

The full PFM process is set out as follows:

THE PARTICIPATORY FOREST MANAGEMENT PROCESS



1. Setting strategic goals and roles

- Determine local planning and strategic priorities (District profiles and plans)
- Identify broad stakeholder groups and form partnerships (NGOs, traditional leaders)
- Negotiate roles, responsibilities, and accountability

2. Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions

- Build awareness and consensus of key local stakeholders, interest groups, and functional community institutions
- Identify needs, priorities, and opportunities (livelihoods, IGAs)
- Assess resource availability, user rights, and tenure
- Negotiate roles, responsibilities, accountability, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms
- Identify and form appropriate locally accountable institutions (VNRMC/Block committees, forest user groups, clubs)

3. Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods

Processes and Approaches

- Community management of customary forests
- Co-management of State Forest Reserves
- Individual/household tree planting, trees on farms
- Afforestation (community and group plantations)
- Community involvement in state plantations
- Harvesting, processing, and marketing forest produce

  ↓

  → **Management Plans**

  ↓

  → **Legal documents**
- Forest management agreements
- Co-management agreements
- Forest plantation agreements
- Bylaws (district and community)
- Licences

4. Performance monitoring and learning

- Assess impact, equity, achievement of outcomes, and performance against standards
- Faciitate participatory action learning
- Review and revision of plans, consultations, and serve agreements
- Communicate learning

The above process aims to guide practitioners and highlight key areas of the PFM process that are often overlooked. It provides direction on taking activities to a logical stage and highlights where individual activities fit in the overall picture of participatory forestry and community empowerment. Few of the individuals, groups or communities supported so far under the new Policy environment have been fully empowered in terms of economic and legal empowerment. Many practitioners and key stakeholders are not aware of the requirements of the Policy & Legislation, eg need for Forest Management Agreements & Management plans for full rights, security of tenure and the right to benefit economically from trees and forest resources.

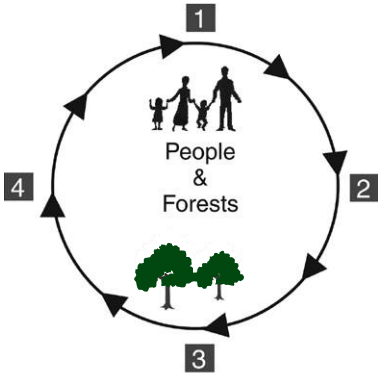
What are PFM service standards?

Development of national forestry strategies, standards and planning is the lead responsibility of Central Government under the decentralisation of forest management responsibilities implementing the Local Government Act 1998, and the National Forestry Programme, 2001.

In the context of participatory forestry in Malawi, the PFM service standards have been developed as a definitive statement of agreed 'best practice'. These have been compiled from review of relevant literature and monitoring and evaluation reports, as well as from the knowledge and experience of those engaged in planning and providing participatory forestry services throughout the country.

The 17 service standards in this document are based on the process of promoting participatory forestry illustrated above, and each highlight elements that are currently considered 'best practice'. These should be considered as benchmarks for service delivery within the sector, and used to assist the effective monitoring of activities and therefore assessment of the implementation and regulation of policy.

SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATORY FORESTRY



1. Setting strategic goals and roles

- **Service standard 1:** Negotiating strategic goals and roles

2. Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions

- **Service standard 2:** Building awareness and consensus
- **Service standard 3:** Identifying needs, priorities, and opportunities
- **Service standard 4:** Assessing resource availability user rights and tenure
- **Service standard 5:** Negotiating roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms
- **Service standard 6:** Identify and form locally accountable institutions

3. Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods

Processes and Approaches

- **Service standard 7:** Community management of customary forests
- **Service standard 8:** Management of State Forest Reserves
- **Service standard 9:** Co-management of State Forest Reserves
- **Service standard 10:** Individual/household planting and trees on farms
- **Service standard 11:** Afforestation
- **Service standard 12:** Community involvement in the management of State plantations
- **Service standard 13:** Harvesting, processing, and marketing forest produce

4. Performance monitoring and learning

- **Service standard 14:** Assessing the impact, equity, and achievement of outcomes
- **Service standard 15:** Facilitating participatory action learning
- **Service standard 16:** Review and revision of plans, constitutions, and agreements
- **Service standard 17:** Communicating learning

How will the PFM standards be achieved and verified?

The achievement of PFM standards is considered through a process of assessment. These take into account a number of 'quality' factors to assess the implementation of the service standard. Many of these involve field assessment and interviews with stakeholder groups and beneficiaries. These are detailed to help the 'assessor' with determining the quality of the stage or step of the PFM pro-

cess, but also to assist the implementers, primarily the forest extension workers, with a measure of the 'service' they should be providing and achieving.

The service standard is confirmed through a 'verifier', the presence or absence of which indicates a level of performance. These are considered 'objective evidence' that a particular process or activity has taken place. These may take the form of documents, actions or discussions in order to verify that a standard has been met. For example evidence of a functioning VNRMC would be that meetings are documented and records kept. However, a measure of quality would be to test that decisions made were equitable and endorsed by the wider community, which would be verified through interviews with community members.

An example of a service standard and associated assessment criteria and verifiers, is set out below:

5	**What is the standard?**	**What will be assessed?**	**How will it be verified?**	**Who is accountable?**
B	Benefit sharing (forest resources & revenues) is equitable according to tenure and access rights, transparent & documented	■ People can explain how & why benefits have been/will be distributed ■ Benefits distributed in accordance with agreed constitution ■ Absence of conflict over benefit sharing ■ Management of revenues (fees, licences, fines) & transaction records kept	Checking the Constitution Performing an audit of committee financial records Interviewing committee & community members	Forest extension worker (E) Chairperson of VNRMC (D) Traditional leaders (D) District Assembly (E)

Based on this assessment along with its associated verifier, an overall assessment of compliance with the standard can be made. This should be either: **FULL or PARTIAL or NOT ADEQUATE** as appropriate according to the assessment criteria, to reflect how far the standard has been met.

Any shortfalls or recommendations for follow up action should be noted and discussed with the responsible service provider as appropriate. This is a critical aspect of the whole assessment process. The main aim of the PFM standards is to improve the service provided to individuals, groups and communities. Therefore it is important to highlight areas that require strengthening or further support to ensure that the beneficiaries of PFM are appropriately empowered.

Who should these standards apply to?

These standards will apply to all groups, individuals, organisations and institutions engaged in 'people and forestry' related activities in Malawi. This covers:

Planning and Implementation Level		Requirement
Field Practitioners	Forest Assistants, extension agents (Government and non-government)	■ Apply and conform to the minimum standards for facilitating community-based forest management
District Planners	District Commissioner, DEC, DESC, Agric & Natural Resources Committee, NGOs	■ Apply and conform to the standards for planning and providing quality forestry extension services ■ Formulation and review of legal matters related to the forestry sector (District bylaws)
Communities	VNRMCs, Block committees, forest user groups	■ To plan, apply and implement forestry activities for the benefit and interest of those they represent. ■ Utilise forest resources in a sustainable manner.
District Assemblies	Ward councillors, Traditional Authorities, Members of Parliament	■ Apply the requirements for providing quality forestry services and allocation of appropriate resources (both human and financial) ■ Approve legal matters related to the forestry sector (District bylaws) ■ Represent the interest of all local & national stakeholders in a responsible manner.
Central Government	Department of Forestry Headquarters including regional offices, research & academic institutions (FRIM & MCFW), and other line Ministries involved in natural resource management	■ Ensure Government & non-government compliance and consistency with the application of standards, ■ Advise District Assemblies and others with the requirements, ■ Apply standards for monitoring the implementation of the Policy.

Who will be accountable?

The last column of the PFM Standards identifies an individual, group, or institution associated with each standard. These have been divided into two types of accountability. Firstly those responsible for planning and providing the appropriate resources (the enablers), and secondly those charged with ensuring that the action or activity takes place to the required standard (the deliverer).

Enabler (E)	The person or institution that creates the 'space' (resources or direction) for an activity of service to take place.
Deliverer (D)	The person or institution that ensures that the activity takes place to the required 'standard' and produces the intended outcome.

These help assist the clarification of 'who' should be doing 'what' to clarify roles and responsibilities in service provision and facilitating various actions and activities at the field level.

How can 'tools' assist the process?

The process of community investigation and mobilisation are fairly well developed and are applied under various circumstances. Most are 'participatory' in nature in that they involve 'people' to varying degrees through the scales of passive participation to self-mobilisation. Various 'tools' and approaches have been developed to assist this process. Examples of 'tools' include: stakeholder analysis; gender analysis; institutional mapping; seasonal calendars; transect walks and so on. Many are used within approaches such as: participatory rural appraisal; appreciative inquiry; objective oriented planning; and the sustainable livelihoods framework.

It is not the role of this document to say whether one 'tool' or approach should be favoured over another, more that a tool should be applied in an appropriate and sensitive manner and the 'outcome' in terms of learning and analysis is not only for the investigator, but importantly the beneficiary. Tools should be a *means* to stimulate *discussion* and *investigation* of issues and therefore stimulate ideas for *ways forward to empowering* the communities to take self action to manage forest resources sustainably in partnership with the Department of Forestry, District Assemblies and others.

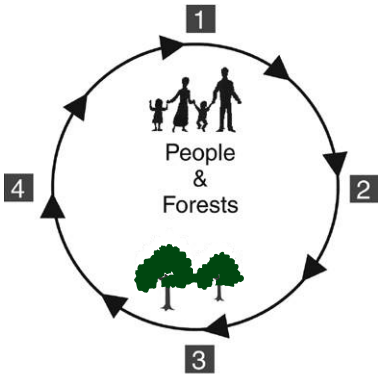
TOOL BOX (EXAMPLE)

Stakeholder analysis
Gender analysis

Throughout this document, the reader will find a number of 'toolboxes'. These have been provided to guide the practitioner in suggesting certain 'tools' or approaches that may be used to assist investigation, understanding, negotiation, prioritisation and planning as appropriate. The practitioner should bear in mind what the 'tool' is trying to achieve and not be viewed as a mechanical information collection exercise.

STAGE 1: SETTING STRATEGIC GOALS AND ROLES

1. **Setting strategic goals and roles**
   - Determine local planning and strategic priorities (District profiles and plans)
   - Identify broad stakeholder groups and form partnerships (NGOs, traditional authorities)
   - Negotiate roles, responsibilities, and accountability
2. **Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions**
3. **Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods**
4. **Performance monitoring and learning**



What is the aim?

The aim is to ensure a common understanding within and between key sector stakeholders at the District level, that strategic planning is undertaken to ensure that forest services respond to local needs and priorities within the overall context of the national policies and the legal framework.

Determining local planning and strategic priorities?

This section is to ensure that forest extension services are provided in an effective and coordinated manner according to local priorities, but also recognises the National priorities as set out in the various policy and legal instruments, such as the National Forest Policy, National

Environmental Policy and the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, to name just a few.

These can be reconciled through developing a 'profile' of the area, the District in the case of a District forest office, an 'impact' area in the case of a project or programme. This 'profile' should provide an overview of the current situation, describing the environmental, economic, social and institutional issues with regards to forests and forest resources, and the human and physical resources available. These should refer to or use data from the published District Socio-economic profiles, and District State of the Environment Reports.

The profile should also provide a brief overview of the other extension providers (Government and non-government) along with their coverage and main activities.

The profile should be supported by a map indicating the distribution of administrative areas (EPAs), forest reserves, fragile areas and other relevant information where possible.

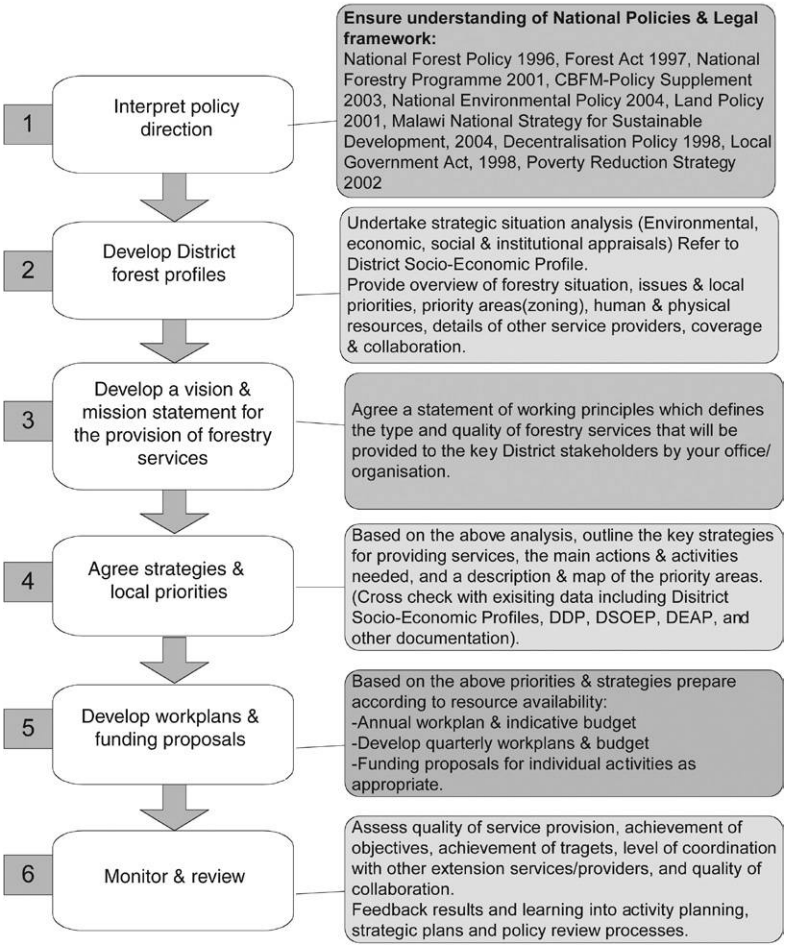
A statement of working principles or 'mission statement' should be developed which defines the type and quality of extension service that will be provided to the key District stakeholders (eg promoting participatory forest management planning approaches, working in partnership with traditional leaders, NGOs and other interested parties, applying transparency in all activities, etc).

The above analysis should inform the development of key strategies for providing forestry services to the key District stakeholders and therefore assist the process of preparing workplans, activity plan and funding proposals in support of sustainable forestry and rural livelihoods.

This process of strategic analysis and planning will assist the Districts to identify the priority areas for support in a targeted and coordinated manner making best use of limited resources.

A strategic planning process is displayed as follows:

STRATEGIC PLANNING



Identifying broad stakeholder groups and form partnerships

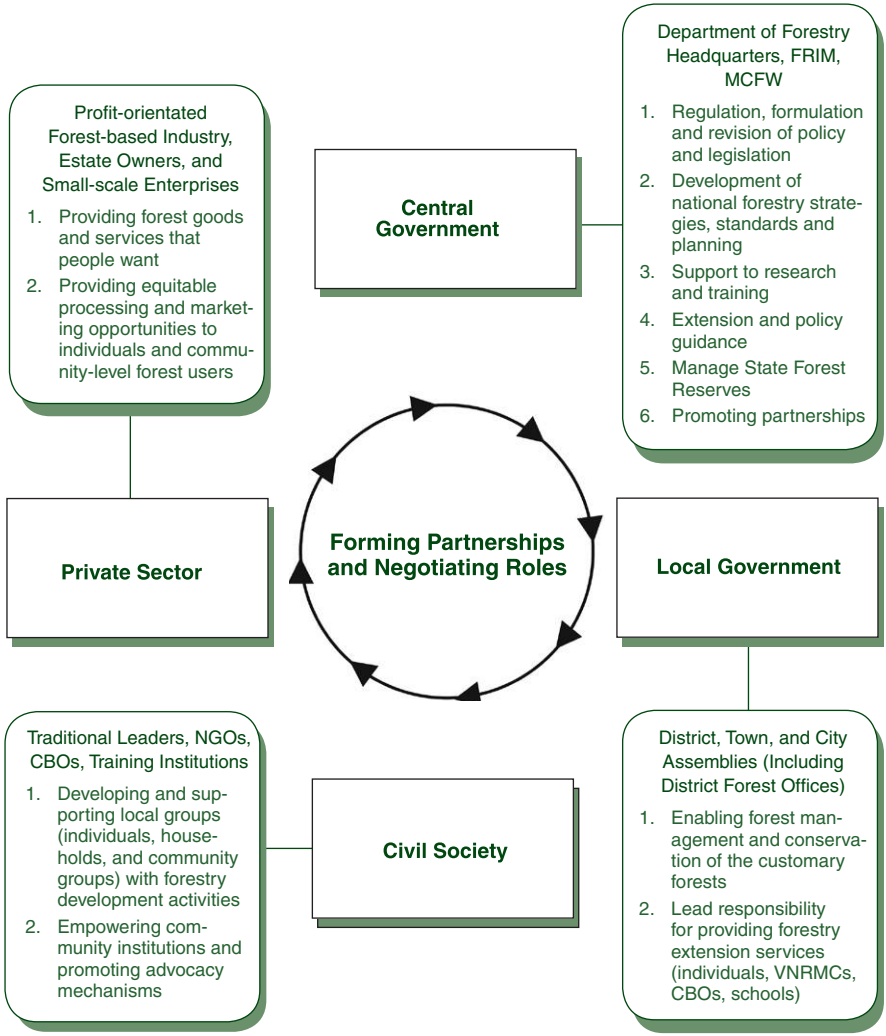
The role of forest extension agents has changed with the new policy direction, it is now broader, more of a supportive role enabling others to engage in forestry and provide services. Forestry can no longer operate in isolation, but should fulfil its role in supporting sustainable development and reducing poverty. Foresters need to look beyond resources and products, to people, their multiple survival strategies and the constraints they face. This now requires greater coordination and collaboration, sharing expertise and resources with others, both Government and non-government, Traditional Leaders, faith-based organisations and private enterprises. Working in partnership with others is now essential given the demands and limited resources, to avoid overlap, duplication of services and potential conflict.

Negotiating roles, responsibilities, and accountability

Once the key players are identified and mobilised, a process of negotiating roles, responsibilities and accountability in providing various extension services or in supporting and facilitating various processes to enable the provision of these services. This needs to be negotiated at the District level considering the relative strengths, capacity, areas of specific expertise or authority and access or availability of resources. Supporting services such as the police, judiciary, should also be included in this process.

Key forest sector roles and responsibilities in relation to the National Forestry Programme, 2001.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR PEOPLE AND FORESTS



Once agreed, joint activity plans can be developed and implemented between service providers, in a coordinated and more effective manner.

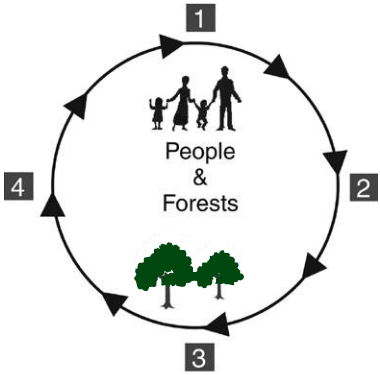
SERVICE STANDARD 1 – SETTING STRATEGIC GOALS AND ROLES

1	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who will be accountable?
A	Service planning and provision (District/EPA) is based on situation analysis & agreed strategic priorities which conform to National Policy direction	▪ District staff can explain the main outcomes of the sector analysis & DSOER including (ecological/ economic/ social & institutional appraisal) ▪ Objectives of activity/ work plans are clearly defined in terms of current policy direction ▪ District forest priorities articulated in DDP, area dev. plan, DEAP	Checking the District Forest profile/ Plan Interviewing DFO Staff	DFO (D) Extension Planners (D) DESC (E) Traditional Authorities (E)
B	Service provision recognises other service providers & involves key stakeholders (traditional leaders) to support & promote participatory forest management	▪ Joint activity plans agreed & implemented between service providers ▪ Partners can explain their roles and responsibilities in relation to joint activities	Checking partnership agreements Reading meeting minutes Interviewing partners and monitoring activity plans	DFO (D) Extension Planners (D) Forest ext workers (D) DESC (E)

STAGE 2: INSTITUTIONAL BUILDING, STRENGTHENING, AND PRIORITISING ACTIONS

1. **Setting strategic goals and roles**

2. **Institutional building, strengthening and prioritising actions**
   - Build awareness and consensus of key local stakeholders, interest groups, and functional community institutions
   - Identify needs, priorities, and opportunities (livelihoods, IGAs)
   - Assess resource availability, user rights, and tenure
   - Negotiate roles, responsibilities, accountability, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms
   - Identify and form appropriate locally accountable institution (VNRMC/Block committees, forest user groups, clubs)



3. **Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods**

4. **Performance monitoring and learning**
   Profit-Oriented Forest-Based Industry, Estate Owners, and Small-scale Enterprises

What is the aim?

This part of the PFM process is critical in ensuring that the appropriate stakeholders are identified for a particular area and that they contribute effectively to sustainable forest management.

This stage covers the identification of the appropriate individuals, groups and organisations that have an interest in managing forest resources and the process of consultation and negotiation necessary to ensure functional, equitable and accountable community level institutions, strengthening their capacity to analyse and plan according to their local priorities.

How to build awareness and consensus of key local stakeholders, interest groups, and functional community institutions?

At the 'local' level, there are a number of individuals, groups, communities, organisations and agencies which have a 'stake' or interest in the availability, condition and management of forest resources both on Public Land managed by Government (gazetted Forest Reserves, Protected Forest Areas) and Public Land under the custodianship of Traditional Authorities including common access land (dambos, community woodlots) and land allocated to individuals, families and groups. Effective and sustainable management of these forest resources and ecosystems depends greatly on consensus and collective action within and between these various 'stakeholders'. These interested individuals, households, groups, institutions or communities, as well as those who might be affected by the intended/planned activity or action, need to be identified and their level of participation determined.

Primary stakeholders	The individuals, households, forest users who directly use or have an interest or rights over the site/forest resources, or will be directly affected by the intended/planned activity or action. Each category of user/interested party should be identified separately and their relationships discussed.
Secondary stakeholders	Those individuals, groups, institutions or agencies who may be indirectly affected by the intended/planned activity or action. Each should be identified separately and their relationships to each other and to the primary stakeholders discussed.

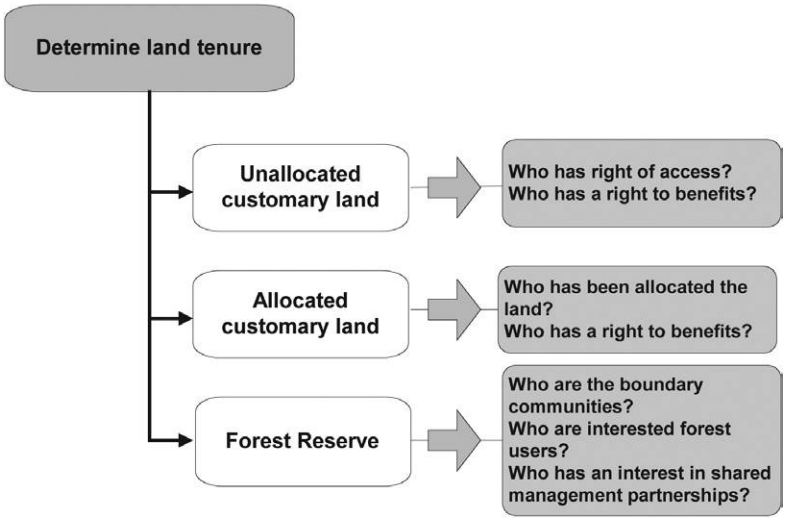
Who should be involved in the management of forest resources therefore is determined by the ownership or right of access and rights to benefits from the area of land in question. Therefore the tenure arrangements have a direct bearing and can assist the identification of the appropriate stakeholders who should be involved, through active participation or the sanctioning of a group or committee to represent their interests.

Proper investigation and discussion of tenure arrangements and usufruct issues at the start of support are essential to minimise resource use and land conflicts later in the process. Investigation through asking:

- Whose land?
- Whose trees?
- Who contributes labour?
- What benefits?
- Who receives those benefits?
- Who decides?

These are simple questions of inquiry that can set the direction for participatory forestry, to ensure that the appropriate individuals, groups and community institutions are involved in taking responsibility for resource management.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?



Once the broad stakeholder groups have been determined, it is important to facilitate a process of identifying sub-groups through processes of poverty and gender analysis. This dis-aggregation of groups can assist later impact monitoring and highlight areas of potential discrimination and conflict that should be recognised and mitigated against.

It is also important to investigate beyond the interest of individuals, groups and communities to engage in forestry activities, not only to generate benefits, but explore who is/will be receiving the benefits, attaining powers, who are the dis-empowered who may be excluded from the process.

TOOL BOX

Appropriate tools include:

- Stakeholder analysis
- Gender analysis
- Institutional mapping
- Sustainable livelihoods analysis
- Appreciative inquiry

The investigation should also consider 'rights' both given and assumed. What are these 'rights' who has these 'rights' are they widely accepted or contested. These are all potential sources of conflict and should be explored.

There are a number of approaches or 'tools that can be used to assist the identification of stakeholders/forest users/interest groups, those with a 'stake' in the management and flows of products and services from trees and forests. Reference should be made to other supporting documents for further information on how to apply these investigation and participatory approaches.

Gender awareness—all facilitators should be aware of:

- understanding the different roles, responsibilities, and experiences of women, men, boys and girls in relation to the issues being explored;
- seeking out opportunities to actively involve women as well as men in consultation and decision-making processes;
- acting on women's as well as men's concerns and priorities;
- seeking out ways to promote benefit for women as well as men;
- being aware of personal attitudes and behaviour and the ways in which these affect communication with women, men, boys and girls.

SERVICE STANDARD 2 – BUILDING AWARENESS AND CONSENSUS

2	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Forest user groups & other key stakeholders identified & their level of interest & participation determined in line to gender needs.	▪ Forest users & wider community can list all concerned stakeholder groups in relation to forest resources, & can explain their level of interest & involvement ▪ Absence of conflict over use & protection of natural resources ▪ Attendance & active participation at community meetings & planned activities	Validating completed stakeholder analysis Interviewing stakeholders Reading reports; Reading minutes of meetings	Forest ext worker (D) District Assembly (D) DFO (E) Extension Planners (E) Traditional leaders (E)

Identifying needs, priorities, and opportunities

The essence of this step is about putting people first and supporting the well-being contribution of trees and forests to rural people's livelihoods and poverty reduction, through sustainable management of these resources. It also involves looking beyond immediate forestry issues through understanding how trees and forests, and their associated products and services, relate to people's livelihood strategies and coping mechanisms, their level of dependency on these resources and potential opportunities that trees, forests and forest related activities present in improving their situation and development.

There are a number of investigative techniques available for undertaking such analysis. These involve participatory approaches including: participatory rural appraisal, appreciative inquiry, objective oriented planning, sustainable livelihoods framework among others, and the reader is directed to other documentation which explain these approaches and their tools in detail. However, what is important is that any investigation and negotiation with communities and disadvantaged groups should be undertaken with sensitivity, understanding and trust, and seek to highlight their hopes and aspirations, strengths and opportunities, and not just needs.

TOOL BOX

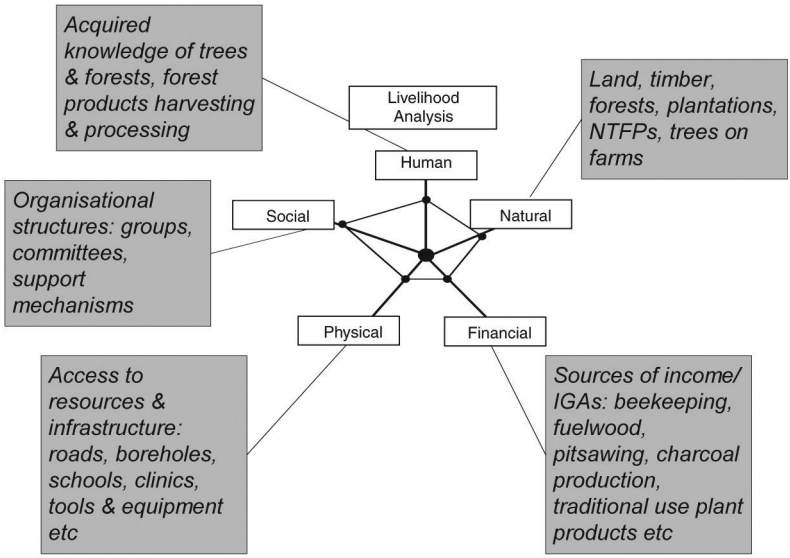
For more detail refer to:

- Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (DFID, CARE, OXFAM etc)
- Appreciative enquiry (COMPASS docs)
- PLA tools (IIED)
- Gender analysis documents

Extension workers should not solely focus on natural resource asset creation (tree planting) or management of existing natural assets such as plantations or VFA management, but investigate where these 'assets' fit within the overall livelihood strategies of individuals, households, groups and communities. Investigation and discussion should be made

of the other 'livelihood assets' available (physical, financial, human and social) and the role trees, forests and forests resources and services play in supporting sustainable livelihood strategies. The sustainable livelihoods framework assists identifying the knowledge and skills, levels of social organisation, capabilities and strategies, and access to resources that can be supported through the practical actions and tenure related forest interventions. These investigations and group discussions should be facilitated in a gender sensitive manner.

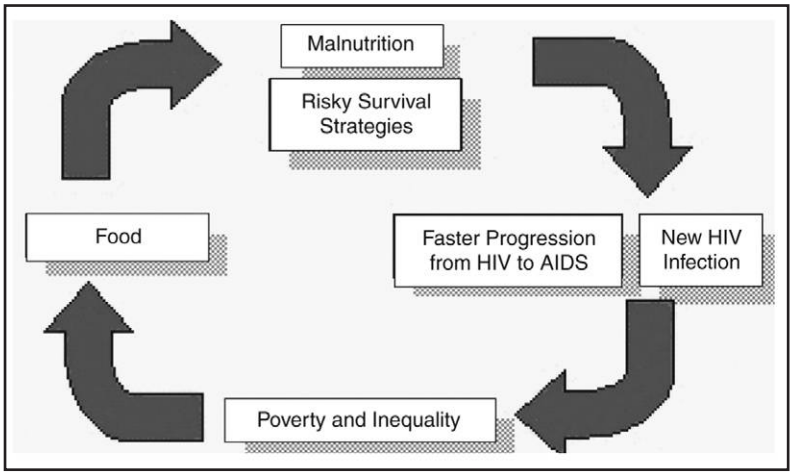
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS ANALYSIS



Extension workers need to understand HIV/AIDS and poverty issues (see following text box) and link to agencies and organisations who are involved in health and other related activities.

HIV/AIDS AND POVERTY – NATURAL RESOURCE USE ISSUES

The impact of HIV/AIDS to rural households is closely linked to poverty issues. Poverty can be defined as having insufficient food, income, assets and other inputs to maintain an adequate standard of living, being vulnerable and therefore unable to cope or recover from shocks and trends, such as droughts and declining crop yields and prices. Food insecurity results in poor nutrition and health which compounds the affects of sickness and disease. Poverty and HIV/AIDS places rural households in a position of weakness which limits the options and choice of survival strategies open to them.



1 Adapted from Save the Children, Oxfam, HIV/AIDS & Food Security in Southern Africa.

Dependency on forests and forest products includes: supply of basic needs for the household; dependency on income through the selling of forest products; and dependency on forest resources as a safety net including food security in times of crisis. This will vary from household to household depending on their livelihood strategies and their vulnerability and access to coping mechanisms.

Forest extension workers should be aware of HIV/AIDS and poverty issues as these affect rural communities and individual households.

HIV/AIDS NR-RELATED ISSUES

- Shortage of labour – through sickness/deaths/attendance at funerals/ time spent caring;
- Reduction of time spent in communal activities including forestry and participation in forestry institutions (VNRMCs);
- Diversion of income to medical and funeral expenses;
- Increase household size through adoption of orphans;
- Increase in collection/dependency on forest resources and change from subsistence use to commercial use in order to generate income;
- Species scarcity for traditional use plant products; and
- Increase demand encourages destructive harvesting techniques and depletion of forest areas.

HIV/AIDS-AFFECTED HOUSEHOLDS COPING STRATEGIES

Increase in forest product collection:

- Subsistence – increase dependence on near resources – collection of fuelwood around the homestead; and
- Commercial – increase in collection and sale of wood and nonwood forest products.

EXTENSION APPROACHES: BUILDING SAFETY NETS AND INCREASING HIV/AIDS AWARENESS

- Securing access, rights, and control over forest resources – reducing vulnerability of disadvantaged and HIV/AIDS affected households;
- Forming partnerships with other development agencies and extension service providers including health workers;
- Highlight the issue of HIV/AIDS affected households during benefit sharing discussions;
- Promoting homestead planting and creation of near resources (trees on farms, riverine planting) for disadvantaged and HIV/AIDS affected households
- Promoting labour saving activities and fuel saving devices;
- Promoting local enterprise development to create income, adding value, forming associations, and improving marketing of forest produce;
- Promoting management of trees and forests to provide foodstuffs (fruit, mushrooms, honey, etc.) for improved nutrition and traditional use plant products for medicinal uses; and
- Include HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention messages during community meetings as part of forestry activities.

Reference should be made to the National HIV/AIDS Policy, 2004 and the Department of Forestry HIV/AIDS draft Strategy.

SERVICE STANDARD 3 – IDENTIFYING NEEDS, PRIORITIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

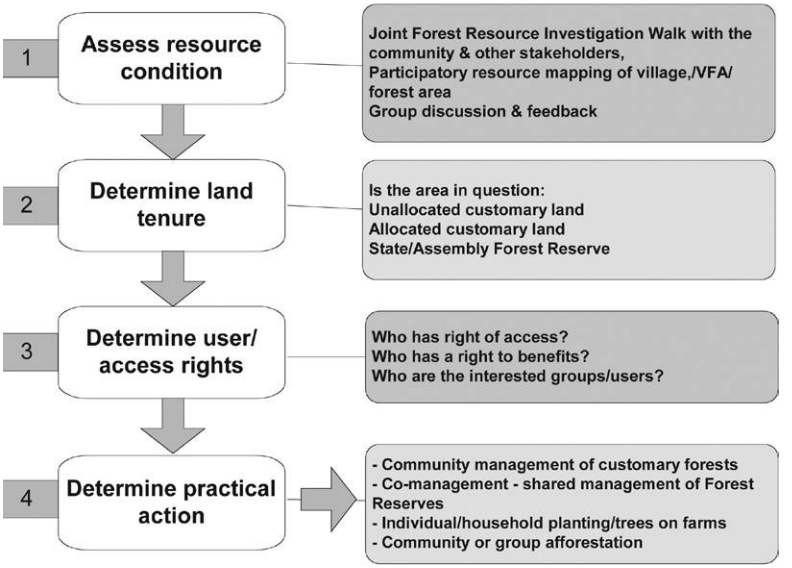
2	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Livelihoods needs, priorities, & strategies are analysed through participatory approaches and gender tools in relation to forest resources	▪ Forest user groups can explain their priorities & strategies in relation to others stakeholders ▪ Existing knowledge & livelihoods strategies are used as a basis to plan new activities ▪ Livelihood assets, priorities & strategies analysed in a participatory manner according to gender & socio-economic status & recorded (baseline data)	Checking Results of PRA's/ appreciative Inquiry & situation analysis Interviewing sample households Checking existence of documentation/disaggregated baseline data	Forest ext worker (D) District Assembly (E)

Assess resource availability, user rights, and tenure

A key element of Participatory Forestry is for all stakeholders to have a full understanding of the forest resources available, their condition, current utilisation and future potential. Equally important is understanding of the tenure arrangements, the ownership, access and the rights to use and collect resources, both for domestic and commercial purposes, officially and unofficially. These can be through existing licences, access rights, informally or legally.

At this stage, this should involve a rapid multi-stakeholder assessment and mapping in order to determine the appropriate broad practical action best suited to the situation, the land-use priorities of the community and the role of trees, forests and forest resources to its households. These in general terms comprise: community management of customary forests, co-management of State Forest Reserves, individual/household planting, trees on farms, plantation establishment and management, both private and community managed. These are covered in more detail in the following chapter.

ASSESS RESOURCE AVAILABILITY, USER RIGHTS, AND TENURE



SERVICE STANDARD 4 – ASSESSING RESOURCE AVAILABILITY, USER RIGHTS, AND TENURE

2	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Appropriate forestry intervention (co-management/ afforestation etc.) determined based on tenure & forest resource availability	▪ Initial forest resource assessment has been undertaken with stakeholders ▪ Tenure arrangements & user rights are determined with community & neighbouring communities	Checking documentation of participatory resource mapping, transect walks Interviewing community members	Forest extension worker (D) Traditional Authorities (E) District Assemblies (E) Civil society (E) Director of Forestry (E)

How to negotiate roles, responsibilities, accountability, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms?

This aspect of participatory forestry is perhaps the most critical. It is usually the lack of transparency, equity and trust that causes a well intentioned forestry initiative to fail at the community level. These are the building blocks upon which community level institutions can grow. If important stakeholders are not included from the outset, that benefit sharing has not been openly discussed, widely agree and endorsed, that committee members and office bearers are not accountable to their wider membership and community, then the institution (VNRMC) will not be sustained in the long term.

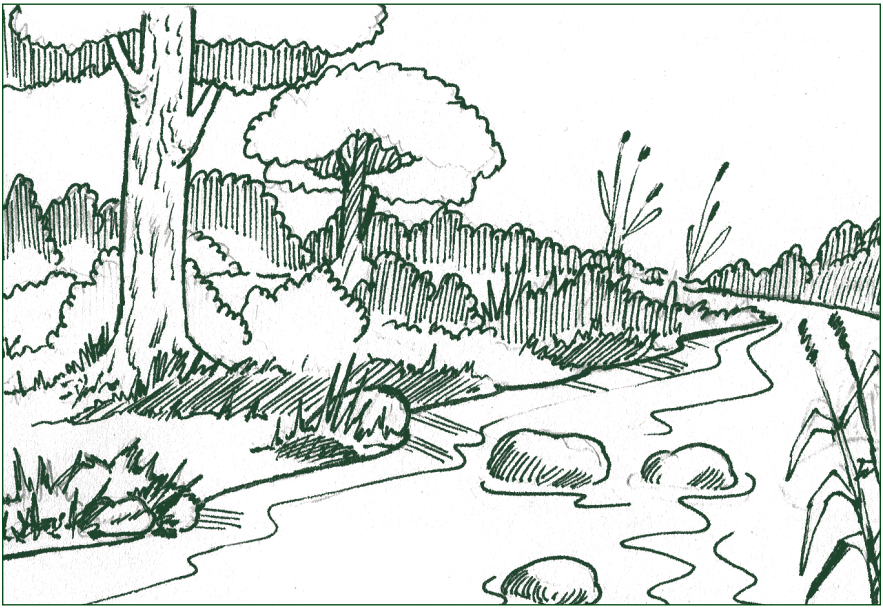
This is the point where discussion, agreement and wider consensus can be built through enquiring:

- Who is involved?
- Who should be involved?
- What are the roles, responsibilities?
- What are the benefits?
- Who can receive these benefits?
- Who decides? What are the rules?
- Who will enforce these rules?
- How will disputes be resolved?

If the benefits from the forest or area to be demarcated or plantation established are not for all, then this has a bearing on the 'management authority' to be formed and the terminology used (see Stage 2 Forming Locally Accountable Institutions). The community and or other interested groups should be assisted and facilitated through a process of discussion and consultation in order to determine, clarify and seek agreement and consensus on the following:

- Access to resources/benefits;
- Local rules governing access and use;
- Sanction mechanisms;
- The costs and benefits how these are valued and how are/will these be shared by the community/group involved; and
- Contribution of labour and time (these may be valued differently by different households and gender groups).

The output of this section should include draft constitutions (including roles responsibilities and benefit sharing arrangements – see Template 2), resource use rules, local bylaws, code of conduct.



SERVICE STANDARD 5 – NEGOTIATING ROLES, RESPONSIBIITIES, BENEFIT SHARING, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

5	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Broad roles & responsibilities of forest users are defined & agreed on by wider community	▪ Forest user groups & wider community can explain their individual and collective roles & responsibilities & rights to benefits	Interviewing community members	Forest extension worker (D) Traditional leader (E)
B	Benefit sharing (forest resources & revenues) is equitable according to tenure and access rights, transparent and documented	▪ People can explain how & why benefits have been/will be distributed ▪ Benefits distributed in accordance with agreed constitution ▪ Absence of conflict over benefit sharing ▪ Proper management of revenues (fees, licences, fines) and transaction records kept	Checking Constitution; Performing Audit of committee financial records; Interviewing committee & community members	Chairperson of VNRMC (D) Traditional leaders (D) Forest extension worker (E) District Assembly (E)
C	Local conflict resolution mechanisms agreed and implemented	▪ Community members can explain cases of conflict and how they were/are being resolved	Interviewing community members	Extension worker (D) Traditional leader (D) District Magistrate (E and D)

Identifying and forming appropriate locally accountable institution in relation to tenure

This is the point where it should be clarified whether the resources to be managed or created belong to the whole community, a small group, or individual households. If the resources and benefits are not for the whole community then the group and its managing committee should not be termed a village natural resource management committee (VNRMC) and the forest area not termed a village forest area (VFA).

The decision to embark on community management of customary forests is one to be taken by the community, and not by a Village Head alone or by a small group of interested individuals. The new management regime will affect the entire village, or group of villages. It will affect every household in the gathering of forest produce for domestic use, and their views will be required at the earliest stage of planning. In most cases active forest management will be a new activity, since the role of government in customary forest management has for many years been minimal, and it will imply the need to impose sufficient discipline to curtail unsustainable and illegal commercial forest-based enterprises. Communities should be assisted to make informed decisions about the future management of their forest resources in full awareness of these implications.

FOREST ACT 1997

Section 30. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, any village headman may, with the advice from the Director of Forestry, demarcate on unallocated customary land a village forest area which shall be protected and managed in the prescribed manner for the benefit of that village community.

Section 31. For the proper management of village forest areas, the Director of Forestry may enter into a forest management agreement with a management authority providing for-

(d) formation of village natural resources management committees for the purposes of managing and utilising village forest areas.

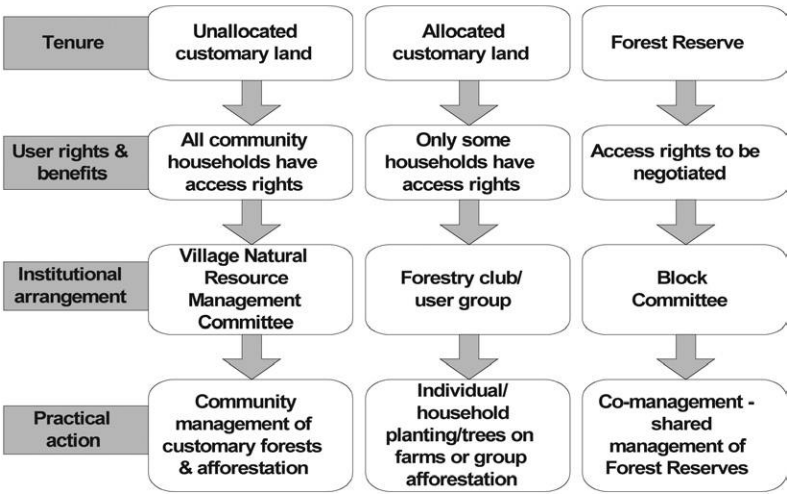
Each village or group village that decides to enter into community forest management will need to elect a committee to represent their interests and act as points of liaison in dealings with forestry extension workers and other government officials. The committee must also be willing to take on the lead role in forest planning, management and administration, and to participate in training. The committee is usually referred to as a "Village Natural Resources Management Committee" or VNRMC, because it is anticipated that the same committee might also take on other roles in natural resources management, for instance wildlife management.

Groups of forest users and interested parties have in many cases come together and established woodlots or plantations on land allocated by the traditional leadership. However, the conflict will arise if these areas are called village forest areas with the inferred right of access of the whole community, when the original group feel that the control and ownership of the trees are with them.

The VNRMC should not become a "forestry club" whose members monopolise the forestry activities of the village. VNRMCs should represent and be accountable to the wider community, and should be periodically re-elected to ensure this remains the case. The VNRMC should prepare a constitution, with the help and support of the community, which clearly expresses its objectives and responsibilities.

In other situations according to land tenure, the land is already allocated to a clan or group of interested persons/households, or there is not sufficient consensus within a community to form a representative and accountable VNRMC. In such circumstances, a forest user group or 'club' may be self-formed to engage in forestry activities. Such groupings are a valid way to encourage forestry protection and management activities, however, it is important that such a grouping should not be called a 'VNRMC' or the area they practice their forestry should not be termed a 'Village Forest Area' if in both instances the wider community are not involved or have a right of access and to benefits from the area.

IDENTIFY AND FORM LOCALLY ACCOUNTABLE INSTITUTION



It may not be necessary in every case to elect an entirely new committee to fulfil the role of a VNRMC. An existing committee or other village institution may be nominated as a VNRMC, provided it:

- Has been elected in the proper manner,
- Is willing and potentially competent to take on the task of a VNRMC, and
- Has the backing of the community in this new or additional role.

The very title "VNRMC" was coined with flexibility in mind, aiming to avoid the unnecessary proliferation of village committees.

In order for a VNRMC or a management committee for a community based organisation to be effective, the following should be considered and discussed with the community/group:

- Is it a viable unit of organisation to the resources to be managed?
- Are there agreed organisational norms & procedures?
- Are there accountability mechanisms, particularly for sharing of benefits, including revenue?
- Does it have sufficient powers and mandate to be functional?

CONSTITUTION FOR A COMMUNITY BASED MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (VNRMC/ CLUB/ BLOCK COMMITTEE)

The purpose of the constitution is to set down clearly its objectives and functions and the way in which it will conduct its affairs. The constitution should identify the area and community represented by the authority/ VNRMC (which may be a village or a group village), and should outline the procedures for the functioning of the committee on behalf of the community. For this purpose it may include procedural rules, or by-laws, which are quite distinct from the management rules developed from a forest management plan for the regulation of forestry activities within the Village Forest Area. The constitution should include detailed provisions for the transparent management and disposal of any income arising from commercial forestry activities, including the maintenance of accounts and other records, and should define sanctions or penalties for infringements of the by-laws and management rules. The constitution should be developed in consultation with, and ratified by, the community, a process that may be facilitated (but not unduly guided) by the forestry extension service.

An outline for a constitution for a community level institution is given in Template 2.

SERVICE STANDARD 6 – IDENTIFY AND FORM LOCALLY ACCOUNTABLE INSTITUTIONS IN RELATION TO TENURE

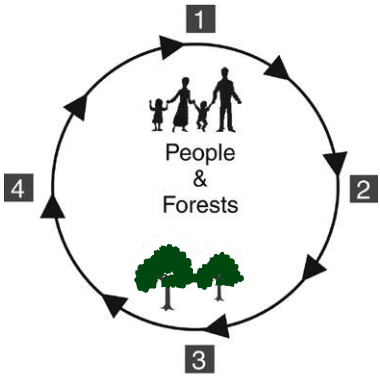
6	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Identified forest user groups are mobilised to nominate representatives to form an equitable democratically elected committee as appropriate to tree and land tenure	▪ Minimum 50% of committee members are women ▪ Equitable representation of interest groups on committee ▪ Institution reflects nature of tree and land tenure	Checking minutes Constitution List of committee members	Forest ext worker (D) Traditional Authorities (E) District Assembly (E)
B	Committee procedures & practice including decision-making clearly stated & understood by wider community, & reflected in a written constitution	▪ Responsibilities and term of office for committee members agreed by wider community and defined in constitution ▪ Community members can explain office bearer responsibilities ▪ Community members can explain how decisions are made ▪ Community institutions (committee) report progress back to wider community on various issues at agreed intervals ▪ Absence of conflict between committee and community/users	Checking Constitution Interviewing sample households Reading field reports	Committee members (D) Forest ext worker (E) Traditional Authorities (E) District Assembly (E)
C	Community forest institution are fully empowered to manage forest resources on behalf of wider community	▪ Community level institutions legally registered ▪ Wider community aware & exercise their rights	Registration certificate Household interviews	Forest ext worker (D)

STAGE 3: IMPLEMENTING PRACTICAL ACTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY AND LIVELIHOODS

1. **Setting strategic goals and roles**

2. **Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions**

3. **Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods**



Processes and Approaches

- Community management of customary forests
- Co-management of State Forest Reserves
- Individual/household tree planting, trees on farms
- Afforestation (community and group plantations)
- Community involvement in state plantations
- Harvesting, processing, and marketing forest produce

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Management Plans

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Legal Documents

- Forest management agreements
- Co-management agreements
- Forest plantation agreements
- Bylaws (District and community)
- Licences

4. **Performance monitoring and learning**

What is the aim?

The aim is to ensure that the appropriate approach is followed that meets the needs of the individuals, groups and communities in relation to the forest resource to be managed and the tenure arrangements in place governing access, use and management of the area in question. Secondly, that such individuals, groups and communities are empowered through receiving the legal authority to manage forest resources, security of tenure and the rights to benefit economically from their forest resource.

"Empower groups at community level to collaborate with government and others in managing forest reserves, develop forest-based enterprise and carry out good management of forest resources on customary land based on clear mechanisms of ownership and control."

CBFM Supplement to NFP, July 2003

What are the main interventions?

The main types of interventions will be determined greatly by a combination of the tenure and usufruct rights to an area, the resource availability and the institutional arrangements for management that have been explored and discussed in the previous chapter.

The main tenure related interventions that are discussed in this chapter are as follows:

- Community management of customary forests (section 3.1);
- Co-management of State Forest Reserves (section 3.2);
- Individual/household tree planting – trees on farms (section 3.3);
- Afforestation – Community / group plantations (section 3.4);
- Community involvement in the management of State Plantations (section 3.5); and
- Processing & marketing of forest produce (section 3.6).

Community management of customary forests

Customary forest means natural forest and woodlands occurring on customary land, that is, land that is governed by customary law as defined in the Land Act. In the context of community based forest management, the focus of interest is in forests of communal access. Mostly, these occur on land that has not been allocated to any individual, family or clan, but in some districts forests of common access occur on allocated land. It is government's intention that all such forest resources should be managed so as to conserve and maintain their productive capacity as well as their less obvious environmental services. The preferred option is that customary forests will be managed, owned, utilised and protected by the communities on whose land they occur, but in the event that a community is unable or unwilling to manage its forest resources this responsibility will be retained and exercised by the government.

The policy for community management of customary forests has two principal objectives:

- It aims firstly to stem the prevailing widespread destruction of forest resources on customary land and the material products and essential environmental services they provide.
- The second and equally important objective is to encourage the development of customary forests and woodlands as important economic assets to the communities on whose land they occur.

Together, these objectives aim to reverse the trend towards deeper rural poverty that the destruction of customary forests will inevitably create.

The strategy to achieve these objectives is to remove the current situation of open access to customary forest resources by clearly assigning forest ownership or user rights to the landholders, and by giving them the legal power to protect and sustain them.

The National Land Policy (2001) makes a number of changes to the way land will in future be classified, allocated and administered. Unallocated customary land that is of a common access nature, for instance dambos, community woodlots and forest areas will be classified as Public Land for the exclusive use of members of the respective Traditional Authority. In addition, all customary landholders, defined to include whole communities, families or individuals, will be encouraged to register their holdings as private customary estates with land tenure rights that preserve the advantages of customary ownership but also ensure security of tenure. These provisions, which will be enshrined in a new Land Act, will strengthen community tenure over forest resources also, but will not otherwise alter government's policy and legal framework for forest management.

The National Land Policy expresses government's intention to undertake participatory land use planning in all villages, involving expertise in spatial planning, soil management, crop and animal husbandry and forestry, and providing a basis for guiding extension services. This process, to be coordinated through the District Planning Office and the Area and Village Development Committees, will help communities to identify which parts of their land holding should be maintained or re-established as forest areas.

What is a village forest area (VFA)?

The Village Forest Area is that area of village land that is to be actively managed by the community for its forest resources. In legal terms, it is the area to which a Forest Management Agreement will apply, and in respect of which the forest ownership and management responsibility will be transferred to the community. It is the intention of the government that the community will manage all forest resources on unallocated customary land. It therefore follows that a Village Forest Area *should include all unallocated customary land*, or at least all such land on which forest resources occur or should be re-established. The responsibility for allocating the Village Forest Area lies with the Village Head, Group Village Head or Traditional Authority.

Upon registration of a village forest area in the name of a VNRMC, the following powers and authority are conferred to the VNRMC under the Forest Rules 2001:

Acts prohibited without Village Natural Resource Management Committee permission	**Forest Rules 2001 - Part III Village Forest Areas** 6. No person shall, without permission in writing of the VNRMC in whose name a village forest area has been registered – (a) squat or reside or erect any building, hut or cattle enclosure; (b) graze or pasture livestock or permit livestock to trespass; (c) clear, cultivate or break up land for cultivation or otherwise; (d) alter or remove any beacon, boundary mark or fence; (e) fell, cut, take, work, burn, injure or remove any tree or forest produce; (f) set fire to any grass or undergrowth; or (g) keep bees or collect honey or beeswax, In the village forest area. 7. No person shall, for any purpose whatever, kindle any fire within a village forest area without taking all reasonable and proper precautions to prevent damage to any forest produce within such village forest area.

In order to make full use of the powers and provision of the Forest Rules 2001, it is important to ensure that the VFA is surveyed (using suitable hand held GPS where possible) and registered in the name of the VNRMC at the District Forest Office.

It is important therefore that the District Forest Office maintains a register of VFAs and responsible VNRMCs within the District.
The above mentioned powers should be taken into consideration when facilitating the development of local management rules, sanctions and bylaws. Please refer to final reference.

What is a participatory forest management plan?

In order to make the best use of a Village Forest Area, a forest management plan is necessary. A management plan is also a formal requirement for the completion of a Forest Management Agreement (see text box below). The plan should be developed by the community with the assistance of forestry extension agents. The participatory forest management planning process aims to equip rural communities with the knowledge to make decisions and become managers of their surrounding natural resources, the essence of the National Forestry Policy, 1996.

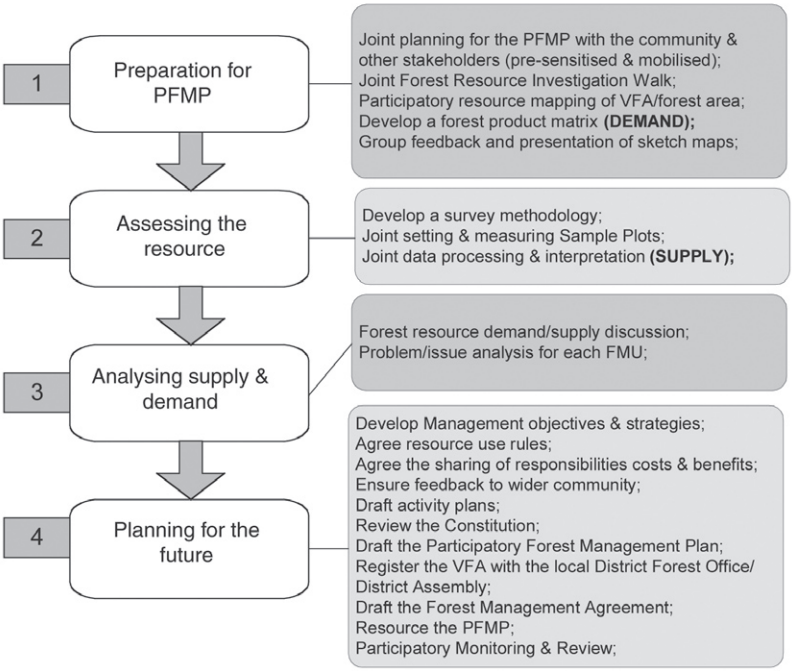
The basis of this involves a multi-stakeholder resource assessment process commonly referred to as **Participatory Forest Resource Assessment** (**PFRA**). This aims not only to explore current condition and use, but stimulate discussion on the future management and potential options available.

TOOL BOX

Forest Product Matrix and simple management plan, PFRA Guide.
An outline for a simple forest management plan is provided in Template 1.

The output of this process of planning, consultation and negotiation are participatory forest management plans, agreed by all key stakeholders, to assist the protection and management of indigenous forest resources. A summarised version of the PFRA/PFMP process is given below. This diagram assumes that community mobilisation, understanding and organisational development processes covered in the previous chapter are already completed.

PROCESS FOR PREPARING A PARTICIPATORY FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN



Forest management strategies

Forest Management Strategies for a particular area should be determined based on the assessment of the forest resources and the needs and priorities of the management institution and beneficiaries. Broad management strategies should be assessed against the current condition of the area in terms of stocking (species and size-class distribution) with the status of natural regeneration according to the following table:

DETERMINING FOREST MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Forest Regeneration status</th><th colspan="5">Forest condition (Stocking)</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th>Good</th><th>Moderate</th><th>Poor</th><th>Open</th></tr>
<tr><td>Well stocked</td><td colspan="2">Sustainable utilisation & natural regeneration management</td><td colspan="2">Natural regeneration management</td></tr>
<tr><td>Moderately stocked</td><td rowspan="3">Sustainable utilisation & natural regeneration management</td><td rowspan="2">Sustainable utilisation & natural regeneration management</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Enrichment planting</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Poorly stocked</td></tr>
<tr><td>Enrichment planting</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">New plantation establishment</td></tr>
<tr><td>Open</td><td colspan="2">Enrichment planting</td></tr>
</table>

Note: The range of figures for the different categories of forest condition and regeneration status is available from FRIM.

This assessment is important to avoid the unnecessary situation where tree planting has occurred on sites with abundant natural regeneration of the same or similar species.

What is a forest management agreement?

Where communities wish to have a formal transfer of management responsibilities and/or wish to engage in commercial exploitation of forest resources from their area, then they require to enter into a formal agreement, currently with the Director of Forestry. The agreement sets out the obligations of both parties (community and Government), the mechanisms to settle disputes and possible termination for non-compliance by either party.

Attached to a Forest Management Agreement will be a management plan for the area which sets out how the area will be protected and managed, the limits of sustainable off-take from the area, the manner in which this will be controlled

FOREST MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS (SECTION 31, FORESTRY ACT, 1997)

The formal transfer of forest tenure and management responsibility from the government to a community is made through the conclusion of a Forest Management Agreement. The agreement is a binding contract signed by the Director of Forestry and a nominated individual representing the community, usually the chairman of the VNRMC. The agreement will specify:

- The nature and extent of forest management practices to be followed. The forest management plan, map and the management rules will be considered part of the agreement;
- The assistance to be provided to the participating community by the forestry extension and planning services providers;
- Provisions for granting access to forest produce and for the use of revenue derived from commercial forestry activities;
- Provisions (if appropriate) for the allocation of land within the Village Forest Area to individuals or families for afforestation, forest management or rehabilitation, and the revocation of such allocation if the land is not used in the intended manner;
- The responsibilities of the VNRMC in the management of the Village Forest Area. The constitution of the VNRMC will be considered part of the agreement;
- Responsibilities of the Department of Forestry as the regulatory and planning authority and representative of the State; and
- The mechanisms for resolving conflicts within and between the various parties should they arise and the process for arbitration and conditions for termination should it be necessary.

The conclusion of a Forest Management Agreement will confer on the community concerned the authority to license commercial forestry activities within its Village Forest Area, so long as these activities are consistent with the forest management plan. Revenues arising from the licensing of commercial forestry activities by a VNRMC will be retained by the VNRMC and disposed of in accordance with its constitution and by-laws.

A template of an outline Forest Management Agreement is provided in the Useful Templates section.

and monitored (including licensing), how benefits including revenue will be managed and shared, local rules, sanctions and mechanisms for enforcement, the rights, roles and responsibilities of those involved.

The process of supporting a community with demarcating a village forest area, preparing a simple management plan and managing their forest resources sustainably should be followed through to the drafting and signing of a Forest Management Agreement. Until this has been achieved, the community *has no security of tenure and no legal entitlement to benefit commercially from the area.*

The existence of a Forest Management Agreement should be viewed as a measure of policy implementation, that control has been transferred formally to the community and they are therefore truly empowered.

What are the service standards for community management of customary forest?

Recognising the importance of stakeholder awareness, needs and priorities, user rights and tenure, as well as negotiating roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing and conflict resolution mechanisms to community management of customary forests, **all standards which apply to building local institutions and prioritising actions (Service Standard nos 2-6 above) should be applied when planning or assessing the quality of support to community management of customary forest.**

SERVICE STANDARD 7 – COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF CUSTOMARY FOREST

7	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section				
A	Relevant social & institutional groupings are identified for assuming roles & responsibility for managing forest areas appropriate to tree & land tenure	▪ Community can explain who are the users of the forest & their level of interest & justification for involvement in the management body ▪ Individuals & groups with rights of access & use are included in the management planning process	Validating the situation/ stakeholder/ institutional analysis Observing and interviewing in the field Checking records	Traditional leaders (D) Forest ext worker & other extension agents (E)
B	Forest management boundaries are agreed by the community as well as relevant neighbouring communities, & these are clearly demarcated on the ground & documented in a management plan	▪ Community members can show/explain tenure & user rights of forest management areas & that these are documented in a management plan ▪ Community members can show/explain forest management boundaries in respect to the management plan	Viewing Management Plan/maps Observing and interviewing in the field	Committee members (D) Traditional leaders (D) Forest ext worker (E)
C	Management strategies & plan have clear linkages to forest resource condition & availability, as well as local priorities & demand	▪ Main forest user groups are involved in determining local demand for forest produce ▪ Available forest resources (incl NTFPs) are assessed in a participatory manner	Checking the completed local forest product matrix and management plan Interviewing local community	Committee members (D) Traditional leaders (D) Research & academic institutions (E) Forest ext worker (E)

SERVICE STANDARD 7 – COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF CUSTOMARY FOREST

7 What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section			
	▪ People are able to explain their forest management strategies in relation to their forest resources and the changes that have occurred in the resources ▪ Priorities of interest groups well defined in management plan ▪ Information from resource & well being assessments documented as baseline data	Assessing the forest resource & well-being assessment & analysis	
D Forest resources are actively managed according to an agreed management plan	▪ Benefit sharing transparent & equitable and agreed through consensus ▪ Management plan includes baseline data to monitor against ▪ Harvesting practices are formulated, agreed & followed for both timber & NTFP's, within limits of sustainable resource supply ▪ Local management rules, sanctions are agreed & implemented	Checking Constitution Plans & agreements Field interviewing with community members Observing harvesting practices Checking records & offences properly documented	Committee members (D) Forest ext worker (E)

SERVICE STANDARD 7 – COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF CUSTOMARY FOREST

7	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section				
E	The management committee possess authority to exclude/ regulate outside use	▪ Community institution & mandate recognised by relevant authorities ▪ Community patrolling/law enforcement supported by relevant authorities ▪ Absence of outside unsanctioned resource utilisation	Checking certificate of registration District bylaws & local record of forest offences Interviewing households	Committee members (D) Forest ext worker (E) DFO (E)
F	Participatory monitoring & evaluation process is actively implemented by VNRMCs/ forest users	▪ Committee conducting regular monitoring & self-assessment of activities & progress ▪ Community can explain changes that have occurred in resource condition & livelihoods	Checking records of activities done Interviewing households	Committee members (D) Forest ext worker (E)
G	Forest Management Agreement signed & implemented between relevant parties	▪ Agree management plan supported by a valid legal agreement ▪ Permits & licences issued according to management plan & terms of the Agreement & within limits of sustainable resource supply	Checking of Forest Management Checking agreement records of licences issued in relation to management plan & Agreement	DFO (D) Forest ext worker (E)

Co-management of state forest reserves

Forest Reserves were created primarily for the protection of specific areas of forests where other forms of land use would be environmentally harmful. The Government's overriding policy objective is to ensure that these areas remain under forest cover in order to maintain their essential environmental services. A second policy objective, having regard to the national deficit in forest products, is to develop the Forest Reserves for productive purposes, to the extent that this is compatible with the primary objective. The conservation of biological diversity and aesthetic resources are also retained as policy objectives in special cases.

As a strategy for achieving increased productivity while at the same time reducing unsanctioned (and hence unmanaged) pressure from boundary communities, the government will enter into agreements with those communities to share both the management of Forest Reserves and the costs and benefits arising from such management. Third parties, for instance non-governmental organizations or District Assemblies, may also be included in the shared management partnership. This type of arrangement is usually known as co-management, and is defined as follows:

"Co-management is joint management by more than one party. The concept involves a variable degree of consultation by and with all parties, involvement in decision-making by all parties and with obligations and responsibilities embodied in a management plan, possibly contractually binding."

CBFM: Supplement to the National Forest Policy, July 2003.

Section 3(c) of the Forest Act, 1997, states that one of its purposes is to promote community involvement in the conservation of trees and forests in Forest Reserves. The management of a Forest Reserve must be conducted in accordance with a management plan drawn up by the Director of Forestry. But section 25 gives the Director the power to design and implement such a management plan in collaboration with the local communities, a clear expression of the National Forest Policy:

> *"24. In assuring the protection and management of forest reserves, the Director of Forestry shall prepare management plans as stipulated in section 5.*
>
> *25. The Director of Forestry may enter into agreement with local communities for implementation of the management plan that is mutually acceptable to both parties."*

The Act does not define "communities", but the Forestry (Community Participation) Rules, 2001, offers a very broad definition that includes VNRMCs, local authorities, NGOs and the private sector. The collaboration between government, local communities and other partners in the management of Forest Reserves is the subject of this part of the guide.

What is strategic planning through local forest management boards?

Before the suitability of a Forest Reserve for co-management may be determined, it is necessary to define the management objectives for the reserve and to develop an overall management plan. The management objectives will be defined with regard to the reserve's wider environmental significance rather than to the demand for the products it might yield.

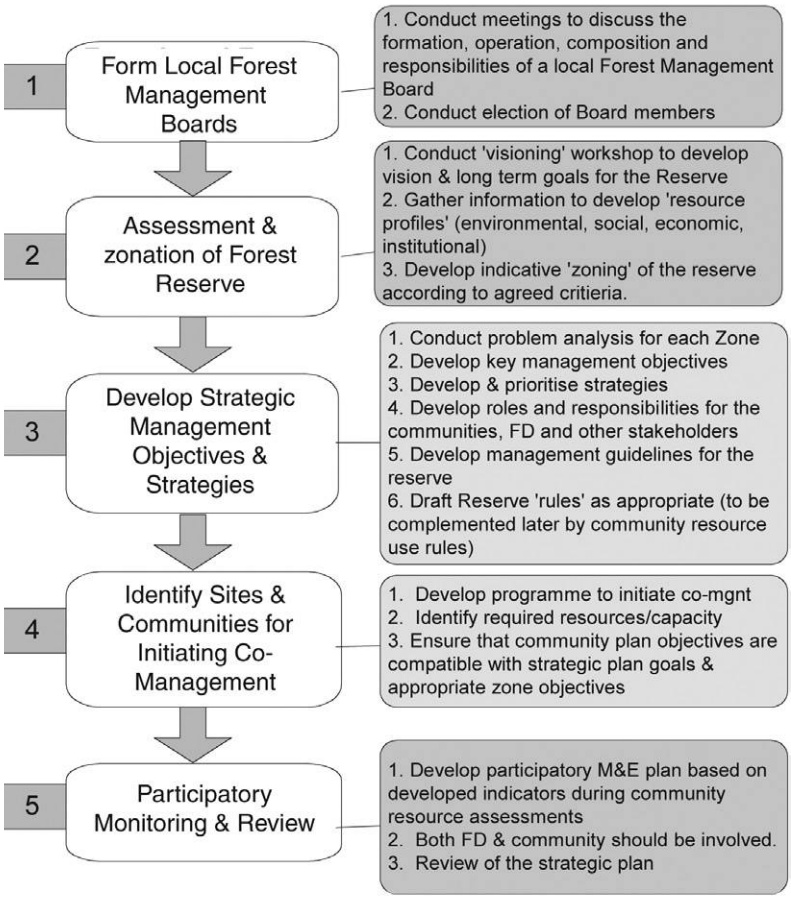
The new Policy direction recognises and advocates greater involvement of other stakeholders in the management of forest areas including Forest Reserves. A mechanism to facilitate this process is highlighted as a priority action under the Malawi National Forestry Programme Strategy 9: Manage Forest Reserves, specifically – *"Encourage formation and evolution of local Forest Management Boards around Forest Reserves to ensure co-ordination of plans, activities and monitoring."*

These are multi-stakeholder bodies that bring together interested parties including: community representatives, Traditional Leadership representatives, civil society groups (NGOs, CBOs, religious groups), District Assembly structures and Central Government. The aim is to facilitate debate over the management of the Reserves, for the relevant stakeholders to negotiate their roles, rights and responsibilities, to plan, and coordinate their efforts to support a strategic planning process, and the preparation of the Forest Reserve Management Plan. This then provides the strategic context for planning and coordinating site level community co-management agreements and benefit sharing from the Forest Reserve in question.

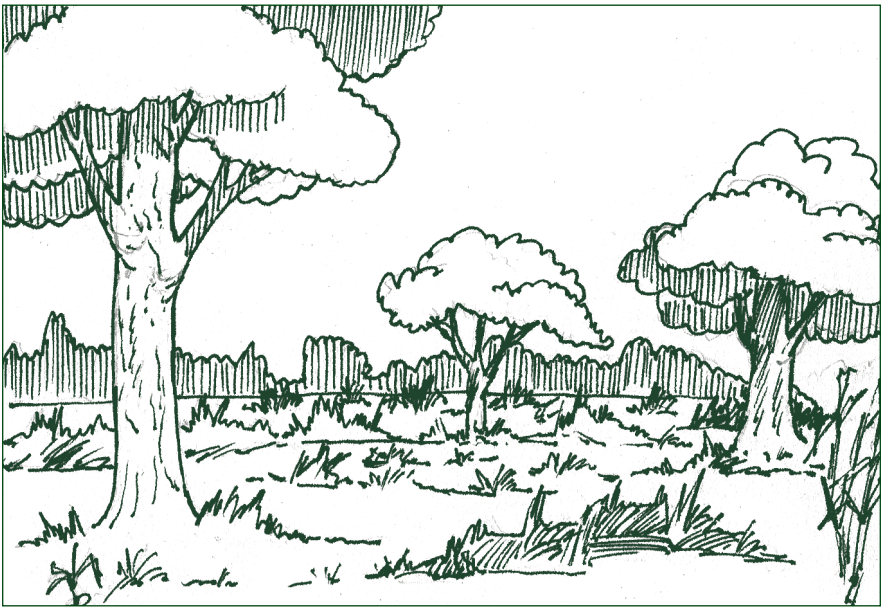
This Board will assist the synthesis and coordination of community management rules developed on a site by site basis relative to the resource, demands and pressures, to rules on an area basis to feed into the development, revision and enforcement of District Forest Bylaws by the respective District Assemblies. It will also act as a forum for conflict resolution. The secretariat to the Board will be provided by the representatives from Central Government who retain the overall responsibility for the management of State Forest Reserves.

The outline steps for preparing a Forest Reserve Management Plan are as follows:

PROCESS FOR PREPARING A FOREST RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN



The Strategic Forest Reserve Management Plan acts as an overall plan or 'umbrella' to guide the individual community co-management plans/ PFMPs as well as provide a framework for the Local Forest Management Board.



SERVICE STANDARD 8 – MANAGEMENT OF STATE FOREST RESERVES

8	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Each Forest Reserve is actively managed & covered by a current Forest Reserve Management Plan	▪ Long-term vision formulated for identified Forest Reserve with clearly defined 'management' zones including strategy for co-management as appropriate, through local stakeholder involvement	Checking of Forest Reserve Management Plan as per sections 5 & 24 of the Forest Act 1997	Local Forest Management Officer (D) Director of Forestry (E)
B	Tasks, responsibilities & benefit sharing arrangements between Department of Forestry, key stakeholders & adjacent communities are clearly defined.	▪ Existence of a functional Local Forest Management Board ▪ All parties can explain their respective roles & responsibilities in reserve management ▪ Agreement is accepted by all parties ▪ Formation of individual Co-Management Block Committees	Reading of minutes of meetings of Local Forest Management Board Validating of formally signed agreement by Director & Block Committee	Local Forest Management Officer (D) Block committee (D) Director of Forestry (E)
C	Any proposed development which changes the nature of the Forest Reserve (or zone within a Reserve) shall first require an EIA [Forest Act sect 28 (3)]	▪ Potential land-use changes & environmental impacts are identified and documented in a formal EIA	Checking that formal EIA was submitted to the Minister together with the advice of the Director of Forestry Validating the existence and quality EIA Document	Director of Forestry (D) Environmental District Officer (D)

How to develop co-management plans and agreements and form local management authorities?

The process for assisting communities with preparing and negotiating a Co-management Plan and Agreement with the Department of Forestry is similar to the participatory planning processes that have been widely tested and followed for preparing plans for the management of Customary Forest areas. The key difference is in the negotiation of roles, responsibilities and the sharing of benefits between parties, as this is a partnership for the shared management of the area. Key elements of the individual co-management plans should conform to the overall strategic forest reserve management plan.

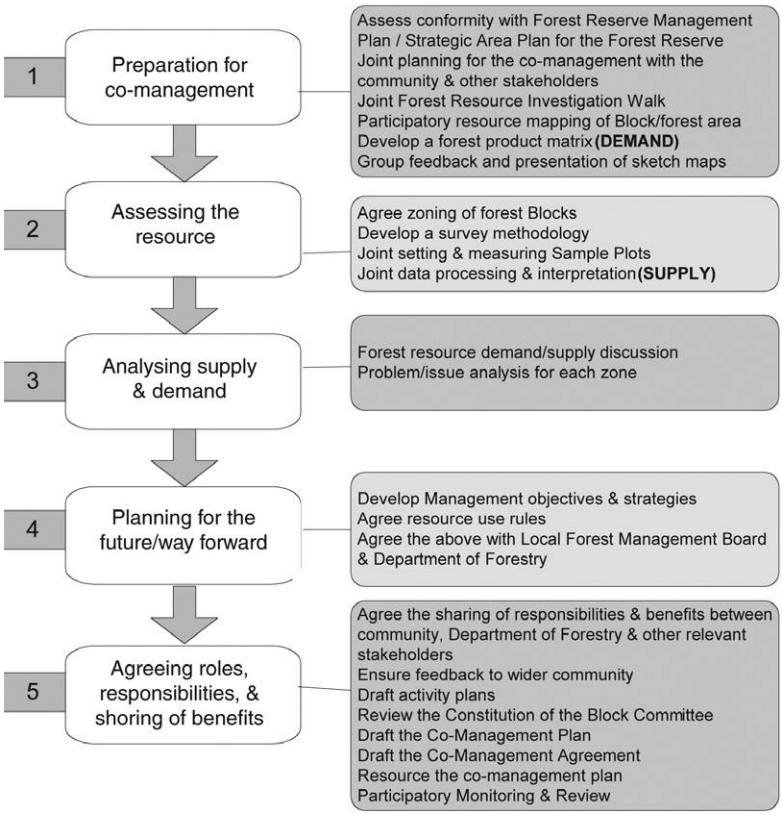
The size of the area for individual co-management agreements (known as blocks) will vary according to suitability and zoning identified in the Forest Reserve Management Plan, the nature of the Reserve, the needs of the boundary communities and other stakeholders and the potential capacity of the proposed management authority. These therefore, should be negotiated on a case by case basis.

A Block Committee is a community-based management authority elected by the stakeholders in a co-management block within a Forest Reserve. It is essentially similar in character to a VNRMC, that is:

- It will represent the interests of and be accountable to the entire community in the co-management initiative. It will also take the lead in forest planning, management and administration.
- It will function as a sub-committee of the Village Development Committee.
- It will develop a constitution that expresses its objectives, responsibilities, functioning, as well as the arrangements for sharing of benefits including the management and use of revenue arising.

All other comments made previously in reference to "identifying and forming local institutions" will apply to block committees (page 42).

PROCESS FOR PREPARING A CO-MANAGEMENT PLAN



Co-management—responsibility and benefit sharing

Co-management is essentially a partnership arrangement for the shared management of a Forest Reserve. This partnership between the State and a third party, usually, but not exclusively with boundary communities, covers negotiating common management objectives and strategies as well as the sharing of responsibilities for management and the sharing of costs and benefits arising from the area (Block) in question.

The co-management of a Forest Reserve may provide a supply of forest products for the domestic consumption of the boundary community, but it could also provide a new source of cash income. The ratio of benefits to costs will vary between reserves, according to their productive potential, the population density of the boundary community and other factors. Accordingly, the sharing of costs and benefits will be negotiated between the parties on a case-by-case basis. The agreed basis for sharing costs and benefits will form part of the co-management plan and legal Agreement.

What is important is that the arrangement provides a meaningful incentive to take on responsibilities and protection activities to ensure the protection of the forest resources and land conservation of the block and Forest Reserve in question. Benefit sharing arrangements should be negotiated and agreed following a true valuation of the benefits arising ie 40% share of annual income of K1,000 between 200 households is *not benefit sharing or a contribution to sustainable development and poverty alleviation.* Sharing of costs and benefits should be included in monitoring mechanisms and reviewed periodically.

Few communities have had any prior experience of negotiating with Government, and they may therefore wish to seek advice and assistance from third parties such as Traditional Authorities, representatives of non-governmental organisations or other individuals with suitable expertise.

What are the service standards for co-management of forest reserves?

Recognising the importance of stakeholder awareness, needs and priorities, user rights and tenure, as well as negotiating roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing and conflict resolution mechanisms, **all standards which apply to building local institutions and prioritising actions** (Service Standard nos 2-6 & 7) **should be applied when planning or assessing the quality of support to co-management of Forest Reserves.**

SERVICE STANDARD 9 – CO-MANAGEMENT OF STATE FOREST RESERVES

All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above and Community Management of Customary Forest Standard No. 7 (A-F) above) should be applied in this section

What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
Individual Co-Management plans are in line with the overall Forest Reserve Management Plan & forest reserve rules (Forest Act)	▪ Block committee can explain how management plan strategies fit into the rules	Reading of Forest Reserve Plan Co-management Plans & agreements Interviewing	Block committee (D) Traditional Authorities (D) Local Forest Management Officer (E) Director of Forestry (E)
Cost, benefit & revenue sharing between communities & the State is appropriate to the value of the resource, the agreed respective responsibilities & mutually acceptable to all concerned parties	▪ Benefits and rationale of distribution are jointly reviewed annually ▪ Number of conflicts arising over benefit sharing	Checking of records Interviewing of major parties	Local Forest Management Officer (D) & Block committee (D) Traditional Authorities (D) Director of Forestry (E)
Permits & licences issued according to overall Forest Reserve Management Plan	▪ Licences are issued for commercial exploitation of forest resources as set out in the Forest Management Agreement/plan; ▪ Revenue received bears direct relationship to licences issued	Checking ofrecords of licences issued & revenue receipt books Observing and interviewing in the field Cross checking licences & revenues are supported by field observation & stakeholder interviews	Local Forest Management Officer (D) & Block committee (D) Director of Forestry (E)

Individual/household tree planting – trees on farms

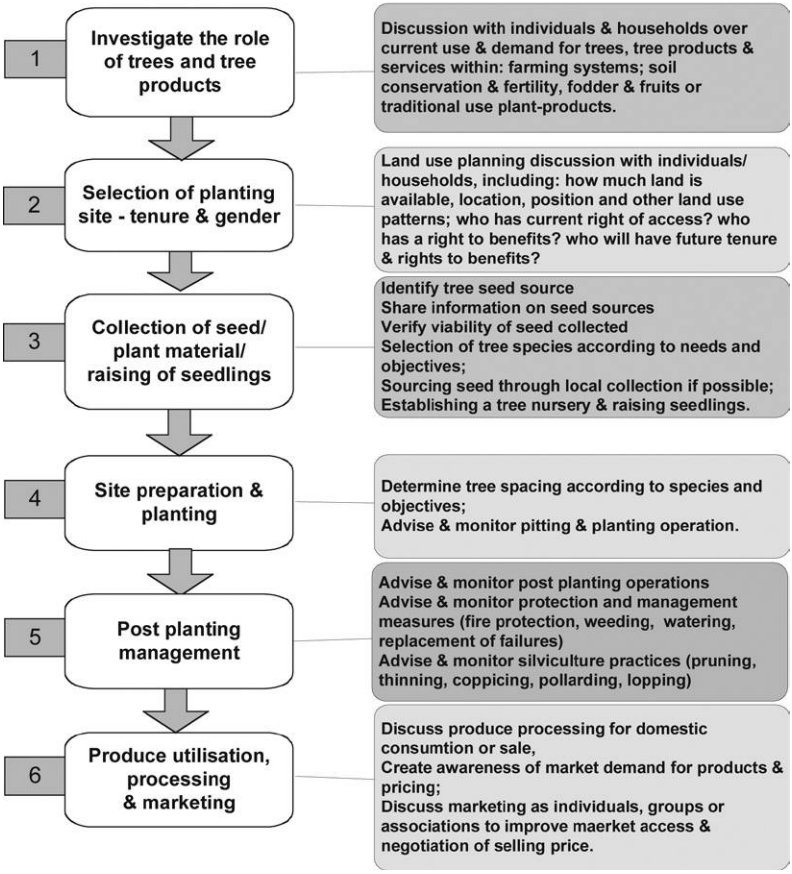
Participatory forest management also recognises the desire of the individual and households to manage trees and forests, but also the management of individual trees and groups of trees within the rural landscape. Trees on farms and those within and around the homestead can be the most intensively managed trees of all, fulfilling a variety of functions and needs. These need to be understood as part of the investigation and participatory analysis undertaken earlier in this document.

This section therefore includes the integration of trees into farming systems (agroforestry), soil conservation activities and land use systems and cover individual woodlots, field boundary planting, intercropping, fruit trees, soil fertility & homestead planting. Management of individual trees may include coppicing, pollarding, lopping and pruning.

Again the tenure, user rights arrangements and authority regimes must be considered and clearly understood as part of the decision making/planning process. Individuals within the same community may use individual trees for different purposes or over different times and seasons. Secondly the use of a tree, or planting of a tree may create a new tenure arrangement which may lead to a new conflict. Thirdly, trees may be managed through taboo or religious sanction.

A set of steps that should be considered by the service provider and facilitated as appropriate is as follows:

INDIVIDUAL/HOUSEHOLD PLANTING, TREES ON FARMS



Further reference:

Much information and guidance available to assist with the above operations. These include:

- Agroforestry Practices in Malawi – a field manual, MAFE
- Nursery Manual – GoM/EU Social Forestry Project
- Silviculltural guidelines – FRIM
- Forestry Extension Kit for Field Workers in Malawi – GOM/UNDP

The service standard for individual household and trees on farms is based on the tenure of the land, the condition of the site and the needs and priorities of the individuals and groups in question.

SERVICE STANDARD 10 – INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD AND TREES ON FARMS

10	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Areas for establishing trees and forests are determined based on a land use planning approach & stated management objectives	▪ People can explain & reason their site selection, species selection & plant spacing appropriate to site & management objectives as defined by the individual/ owner ▪ Simple harvesting & care strategies including tending operations ensure proper protection of fragile areas	Checking simple planting plan & interviewing individuals	Individual, as appropriate (D) Forest ext worker (E)
B	Tenure arrangements & boundaries of sites for planting are clarified to minimise conflict	▪ Tenure & user rights clarified & widely known ▪ Community members can show/explain their boundary	Observing and interviewing in the field	Individual, as appropriate (D) Forest ext worker (E)

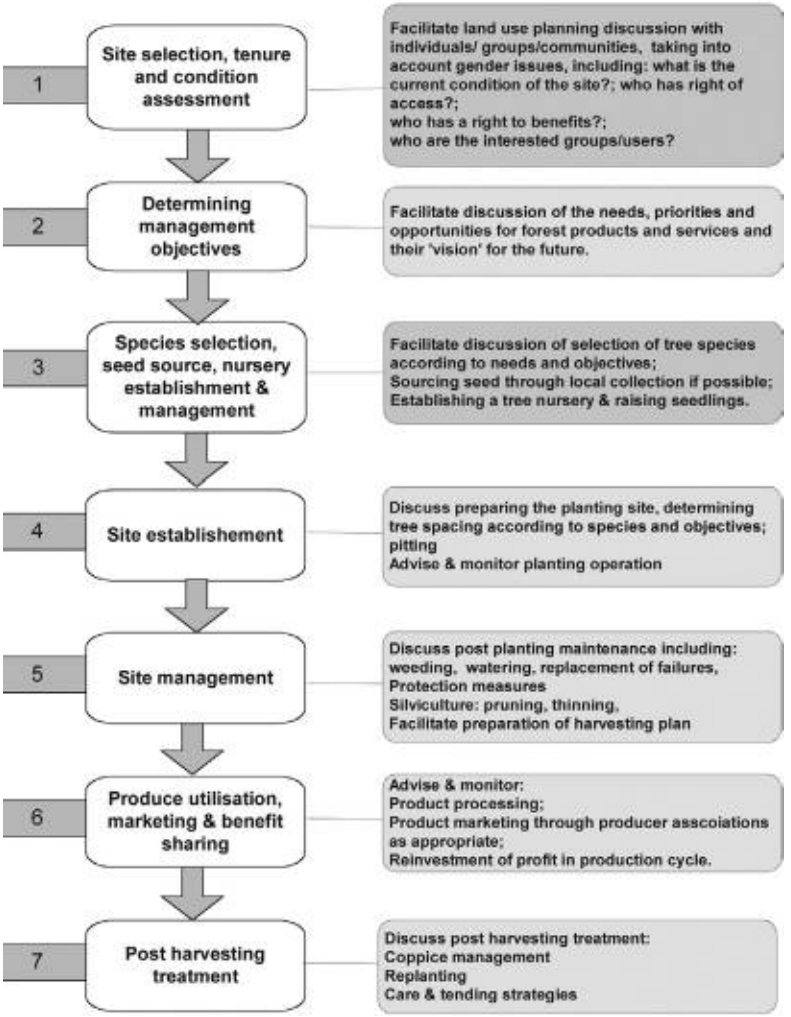
Afforestation (community and group plantations)

In areas where there are no longer significant areas of indigenous forest or such forest is in an extremely degraded condition, a strategy of the National Forest Policy is to encourage individuals, groups and communities to establish plantations and woodlots to address the shortfall in available forest resources as well as promote economic development through production of forest products.

As part of forest extension services, many groups and communities have been provided technical assistance with raising seedlings and planting trees. However, aspects of site selection, species selection, plant spacing and post-planting management according to the needs and priorities of these groups and communities along with the institutional arrangements in relation to land tenure and tree ownership, have often been neglected. These aspects are crucial if people are to benefit meaningfully and potential natural resource use conflicts are to be avoided.

A set of steps that should be considered by the service provider and facilitated as appropriate is as follows:

AFFORESTATION (COMMUNITY AND GROUP PLANTATIONS)



The essence of the above planning approach should be captured in a management plan, which sets out the planned activities and responsibilities. This should be facilitated in a manner that communities and groups view it as a guiding tool to assist them in their work, not as a burden or restriction on their livelihood strategies.

PLANTATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

A simple management plan for a plantation might contain the following:

- Name, location, management authority;
- The total area of the plantation plus surveyed map/sketch map;
- Detail of the species, year of planting/coppicing by area;
- Identification of the plots to be harvested by year;
- Expected products and yield for each plot to be harvested;
- Actual yield from recent/past harvesting;
- Work to be carried out (when, by whom):
  Treatment: care & maintenance, pruning, thinning, harvesting, replanting;
  Protection: fire management, patrolling;
- Management rules/local bylaws; and
- Constitution/benefit sharing arrangements.

Source: adapted from BCFP – Nkhalango

What is a forest plantation agreement?

The Forestry Act 1997, Part VI, section 36 sets out the requirement for legal agreements in relation to afforestation. Although in practice, very few have been prepared and approved, there are circumstances where individuals, groups and communities may wish the security that is conferred through possessing a legal Agreement which grants rights to the land and to harvest timber and other forest produce thereon.

In this instance the management plan will be termed a "plantation management plan" and the formal agreement a "Forest Plantation Agreement". Although the type of forestry to be undertaken will be different, the structure of the contract between the parties will remain the same as for a Forest Management Agreement. A Forest Plantation agreement will:

- Provide for the obligation to grow and manage trees in accordance with the plantation management plan;
- Convey the right to harvest the forest plantation;
- Provide for advice and assistance from the Department of Forestry in growing and managing the plantations; and
- Specify the obligations of each of the parties to the agreement.

INDUSTRIAL PLANTATIONS

Industrial plantations refers to a continuous area of land planted with exotic species managed by individuals, groups, commercial concerns as well as State Government Plantations and Local Authority Plantations. These areas will generally be in excess of the size of areas planted by smallholders and groups at the community level.

It is expected that management of these areas will be specifically mentioned in the new Policy and Legislation currently under preparation and review. However, reference should be made to appropriate environmental legislation, Forest Act 1997, EMA 1996, including the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs).

Planning and operational requirements cover:

- **Environmental protection practices**

  Environmental standards
  - Protection of watercourses & riparian strips
  - Protection of indigenous forest
  - Forest roads, water crossings
  - Harvesting operations
  - Health and safety requirements

  Environmental planning requirements
  - Environmental monitoring and mitigation plan
  - Waste management plan

- **Forestry plantation management practices**

  Forestry plantation standards
  - Permitted species

  Forestry plantation planning requirements
  - Protection measures

For further information, please refer to the Draft Code of Practice for the Management of Industrial Plantations under Long Term Concession Agreements, October 2003, and other FPIM documents as appropriate.

SERVICE STANDARD 11 – AFFORESTATION – COMMUNITY AND GROUP

11	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Areas for establishing trees and forests are determined based on a land use planning approach & stated management objectives	▪ People can explain & reason their management objectives ▪ Species selection & plant spacing appropriate to site & management objectives as defined by the committee/community members ▪ Simple harvesting & care strategies incl tending operations ensure proper protection of fragile areas	Ground truthing of land use plan appropriate to scale (>1ha) inc. map of boundaries Checking simple planting plan; Interviewing individuals	Individual, group, community as appropriate (D) Forest ext worker (E)
B	Tenure & existing user rights arrangements are clarified prior to planting	▪ Tenure & user rights are known by all parties prior to planting ▪ Committee & community members can show/explain boundary in respect to the site plan/ management plan	Checking of tenure document Interviewing individuals	Individual, group, community as appropriate (D) Forest ext worker (E)
C	Tenure & existing user rights arrangements are clarified prior to entering into a formal agreement	▪ Tenure & user rights are known by all parties to the agreement ▪ Committee & community members can show/explain boundary in respect to the site plan/ management plan	Checking of signed Forest Plantation Agreement Interviewing individuals	Individual, group, community as appropriate (D) Forest ext worker (E),

SERVICE STANDARD 11 – AFFORESTATION – COMMUNITY AND GROUP

11	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
D	All areas of new planting >5.0ha covered by a Forest Plantation Agreement [Forest Act sect (36)]	▪ A proper system to apply for & process agreements established & functioning	Monitoring of district level records & database of Forest Plantation Agreements Checking Signed Forest Plantation Agreements	Local District Forest Officer (D) Director of Forestry (E)

Community involvement in the management of state plantations

In the management of State industrial plantations, the government recognises the high reliance on wood and non-wood products by boundary communities and fringe traders for their livelihood strategies and therefore well-being, both for subsistence use and trading in these products. Continued well-being will depend on a sustained supply of these products and services, however this is currently under threat through uncontrolled and unregulated access to plantation resources.

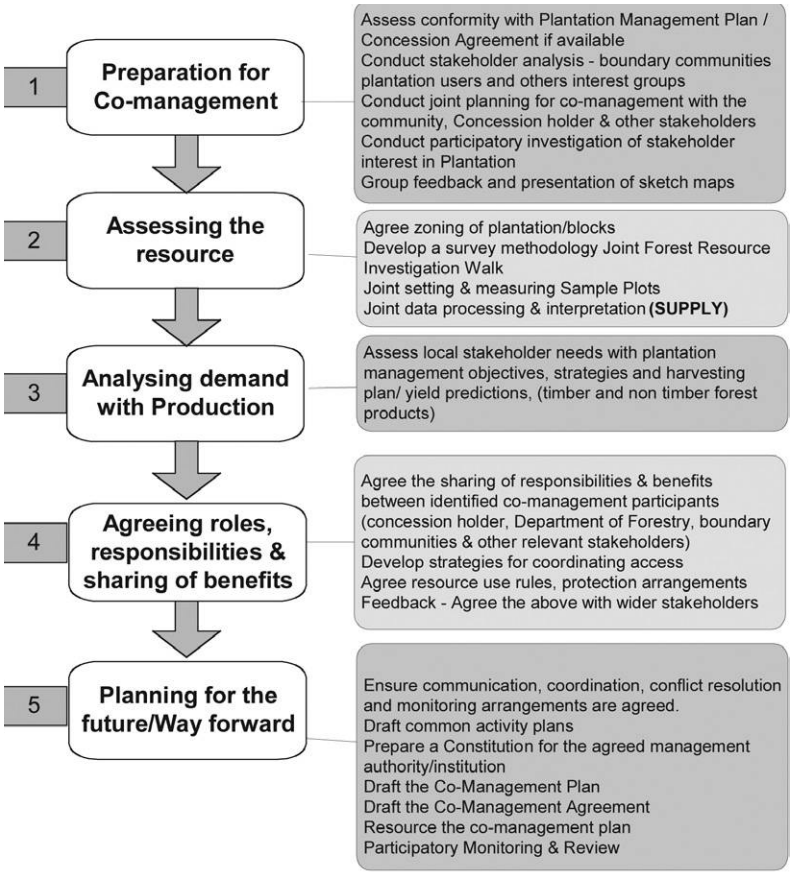
The aim of promoting community involvement in the management of State Plantations is to address this threat through improving the participation of surrounding communities and other stakeholders in the decision-making process and management of these assets. This includes negotiating rights of access, rights to benefits and responsibilities with regard to protection, management and utilisation.

Again, it is important to ensure that the appropriate institutional arrangements for the involvement of forest users, interest groups, and surrounding communities in the management of State plantations are followed. This should be facilitated with care and sensitivity, with full identification, consultation and participation of all stakeholders. This will reduce the incidence of conflict at a later stage which can have a disastrous impact on both the investment and the resource. The principles are similar to those for co-management of State Forest Reserves, and associated approaches should be referred to.

The minimum requirement is that social issues including community access rights are addressed within State plantation management plans, concession agreements with private operators and other licenses issued. Reference should be made to lessons from the Blantyre City Fuelwood Project (BCFP) and documentation from the Forest Plantation Initiative Malawi (FPIM).

Recognising the importance of stakeholder awareness, needs and priorities, user rights and tenure, as well as negotiating roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing and conflict resolution mechanisms to community involvement in State plantations, all standards which apply to building local institutions and prioritising actions (Service Standard nos. 2-6 above) should be applied in this section.

INVOLVING COMMUNITIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF STATE PLANTATIONS



SERVICE STANDARD 12 – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF STATE PLANTATIONS

All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section

12	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Social issues addressed within State Plantation Management Plans and concession agreements, including formal & non-formal users.	▪ Access & benefits arrangements identified & formulated with surrounding communities & key stakeholders	Checking of situation analysis Concession agreements Plantation management plans	Designated Plantations manager (D) Director of Forestry (E)
	Permits & licences issued according to management plan, concession agreement	▪ Licences have been issued in relation to Forest Plantation Management plan ▪ Revenue received bears direct relationship to licences issued ▪ Licences & revenues are supported by field observation & stakeholder interviews	Interviewing in the field Checking of records of licences issued, revenue receipt books Observing and interviewing in the field	Designated Plantations manager (D) Director of Forestry (E)

Note: Full details of requirements for concession agreements and state plantations management are available at the headquarters of the Department of Forestry.

Processing and marketing forest produce

Under a Forest Management Agreement (FMA), a VNRMC (or recognised management authority) may be established as the licensing authority for commercial forest resource production within its Village Forest Area. The VNRMC may generate income from forest production in two ways. Firstly, it may engage in direct sales of forest products (planks, poles, grass, firewood, etc.) outside the community. Alternatively, it may license community members or even outsiders to harvest such products for their own private business purposes. Production (harvesting) must in every case be recorded, and must not be permitted to exceed the limits set in the forest management plan which form part of the legal agreement (FMA).

Income generating activities based on harvesting forest resources should be planned or assessed as one would any commercial enterprise. The full chain from production or harvesting, to processing and sale should be considered in terms of feasibility. That is:

- **Sustainability:** the availability of the resource and its continued availability considering the planned quantities to be extracted or produced over a given period. This should be highlighted in the management plan.
- **Commercial viability:**
  - Is there a market?
  - What is the quality expected by the market/buyer? – Is further processing & packaging required?
  - Does the selling price cover the cost of production?
  - Is there sufficient profit to reinvest in the resource to improve or increase production?

A key lesson from earlier projects is that the marketing aspect of the supported activity is often overlooked. Extension workers should in the first instance support activities where there is an existing market to ensure immediate flows of benefits and secondly support activities where markets are as yet undeveloped. However, it should not be overlooked that many forest products are collected at no financial cost, are consumed within the household and thereby release limited financial resources for other purposes. Many products in addition to providing income, enhancing household food security through domestic consumption of forest foods, honey production and guinea fowl rearing among many. These should be supported on a demand-driven basis, resources allowing.

Enhancing income-generating opportunities for the rural poor can be achieved through forming producer associations and providing marketing prospects. Experience has shown that this can only be successful where these associations have access to:

- Quality extension services;
- Various form of inputs (physical, financial, capacity building);
- Access to markets, market intelligence and networking with other associations;
- Viability and the quality of product; and
- Managerial capacity and effective group dynamics including trust.

SERVICE STANDARD 13 – HARVESTING, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING FOREST PRODUCE

.13	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Income generating activities from forest resources are promoted based on feasibility (resource availability & sustainability) & viability (capacity & market analysis)	▪ Simple cost benefit analysis is undertaken to assess resources availability, capacity & market viability for the IGA ▪ Assessment of annual resource use in relation to resource availability & according to a management plan (resource sustainability) ▪ IGA interest groups & associations possess or have access to knowledge on forest product processing & marketing ▪ Commercial viability – ▪ Forest product producer associations possess a viable marketing strategy ▪ Suitable means of processing are available & functioning; ▪ Consumers buying products at acceptable quality & price ▪ Revenues reinvested in production means	Monitoring of harvesting plans Checking of market & resource-use analysis Marketing plans/ strategies Interviewing individuals	Forest ext worker (D) DFO/ Extension Planner (E)

SERVICE STANDARD 13 – HARVESTING, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING FOREST PRODUCE

.13	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
B	Licences to commercially harvest forest resources issued on the basis of an agreed plan or legal agreement & within sustainable resource yield limits	▪ Licences are issued within agreed utilisation levels set out in a Management Plan/ Agreement ▪ Issuer of licences can explain basis for issuing licence ▪ Requests for licences are recorded ▪ Offences recorded; ▪ Licences & revenues received are supported by field observation & stakeholder interviews	Monitoring of records of licences issued Management Agreements Observing and interviewing in the field	Forest ext worker (D) DFO/ Individual community members (D) Associations (D) Extension Planner (E) Community based organisations (E & D)

Bylaws and local management rules

A bylaw is defined as: A rule made by a local authority for the regulation of its affairs or management of the area it governs. In terms of forestry in Malawi, VNRMCs have been encouraged to develop bylaws to assist the governance of forest resources under their control. However, according to the Forest Act, 1997, these bylaws require the approval of the Minister before they can be applied and enforced. Although many VNRMC bylaws were prepared, with approval required at such a high level, most have not yet been officially sanctioned and therefore much of the local control and sanction has been under customary law. This has resulted in a 'management vacuum' where management committees have been formed yet are powerless to manage. Secondly, in many Districts, the roles, procedures and functioning of the VNRMC has been included as part of the bylaws. With few approvals, this affects the running of the VNRMC, particularly related to terms of office, elections and regulation of meetings and decision making. These aspects should therefore be considered as part of a constitution for the functioning of the institution, separate from rules, sanction and enforcement mechanism which have a greater legal implication.

Which bylaws do not require the approval of the minister?

Information relating to community management of customary forests and the demarcation of village forest areas can be found on page 50. Upon registration of a village forest area in the name of a VNRMC, the following powers and authority are conferred to the VNRMC under the Forest Rules 2001:

Acts prohibited without Village Natural Resource Management Committee permission.	**Forest Rules 2001 – Part III Village Forest Areas** 6. No person shall, without permission in writing of the VNRMC in whose name a village forest area has been registered – (a) squat or reside or erect any building, hut or cattle enclosure; (b) graze or pasture livestock or permit livestock to trespass; (c) clear, cultivate or break up land for cultivation or otherwise; (d) alter or remove any beacon, boundary mark or fence; (e) fell, cut, take, work, burn, injure or remove any tree or forest produce; (f) set fire to any grass or undergrowth; or (g) keep bees or collect honey or beeswax, In the village forest area. 7. No person shall, for any purpose whatever, kindle any fire within a village forest area without taking all reasonable and proper precautions to prevent damage to any forest produce within such village forest area.

In order to make full use of the powers and provision of the Forest Rules 2001, it is important to ensure that the VFA is surveyed (using suitable hand held GPS where possible) and registered in the name of the VNRMC at the District Forest Office.

What are customary law and local resource use rules?

The Forest Act 1997, Forest Rules 2001, bylaws approved by the Minister, as well as bylaws approved by the District Assemblies fall under statutory laws of Malawi. Customary law includes those rules administered by the traditional leadership. These are generally well known within communities and traditional fines and penalties are generally accepted. In many areas these are the main form of 'law' used for natural resource management and sanction. These existing forms of control and

sanction should be investigated and discussed along with the powers conferred under the Forest Rules 2001 (see text box above) and form the basis for developing local bylaws to be administered at the local level.

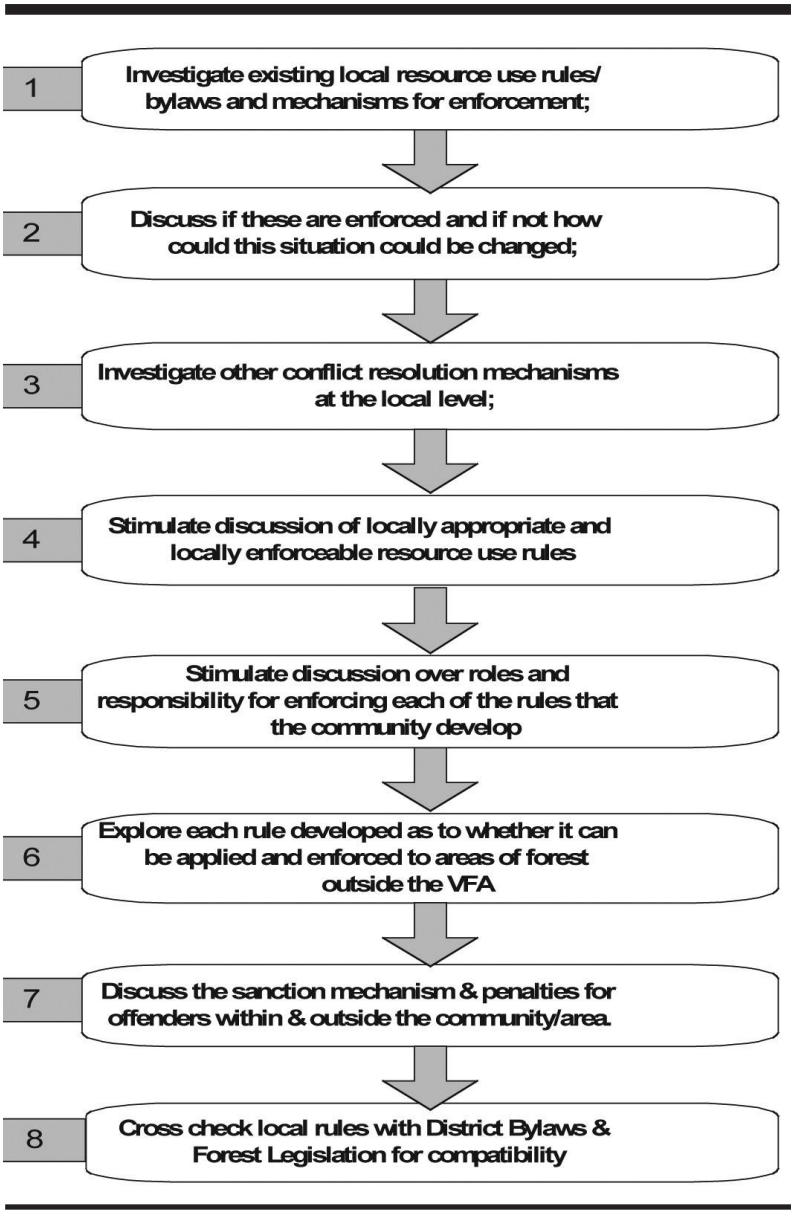
Field experience has shown that locally developed, relevant, agreed and enforced resource use rules have a greater impact on the protection and management of small areas such as VFAs than higher level and generic laws and bylaws. This is mainly due to the problems with enforcement and ultimately successful prosecution of offenders in the absence of higher level bylaws. Although there is a need for such higher level laws to deal with serious forest protection infringements, there is a role for locally developed and enforced resource-use rules which relate directly to the resource in question. These must be developed through local debate and consensus involving all stakeholder groups.

Investigate and stimulate discussion over rules covering the following:

- Rules to regulate harvesting of fuelwood and timber products;
- Rules to regulate the collection of non-wood forest products (mushrooms, honey, medicinal plants/traditional use plant products, thatching grass etc.);
- Rules to regulate access;
- Rules to protect against fire; and
- Rules to protect individual tree/plant species and encourage regeneration.

Note: Changing a rule alone will not lead to actual change unless practices are changed, therefore practices need to be understood. For example, who collects firewood from where, when and by what means. Banning firewood collection will not solve the problem, without the agreement of those who currently collect firewood or use the particular area.

The following diagram sets out a series of steps to assist the investigation of current natural resource rules and sanction mechanisms, to stimulate discussion over locally appropriate rules, how these should be applied and enforced, and to link these with higher level bylaws and the Forest Rules 2001.


1
Investigate existing local resource use rules/ bylaws and mechanisms for enforcement;
2
Discuss if these are enforced and if not how could this situation could be changed;
3
Investigate other conflict resolution mechanisms at the local level;
4
Stimulate discussion of locally appropriate and locally enforceable resource use rules
5
Stimulate discussion over roles and responsibility for enforcing each of the rules that the community develop
6
Explore each rule developed as to whether it can be applied and enforced to areas of forest outside the VFA
7
Discuss the sanction mechanism & penalties for offenders within & outside the community/area.
8
Cross check local rules with District Bylaws & Forest Legislation for compatibility

These local rules may not have full legal recognition, but may assist a management committee with day to day protection and management issues through application of existing customary laws and norms, until such time that higher level bylaws are developed and endorsed. Do remember the powers that are provided to registered VNRMCs under the Forest Rules, 2001.

Although local rules and bylaws cover primarily offences, consideration should also be made of the 'offender' and differentiate between those from within and those outside the community or area in question. The rules and bylaws should have the flexibility for cases and fines dealt with locally by the management committee and traditional leadership, but also those cases which require to be dealt with through the courts.

Rules and bylaws should also stipulate which area they apply to and differentiate between protected areas such as the VFA and community plantations, with trees and forests outside these areas in the general landscape and which also may be found on individual land and family areas.

What are district bylaws?

District Assemblies are empowered by the Local Government Act, 1998, to make by-laws for the management of sectors under their overall control, including forestry. After approval by the Minister responsible for local government and subsequent publication in the gazette, district by-laws will be legally enforceable in a magistrate's court. District by-laws might be used to bridge any gaps between the formal forestry legislation (the Forestry Act and its various Rules and Regulations) and the informal management rules made by VNRMCs and Block Committees. The Department of Forestry will provide technical guidance on request to any Assembly wishing to draft district forestry by-laws.

Who issues licences?

In line with the Policy goal, it is Government intention that customary land forests are managed for the benefit of the people on whose land these forests occur. Until such time that effective community management is put in place, **through registration of the VFA and VNRMC with the District Forest office or covered by a legal agreement**, *the responsibility for management of customary forests rests with Government*, now District Assemblies under the decentralisation of forestry functions. Therefore the main mechanism to control access and use of these areas, commercial activities in particular is through licensing. The mandate for licensing in the first instance is therefore with the District Forest Office.

The policy objective for the management of customary forests that are not yet under community control is therefore to balance the immediate need for forest products and forest-based livelihoods with the need to ensure their continued availability to future generations, by:

- allowing rural communities free access to the forest products required for domestic use and consumption;
- allowing controlled access to forest products for commercial purposes, on a sustainable yield basis; and
- prohibiting the commercial use of forest products beyond the limits of sustainability.

The strategy for achieving this objective is the operation of a licensing system for all commercial harvesting, trading and processing of forest products.

Under the Forestry (Community Participation) Rules 2001, section 4 (2), a community shall have the power to (a) develop a licensing system in collaboration with the Director of Forestry.

The licensing of wood processing, the trade in forest products and the harvesting of forest products from customary land that is not a Village Forest Area managed under a Forest Management Agreement will be decentralised to the District Assemblies in accordance with the Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources & Environment devolution plan.

LICENSING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COLLECTION OF FOREST PRODUCE FOR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

Customary Forest	▪ District Assemblies ▪ VNRMCs on the basis of a signed Forest Management Agreement, or other agreement with the Director of Forestry
State Forest Reserves	Licences issued by the Director of Forestry on the basis of a current forest reserve management plan

"Even where Forest Reserves are to be managed solely by government, the policy indicates that their productive functions will be fully developed through licensed access to resources on a sustainable-yield basis."
CBFM Supplement to NFP, July 2003

Reference should be made to the relevant forestry legislation, currently the Forest Act 1997, Forest Rules 2001, Forestry (Community Participation) Rules 2001, but also to District Bylaws as these are approved.

What are the incentives for PFM and are they appropriate?

The National Forest Policy 1996, encourages greater involvement of other stakeholders in forest management and provides a framework for the provision of 'incentives' that will promote community-based conservation and sustainable utilisation of forest resources. These 'incentives' comprise new rights, and formal access and ownership arrangements that were previously not available. However, in terms of delivery of extension services, other forms of 'incentives' are being used as a means to stimulate interest and encourage participation in forestry activities.

Such 'incentives' could be considered as inducements, rewards, or compensation, and can comprise: training; provision of physical inputs (tools and materials to start forestry activities); direct grants or pay-

ments or provision of foodstuffs as part of public works type development assistance or to compensate for time lost from other activities; or a combination of these.

Different organisations can have different approaches, and sometimes these different forms of incentives are provided through the same extension staff. Despite the generally satisfactory degree of field-level collaboration between the partners in forestry extension, the extension environment has been damaged in some locations by the manner in which incentives are provided. These in many instances, have created conflicts that were not there before, created bad feeling both within communities and between extension service providers, and produced the opposite effect than what was intended.

What is critical is that there is full understanding by the extension staff, both planners and front-line staff of the various forms of incentives and how they should be applied. Secondly, it is essential that the beneficiaries of such incentives are identified, sensitised and fully aware of the reason for the incentive and the nature or duration of the incentive. All should be aware of the long term goal of the project or what is trying to be achieved from a particular activity that the 'incentive' aims to encourage or compensate for, and how these activities can be sustained beyond the period of the reward.

There is without doubt a need for the adoption of a set of common standards across all forestry extension service providers, and ideally a Code of Practice should be developed for this purpose. Until such time as a Code of Practice is in place, extension workers should think very carefully about how they interact with the communities they serve – problems can be avoided by remembering always to put the long-term interest of the community first, and achieving project targets second.

GUIDANCE FOR THE PROVISION OF INCENTIVES

Training:

- Training should involve participants other than just office bearers of the VNRMC and selection of participants should be discussed by the community and traditional leaders;
- Training should be delivered on site or in a village setting to as many people as feasible and practicable; and
- Payments of DSA to community members should be avoided.

Physical inputs:

- Inputs should be provided with the understanding that these are a 'starter pack' to 'kick start' the activity and short term in nature; and
- Local seed collection should be encouraged.

Direct cash payments (such as MASAF) and provision of foodstuffs:

- Where available, these public works approaches should be targeted at existing functional community institutions who can manage the arrangements including selection of beneficiaries, equitably and transparently. Creating new institutions just to receive these inducements should be avoided; and
- If involving tree planting, tree tenure and subsequent maintenance and benefit sharing should be discussed and agreed.

In all instances, incentives should be provided transparently with full understanding of those involved, with care not to raise unrealistic expectations and make promises that cannot be kept!

The starting point should be the need not the incentive.

References:

DOF: Strategy for training VNRMCs, July 1999.

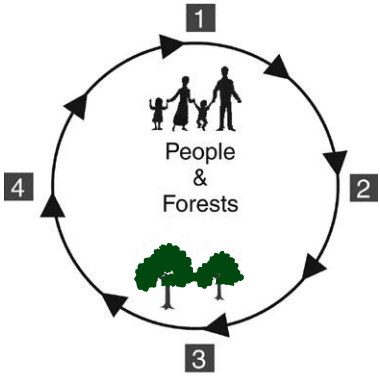
UN: DSA rates for donor funded workshops & seminars, June 2001.

SFP: Incentives that work, SFP Note no4, March 2003.

BCFP: Nkhalango, a social forestry model, 2003.

STAGE 4: PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND LEARNING

1. **Setting strategic goals and roles**
2. **Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions**
3. **Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods**
4. **Performance monitoring and learning**
   - Assess impact, equity, achievement of outcomes and performance against standards
   - Faciitate participatory action learning
   - Review and revision of plans, consultations and serve agreements
   - Communicate learning



What is the aim?

The aim is to ensure that both beneficiaries and service providers are able to assess their progress and achievements in relation to what they have planned and implemented, that plans and services are reviewed and revised accordingly, and that this learning is shared with others.

How to assess impact, equity, achievement of outcomes and performance against standards?

Many forestry practitioners and extension workers will be familiar with monitoring and evaluation as part of projects or funding requirements

that they have been involved with. There are many types of monitoring[1] and evaluation[2] systems, tools and approaches that can be applied and followed. However, what is important is to clarify the reason for monitoring, who is involved, how change or progress will be measured and how this information or 'learning' will be used.

REASONS FOR MONITORING

- To review progress – implementation of activities/projects, policy implementation;
- To provide accountability - to beneficiaries, and funding agencies;
- To strengthen organisations;
- To understand and negotiate different stakeholder perspectives;
- To provide information at different levels;
- To assess well being, who benefits and what are the changes in power relations; and
- To assess the real costs of responsibilities, and participation with benefits from forestry activities (inputs versus outputs).

Whatever the context for assessing the impact of a particular activity or intervention, there is need for simple, affordable methods, which are easily understood, locally relevant, which allows self-assessment by both beneficiaries and service providers (extension agents and planners/managers).

1 Monitoring: the systematic and continuous collecting, analysis and using of information for the purpose of management and decision making.

2 Evaluation: a periodic assessment of efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and relevance of an activity/project, usually undertaken externally.

When preparing a monitoring plan or strategy, the following should be considered:

Why	What is the purpose of the monitoring?
What	What activity is to be monitored and why is it being done?
Who	Who is involved, who should be involved?
How	How is the monitoring to be done, using what tools?
Where	Where is the activity taking place, is it appropriate?
When	When should the monitoring take place? Is the activity being monitored on schedule?

What is important is that the process of assessment should involve the appropriate people, that they are fully involved in measuring their progress against their own indicators of success, that feedback is provided to others, and that the process is simple, open and empowering.

TOOL BOX

Measuring progress in adaptive management – COMPASS II

The main aim of the following service standard is to assess whether monitoring is taking place, if follow-ups are being conducted by the local extension worker, that local supervision is being undertaken, and whether assessments of compliance to the service standards are carried out.

SERVICE STANDARD 14 – ASSESSING THE IMPACT, EQUITY, AND ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES

.14	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Participatory monitoring plans are developed to objectively measure performance against predefined targets & change against a pre-established baseline	▪ Management plans include a monitoring component against performance targets and pre-established baseline ▪ Extension worker can explain monitoring activities against the baseline ▪ Participatory site level monitoring includes changes to the resource and well-being of the community/ households ▪ Site level self-monitoring & reflection is documented, reported & shared	Checking of pre-established baseline data Action plans Reading of monitoring reports Organisation periodic reports Interviewing in the field	VNRMC (D) Forest ext worker (D) DFO/ Extension Planner (E)
B	Periodic external 'audits' (follow-ups, supervision visits) are conducted to measure compliance by all parties (committee, service providers) to standards	▪ Audits/supervision reports are published detailing findings, recommendations & responsibilities for further action as appropriate ▪ Extension worker can show whether activities are in line with planned measures or not	Checking of audit reports Interviewing beneficiaries	Audit teams (D) Director of Forestry (E)

How to facilitate participatory action learning?

Participatory action learning (PAL) relates to the need for the people who are actively engaged in forestry activities to be building on their own knowledge and expertise, to test approaches that are relevant to their particular situation and determine what works best for them according to their own needs and objectives. PAL aims to enhance the capacity of individuals, groups and communities to undertake a process of self learning and adaptation of processes and approaches which meet their needs and objectives through testing and innovation.
This can range from selection of species, planting mixtures of species for different products and services, to treatments in order to encourage natural regeneration of indigenous woodland.

CASE STUDY MOYO-MAUNI, MANJAWIRA, NTCHEU

The community wished to regenerate their indigenous forest VFA and were advised that they could conduct screefing. However they found that regeneration was more prolific in the areas they had carried out patch burning to reduce the incidence of late season fires. Now they had to analyse closely what species were regenerating under the two regimes and determine which one suited their requirements. This would be used to plan their management activities in the VFA for the following season.

The above case study is a form of research undertaken by a community and therefore is adaptive and demand driven. This form of local analysis and learning should be incorporated into activity plans and included within local monitoring systems.

Why review and revise plans, constitutions, and service agreements?

Management plans, constitutions and agreements should be viewed as dynamic instruments of management and governance. These represent the understanding, analysis, vision and agreements made within and between stakeholders at a particular point in time. As the situation changes, as understanding and knowledge is enhanced over time, then

these 'instruments' should be reviewed and revised to ensure that they provide the intended direction and benefits.

This process of review and revision along with a clear period of operation or validity should be built into and agreed within any plan, constitution or agreement. This should be ideally based on a process of monitoring, evaluation and learning described earlier.
Within legal agreements (co-management, forest management and plantation agreements), this should involve review of roles, responsibilities, obligations as well as the sharing of benefits between the various parties to the agreement. This is important to ensure that these partnership arrangements achieve the results and impact that the various parties involved intended at the outset.

SERVICE STANDARD 15 – FACILITATING PARTICIPATORY ACTION LEARNING

.15	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Local learning & preferences are promoted through adaptive management, analysis & reflection by local forest users	▪ Local testing & analysis of alternative forest management practices ▪ Local users can explain local trials, testing of alternatives & reasons for choices selected	Reading of meeting reports Lessons learned documents Organisation periodic reports Interviewing in the field	Forest ext worker (D) DFO/ Extension Planner (E)

SERVICE STANDARD 16 – REVIEW AND REVISION OF PLANS, CONSTITUTIONS, AND AGREEMENTS

16	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Plans, constitutions, service agreements & legal Agreements (Forest Management, Co-management, & Plantation Agreements) at all levels are periodically reviewed & revised as necessary	▪ Plans, constitutions & agreements are reviewed & revised within their specified period ▪ Individuals & committees can explain how lessons from their periodic monitoring will be/are included in the revised plan/ constitution/ agreement	Validating reviewed documents Interviewing in the field	DFO/ Extension Planner (D) Director of Forestry (E)

How to communicate learning?

The aim is to ensure that lessons and learning from the field is shared with others to improve practice, resolve issues and obstacles that might be encountered elsewhere by other practitioners.

Projects, programmes, agencies and institutions, should not only have communication systems to pass information downwards to practitioners and communities, but also a process that can capture, collect, analyse and share information upwards, sidewards and back downwards to other geographically distinct practitioners and beneficiaries.

While it may appear daunting to set up such a system, in practice most projects and agencies will have existing channels of communication upwards and downwards. Therefore it can be more a matter of ensuring that the appropriate lessons and information passes through these channels to best effect. This information flow should incorporate relevant information and lessons captured within formal and informal monitoring systems and within reports and periodic publications.
At the simplest level, many Government extension staff are paid monthly in cash and therefore travel or come together to receive their pay. This is a form of communication that is undeveloped as an information sharing and gathering exercise.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING

Identify the: implementer – assessor – reporter – analyser – planner – communicator – audience/recipient.

- Assess lines of communication and reporting already established;
- Assess the participation, who is involved and where;
- Assess who should be involved and through what channels;
- Assess who are the drivers in the communication process;
- Assess the target audience, level of education/literacy/language;
- Assess the messages and targeted information;
- Assess effectiveness of various means of communication;
- Assess whether messages have influenced behavioural change; and
- Assess whether the necessary means and resources are available.

SERVICE STANDARD 17 – COMMUNICATING LEARNING

.17	What is the standard?	What will be assessed?	How will it be verified?	Who is accountable?
A	Field learning is analysed, synthesised & shared to improve practice, policy & legislation	▪ Lessons from field practice are regularly shared and synthesised at District level and above ▪ Dissemination strategy developed & implemented ▪ Field learning fed into policy & legislative review processes	Monitoring reports Organisation periodic reports Dissemination products (posters, leaflets, etc) Revised policy & legal instruments	DFO/ Extension Planner (D), Director of Forestry (E)

ASSESSMENT OF PFM SERVICE STANDARDS

This section covers the process of using the PFM Standards outlined in the previous sections to assess the process of participatory forestry and the quality of service provision to beneficiaries.

PFM standards have been developed to ensure that there is consistency in forest extension service provision across the sector, but also to ensure that the 'client' the beneficiaries of the service, receive quality support and direction, and as such are empowered in the manner intended by the policy and legal framework. Each service standard in this document is based on the generic process of promoting participatory forestry and each of its various steps and stages highlight elements that are currently considered best practice.

The process of assessment may be formal or informal, be conducted within a project, organisation or agency as part of routine supervision, by the Department of Forestry as part of its regulatory and monitoring function, or through a process of self assessment by the extension staff themselves.

What is important is that the assessment is viewed as a process of learning, of sharing knowledge between the assessor, the responsible extension worker and the beneficiaries.

What are the steps of a PFM standards assessment?

Preparing for the assessment

To ensure the widest possible learning out of the assessment process, a team approach is recommended. This should involve as a minimum, the extension staff responsible for the site/community/group, but also the direct supervisor to ensure that the necessary support and guidance is provided following the assessment. This is discussed later.

The team should build an understanding of the need for and the application of PFM Standards, then familiarise themselves with each of the standards and the method of assessment.

The PFM Standards cover a range of participatory forestry interventions, from working with individuals, groups and communities, however, the team should work through each of the 17 main standards and their component standards, assessing those which are applicable to the site/situation.

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS BY PFM PRACTICAL ACTION

Practical Actions	Negotiating strategic goals & roles	Building local institutions & prioritising actions	Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry & livelihoods	Performance monitoring & learning
Community management of customary forest	1	2-6	7, 13	14-17
Management of state forest reserves	1	2-6	8, 13	14-17
Co-management of state forest reserves	1	2-6	8, 9, 13	14-17
Individual/household trees on farms	1	3, 4	10, 13	14-17
Afforestation (private, estate, community)	1	2-6	11, 13	14-17
Community involvement in state plantations	1	2-6	12, 13	14-17

The Team should then plan how they will conduct the assessment exercise.

Doing the assessment

The community or group should be informed in advance of the assessment site visit and a time arranged that is convenient. Normal etiquette for community meetings should be observed which should include a meeting with the relevant traditional leader for the area.

The assessment may comprise a combination of community/group meetings and semi-structured interviews with key informants. The aim is to ensure that the information collected is representative of the situation and captures the views of as many of the key stakeholders as possible, but also to verify or 'triangulate' information collected. Situations where only the VNRMC are met with should be avoided. If only the committee are present at the meeting then the team should ensure that they meet with others in the community later. If appropriate the team could split into smaller groups to meet with other households and key informants as appropriate.

CONDUCTING SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS

The approach:

Be aware of bias, forcing your own opinion or perception, asking leading questions, interrupting the answer from the informant, not recording fully the information, politeness, cultural and gender sensitivity.

The informant:

Knowledge: is the informant directly involved, is the information first hand?

Credibility: is the informant painting a particular picture for the assessor to hear? Only positive? Only problems with the expectation of support?

Motives: is the informant trying to gain out of a particular situation or position?

The information:

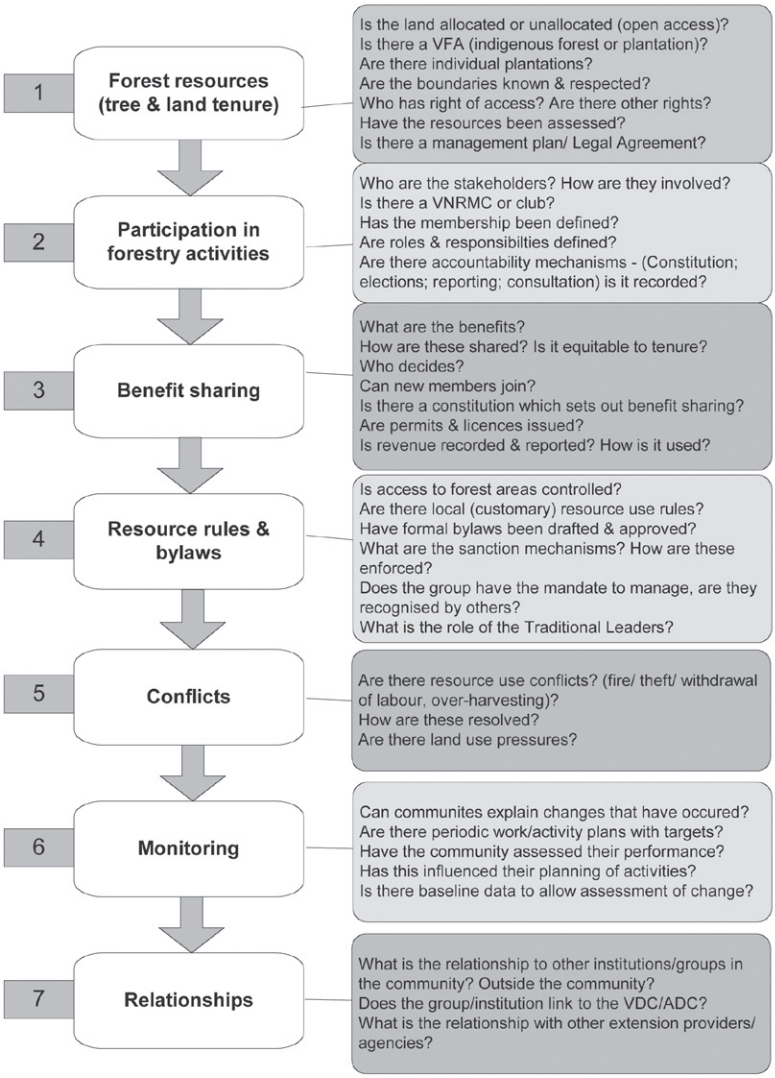
Is it factual – actually taken place; an opinion – a judgement or view; or rumour – hearsay, an unverified statement?

Using the key questions sheet

It can be seen from the assessment criteria that there are common themes which cut across the various service standards. These include questions and issues relating to: tenure and access rights; level of participation; benefit sharing; resource rules and bylaws; conflicts relating to land and resource use; monitoring; and the relationships within and between various groups and institutions both at the community level and outside.

To assist the assessment process, a one page 'key questions' sheet has been prepared to assist the teams with their semi-structured interviews. During the development and pre-testing of the standards it was found that this was useful to gain a rapid insight into the social and institutional issues as they impact on the forestry activities taking place.

PFM SERVICE STANDARDS – KEY QUESTIONS – CHECKLIST FOR FIELD STAFF



Completing the assessment form

The PFM Standards Assessment form (which can be found in Template 4) should be used to assess compliance with the applicable service standards relevant to the various practical actions (afforestation, co-management, community management of customary forests etc.) implemented to promote participatory forestry.

Each standard and its sub-components should be considered according to the assessment criteria set against each standard and its sub-components, and comments made in the appropriate column.

Based on this evaluation of the assessment criteria measured by its associated verifier, an overall assessment of compliance with the standard should be made. This should be either: **FULL** or **PARTIAL** or **NOT ADEQUATE** as appropriate. Any shortfalls or recommendation for follow up action should be noted in the last column. A section of a completed assessment form appears as follows:

Service Standard	Applicable Yes ✓/No X	Comments based on assessment criteria	Assessment of Compliance	Recommended remedial action
5	Negotiate roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms			
5a	✓	Broad roles & responsibilities agreed and understood	Full	
5b	✓	Benefit sharing not widely discussed & agreed nor documented	Partial	Constitution requires to be reviewed

Overall comments on what was observed or discussed should be made in the 'general comments' box on the last page. A copy of the form should be left with the relevant person/extension worker responsible for the site to provide guidance to assist follow-up actions.

Following up after the assessment

The assessment process should not end with the completion of the form. A plan for follow-up action should be agreed with the concerned extension worker and the organisation or agency they represent.
Issues raised should be discussed and further action agreed. This could cover follow up activities with the community or group or the need for new skills or further capacity building of the extension staff.

Involving the community in assessing the standards

These PFM Standards are primarily aimed at the practitioners or service providers through a process of external and self-assessment. Although the assessment exercise involves community meetings and key informant interviews, it is hoped that the beneficiaries, the recipients of the service, can be further involved in the assessment exercise. There are a number of participatory tools that can be used in community level evaluations. It is hoped that these can be incorporated into future methods of assessment as the standards process is further refined and experience gained.

USEFUL TEMPLATES

Template 1 – Forest product matrix/simple management plan

The following forest product matrix has been tested in a number of situations as the basis of a simple VFA management, to establish the important forest resources to a community, the approximate level of demand

TEMPLATE 1 – VILLAGE FOREST AREA – FOREST MANAGEMENT UNIT NAME

1	Product	Eg Poles	Timber	Fuelwood	Fruits etc.
2	Important species	1 2 3 etc	1 2 3 etc	1 2 3 etc	1 2 3 etc
3	Demand (approx. quantities collected)				

To develop a Forest Management Matrix, the following new rows can and should now be added to the matrix:

4	Supply (from sample plot data)				
5	Problem /issues				
6	Management opportunities/strategies/options				
7	Resource use rules				

This information should be used along with other social, economic and institutional self analysis generated through PRAs or Appreciative Inquiry, along with the constitution and activity and resource utilisation plans, should form the VFA management plan. This forms the main documentation to support the Forest Management Agreement.

For more information please refer to:

SFTEP (2003): Participatory Forest Management Planning – Field Manual (version 2.1)

TEMPLATE 2 – CONSTITUTION HEADINGS FOR COMMUNITY LEVEL INSTITUTION

Constitution – Outline Headings

The following headings/issues should be raised and negotiated within the community. The constitution should appear as an annex to a management plan.

Objectives of the institution

To develop, protect, manage and control the sustainable utilisation of natural resources in the area of……on behalf of……. in a transparent and equitable manner. (to be developed and agreed by the primary stakeholders).

Structure and membership

The structure or composition of the local institution should be appropriate to the situation. The aim is to have a functional body that is representative of the community and represents the interests of its composite groups. In some cases different levels should be considered:

- Managing committee – comprising the office bearers such as: chair-person, secretary, treasurer plus vice positions up to a total of 10;
- General body, members who are actively engaged or interested in forestry activities;
- The wider community, local people living in the area whose interests are represented by the committee, who have the right to participate and take part in the elections of office bearers; and
- The Traditional leader/village head should be an ex-officio member, to provide advice direction and to assist with the settling of disputes.

Functioning of the managing committee/office bearers

- Composition of the management committee;
- Duties and responsibilities of the Managing Committee;
- Eligibility for election to office;
- Tenure - Term of office & number of consecutive terms (as agreed);
- Disqualification of office bearers;
- Powers of the managing committee; and
- Dissolution of the management committee.

Membership

- Eligibility – who can join?
- Elections, conducted free and fair with proper consultation with traditional leaders;
- Frequency of elections (see term of office for managing committee);
- How do new members join in the future?
- Disqualification of members from the general body; and
- Right of Appeal.

Functioning of the institution:

- Duties of the general body;
- Frequency of meetings for the general body, with the wider community;
- Quorum for meetings – the minimum numbers of individuals that require to be present to vote on management decisions;
- Management rules and sanctions – Bylaws, Resource use rules, Penalties and sanctions;
- Accounts/financial management – receipts and payment procedures;
- Record keeping – minutes of meetings and financial accounts;
- Policy on leases and loans;
- Policy on equality;
- How can the constitution be amended.

Benefit sharing

- What benefits and incentives are available and who can receive them?
- How is this agreed and endorsed?

TEMPLATE 3 – TEMPLATE FOR FOREST MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

FORESTRY MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT
(Forestry Act, 1997 Section 31)

THIS AGREEMENT is made the ……..day of……..

BETWEEN Director of Forestry, Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources & Environment, hereinafter referred to as the Government, and local residents of …….village of Traditional Authority……..... ..……..and District ……..... .....…… represented by ……..Village Natural Resources Management Committee (hereinafter referred to as the VNRMC)

WHEREAS the Government wishes to make an agreement with the VNRMC to provide for the transfer of management authority and ownership of forest resources of ……forest area in order to promote participatory forestry on customary land through protection, management, control and sustainable utilization of forest resources by local communities.

NOW IT IS HEREBY AGREED as follows:

1. The Government shall upon being satisfied with transitional arrangements handover authority to protect, manage, control and utilize sustainably the forest resource for the benefit of the local community of ……village(s).
2. The VNRMC accepts and undertakes to protect, manage, control and utilize sustainably the forest resource in accordance with terms and conditions stipulated in this agreement and annexed Management Plan.

VNRMC OBLIGATIONS

3. In particular the Government gives authority to the VNRMC subject to the following conditions:
   (a) forest resources shall be properly maintained and managed according to approved management techniques as set out in the annexed Management Plan.
   (b) forest area shall not be converted to other land-uses including arable cropping and erection of dwellings, temporary or otherwise.

(c) extraction of forest resources for commercial purposes shall be licensed and documented in accordance with the sustainable yield limits as set out in the annexed Management Plan.

(d) the forest area shall be protected from fires, pests, diseases, theft, poaching, vandalism and other such forms of hazards.

(e) benefits accruing from the forest resource shall be equitably utilized by the community in accordance with the benefit sharing arrangements set out in the annexed Management Plan.

(f) community propose and enforce rules governing access, use and protection of the designated forest area in conformity with customary laws and existing regulations and local sanctions as set out in the annexed Management Plan.

(g) community establish, administer and account for the operations of the community development account.

(h) VNRMC prepare financial reports to be presented at regular meetings to the community.

(i) VNRMC make accessible records of accounts to the Director of Forestry or his/her representative, the District Commissioner or his/her representative upon receiving notification from the Director of Forestry or District Commissioner.

(j) VNRMC shall represent and be accountable to the community and operate in accordance with the agreed constitution as set out in the annexed Management Plan.

(k) delineate and maintain boundaries of forest areas to be under the control of the local community represented by the VNRMC in collaboration with local leaders.

GOVERNMENT OBLIGATIONS

4. The Government shall:

(a) provide technical expertise in collaboration with other partners, including assistance with inventory of forest resources and revision of management plans jointly with the VNRMC.

(b) provide in collaboration with other partners, legal, organisational, marketing and other forms of support to the VNRMC as appropriate.

(c) organise in collaboration with other partners, relevant training courses to enhance organisational, technical and management capacity of VNRMC, traditional authorities and other members of the community.

(d) recognise and actively support the protection and policing measures taken by the VNRMC and the community in accordance with the Forest Act, 1997, Forest Rules 2001, and Bylaws as these are approved from time to time.

(e) take steps to monitor jointly with the VNRMC to ensure that the Village Forest Area is managed in accordance with this Agreement and annexed Management Plan.

COMMENCEMENT, DURATION AND TERMINATION

5. This Agreement shall come into effect when signed by representatives of the parties, and shall be binding indefinitely subject to clauses 6 and 9 below.
6. The Government shall have the right to terminate this agreement and revoke authority to protect, manage, control and utilise forest resources, in any of the following events;

   – negligence or failure to protect, manage and control the forest area.
   – if the VNRMC commits any serious breach of this agreement.

7. The powers stipulated in clause 6 above, shall not be exercised unless the Government has tried all efforts to resolve or correct the situation amicably.
8. In cautioning the local community the government shall cite the shortcomings and remedies giving the period within which they should be addressed.
9. The VNRMC may terminate this agreement at any time by giving notice of not less than 8 weeks, in any of the following events:

   – if there is serious breach of this agreement.
   – if for any reason the community finds itself unable or unwilling to continue with the activities of the designated forest area.

10. In the event of notice of termination, VNRMC shall be under obligation to ensure that the forest area is protected until a Care-Taker Committee or Government has assumed authority over forest area.

DEMARCATION AND BOUNDARY

11. Division or delineation of forest areas shall be as displayed on the sketch map forming part of the Management Plan annexed to this Agreement.

DISPUTES

12. In the event of any dispute arising under the Forestry Management Agreement, the matter shall be referred to the Minister of Mines, Natural Resources & Environment. If any party is dissatisfied with the decision passed by the Minister he/she may apply for a judicial review to the High Court.

13. SIGNED:

_____

DIRECTOR OF FORESTRY

Dated_____

AND

_____

CHAIRPERSON
VILLAGE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Dated_____

WITNESSES:

_____

_____

_____

VILLAGE HEADMAN/WOMAN

Dated_____

_____

TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY

Dated_____

_____

DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

Dated_____

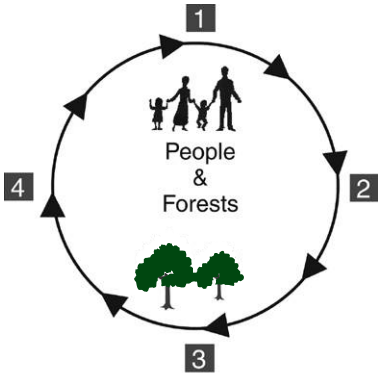
Annexes:

Management Plan for Village Forest Area

TEMPLATE 4 – PFM STANDARDS FIELD ASSESSMENT FORM

Participatory Forest Management Service Standards Assessment Form	
District:	Date:
Extension Agency:	Site Name:
Community institution name:	Assessor:
GPS Coordinates: S	E

SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATORY FORESTRY



1. **Setting strategic goals and roles**
   - **Service standard 1** – Negotiating strategic goals and roles
2. **Institutional building, strengthening, and prioritising actions**
   - **Service standard 2** – Building awareness and consensus
   - **Service standard 3** – Identifying needs, priorities, and opportunities
   - **Service standard 4** – Assessing resource availability, user rights, and tenure
   - **Service standard 5** – Negotiating roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms
   - **Service standard 6** – Identify and form locally accountable institutions
3. **Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry and livelihoods**
   - **Service standard 7 –** Community management of customary forests
   - **Service standard 8** – Management of State Forest Reserves
   - **Service standard 9** – Co-management of State Forest Reserves
   - **Service standard 10** – Individual/household planting and trees on farms
   - **Service standard 11** – Afforestation
   - **Service standard 12** – Community involvement in the management of State plantations
   - **Service standard 13** – Harvesting, processing, and marketing forest produce
4. **Performance monitoring and learning**
   - **Service Standard 14** – Assessing the impact, equity, and achievement of outcomes
   - **Service standard 15** – Facilitating participatory action learning
   - **Service standard 16** – Review and revision of plans, constitutions, and agreements
   - **Service standard 17** – Communicating learning

Instrucors:

This form should be used to assess compliance with the applicable service standards relevant to the various practical actions (afforestation, co-management, community management of customary forests etc.) implemented to promote participatory forestry. Each standard and its sub-components should be considered according to the assessment criteria set against each standard and its sub-components, and comments made in the appropriate column. Based on this assessment along with its associated verifier, an overall assessment of compliance with the standard should be made. This should be either: FULL or PARTIAL or NOT ADEQUATE as appropriate. Any shortfalls or recommendation for follow up action should be noted in the last column.

Overall comments on what was observed or discussed should be made in the 'general comments' box on the last page. A copy of the form should be left with the relevant person/extension worker responsible for the site to provide guidance to assist follow-up actions.

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS

Practical Actions	Negotiating strategic goals & roles	Building local institutions & prioritising actions	Implementing practical actions for sustainable forestry & liveli-hoods	Performance monitoring & learning
Community Management of Customary Forest	1	2-6	7, 13	14-17
Management of State Forest Reserves	1	2-6	8, 13	14-17
Co-Management of State Forest Reserves	1	2-6	8, 9, 13	14-17
Individual/house-hold trees on farms	1	3, 4	10, 13	14-17
Afforestation (Private, Estate, Community)	1	2-6	11, 13	14-17
Community involvement in State Plantations	1	2-6	12, 13	14-17

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standard	Applicable Yes ✓ /No X	Comments based on assessment criteria	Assessment of Compliance	Recommended remedial action
1	Determine local planning and strategic priorities			
1a				
1b				
2	Building awareness and consensus of key local stakeholders, interest groups and functional community institutions			
2a				
3.	Identify needs priorities and opportunities			
3a				
4	Assess resource availability user rights and tenure			
4a				
5	Negotiate roles, responsibilities, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms			
5a				
5b				

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standard	Applicable Yes ✓ /No X	Comments based on assessment criteria	Assessment of Compliance	Recommended remedial action
5c				
6	Identify and form locally accountable institutions in relation to tenure			
6a				
6b				
6c				
7	**Community Management of Customary Forests:** All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section			
7a				
7b				
7c				
7d				
7e				

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standard	Applicable Yes ✓ /No X	Comments based on assessment criteria	Assessment of Compliance	Recommended remedial action
7f				
7g				
8	Management of State Forest Reserves			
8a				
8b				
8c				
9	**Co-management of State Forest Reserves:** For co-management the components of all standards which apply to Building local institutions & prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above and Community Management of Customary Forest standard No. 7 (A-F) above) should be applied in this section			
9g				
9h				
9i				
10	Individual household planting and trees on farms			

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standard	Applicable Yes ✓ /No X	Comments based on assessment criteria	Assessment of Compliance	Recommended remedial action
10a				
10b				
11	**Afforestation (Community / group plantations)** All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section on community and group afforestation			
11a				
11b				
11c				
12	**Community involvement in the management of State plantations** All standards which apply to Building local institutions and prioritising actions, standards No. 2-6 above, should be assessed in addition to this section			
12a				
12b				

APPLICABLE SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standard	Applicable Yes ✓ /No X	Comments based on assessment criteria	Assessment of Compliance	Recommended remedial action
13	Processing and Marketing Forest Produce			
13a				
13b				
14	Assessing the impact, equity, and achievement of outcomes			
14a				
14b				
15	Facilitate participatory action learning			
15a				
16	Review and revision of plans, constitutions and agreements			
16a				
17	Communicate learning			
17a				

GENERAL COMMENTS

Assessor: Signed: Date:

REFERENCES

SFMP & SFTEP (2003): Forestry Extension Handbook

GoM (2002) How to Build a Tree Nursery & Raise Seedlings in Malawi

MAFE (1995) A Field Manual For Agroforestry Practices in Malawi

COMPASS Appreciative Inquiry

COMPASS Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation

Social Forestry Training & Extension Project (1997-2003)

SFTEP (2003): Participatory Forest Management Planning – Field Manual (version 2.1)

SFTEP (2002): Participatory Forest Management: A Guide for Promoting Community Fire Management.

Social Forestry Dissemination Documents (2003)

Social Forestry Note No 1: Social forestry and the NFP- explaining the links

Social Forestry Note No 2: Dealing with devolution in forestry: building village institutions to engage in participatory forest management

Social Forestry Note No 3: A new institutional map – shifting roles, responsibilities and relationships to add value to forestry

Social Forestry Note No 4: Incentives that work: encouraging communities to do participatory forest management

Social Forestry Note No 5: The Bwanje Social Forestry Success Story: making forestry work for communities

Social Forestry Note No 6: learning from experience, informing policy: lessons from the field

Large poster: Participatory Forest Management Planning, Department of Forestry, Malawi

Poster set: Solutions to deforestation – making forestry work for communities (set of 9 posters)

Sustainable Forest Management Programme (2001-2004)

SFMP (2002): Social Forestry Lessons

SFMP (2002): Review of Guidelines for Participatory Management of Forest Resources

SFMP (2003): Preparing Participatory Management Plans for Indigenous Forests on Customary lands (Version 2.0)

FRIM (1999) Community-Based Management of Miombo Woodlands in Malawi

FRIM (2000) Project Promotion Training Course Document

GoM & UNDP (1996): Forestry Extension Kit for Field Workers in Malawi, volumes 1 to 4

Kaarhus R, Jorgensen I, Kamoto J, Mumba R, Sikwese M, Ferrar S, (2002): Nkhalango, A Social Forestry Model, Experiences from Blantyre City Fuelwood Project in Southern Malawi