

NATURAL RESOURCES SYSTEMS PROGRAMME
PROJECT REPORT¹

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R8363

Report Title

Enhancing developmental impact of process tools piloted in Eastern India. Scientific report.

Annex A of the Final Technical Report of projects R8363.

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Organisation

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Glossary

Better-Practice Guidelines: (BPGs): STREAM BPGs are lively 4-page guides with pictures and illustrations written in plain English and translated into 11 other languages. They aim to share beneficial lessons from local practice or from research.

CIM: NRSP's Conceptual Impact Model underlies NRSP's strategic thinking and planning in general and specifically its Uptake Promotion strategy. The CIM identifies five generic stakeholder domains, named Domains V to Z, that specify the beneficiaries/stakeholders with whom NRSP can achieve either developmental impact, or make progress towards developmental impact through research uptake.

Communications Hub: A STREAM Communications Hub is a national level institution with a permanent manager, most commonly embedded within a suitable government institution in the fisheries sector, which acts as a conduit for knowledge exchange between a network of national stakeholders and a regional network of national communications hubs throughout Asia-Pacific.

Consensus-Building Process: A tool in support of policy change processes, the CBP builds on longer-term engagement, draws heavily on relationships and involves careful facilitation of policy change processes which favor wide-scale stakeholder involvement, including people who are poor.

Country Strategy Paper: A CSP is a document drawn up in consultation with a range of national stakeholders by each STREAM country office with support from the STREAM Regional Office in Bangkok. It identifies relevant national poverty and aquatic resources issues, examines policy and institutional environments, establishes key objectives, proposes implementation approaches, highlights partnerships with national and regional stakeholders, and provides a basis for seeking financial support.

DFID-NRSP Target Countries: Cambodia, India, Lao PDR, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam

DFID-NRSP Non-Target Countries: Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan and Philippines

Downloads: The number of times a specified file is downloaded by visitors to the STREAM website [www.streaminitiative.org]. If an error occurred during the transfer, it is not counted.

Impact: A positive change in the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable aquatic resources users.

Information Access Survey: A tool which identifies and recommends methods of communication that are appropriate to aquatic resources management stakeholders, focusing in particular on poor rural communities. It provides an overview of available media resources, examples of communication strategies and tools currently used across a range of sectors and stakeholders to provide access to information.

Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific: NACA is an intergovernmental organization that promotes rural development through sustainable aquaculture. NACA seeks to improve rural income, increase food production and foreign exchange earnings and to diversify farm production. The ultimate beneficiaries of NACA activities are farmers and rural communities. The core activities of NACA are:

- Capacity-building through education and training;
 - Collaborative research and development through networking among centers and people;
 - Development of information and communication networks;
 - Policy guidelines and support to policies and institutional capacities; and
 - Aquatic animal health and disease management.
-

NACA Member Countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong SAR, India, Iran, Korea (DPR), Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

NACA Participating (Non-member) Countries: Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR and Singapore.

One-stop Aqua Shops: A single local location for fish farmers and aquatic resources stakeholders to share knowledge, find information, training, sources of inputs such as fingerlings, micro-credit, loans and market information government, inter-governmental and NGO support, and rural banking services.

Outcome: A positive or negative change in the behavior of an individual and/or the practice of an organization.

Net-meeting: A regular facilitated meeting conducted in an on-line environment, enabling STREAM Communications Hub Managers, NACA-STREAM Regional Office staff and guests to discuss agreed topics and identify follow-up actions.

Policy Brief: A 2-page publication designed to be read quickly to highlight key issues and to lead the way to further information sources. They share beneficial lessons that are learnt from local practice or from research which support aquatic resources management in ways that benefit the livelihoods of people who are poor.

Scaling-up: Scaling-up aims to provide more quality benefits to more people over a wider geographical area more quickly, more equitably and more lastingly (IRR, 2000). Scaling-up can be a geographical expansion to more people and communities within the same sector or stakeholder group, as well as institutional, involving expansion to other stakeholder groups and sectors.

Self-Help Groups: A way to start working that helps to build up the social connections which people find useful in support of their livelihoods objectives.

Significant Change Stories: A description of the most significant change that has happened in a person's life, livelihood, work or some broader context, since the last time they reported. SCSs are a part of STREAM's M&E System, which help to capture unanticipated (positive or negative) changes in people's lives.

Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management (STREAM Initiative) is an initiative designed within the five-year Work Programme cycle of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) which aims to support poor people's livelihoods through improved communications, and by influencing institutions and policy development to better support the needs of poor people who are involved with fishing and small-scale fish farming.

STREAM Countries: Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Yunnan Province of China.

STREAM Journal: A quarterly journal published in 12 languages to promote participation, communication and policies that support the livelihoods of poor aquatic resources users in Asia-Pacific. Issues include learning, conflict management, information and communication technologies, aquatic resources management, legislation, livelihoods, gender, participation, stakeholders, policy and communications.

Visits: The number of times the website is browsed. If a visitor is idle longer than the thirty minutes idle-time limit, web monitoring software assumes the visit was voluntarily terminated. If the visitor continues to browse the site after they reach the idle-time limit, a new visit is counted.

1. Introduction

R8363 and STREAM

Project R8363 “Enhancing Development Impact of Process Tools Piloted in Eastern India” (February 2004 through August 2005), implemented by the STREAM Initiative, follows two DFID-NRSP Research Projects: R6759 “Integration of Aquaculture into the Farming Systems of the Eastern Plateau of India” and R8100 “Investigating Improved Policy on Aquaculture Service Provision to Poor People”. In addition, R8363 is complemented by the on-going DFID-NRSP Research Project R8334 “Promoting the Pro-poor Policy Lessons of R8100 with Key Policy Actors in India”.

The STREAM Initiative:

- Aims to highlight the importance of inland fisheries and aquaculture in planning and policy formulation to improve food security and the livelihoods of rural people (in response to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication in December 2002)
- Responds to the expressed need for greater exchange of information and experience regarding the development of rural aquaculture (of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, April 2002)
- Highlights the value of building social capital (farmer associations) (In response to the Second meeting of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, 2003)
- Supports approaches to better service provision, with building social capital as the entry point on behalf of line agencies and lead institutions (as requested by the 16-country NACA Governing Council Meeting, 2003)
- Links an on-line forum of specialists with local beneficiaries (As requested by the NACA Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, 2003).
- Is working towards the scaling-up of livelihoods approaches to better meet poor people’s needs through a market research type approach (Information Access Survey); using community-based methods that are appropriate for poor people (Self-Help Groups) and a method for including all stakeholders in policy dialogue and priority setting (Consensus-Building Process). (In response to the Los Baños Inter-governmental Conference on Livelihoods Approaches, 2005)

The Process Tools

Collectively, these objectives underlie the rationale for Project R8363, to enhance the uptake and promotion of three DFID-NRSP process tools for planning and implementing service provision.

Building Social Capital¹ - This tool includes promotional steps in support of farmer associations for poverty alleviation and the establishment of a supported network of dedicated community-based professionals or Community Organizers (COs), and their extensive use of participatory approaches to develop trust and understanding of the strengths, resource use priorities and constraints of (poor) farmers and fishers. Other steps involve nurturing of social cohesion, the process of association, capacity-building for inclusion in groups, decision-making, skills development and sharing, the development of savings and the evolution of local micro-credit services and a supportive institutional environment. This tool later became known as Self-Help Groups (SHG).

The Consensus-Building Process² (CBP) - Where it is possible to negotiate a role in policy change (usually based on long-term engagement), this tool draws heavily on relationships and involves careful facilitation of policy change processes which favor poor people. It adopts a process approach,

¹ BSC is a process tool developed by R6759 and further developed and used by R8100.

² CBP is a process tool developed by R8100 and is being promoted at state level in eastern India in Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal via R8334.

and reduces transactional costs by learning lessons from elsewhere as well as identifying “discourse gaps” and mechanisms to transcend hierarchical structures as it empowers recipients, implementers and less-heard voices. The process tool prioritizes policy change proposals, builds shared understandings and sensitizes senior policy-makers to change priorities, bringing together state and national policy-makers, implementers and recipients of services to review policy. Complex issues are played out literally in live specially-commissioned drama performed for policy-makers who are requested to describe how they can contribute to appropriate policy change.

The Information Access Survey³ (IAS) - This tool identifies and recommends methods of communication that are appropriate to aquatic resources management (ARM) stakeholders, focusing in particular on poor rural communities. It provides an overview of available media resources, examples of communication strategies and tools currently used across a range of sectors and stakeholders to provide access to information. It also examines how poor rural communities obtain information related to aquatic resources management, their preferred information sources, their own communication networks, and the ways in which they access the media. The tool also identifies costs, contact details and specific media strengths and weaknesses in a country context.

Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholders of R8363 are the same as the stakeholders of STREAM as shown in Figure 1. For the sake of brevity the various STREAM stakeholders can be characterized by type including institutional setting and role. In this report STREAM uses these to define stakeholder types which can be matched to DFID-NRSP’s generic stakeholder classification. A stakeholder analysis of STREAM (and therefore of R8363) is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Stakeholder analysis of STREAM

NRSP-CIM Domains	STREAM stakeholders
V	Poor and Vulnerable Aquatic Resources Users in communities in Eastern India (associated with Project R6759, R8100 & R8334). Farmers and Fishers who were stakeholders in the projects that resulted in or generated the process tools.
W	Representatives of communities, federations of SHGs, and regions identified in each Country and the organizations based there.
X	National Institutions, fisheries line agencies in Asia-Pacific. Intermediate stakeholders.
Y	STREAM Communications Hubs and partners, NACA Governing Council and Policy Makers, STREAM Regional Office and partners.
Z	Farmers and fishers in Asia-Pacific.

Stakeholder Demand

At the March 2003 14th NACA Governing Council held in Yangon, Myanmar the 16 NACA Governing Council members representing senior levels in government line agencies called for methods and processes to assist service providers, stating “*It is recommended that the capacity of line agency staff to investigate and understand the livelihoods of poor people who manage aquatic resources, and their capacity to use this knowledge in the development of policies, legislation and support services be strengthened. It should be recognized that this is a considerable undertaking*”. (NACA 2003a).

Following this request at the July 2003 NACA Technical Advisory meeting (TAC) held in Bali, Indonesia senior members of national and international aquatic resource institutions stated “*The input of farmers could be brought into the discussion forums through STREAM hubs and mass media such*

³ IAS is a process tool developed by R6759 and subsequently tested and used in Cambodia, Philippines and Vietnam.

as radio. STREAM hubs could run discussion forums with farmers and results of discussions could be posted on the website and linked to other media such as radio and STREAM hubs. Farmers could contribute questions or knowledge” (NACA 2003b). Both these requests were significant as they articulated the need for approaches and process to assist the development of farmers and fishers rather than a request for more traditional technology focused approaches.

The need to generate mechanisms and media for sharing process tools has also been articulated by the WorldFish Center and the Technical Advisory Body of the Mekong River Commission. Therefore in responding to this demand through project R8363, STREAM remained committed to its aims and guiding principles using an interactive participatory process involving farmers and fishers and national and international target institutions with the aim of delivering communication products for the three tools that were relevant and accessible to each participating country in R8363.

2. Project Purpose

The purpose of project R8363 was to support international level institutions to provide more quality benefits to primary stakeholders/ultimate beneficiaries through the enhanced uptake and promotion of the three process tools developed from the DFID-NRSP project R6759 (Integration of Aquaculture into the Farming Systems of the Eastern Plateau of India) and DFID-NRSP Project R8100 (Investigating Improved Policy on Aquaculture Service Provision to Poor People) for the delivery of improved rural services.

This was achieved through synergistic and overlapping horizontal (geographical and quantitative) and vertical (institutional) communication processes (Table 2). The Communication Plan targets were primarily Nepal and Sri Lanka. However, through the STREAM network a mechanism for sharing with seven Asia-Pacific countries was provided. The process involved the drafting and sharing of Better-Practice Guidelines, or BPGs (aimed at practitioners), and Policy Briefs, or PBs (aimed at policy shapers and makers), developed in local languages so that uptake of the process tools could influence development initiatives and support farmers and fishers. It was expected that these would be shared with government initiatives in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Figure 1: A Comparison between STREAM Stakeholders and DFID-NRSP Stakeholder Domains

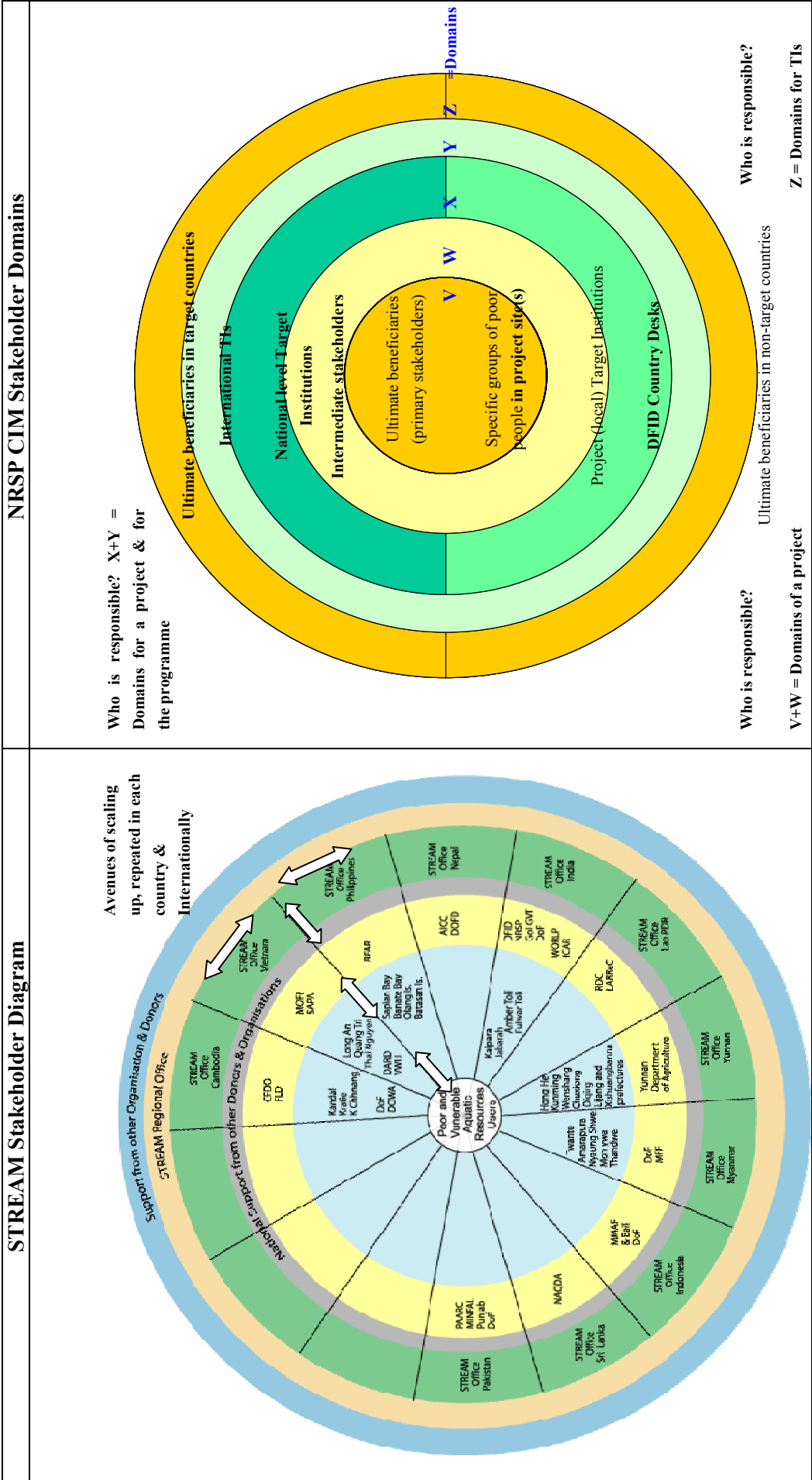




Table 2 Expected uptake of R8363 based on NRSF’s Conceptual Impact Model

		Geographical spread 											
Uptake 	CHM Domains	Stakeholders	Action	Step ⁴	NRSP Target countries			RNRRS Countries			Non-Target countries		
	Sub-regional organization (Domain Y)	STREAM Regional Office	Partnership Agreements with stakeholders including collaborating and target institutions	A	India	Sri Lanka	Nepal	Cam	Viet	Lao	Phil	Indonesia	
Domain Y	STREAM partners	Research product	B	GVT ICAR DOF WORLP JTLD	DFAR NAQDA	DOFD AICC	DOF CFDO	MOFI SAPA	DLF	BFAR	DGA		
	STREAM Communications Hubs with ITI ⁵ partners	Development of appropriate research based products through adaptation/ packaging	C	Under R8334	BPGs in Tamil and Singhalese	BPGs in Tamil and Singhalese	BPGs in Khmer	BPGs in Vietnamese	BPGs in Lao	BPGs in Tagalog	BPGs in Bahasa		
	ITI partners	Promotion of technology	D	Net-meetings, online discussion fora, developing Policy Briefs and Better-Practice Guidelines									
		Adoption of products by target institutions	E	Sub-regional multi-lingual workshop; publish products									
		Application of products	F	To be monitored and evaluated									
Domain Z	Ultimate beneficiaries in other target and non-target countries	Behavioral change	G										
		Developmental impact	H										

⁴ DFID A-H scale of research uptake

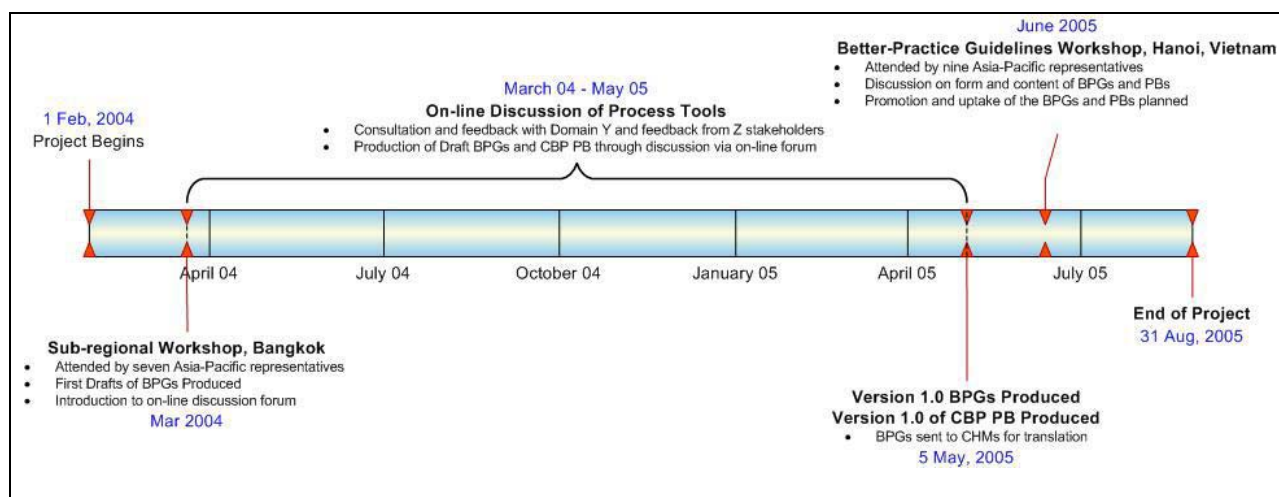
⁵ International level target institutions

3. Project Design

The three process tools promoted here were originally developed by DFID-NRSP-funded Research Projects R6759 and R8100 working with farmers and fishers in the Eastern India plateau region. This project follows demand from the NACA Governing Council and associated line agencies, and includes stakeholders across Asia-Pacific.

A time-line of Project R8363 is given in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Timeline of Project R8363 Illustrating Key Events and Objectives



In March 2004 a sub-regional multilingual workshop to share the three process tools with STREAM Communications Hub Managers from seven Asia-Pacific countries (Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) was the first project activity (Bulcock and Haylor, 2004 – Annex F1). The workshop also developed draft Better-Practice Guidelines (BPGs) for each tool (Appendix II).

Thereafter, an international Discussion Forum was used for developing and sharing BPGs for each of the tools. The use of the Discussion Forum among line agencies in Asia-Pacific was first proposed at the NACA Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (NACA, 2003b) by government delegations. In response, NACA had developed a capacity for on-line discussion at www.enaca.org to assist colleagues in sharing knowledge more effectively. The site design is based around a Content Management System, which not only lets others enter information but also automatically takes care of formatting. The STREAM Initiative established an on-line Discussion Forum specifically for project R8363 to share information and comments regarding BPGs with government and NGO stakeholders and aquatic resources users and to discuss their form and content with all STREAM countries at <http://www.enaca.org/modules/newbb/>. Each participating Communications Hub Manager promoted the Discussion Forum and where feasible elicited inputs from farmers and fishers, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and federations of SHGs along with national level institutions, in effect using the Communications Hubs and the forum facility to attempt to bridge the divide between remote communities and those with access to the internet.

The first drafts of the three process tools produced by the sub-regional workshop were posted in the STREAM Virtual Library <http://www.streaminitiative.org/Library/bpg/index.html> and later in conjunction with project R8334 the Policy Brief of the Consensus-Building Process was posted at <http://www.streaminitiative.org/Library/PolicyBrief/index.html> with links provided from the Discussion Forum where viewers could comment on them. Comments regarding the drafts were also elicited in regular Net-meetings amongst CHMs. Simultaneously CHMs printed hard copies of the

drafts and discussed with farmers and fishers, eliciting feedback and posting it on the Discussion Forum.

Following periodic reviews of the comments, the drafts were adapted and re-posted on the website. Through this participatory process sequential drafts of the BPGs and PBs were developed until consensus was reached on the form and content of the documents and these were then designated as Version 1.0, (Appendix II). These were then fine tuned by eleven CHMs, conveying the meaning of the document rather than conducting a literal word-to-word translation and allowing them to take on a more country-specific style as appropriate (Copley, Haylor, and Savage 2005a, 2005b, 2005c).

Following a request by the Vietnam Ministry of Fisheries in Hanoi and the newly established National Aquaculture and Fisheries Extension Centre (NAFEC) to co-host a workshop to share the approach and consider utility of the outputs, a second regional workshop was held from 17-18 June, 2005. This workshop was attended by STREAM National Coordinators and Communications Hub Managers from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, and STREAM Regional Office colleagues based in Thailand and Australia. Participants reviewed Version 1.0 of the BPGs and PBs produced in twelve languages (Bahasa Indonesia, Bengali, English, Hindi, Ilonggo, Khmer, Myanmar, Nepali, Oriya, Sinhala, Urdu and Vietnamese) as well as other BPGs and PBs produced in association with DFID-AFGRP, (Morales, J and Amilhat, E, 2005a, 2005b), DFID-NRSP R8334, (Ansary, and Mukherjee, 2005, Bahari and Mukherjee, 2005, Haylor, 2005), FAO (Copley, Haylor and Savage, 2005d, Haylor, 2005b), DFID-FMSP (Lorenzen, 2005) and WORLP (Copley, Haylor, Mukherjee, Savage, and Tripathi, 2005). Participants reported the use and planned use of these tools in each national context.

4. Outputs

4.1. Introduction to Outputs

R8363 has four planned outputs: (1) raising awareness of the process tools with STREAM partner countries and line agencies, (2) conducting an on-line multi-stakeholder discussion about the process tools, (3) providing multi-lingual context specific guidance on design and promotion of the communication products for each tool, and (4) assessing progress of uptake promotion. Each output is considered in relation to the objective, key research findings, achievements, outcomes and any specific insights and learning that were revealed.

4.2 Output 1: Key national level stakeholders from non-project countries engage with research products of R6759 and R8100, as they relate to the use of water bodies for livelihood enterprise

4.2.1. Objective

The objective of output 1 was to enable national-level stakeholders to engage with the process tools: Consensus Building Process, Information Access Survey and encouraging and supporting Self-Help Groups, each of which are research products developed by DFID-NRSP and to relate them to national aquatic resources management and rural development contexts and promote their uptake.

4.2.2. Findings

Two new genres of publication were conceived by national level stakeholders at the workshop: BPGs and PBs and early drafts of these developed by the workshop are reproduced in Appendix II.

The design of the BPGs and PBs by a sub-regional network of colleagues from different linguistic and cultural contexts required time to reach agreement on the form and contents, and the identification of uptake pathways.

The IAS Better Practice Guideline post-dates a number of actual surveys that have already been conducted using the tool, e.g. in Eastern India (Felsing, Haylor, Lawrence and Norris, 2000), Cambodia (Mee, Haylor, Vincent and Savage, 2003), Western Visayas, the Philippines (Felsing, Gonzales and Pador, 2003) and Vietnam (Felsing and Nguyen, 2004). Those involved in the surveys were able to offer advice on the production of the BPG. There is evidence that the BPG encouraged the Asian Development Bank to use the tool during its work in Cambodia in 2005.

Box 1: Proposed Contents of Better-Practice Guidelines

1. Introduction

- Definition (what are BPGs?)
- Why “better” rather than “best”?
- Why are they needed (goal, purpose)?
- Who are they aimed at?

2. Context (Where and When)

- Background, to be tool-specific
- Where and when would you use this tool (criteria for its application, guiding principles)?

3. The Process (How)

- Phases of initial engagements (groundwork) and preparation; application, M&E and feedback.
- Steps, can be considered sub-section of the phases outlined above and include:
 1. Strategy, design and tool development.
 2. Consultation.
 3. Planning of implementing and application, and
 4. Monitoring & Evaluation and fine tuning.

4. Examples

- Impacts
- Success Stories

5. Recipients experiences of using the guidelines

- Appeal for feedback from recipients to share their opinions on the tools and suggestions for improvement. To be used to redraft the guidelines.

4.2.3. Achievements

In March 2004 communications stakeholders from seven Asia-Pacific countries (Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) came together for a workshop to identify suitable ways to share and promote the use of three process tools developed by previous DFID-NRSP projects (see Bulcock and Haylor 2004).

It was agreed that BPGs and PBs would be short, written in plain English and relevant to the country in which they were to be used. Better-Practice Guidelines were characterized as “procedures to improve ways of working” for service providers and implementers (e.g., community organizers; extension workers; information, education and communications officers; development organizations such as NGOs and GOs; educators, academics and researchers; media services; commercial and business sectors; and accreditation services). The use of ‘better’ rather than ‘best’ was agreed upon as it reflected that the guidelines would be continually improved (Appendix I). Policy Briefs, characterized as “succinct direction for busy professionals” are written for policy shapers and policy makers (e.g., politicians, policy administrators, policy advisors and consultants, donor agencies, and planners).

The form and contents proposed by the workshop are given in Box 1.

4.2.4. Outcomes

Better-Practice Guidelines for three process tools as well as Policy Briefs on Consensus Building and the Livelihoods Approaches are now available in twelve languages.

As a result of the process outlined in the project design and initiated at the March 2004 workshop, seven STREAM CHMs, who understood and recognized the potential of the three process tools within their own countries, assisted with the production of the first drafts of the BPGs (Appendix II). Following discussion on the web-based Discussion Forum (Output 2) and the BPG workshop, there is now broad acceptance of the BPG and PB genres by national level institutions, extension workers and farmers and fishers of each NACA-STREAM member country as well as acceptance of the importance of the three process tools. This is demonstrated by multilingual forms of the three process tools (Annex B1) (Output 3), the expanding BPG portfolio, and farmers-authored BPGs (Output 3).

4.2.5. Insight and Learning

Although it took time to agree on and design new genres of publication colleagues understood the tools quickly and could articulate their potential use within their own countries. This investment of time was necessary to reach consensus, especially when working among nine countries and cultural and linguistic contexts.

It is difficult to provide concise guidance that can be easily translated and is understood across cultures and language groups. The use of plain language text, illustrated with photos, drawings and cartoons, and associated with information about the origin of the publication and where to obtain more copies or guidance on other topics in Better-Practice Guidelines - is the outcome of numerous meetings and face-to-face as well as web-based discussions and several workshops. There is not always a narrowly defined audience for BPGs and this complicates the expression of ideas succinctly and requires technical and communications specialist working together. Large numbers of images are required and it can take considerable time to accumulate the required photos and drawings.

The IAS Better Practice Guideline post-dates a number of actual surveys that have already been conducted using the tool, e.g. in Eastern India (Felsing, Haylor, Lawrence and Norris, 2000), Cambodia (Mee, Haylor, Vincent and Savage, 2003), Western Visayas, the Philippines (Felsing, Gonzales and Pador, 2003) and Vietnam (Felsing and Nguyen, 2004). Those involved in the surveys were able to offer advice on the production of the BPG. There is evidence that the BPG encouraged the Asian Development Bank to use the tool during its work in Cambodia in 2005.

Policy Briefs have a very specific audience and as such are simpler to write. The discipline of summarizing the briefing into one sentence, one panel and then two pages respectively helps to establish the most important points to share with busy policy-oriented professionals. The sections highlighting further reading are valuable especially to those who have work delegated to them by policy makers who are the first recipients of the Policy Briefs.

4.3. Output 2: Potential utility of the process tools developed by R6759 and R8100 further progressed through international on-line Discussion Fora attended by governmental and non-governmental, research and academic staff, partners and collaborators, farmer representatives and hosted by NACA-STREAM.

4.3.1. Objective

The objective was to use an on-line Discussion Forum to consider and share the utility of the process tools. During the NACA Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (NACA TAC 2003, Bali), the concept of an international on-line Discussion Forum was proposed to enable the sharing of process tools and a discussion of their utility among ARM line agencies in Asia-Pacific. One objective of output 2 therefore was to test this approach to international discussion; a second objective was to assess the potential utility of the three process tools in question for further promotion by NACA and the STREAM Initiative.

4.3.2. Findings

The use of the on-line Discussion Forum (see <http://www.enaca.org/modules/newbb/>) provides an opportunity for public debate, which is cost-effective and does not need to take place in real time (an important consideration when spanning large numbers of time zones across Asia-Pacific). Effective consultation between farmers and fishers, line agencies, the STREAM Regional Office, STREAM Communications Hubs, and intermediate stakeholders was achieved.

Websites which use a Content Management System (as in the case of NACA) are increasingly popular amongst those who design and manage web content, as they are simple to set up and can be almost self-managing amongst sophisticated user groups. However, even for digitally literate colleagues the operating platform available (XOOPS) proved somewhat obscure to users less familiar with the software who reported difficulties in understanding the forum and in contributing to it. The frequency of discussion was greater via e-mail and Net-meetings compared to the Discussion Forum. Currently, the need to register forum participants (in order to monitor and manage content) is a barrier to joining the discussion. Those with no access to the internet required the assistance of STREAM Communications Hubs, acting as an intermediary, and posting stakeholder feedback on the Discussion Forum. In response to initial comments on the BPG documents posted on the forum, a process of development was initiated (Figure 3).

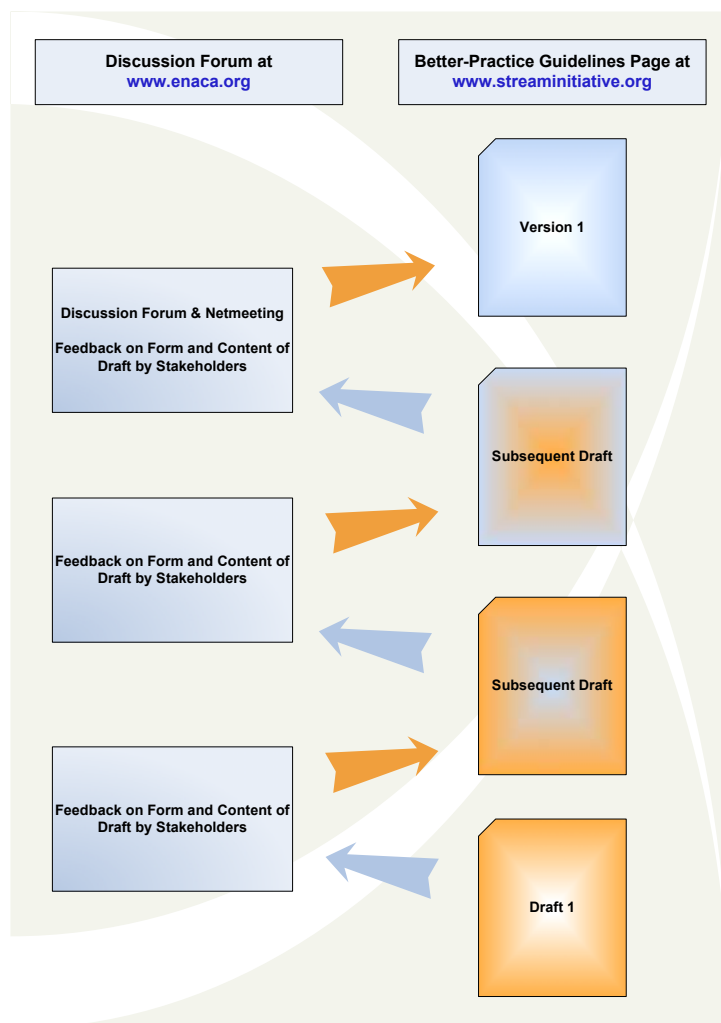


Figure 3: The Development of Better-Practice Guidelines via an On-line Discussion Forum

Documents were made less text heavy and livelier through the use of color, images including context specific photographs and cartoons. They evolved to become more informal and consensus was reached on their form and content (see Appendix II) (Copley, Haylor, and Savage 2005a, 2005b, 2005c).

A process of participatory development involving many countries at low cost was achieved. In some instances CHMs were able to bridge the digital divide by adding stakeholder inputs to the Discussion Forum following field visits (Box 2).

Members of the forum noticed that each BPG had a generic first page, outlining to readers what a BPG was. It was then decided that this first page should be removed and produced as a stand-alone document entitled “What are Better-Practice Guidelines?” (Haylor G 2005c) (see Annex B2) to accompany the distribution of BPGs. Later an introduction to Policy Briefs entitled “What are Policy Briefs?” was also produced (Haylor 2005d) (see Annex D3). These documents addressed the questions of forum members regarding the form and content of BPGs and PBs.

Box 2: Feedback from ARM Institutions in the Philippines.

“The contents are perfect as they are, i.e., topic headings are phrased in a friendly way, texts are concise, in simple English and easy to understand. The use of a watermark picture as a background looks perfect.”

“They are now getting the hang of the innovative way STREAM presents and shares information and knowledge. Like these guides, the things written there may already be familiar to them but the way STREAM packages them, they sure look interesting aside from being useful.”

but later a note of caution was added

“Pictures make the pages alive and enhance the ‘look’ of the pages and encourage audiences to read and not just browse through them. However, too many images look crowded and the overall effect of the page is too ‘heavy’. One stakeholder with an IEC background suggested that perhaps we could do away with the watermark picture on the background and make the pictures on the upper portion smaller than the ones placed at the bottom of the page.”

Experience and expertise of NGOs and local government staff (including from the Philippines) in producing and using extension materials was of particular benefit. Through discussion using web-based communications tools, the style and contents of the BPGs for the three process tools became more focused. What began in India could be applied elsewhere, reaching consensus on guidelines applicable to a wider audience in Asia-Pacific.

The Use of Color

Initially the use of extensive coloring raised another issue which was eventually addressed in a STREAM Net-meeting that of colors and their impact on product cost. The more color used the more expensive BPGs became to print. Naturally black and white was cheaper but this was ruled out. A compromise was found one where colors were streamlined, reducing the cost of printing without losing their appeal. Subsequent discussions with local printers revealed that for the BPGs four colors would be a cost-effective yet attractive compromise; as a result the BPGs were revised and improved.

4.3.3. Achievements

Through the Discussion Forum, Net-meetings, e-mail exchanges face-to-face discussions and the field work of CHMs in communities and linking this with Discussion Fora, four or five versions of each BPG were produced, resulting eventually in the agreed Version 1.0. (Appendix II). These three *final* documents were then distributed to CHMs for interpretive translation and brought together in all their local language and cultural contexts at the BPG Workshop in Hanoi.

Intermediate/secondary stakeholders in the participating countries reported that the BPGs are both a product suitable for immediate use and a launch-pad from which to generate other media products (covering the same information) to suit the circumstances of a range of different stakeholders.

Farmer-authored BPGs

After seeing BPGs two farmers and farmers leaders (*Jankars*) in India, suggested additional titles for BPGs and agreed to assist in writing them, aiming to distribute these in conjunction with other STREAM Projects such as R8334 and the WORLP through the expanding One-stop Aqua Shop (OAS) network in eastern India. Box 3 highlights comments from Kuddus Ansary who later co-authored a BPG on OAS. This was an unexpected but welcome development and it became apparent there was a demand for information on other topics, particularly of a more technical nature, including those identifying quality seed and forming a One-Stop Aqua Shop.

Box 3 Feedback from a farmer leader in India

From the India Communications Hub: *“Thanks everybody for your valuable comments on the BPG. I have discussed with Mr. Kuddus Ansary, a farmer leader of Kaipara Village, West Bengal, regarding the BPG. He likes the cover page as he found himself everywhere. What he suggests to me is that “will it be possible to highlight or link the success of One-stop Aqua Shop in the BPG” as it is the outcome of the CBP or we can say a long activity.”*

From the Regional Office: *“An excellent idea from Kuddus. We are hoping to expand our collection of BPGs (at the Regional Conference we talked of seven new ones). The One-stop Aqua Shop (OAS) would be a good topic for a BPG, which Kuddus might like to help us with. Perhaps based on the four-page designs you have seen so far you might continue discussion with Kuddus on this with a view to drawing up an OAS BPG for sharing further.”*

In another instance, as well as asking for guidelines on how to start a One-stop Aqua Shop, the farmers of Kaipara Village in West Bengal asked for a separate section in the BPG where there would be a step-by-step guide outlining how to start aquaculture activities at the village level (general aquaculture guidelines). Again it was becoming increasingly apparent that the format and concept of Better-Practice Guidelines were understood but there was also a demand for more technically focused documents relating to particular aquaculture activities.

Subsequently 2 BPGs have been produced in conjunction with the DFID-NRSP project R8334 entitled “The One-Stop Aqua Shop” (Ansary, and Mukherjee, 2005) and “Buying Fish Seed” (Bahari and Mukherjee, 2005), Annex C3) and 19 in conjunction with WORLP (Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project) (Annex C4) on technical issues associated with small-scale aquaculture. As another post on the forum stated, “what is beginning to become apparent is that we are trialing and developing a process for forming Better-Practice Guidelines, one that seems to work so far and one which we can use to develop further BPGs.”

4.3.4. Outcomes

R8363 was proposed to NRSP in response to demand expressed by the NACA Governing Council, the also the NACA Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, as well as other demand expressed by WORLD FISH and MRC. Through the participatory nature of the project, especially with the inclusion of farmers and fishers and those that work directly with them, further demand was identified this time originating from the actual users and intended beneficiaries of the documents. This both reinforced and gave practicality to the senior level demand by the NACA Governing Council. BPGs in particular were found to be an acceptable genre for responding to these demands and this stimulated ideas for further BPG titles and led to the farmer/fisher preparation of BPGs. The BPG portfolio has expanded from the original three to currently over twenty-five.

4.3.5. Insight and Learnings

Crossing the Digital Divide: Problem Areas, Advantages and Constraints of Using the Discussion Forum

The use of the on-line Discussion Forum was complemented by STREAM CHMs attempt to elicit inputs from farmers and fishers groups, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and federations of SHGs, bridging the divide between remote communities and the internet. As such, lessons learnt from our experience in using this medium can be used in other situations.

A common and valid criticism of the use of digital technology in development is that most poor people do not have access to the internet or even to a computer. To include people in communities without internet access in this process their opinions have to be elicited by intermediaries. Having an

existing regional network of Communications Hub Managers allowed STREAM to achieve this quickly and at low cost.

Technical Issues

After the workshop early drafts were further developed using web-based tools, including open-access software designed for managing discussions amongst colleagues in locations remote from each other, called a Discussion Forum (which uses XOOPS software). This was set up on the NACA website, which uses a complementary Content Management System. Because this software has not proved intuitive and easily accessible to STREAM Initiative stakeholders in the region it is not used as the basis for STREAM internet interactions. To facilitate its use in this project Net-meetings (professionally facilitated text-based chat room interactions) piloted over recent years by STREAM were used to help colleagues negotiate around the Discussion Forum. In addition to the original participants, through these mechanisms communications specialists from other Asia-Pacific countries (Myanmar and Pakistan) also began to engage with the tools. Stakeholders not connected to the internet, including ultimate beneficiaries in each country were also linked to the Discussion Forum where possible by STREAM CHMs eliciting feedback in villages which they then posted on the web.

Language Specialists attempted to write BPGs and PBs in simple, plain English statements. Through a process of drafting and posting on the STREAM website Virtual Library, collecting and reviewing comments posted on the NACA website Discussion Forum, discussion during Net-meetings, and redrafting, documents became less text-heavy and more inviting through the use of photographs and cartoons, and were fine-tuned to the communications needs of target audiences. Through four or five iterations of each BPG consensus was eventually reached on the form and content of a Version 1.0 for each of the three process tools (Copley, Haylor, and Savage, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c)

A Discussion Forum, in its current stage of development, remains inaccessible to many STREAM stakeholders. The layers and modes of navigation within Content Management Software preclude its use by colleagues with slow connection speeds and for those who are unfamiliar with digital literacy.

The Discussion Forum has subsequently been successfully used as a part of a DFID-FMSP funded project entitled “Fisheries Enhancement Decision Support Tool and Toolkit Development” with STREAM support. Here participants with a stronger technological background had much less difficulty registering, posting comments and interacting using the forum.

Overall the use of this facility could be said to have great potential, if used by the right groups with the right technological background in the right context especially if we consider that originally on-line messenger services and even e mail were unfamiliar to many but are now a standard way of working.

R8363 is an uptake promotion project, but one which intended from the start to elicit the opinions of a range of stakeholders, all having their own needs and priorities. Instigating discussion with these groups provided opportunities that were not planned at the outset. The suggestion of farmer-authored BPGs is one such example, demonstrating how stakeholders recognized the value of the BPG format and began suggesting their own titles and offering assistance in writing them.

4.4. Output 3: Policy Briefs and Better-Practice Guidelines developed for research products by multilingual specialists and Communication Hub Managers; these are then fine-tuned to specific national communication contexts and promoted widely within each country

4.4.1. Objective

The objective was to produce and promote relevant, multi-lingual context-specific guidance tools for stakeholders. Once produced, these tools were then to be promoted using communication techniques appropriate for their intended audiences.

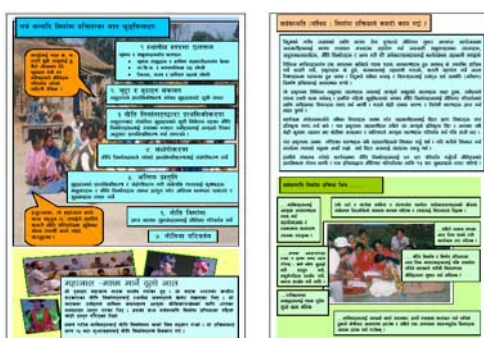
4.4.2. Findings

Consensus on the suitability of the form and content of the process tools was reached among many countries (Output 2) (Appendix I). The rapid production of these tools in multilingual formats (Annex B1) reinforced this and demonstrated how the time invested in reaching this consensus had been worthwhile.

The Better-Practice Guidelines and Policy Briefs were successful as new genres for sharing research products. Their use of simple language and imagery combined with a highly targeted message has led to these new genres being embraced and adapted in other projects and contexts. They have been translated into twelve languages, and are rapidly being adopted by those working with farmers and fishers (Annex C3). They are also being produced for and by other projects and organizations DFID-AFGRP (Morales, J and Amilhat, E. 2005a, 2005b), (Annexes C1, E1), FAO-TCP (Copley, Haylor, and Savage, 2005d), DFID-NRSP R8334 (Annex C2), (Ansary, and Mukherjee, 2005; Bahari and Mukherjee, 2005), (Annex C3), DFID-FMSP (Lorenzen 2005), Annex E4 and WORLP, (Annex C4). Additionally, through BPGs and PBs and facilitation by the CHMs, the three process tools are being adopted by regional and local governments and NGOs and incorporated into their ways of working (Output 4).

STREAM is only at the beginning of this process, with some country-specific versions now beginning to emerge. For example, the Nepali version of the CBP (Box 4), (Annex B1) has adopted a different layout with new pictures. These changes resulted after consultation with local stakeholders, where a discussion of appropriate color and imagery took place. This process will likely be repeated within other countries and the BPGs will continue to evolve over time.

Box 4: Nepali Version of the Consensus-Building Process Better-Practice Guideline



Here the Nepalese Communications Hub Manager after consultation with stakeholders and as a result of their own experience in communications within Nepal, substituted local photographs to convey a more country specific communications context.

Considerations Regarding the Production of Multilingual Publications

At the BPG workshop in June 2005 in Hanoi (Copley, Haylor, Ponglumyai and Savage, 2005) (Annex F2) discussions regarding the production of multilingual publications took pace. Three key points were identified. These were a consideration of audience and cultural sensitivities, technical issues concerned with the translation process and the use of suitable software packages and fonts.

Audience

There were many alternate views of the design and content of publications. Speaking from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, participants suggested many changes to pictures, text and general appearance to make publications more appropriate for the audiences they envisaged. Through discussion at the workshop, it was revealed that people generally responded well to the attractive content and format of the BPGs, but wished to replace as many written instructions as possible by diagrams and graphics.

There was also considerable discussion about the potential for causing offense inadvertently. It was agreed that care should be taken with the use of images and photographs as they may convey different meanings in different countries or be subject to different interpretations which can make users uncomfortable and hence unwilling to use the tools. One such example is given in Box 5.

Box 5: Example of an Image Found to Have Different Cultural Interpretations



In this example some users expressed discomfort with the proximity of the man's foot in the background to the heads of the women. In Buddhist and Muslim cultures it is impolite or rude to show the soles of your feet or shoes or touch anything with your foot. It is also impolite to touch people's heads. Therefore the combination of a foot near a head seen here should be avoided.

Translation

It is not an inconsiderable task to simplify technical guidance. Even after numerous redrafts the language used in the BPGs was considered to be too complicated for easy translation by the Hanoi workshop. It was again suggested that perhaps fewer words and more pictures be used and that language be made simpler in future versions.

All participants acknowledged the importance of conveying the meaning of the text when adapting the documents to their national context rather than providing a literal interpretation or translation. Adaptation of Version 1.0 had begun with some countries such as Indonesia finding it necessary to add explanations appropriate to their national communications context.

Another issue raised was the amount of time taken to adequately complete a translation. Accurate costing for time taken in editing, translating and reformatting publications is important.

Dedicated Software and Formatting Issues

The use of graphical tools such as dialogue boxes, speech bubbles and photos was acknowledged to be a good way of conveying information and making documents more inviting. Despite this, these graphical tools were the source of much frustration as they caused formatting problems and resolving them consumed large amounts of time.

It was suggested that formats be simplified and more easily controllable by authors. Options considered included fixing certain aspects of the documents by using a template, using locked-position text-boxes that can also grow or shrink with different language fonts, and adopting desk-top publishing software.

Word processing software it is not specifically designed for publishing. In a multilingual, multicultural environment where formatting and document structures are being constantly adjusted, word processing software does not provide adequate control to authors.

Additionally, as eleven languages were being dealt with, the issue of fonts was also raised. Some fonts were reported as difficult to use in Microsoft Word and some took up more physical space than others within the document. The Urdu, Oriya and Hindi translations had to be imported into the BPG Word document as pictures. This took more time, led to larger file sizes and created formatting complications. Where Unicode fonts are available these were found to solve this problem for example when dealing with the Bengali font.

4.4.3. Achievements

Despite these issues, 12 language versions of the following documents were produced in time for the BPG Workshop in Hanoi:

- Three Better Practice Guidelines: *Consensus-Building Process, Information Access Surveys and Self-Help Groups* (Copley, Haylor, and Savage, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) (Appendix II).
- Two Policy Briefs: *Building Consensus* (Haylor, 2005) for R8334 (Annex D1) and for *FAO TCP Livelihoods Approaches* (Haylor, 2005b) (Annex E2), and
- Two introductory documents: *What are Better-Practice Guidelines?* (Haylor, 2005c), (Annex B4) and *What are Policy Briefs?* (Haylor, 2005d), (Annex D3).

The BPG and PB genres have significant take-up in other projects, with the following publications currently in production:

- *Local Resource Users' Groups? What are they?* For DFID-AFGRP managed by the University of Stirling, UK, (Morales, J and Amilhat, E, 2005a) (Annex C1).
- *Livelihoods Approaches* for FAO TCP (Annex C2).
- *Buying Fish Seed* for DFID-NRSP R8334 co-authored by an Indian farmers leader (and long-term colleague of STREAM) and the STREAM Indian CHM (Ansary and Mukherjee, 2005).
- *The One-stop Aqua Shop*, for DFID-NRSP R8334 co-authored by a fish farmer from Jharkhand (and long-term colleague of STREAM) and the STREAM Indian CHM (Bahari and Mukherjee, 2005) (Annex C3).
- 19 titles for the Government of Orissa – DFID, Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project (WORLP)
 - What is Fish Culture?
 - Pond Construction: selection of suitable sites for ponds.
 - Pond Construction: design and layout of ponds.
 - Broodstock Collection, Transport and Maintenance.
 - Spawn Production in Hapas.

- Spawn Production in Hatcheries.
- Spawn Production of Common Carp.
- Fry Production: nursing spawn.
- Fast Fingerling Production: nursing spawn in ponds.
- Fingerling Production: nursing fry in ponds.
- Fingerling Production: nursing spawn and fry in pens.
- Advanced Fingerling Production: seasonal ponds.
- Advanced Fingerling Production: perennial ponds.
- Packing and Transport of Spawn, Fry and Fingerlings.
- Marketable Fish Production: seasonal ponds.
- Marketable Fish Production: perennial ponds.
- Recognizing and Managing Common Fish Diseases.
- Marketing and Hygiene.
- One-stop Aqua Shops.

(see Annex C4).

- Self-recruiting species from farmer managed aquatic systems - are they important to the livelihoods of rural communities? A Policy Brief produced in English and Vietnamese for DFID-AFGRP Project R7917 managed by the University of Stirling, UK (Morales, J and Amilhat, E, 2005b) (Annex E1).
- A Policy Brief produced for DFID-FMSP R8469 Development and Management of Aquaculture-based Fisheries Enhancements
- The DANIDA FSPS project has also requested support to develop Policy Briefs and Better-Practice Guidelines in Vietnam; and
- Advocacy, Changing Attitudes, Cross-learning, Policy Development, Stakeholder Relations and Story-telling are being produced by working groups within STREAM.

All Better-Practice Guidelines are available to view in the STREAM Virtual Library on the STREAM website at <http://www.streaminitiative.org/Library/bpg/index.html> while Policy Briefs can be viewed at <http://www.streaminitiative.org/Library/PolicyBrief/index.html>. The STREAM website averages approximately 5,000 downloads per month (Appendix III). Although only uploaded in July 2005, translated BPGs are already proving popular. More than 21,000 R8363 project related publications have been distributed and more than 60% of these are in local languages.

4.4.4. Outcomes

The planned delivery and promotion of multilingual products by R8363 is achieved. There is a broad acceptance of the importance of the three process tools (IAS, CBP and SHG). In some instances, the recommended ways of working have already been adopted by STREAM's Communications Hubs and national line agencies (Output 4). There is also a growing recognition by international organizations e.g. FAO, national level partners of STREAM, extension staff and farmers and fishers of the value of BPG and PB genres for sharing information. This is demonstrated by the expansion of the STREAM BPG portfolio including the emergence of farmer-authored BPGs.

4.4.5. Insight and Learning

Fine-tuning BPGs and PBs to specific national communication contexts involves more than just translating Version 1.0 into a local language. STREAM CHMs are aquatic or natural resources management professional with experience in development issues and use of its terminology. The CHM network is necessary to convey the meaning of the text, whilst also taking into account the needs of their national audience.

Box 6 highlights some practical issues around publishing BPGs raised by the CHMs.

Box 6 Practical Issues in Managing the Production of Multilingual Documents**Use Unicode Fonts or PDF Format**

Unicode fonts – is where font software is embedded in the document, which can be used in all modern software packages. Multiple languages and character sets can be read automatically on any machine. If Unicode fonts are not available then presenting files as portable document files (PDF) is advised. The PDF format is intended mainly for viewing documents and supports the embedding of fonts in a document.

The software to read PDF files called Adobe Reader is available for free at www.adobe.com. However, to create PDF files, full Adobe Acrobat software is required, which has to be purchased.

Keep File Sizes Small

It is advisable to keep the file size small, below 1 MG. This facilitates sending via email and makes them more easily downloadable from a website. An efficient file format (such as PDF) or the compression of the document and especially images within it will cut file size substantially. There is a trade-off between picture file size and quality. Printed publications are more sensitive to quality than for those destined for digital distribution.

Software selection

A practical lesson learnt in managing the participatory production of multilingual documents was the importance of selecting of the right publishing software at the outset. The project used proprietary word processing software (Microsoft Word) because a wide-range of stakeholders were involved with the development process and were already familiar with the package. However, with increasing levels of complexity and reorganization of text and images, and widespread sharing of stages of production the software proved cumbersome and difficult to edit. Desktop publishing software would better facilitate participatory production of BPG and PBs in spite of the learning curve to be traversed initially for everyone to use it.

4.5. Output 4: Assessing progress towards livelihood improvement of target groups of the poor

4.5.1. Objective

Although this was a short project, output four aimed not only to understand any early impacts but also begin to share mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation with GO and NGO stakeholders.

4.5.2. Findings

The Monitoring and Evaluation System

In conjunction with the STREAM Regional Office the project developed a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of expected outcomes and impacts through the use of indicators associated with a Logical Framework combined with a participatory mechanism for capturing unanticipated changes through the use of Significant Change Stories. The system provides a framework for monitoring changes in activities and stakeholders on a quarterly basis and for capturing change in the behavior of institutions (especially in service provision), defined in the system as outcomes, and in farmers and fishers' lives, defined as impacts (www.streaminitiative.org/MonitoringandEvaluation.html).

As shown in Box 7 below activities, stakeholders and outcomes/impacts are all collected, reported and reviewed and provide the input into a learning process. This is an ongoing process where the application of learning is the ultimate goal. There are a series of detailed steps underpinning this system that are carried out regularly, but which are too detailed for this discussion.

Box 7 STREAM Monitoring and Evaluation Process

Monitoring Categories	A. Information Recording	B. Information Reporting	C. Evaluation
1. Activities	1A Activity Recording	1B Activity Reporting	1C Activity Review
2. Stakeholders	2A Stakeholder Recording	2B Stakeholder Reporting	2C Stakeholder Review
3. Outcomes & Impacts	3A Change Recording	3B Change Reporting	3C Change Review
4. Learning	4A Recording Learning	4B Reporting Learning	4C Applying Learning

Significant Change Stories

The majority of the STREAM Initiative's networks are people-based. The most crucial of these networks are relationships with poor people throughout Asia-Pacific. The basis of these relationships is that they are adaptable, responsive and very personal. These qualities are essential if we are to learn and communicate successfully, but they make for a substantially more complex flow of knowledge.

Knowledge sharing amongst heterogeneous stakeholders calls for highly relevant messages from multiple sources in a variety of media. The medium used must be appropriate to its purpose and be in tune with the needs and opportunities of colleagues who chose to use it. To further improve the effectiveness of these messages it is important to understand the processes by which they are communicated.

Significant Change Stories is a participatory monitoring approach that can deal with the unexpected. It draws meaning from actual events, rather than being based on indicators. The method involves systematically collecting stories which are then analyzed, discussed and verified. The stories capture changes in the lives of beneficiaries, and changes observed by those working with them. The method also helps to identify why change happens.

During the development of the Self-Help Group BPG we engaged in many discussions with people who had experience in establishing Self-Help Groups or were interested in establishing them. By listening to their experiences we were able to learn how to adapt the techniques and messages we used to promote the benefits of Self-Help Groups. Kuddus Ansary, one of the major organizers of Self-Help Groups in Kaipara, has experienced a dramatic shift in attitudes towards such groups. He has been able to communicate these lessons and changing attitudes through recounting first hand experiences, an excerpt of which is shown below.

“I remember that in an open meeting one of the political leaders not only criticized my work with Self-Help Groups but also instructed the Panchayat head not to sign any of my applications. At that time I thought whether there was anything wrong with my work; am I cheating people? But still I have continued my work with will and self-confidence. And now I am surprised to see that the same political leader is giving speeches on group formation. Favorable conditions are coming and every organization (GOs and NGOs) is talking about group formation.”

– an outcome reported by Kuddus Ansary, Kaipara in “Will and self confidence shows the way of victory”

The development of the three process tools during this project has only recently been completed. It is anticipated that over time as these tools are taken up they will positively affect the manner in which policy dialogue is conducted and in the longer term will result in improved livelihoods in poor and vulnerable communities. However at this stage the expected outcomes of the project are only potential. To assess whether they will eventuate the monitoring and evaluation process outlined above will be employed and regularly reported against. Thus over the longer term the STREAM Initiative will be able to track the impacts emerging from R8363.

4.5.3. Achievements

Over the approximately 15 months that the better practice guidelines and policy briefs were developed a wide range of stakeholders were closely involved and consulted, a variety of communication techniques and media were employed and a host of new understanding and learning was established. The focus on an incremental, inclusive and reflective process has resulted in new tools that have an already established, receptive audience who understand the context and purpose of these tools. Even more significantly, by adopting such a collaborative approach a diverse number of participants have gained new skills in participatory development. These skills can be applied in future to developing other tools and can be used in other contexts.

The project recognized from the outset that improved communication and dialogue among development stakeholders is important in facilitating the scaling-up of livelihoods approaches. To this end a series of workshops and project activities were held facilitating interaction between

communications staff, key GO and NGO representatives and farming and fishing communities. Major achievements resulting from these activities are as follows:

Key stakeholders and national communications staff understand the three process tools and can articulate their utility in their own country contexts

At the BPG Workshop Hanoi, June 2005, representatives from eleven countries reviewed the Better-Practice Guidelines and Policy Briefs and the processes used to generate them. They also established ways that they could support service providers in their respective countries to better use the knowledge that this project had generated in ways that can benefit poor people. The expertise that had been developed by all of these communications experts during the project was evident, particularly with the strategies that had been developed to employ these tools in their respective environments (Copley, Haylor, Ponglumyai and Savage, 2005) (Annex F2).

Each country represented discussed how they had used the Better-Practice Guidelines and Policy Briefs and how they intended to use them in the future (Table 3). Line agencies in four Asia-Pacific countries already use the research products and nine have specific plans to make use of the Better-Practice Guidelines and Policy Briefs genres.

All possible stakeholders are invited to share a vision of how to progress the process tools into formal policy channels.

At the outset of this project an on-line Discussion Forum was considered to be an appropriate mechanism for engaging the greatest number of stakeholders to share their vision of how to advance R6759 and R8100's recommendations into formal policy channels. The use of this Discussion Forum was complemented by STREAM CHMs attempts to elicit inputs from farmers and fishers groups, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and federations of SHGs, bridging the divide between remote communities and the internet.

A common and valid criticism of the use of digital technology in development is that most poor people do not have access to the internet or even to a computer. To include them in this process their opinions have to be elicited by intermediaries. In the case of R8363, these were STREAM Communications Hub Managers, working within an existing institutional structure and with identified stakeholders. Having an existing regional network of institutions allowed STREAM to utilize existing relationships rather than create new ones. This is preferable, especially for a relatively short project, as it allows information flow between line agencies and farmers to be achieved quickly and at low cost.

As time progressed this particular medium proved to not be as effective as had been anticipated. Much of the restriction was purely technical, many people did not have access to the physical infrastructure to enable them to access the Internet either frequently or reliably enough. However, this factor alone did not account for participants not engaging with this medium. Even those with access to the Internet and appropriate familiarity with other electronic media did not extensively use the Discussion Forum. Most project participants reverted to email, phone or face-to-face conversation to maintain dialogue.

Multi-lingual Policy Briefs and Better-practice Guidelines produced specific to each country

12 language and country specific versions of the following documents were produced by the conclusion of the project:

- Three Better Practice Guidelines: *Information Access Surveys*, *Self-Help Groups* and *Consensus-Building Process* (Copley, Haylor, and Savage, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) (Annex B3).

- Two Policy Briefs: *Building Consensus* (Haylor, 2005) for R8334 (Annex D1) and for FAO TCP *Livelihoods Approaches* (Haylor, 2005b) (Annex E2) , and
- Two introductory documents: *What are Better-Practice Guidelines?* (Haylor, 2005c), (Annex B4) and *What are Policy Briefs?* (Haylor, 2005d) (Annex D3).

Significant change assessed in at least four countries by intermediate stakeholders

The development of communication materials for the process tools during this project has only recently been completed. It is anticipated that over time as these tools are taken up they will positively affect the manner in which policy dialogue is conducted and in the longer term will result in improved livelihoods for poor and vulnerable communities. However at this stage the expected outcomes of the project are only potential. To assess whether they eventuate, and to understand how this occurs, the monitoring and evaluation process outlined above will be employed and regularly reported against. Thus over the longer term the STREAM Initiative will be able to track the impacts emerging from R8363.

4.5.4. Outcomes

In the short term our communications experts in the STREAM Initiative have focused their efforts on establishing these tools in their local contexts with some notable successes.

In India the development of these process tools have coincided with the evolution of local institutions called One-stop Aqua Shops, set up close to farmers and fishers which support aquaculture development. Currently nine OASs are sharing BPGs in Oriya, Hindi and Bengali in the states of Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. In close conjunction with the Indian Council for Agricultural Research, Central Institute for Freshwater Aquaculture and the Government Fisheries Departments in Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal STREAM has launched a One-stop Aqua Shop Information Service (OASIS) to supply some of the communications materials required by OASs.

In the Philippines the Asian Development Bank's Fisheries Resources Management Program has used the Information Access Survey technique to help shape its extension efforts using the BPG for this purpose.

The Better-Practice Guidelines developed by R8363 have been particularly well taken up in Indonesia. On 11-15 July 2005, the National Coordinator of STREAM Indonesia, Mr Abduh, was invited to a Fresh Water Technical Implementing Units (TIUs) Meeting in Manado, North Sulawesi entitled "Dissemination and Implementation of Fresh Water Culture Technology to Community". It was attended by representatives of TIUs from Jambi, Sukabumi, South Kalimantan and North Sulawesi; farmers; people from IPB (Bogor Agriculture Institute), Gajamada University in Yogyakarta (Central Java) and Samratulangi University (North Sulawesi); and representatives from Fisheries Services in North Sulawesi, BRKP (Bureau of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Research).

All delegates belonged to groups who work closely with communities, especially farmers, and therefore STREAM Indonesia were invited to promote and distribute the Bahasa versions of the STREAM BPGs to delegates to build awareness of the process tools and the BPG concept with a wider audience. The government of Indonesia had such an interest in sharing the tools that they had funded the printing of the documents for the meeting. STREAM Indonesia spent 2-3 hours introducing the three process tools and the concept of BPGs to delegates. Indonesia's National STREAM Coordinator Mr Abduh reported that there was great interest among participants regarding the BPGs with the SHG tool generating particular interest.

Table 3 Use of the Three Process Tools Identified at the Better-Practice Guidelines Workshop in Hanoi

Country	Have the three tools been used?	Can your national system make use of the BPGs and PBs?
Cambodia	The IAS already used in conjunction with Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project (TSEMP) The BPGs will bring more guidance to modify and find a better way to build consensus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TSEMP in close cooperation with the CFDO used the IAS to conduct surveys on how awareness-raising activities reach communities in 5 provinces surrounding the Great Lake of Cambodia namely Battambang, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Thom, Pursat and Siem Reap. The outcomes were presented during the Mid Term Review and identified as: Radio 57 %, Television 59 %, Newspaper 22%, Community Meeting 95 %, NGO Brochure 42 % and Posters 87 % The BPGs will be shared when we see a use for them and with the CBNRM Learning Institute and other NGOs in Cambodia and also the ADB who are looking at guidelines and developing new projects. The CBP is new to Cambodia. There is a great demand for BPGs from government and NGOs. We will share these through the OAS network and OASIS.
India	We have used the CBP and SHG tools in previous NRSP projects, and also the IAS to some extent.	
Indonesia	Not yet used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will use BPGs in sites highlighted in the STREAM CSP where stakeholder meetings are held and there is a need for self-help group building. We have already received requests for this. Regarding the IAS, we will work with the Technical Implementing Unit of DGA and will use the CBP with SHGs. BPGs will be discussed and promoted at the Fresh Water Technical Implementing Units (TIUs) meeting in Manado, North Sulawesi, entitled “Dissemination and Implementation of Fresh Water Culture Technology to Community”. The SHG BPG will be used to assist fisher group formation in Banggai and Banyuwangi.
Myanmar	Not yet used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will consult BPGs with the director-general and agree a framework as to how to take their use forward. The CBP can be used in the development of rural and coastal areas. With respect to SHGs, we are keen to learn from India and we are investigating using SHGs in economic contexts and have already shared these with an economics forum.
Nepal	DOFD Extension Officers and INGOs have already used the SHG BPG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will also provide these to ministry policy-makers. The CBP PB and BPGs can help them with their policy change agenda. District levels will use them in conflict management.
Pakistan	Not yet used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STREAM Pakistan will distribute to its stakeholder network. The CBP, IAS and SHG are used by NGOs. They will be used in CBO formation by IUCN, WWF and the Aga Khan Rural Development Support Program.
Philippines	We have already used the IAS in conjunction with FRMP under IEC activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IAS has been used by extension staff within BFAR to influence their ways of working, e.g., in Sapien Bay and Banate Bay. They have also been promoted to Bay Management Councils and NGOs. With respect to the CBP, it can be used with the Fisheries Resource Management Division (FRMD) for regulating conflicts on resource use policy implications, and also with LGU councils and NGOs.
Sri Lanka	Not yet used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We intend to use these within NAQDA and will discuss their use with the ADB fisheries project (the largest in Sri Lanka).
Vietnam	We have used the CBP and SHG tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Vietnam, the IAS was used two years ago and findings are being used by FAO and Institute for Fisheries Economics and Planning (IFEP) in setting up the Fisheries Information Network. The first Self-Help Group was established in Ninh Binh Province, Vietnam, under supervision by the Youth Union of Yen Mo District. The Youth Union leaders plan to form at least five more SHGs in the district by end of 2005 (Box 6). Over the next two years the tools will be used in several development projects, then assessed and adapted before being launched by the Ministry of Fisheries National Extension Centre.

In another development, the STREAM Communications Hub Manager in Indonesia, Aniza Suspita, had been investigating the trade in marine ornamentals between Indonesia and Europe and especially how it does, or could better, support sustainable livelihoods among people who are poor (through an EU-funded EC-PREP project). People involved in focus group discussions on that project in Banggai and Banyuwangi, have approached the Livelihood Teams to help them start forming Fishers Groups. STREAM has agreed to help with this and is making available the BPG on SHGs.

The Yen Mo Story (Box 8) by Nguyen Song Ha, STREAM Vietnam Communications Hub Manager describes how learning from India is taking place within Vietnam, where the Yen Mo District Youth Union (DYU) is encouraging aquaculture-based SHGs in the district using the BPG.

Box 8 The Yen Mo Story: The First Self-Help Group in Ninh Binh Province, Vietnam

Initial Interest

STREAM Vietnam shared the BPG on Self-Help Groups with Mr Cung (First Secretary) and Mr Viet (Second Secretary) of the Yen Mo District Youth Union (DYU), Ninh Binh Province. The DYU selected Mr Minh (a young farmer at Trinh Nu village) as the main contact person.



Mr Minh uses the Self-Help Group BPG

First Group Meeting

On 16 July 2005, people met at Mr Minh's house to discuss the potential benefits of group formation. In Vietnam, they learnt, group formation would enable each member to borrow ten to fifteen million dong (higher than they would be able to as individuals). They felt they should start small, as many families within the village were unfamiliar with aquaculture. At the end of the meeting, the members agreed to choose "Trinh Nu 1" as the group name. This means "The Maiden" and is the name of the river flowing through the village. A key issue they decided was a limited amount of technical knowledge and of special interest was rice-fish culture. STREAM Vietnam sent the group information on rice-fish farming and cage culture.

Follow-up Actions

DYU leaders have a plan to encourage many more Aquaculture SHGs over the next five-years.

Trinh Nu 1 Member Profile

The members of Trinh Nu 1 farm an area of around 17 ha of paddy with key figures: Vu Khac Phuc, Nguyen Dinh Minh, Nguyen Van Quyet and Nguyen Dinh Diu sharing their aquaculture experience.

4.5.5. Insight and Learning

Understanding Change

Understanding why change does or does not occur; why change is prioritized differently by stakeholder groups and how we can learn lessons is the key of the assessing, understanding and learning from change.

There are two types of changes that were assessed in this project, outcomes and impacts. These are defined as follows:

- Outcome: a positive change in the behavior of an individual and/or the practice of an organization
- Impact: a positive change in the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable aquatic resource users

During the project these distinctions between types of change have proven to be an invaluable tool in enabling people to articulate the incremental process by which change occurs. It is easier to accept that not all actions we take will positively benefit the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable communities (impacts) when we acknowledge that by changing individual and institutional behavior (outcomes) we are establishing an environment that is a often a necessary precursor to these more substantive

changes. Acknowledging success at varying levels is crucial to establishing enough momentum to create ongoing change.

The Power of Telling Stories

We have come to believe that the importance of stories rests less on their being told, than on their being listened to. When we listen to other people's stories, we are demonstrating that we value what they have to say. When we act on what people are telling us, we are showing that we believe they know what is best for them. This requires us, however, to re-imagine how we view ourselves in our relationships with the people with whom we work.

We have listened to and documented a variety of story types. People have told us about their successes and failures, changes that have happened, past events, whether a particular aquaculture technology works or not. Stories are being used to understand how people live, the significant changes that take place in their lives, the effect that conflict has on individuals and communities, and how to enable people to realize their right to be heard.

By spending time with people, by valuing their lives and stories, we are able to document with them their perspectives of the realities of their lives, as in the following excerpts from a story written by STREAM Consultant Dr Satyendra Tripathi, told to him by Ms Thanda Mahato, of Jabarrah Village in West Bengal, India.

“We discussed the changes in her livelihood. During our last visit she had a bank deposit of Rs 40,000 but now she was left with only Rs 5,000 owing to various expenses which she had to incur during this period.

She was herself involved in selling fish as in the past, purchasing it from Purulia or Lalpur markets and then selling it from door-to-door in villages around Jabarrah, which fetches her anything from Rs 30-100 per day. However, this work is limited to winter months only as fish preserved in ice fetches a low price and gets spoiled by noon if ice is not used. She sometimes suffers a loss too.

Her husband, Mr Kalipada Mahato, goes for harvesting fish but has to hire a net that costs him Rs 200 which he pays after selling the catch (30% of the fish caught) himself or through his wife, Thanda.

She has recently constructed a house on the land that belongs to her husband, spending Rs 70,000 for which she had to get the bricks for Rs 21,000, pay labor charges for five persons and two masons with food and also contribute two laborers from the family. A neem tree that she had was cut to be used for beams and other purposes.

An unexpected problem faced by her was the premature birth of her grandson who weighed only 1.9 kg. She had to run to Purulia and keep her daughter-in-law in the hospital and spend Rs 12,000 in just one month. To meet these expenses, she sold 14 goats at Rs 500 each, about 1,400 kg of rice which she had collected in lieu of the wages for grazing the village cattle for one year, 200 pairs of cow dung cakes for Rs 1,000, and birds for Rs 300, besides using another Rs 1,000 received from the salaries of her two sons.

Of her four sons and one daughter, the eldest son and her daughter have been married. Her daughter has been widowed and has a school-going boy, who now stays with her. A total of 11 members stay in her house. Her youngest son and her grandson (daughter's son) go to school. She borrowed Rs 1,500 from a school teacher to put the two boys in school.

Thanda works hard from daybreak to dusk and has been such a great support to her family. It was her planning and savings that helped her save the life of her grandson and build a house for them all.”

Reflection on Uptake Promotion

Generally the desired outcome of uptake promotion projects is for research to be made accessible and used by the intended audience. This is often attempted by developing various media products and promoting appropriate methods for dissemination. However, no matter how well this outcome is pursued, uptake relies on the capacity, opportunity and willingness of intended users to take advantage of what is available. For this allowing sufficient time is the key. Whilst the uptake promotion objectives of each output may be realistic within the timeframe of the project, stakeholders have their own pace for handling change. There are various factors that can disrupt uptake promotion work and the ability to respond flexibly is crucial. During the delivery of R8363 new relationships had to be frequently cultivated due to senior staff changes in key institutions and government elections to ensure that momentum in institutional learning was not lost.

The uptake promotion work in R8363 required constant attention to building and rebuilding relationships and nurturing stakeholders towards action, in accordance with the policy priorities of the preceding project, R8100. There is also a need for flexibility in order to maintain a capacity for responsiveness to promotional opportunities as they arise. Uptake promotion work has to accommodate the day-to-day realities of the project’s target communication stakeholders – both the institutions and the individuals within them. This will vary from a low key support role to taking an initiative for action when an opportunity arises.

Three early impacts from the project are highlighted below: the uptake and promotion of: a system for monitoring and evaluation, of the process tools themselves, and of the new genres of publications developed by the project.

Uptake and promotion of the M and E system: Stakeholder understanding of the impact of their efforts can be achieved through certain forms of monitoring and evaluation. The STREAM Initiative over several years has been developing a system for monitoring and evaluation which involves measuring Objectively Verifiable Indicators at the output to purpose level in the STREAM Logframe, to capture expected changes, as well as the collection and assessment of Significant Change Stories, a method first developed by Rick Davies in association with an NGO in Bangladesh (Davies, 1998) to also capture unanticipated changes. This was developed as an explanatory matrix base on PowerPoint and posted on the web (see <http://www.streaminitiative.org/MonitoringandEvaluation.html>) and on CDs in an HTML format for sharing. It has also been adapted to different contexts for sharing with GO and NGO stakeholders for use in their work

Following a request from the Government of Orissa, in association with a UK-based consultant, NR International, it was demonstrated and discussed with the Orissa Watersheds Development Mission. It has now been adopted by the Government of Orissa, Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project for monitoring their progress, not only in aquaculture, but across all disciplines over the coming five years.

Uptake and promotion of the process tools: The process tools themselves have been taken up by stakeholders within the project as well as by others working in the countries where the project operated, including: the ADB Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project in Cambodia, which used the IAS tool to survey how awareness-raising activities reach communities in 5 provinces (Battambang, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Thom, Pursat and Siem Reap) surrounding the Great Lake; the FAO and the Institute for Fisheries Economics and Planning (IFEP), which used the IAS tool in setting up the Fisheries Information Network in Vietnam, and the Youth Union of Yen Mo District in Ninh Binh Province, which used the SHG tool, also in Vietnam. In the Philippines the CBP tool was used by the Fisheries Resources Management Program of ADB in Sapijan Bay and Banate

Bay in a policy development manual and, at the request of government, all the tools have also been promoted to Bay Management Councils and NGOs in Western Visayas. The Government of Pakistan and FAO used the CBP tool for preparation of a policy development manual to support efforts to change Pakistan's national fisheries policy.

Uptake and promotion of the new publications genres: R8363 committed itself from the start to an inclusive and participatory method of producing communications tools; one that encompassed stakeholders from across Asia-Pacific and combined the use of electronic and face-to-face discussion. This was a different approach to more familiar methods where the design, pre-testing and then production of manuals and guidance is all completed by project staff, usually towards the end of a project. The management of such an inclusive process needs careful planning and the existence (or development of) a team of language specialists who are also technically qualified development professionals, such as the network of STREAM Communications Hub Managers. The participatory design efforts created two new genres of publications for which explanatory briefs have been published. BPGs and PBs have been quite widely copied even within the life of the project. Already, over twenty-five Better-Practice Guidelines and 4 Policy Briefs have been published, relating process and technical tools. BPGs have been used by farmers, DFID research programs (AFGRP and FMSP) as well as FAO and the DFID- Government of Orissa livelihoods project (WORLP).

The impacts of these communications mechanisms will be further assessed through continued monitoring and evaluation. Project R8363 was concerned with participatory development of the form and content of extension media which takes time. However, this approach allows the opinions of many different types of stakeholders to shape appropriate materials for a variety of country contexts and also promotes uptake of the guidance materials produced.

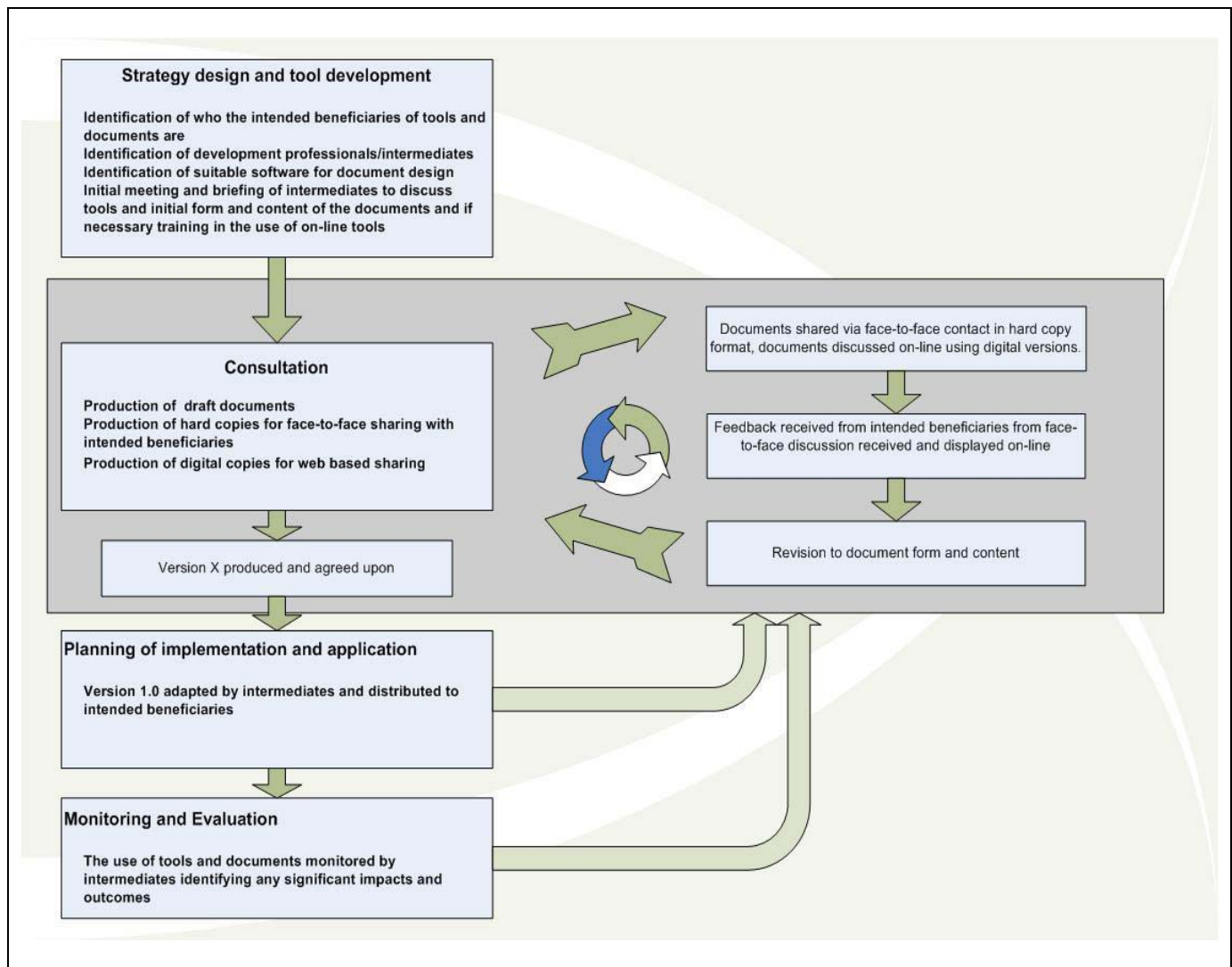
5. Discussion and Conclusion

R8363 committed itself to an inclusive and participatory method of producing communications tools one that encompassed stakeholders from across Asia-Pacific and combined the use of electronic and face-to-face discussion. (Figure 4) This is different to more familiar methods which design, pre-test and then produce manuals and guidance but crucially do this at the end of project. As a result of project R8363 STREAM gained significant insights into this approach which may be of use to comparable initiatives

Firstly, a key lesson for R8363 is that when working on an uptake promotion project for a relatively short project, an enabling institutional structure or network is required. The network was key in introducing the tools to stakeholders and relaying their opinions back to the regional Office and a two-way flow of information from line agencies to farmers and vice versa was achieved. The quality of this network is also crucial. STREAM CHMs are professionals with considerable experience in aquatic or natural resources management and development sectors and therefore are familiar with issues and able to adapt guidelines to suit their national context, critically they can interpret and convey the meaning much more efficiently than a mere translation would ever achieve.

Secondly, Project R8363 was concerned with instigating a participatory and inclusive process of discussion with stakeholders on the process tools and eliciting their opinions regarding their form and content. As a result considerable thought and discussion was given to the development of the actual structure of the documents. This approach allowed the opinions of many different types of stakeholders to be heard on this subject and allowed more appropriate materials to be produced for each country and tool. It should also be stressed that the production of Version 1.0 of the documents is only the beginning and it is expected that CHMs will continue to engage with farmers and fishers and those that work with them receiving further recommendations regarding form and content and hence the tools will continue to adapt to suit national contexts. As a result of this approach later versions of the BPGs and PBs were quickly identified as suitable genres to promote both local farmer knowledge and other research project findings.

Figure 4: Guidance for the Adoption of Participatory and Inclusive Process



This adoption of the genre also presented significant opportunities that were not originally planned at the outset of the project and therefore another key insight of R8363 is that there must be a real focus on the acknowledgment of, and capitalizing upon, unexpected opportunities presented during a project's lifetime. This can lead to additional products being created which not only complement but add value to the planned products.

The combination of digital and face-to-face discussion had additional advantages in that they contributed towards an increased awareness of the documents and maintained that awareness throughout the project. The documents could be said to have undergone a process of "being socialized" throughout their development. Whilst not everyone involved would have comments to make on form and content, a general understanding and anticipation of the documents was created, one that would contribute towards improved uptake once Version 1.0s were released.

More technical issues in managing the production of multilingual documents were revealed. Key to this was the realization that Microsoft Word is definitely not an appropriate publishing medium and great care and thought should be spent at the onset of a project such as R8363 as to what software will be used. Failure to do so can lead to difficulties later in the life of the project many of them concerned with formatting which could have been avoided in the onset. It may be useful to employ a graphical specialist as part of the project or as an initial consultant to try and avoid such issues.

Finally, one of the most important insights into this process, and one that crosses all four of the outputs, is that it can take time to agree on and design a new genre, particularly when working within a framework of nine country and cultural contexts and twelve languages. However, the time invested can be valuable in enabling consensus to be reached, and unexpected and unanticipated change identified. Therefore, when dealing with an uptake project such as R8363, an acceptance of the need to invest time is needed as is a willingness and ability to achieve this.

With respect to the continued use of the BPGs and process tools, continued uptake ultimately depends on the ability and willingness of intended users to use the tools. Output 4 suggests that this is beginning to happen and there are several reasons why their continued use is also thought likely

The overall success and impact of this project depended upon there being a need or demand for the process tools with stakeholders in Asia-Pacific. The demand from the NACA Governing Council and its associated line agencies demonstrated this need, clearly a fact confirmed by the rapid uptake of the process tools across the sub-region. Additionally, the discoveries that farmers were themselves willing to write their own BPGs to share their own local knowledge presented another promising indicator of long-term use with respect to BPGs and maybe even the PB genre.





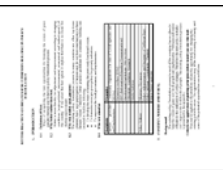



In India, BPGs have also been identified as appropriate for distribution through the expanding network of One-stop Aqua Shops (OAS). The OAS concept is a STREAM-supported activity identified by DFID-NRSP Project R8100 and developed by DFID-NRSP Project R8334. OASs aim to provide a single-point under-one-roof provision of services, including information in local languages, expertise and access to service providers such as banks, hatcheries and feed and fertilizer suppliers. BPGs – as accessible and easy-to-follow sources of information available in local languages – have therefore been identified as potentially fulfilling this information role in an OAS. BPGs will therefore be distributed through the expanding OAS network currently in nine locations in three states of eastern India (Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal). Through STREAM, OASs are now emerging in Vietnam (through the DANIDA-funded ‘Support to Brackish and Marine Water Aquaculture’ (SUMA) project) and Pakistan (through an NGO “Nature Farming Research and Development Foundation” near Gujranwala about 100 km from Lahore and 250km from Islamabad). Additionally, the combination of STREAM activities in the form of OAS implementation and the formation of products in the form of BPGs demonstrates how much synergy can be achieved between projects when working within a regional communications and learning initiative.



As part of the STREAM Communications Matrix, BPGs and PBs will also be distributed via all other STREAM Communications Hubs throughout Asia-Pacific, with outcomes and impacts monitored through the M&E System. It is hoped that this embedding within STREAM will lead to their continued use and adaptation. This combined with the use of a M&E system will enable outcomes and livelihood impacts concerned with the use of these tools and other products of the BPG and PB genre to be readily identified.





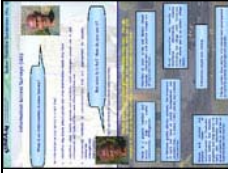
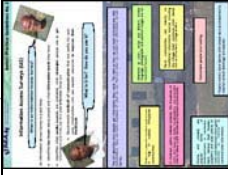
Table 4 STREAM Communications Matrix

Communication Target	Key Messages	Medium															
		Flyers	SJ	SU	BPG	Policy Briefs	S Folder	Posters	CDs	Cards	Press Releases	Articles	Reports	Capability Statement	Website Links	Networking	
Farmers & Fishers	Technical knowledge, ways of working in local languages. Build awareness of services through Comms Hub, OAS and local outlets.	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Local NGOs & Government	Technical knowledge, ways of working in local languages, through Communications Hub. Build awareness of STREAM services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Local Media	Area specific learning related to local context. Technical knowledge, ways of working and local events, projects and activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Banks & Commercial Entities	Technical knowledge and ways of working in local languages, through Communications Hub. Build awareness STREAM services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provincial Government	Technical knowledge, ways of working in local languages, through Comms Hub and Reg Office. Build awareness of services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Government	Build relationships through Reg Office and Comms Hub. Share ways of working. Build awareness of services (highlight themes).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
International Development Agencies	Technical knowledge and ways of working, through Comms Hubs and Reg Office. Build awareness of STREAM services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academia	Technical knowledge & ways of working, through Comms Hub and Reg Office. Focus on multi-lingual network, research and develop	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Industrial, Commercial and Enviro Sectors	Build awareness of STREAM services. Focus on multi-lingual comms network, research and development ethical trade potential	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National and International Media	News items on specific topics, if possible related to national and international situations. Build awareness of STREAM services.	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communications Specialists	Share tech knowledge, ways of working in local languages. Build awareness of services through Comm Hubs, OAS and local outlets.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix I: Time line of Better-Practice Guideline Development

Time	March 2004	April 2004	May 2004	June 2004	July 2004
Key Activities	<p>Regional Workshop, Bangkok held:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders from seven Asia-Pacific identify suitable ways to share and promote three process tools BPG work plan developed 	<p>Communications Hub Managers and trained in the usage of an online discussion forum.</p>	<p>Online discussion forum established for drafting and sharing information about BPGs</p>	<p>First BPG is translated into Bangla.</p>	<p>BPG is circulated amongst farmers of Kaipara for comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaipara suggests developing an OAS BPG and a "Starting Aquaculture BPG"
SHG	 <p>Self Help Groups (Version 0.1)</p>		 <p>Self Help Groups (Version 0.2)</p>	 <p>Self Help Groups (Version 0.3)</p>	 <p>Self Help Groups (Version 0.4)</p>
CBP	 <p>Consensus Building Process (Version 0.1)</p>			 <p>Consensus Building Process (Version 0.2)</p>	
IAS	 <p>Information Access Survey (Version 0.1)</p>			 <p>Information Access Survey (Version 0.2)</p>	

Time	August 2004	September 2004	October 2004	November 2004	December 2004
<p>Key Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A document "What are Better Practice Guidelines" is created to inform about the purpose of BPGs - A BPG on Buying and Selling Fish Seed is written by Mr Raj Bihari in India 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff of BFAR and to NGO stakeholders provided detailed comments - First draft of an OAS (One-Stop Aqua Shop) BPG completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online Discussion Forum ceases to be used. Communication reverts back to email dialogue 		
SHG					
CBP IAS					

Time	January 2004	February 2005	March 2005	April 2005	May 2005	June 2005
Key Activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All three BPGs available on STREAM website 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Version 1.0 agreed upon and produced BPG translated into twelve languages 	Better Practice Guidelines Workshop, Hanoi Vietnam
SHG					 Self Help Groups (Version 1.0)	
CBP	 Consensus Building Process (Version 0.3)		 Consensus Building Process (Version 0.4)		 Consensus Building Process (Version 1.0)	
IAS		 Information Access Survey (Version 0.4)			 Information Access Survey (Version 1.0)	

Appendix II Initial and Version 1.0 of the Better-Practice Guidelines

Better Practice Guidelines for Building Social Capital tool

1. Introduction

Definition of Building Social Capital (BSC):

Building Social Capital is a tool that help develop and enhance the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood objectives, through:

- Networks and connectedness, either vertical (patron/client) or horizontal (between individuals with shared interests) that increase people's trust and ability to work together and expand their access to wider institutions, such as political or civic bodies;
- Membership or more formalized groups which often entails adherence to mutually agreed or commonly accepted rules, norms and sanctions; and
- Relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges that facilitate cooperation, reduce transaction costs and may provide the basis for informal safety nets amongst the poor

Why "better" rather than "best"

- Change in a constant thing in life through the years, new knowledge is acquired, new skills are developed, new attitudes emerge. In development work in particular, what may be relevant at present may longer be relevant in the future. What may be the best way of working and thinking now may longer be the best in the future because new approaches and tools have to be developed and adaptation has to be made to keep pace with dynamic changes
- that happen. Hence, we aim for "better practices" than the "best" to anticipate future emerging changes.
- Multi-disciplinary aspects of development work require us to learn from others, since what we think "the best" in our working sector/field may not fit into broader scenario.
- Everything keeps on changing, we need to harmonize our work with other dimensions of change.

Why it is needed:

- Better Practice Guidelines is needed to improve our ways of working (knowledge, skills, capacity, practices)
- Building Social Capital is needed to influence policy-makers to make policies that support people's livelihoods; Give people stronger voice in advocating policies that directly/indirectly affect them, and in negotiating with more powerful forces.
- Improve people's access to services and safety nets.

Who is it aimed at:

- Extension workers
- Field officers
- Community Organizers
- Village group leaders
- NGOs
- GOs
- Donors

2. Context

a. Background

- Used for rural communities, especially in poor and disadvantaged areas

b. Guiding principles for the application of BSC

- People-focused: Taking into consideration the needs of communities
- Participatory: Socially and culturally acceptable, and involving as many people as possible
- Practical: Easy to implement
- Flexible: Modifiable, depending on circumstances
- Supportive: Outcomes should support communities' interests
- Transparent: same understandings, same information, easy to understand
- Reflective: Receptive and responsive to any feedback

3. The Process (see diagram)

Example of BSC methodology for community level

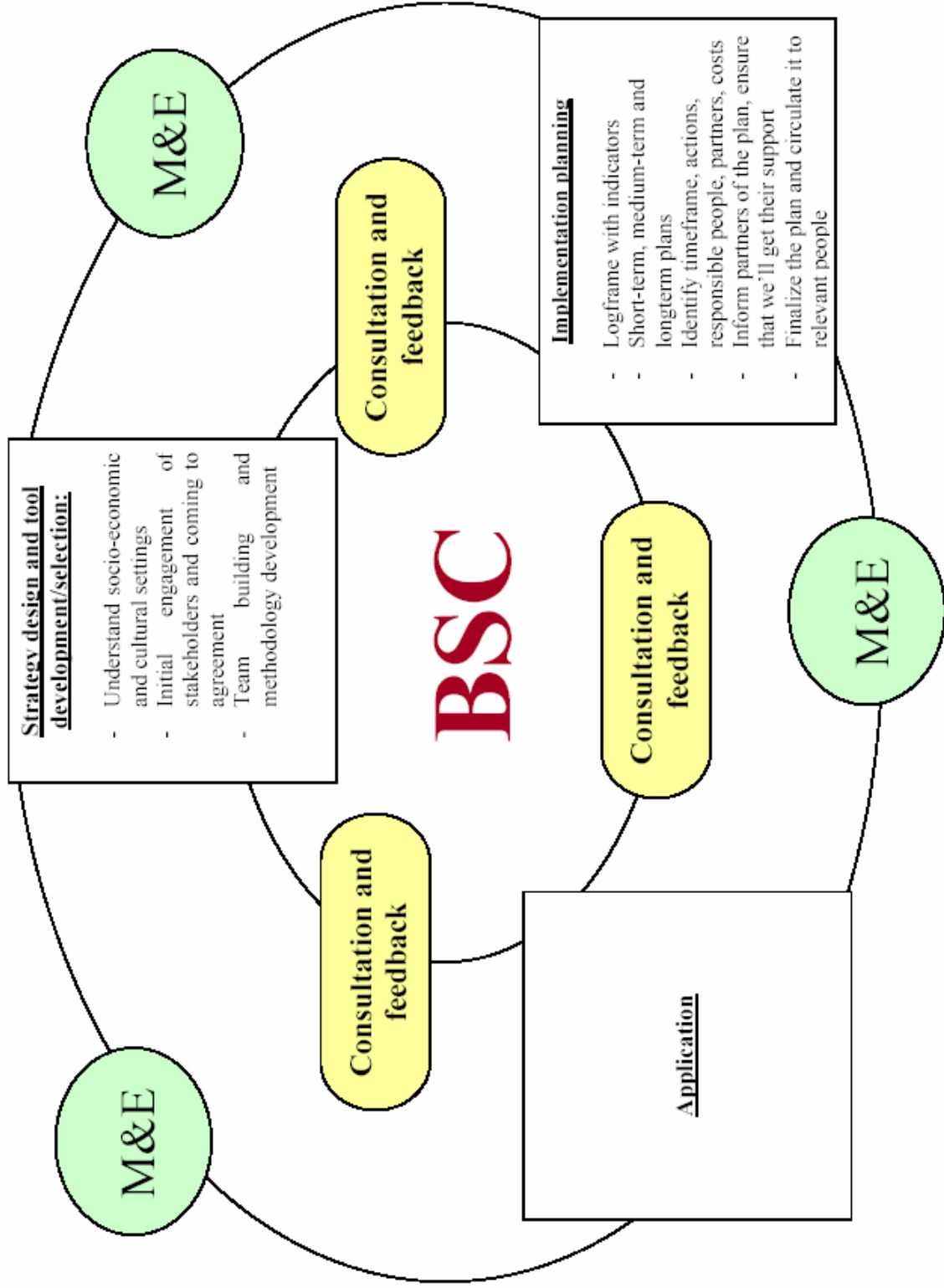
- . Rapport building: Relation and trust building;
- . Identification of key issues and stakeholders
- . Identification of key leaders and core members
- . Group building by and capacity building for communities
- . Group planning of activities
- . Facilitation of community-plan fulfilment

Notes for M&E

- . “Significant change” stories be collected
- . Should be participatory

4. Examples

- Impacts (India)
- Success Stories (India)



Better-Practice Guidelines for Consensus Building in Policy Formulation

1. Introduction

1.1 Definition (What)

Ways of recognizing the best opportunities for listening to the voices of poor people (farmers and fishers) in policy formulation process.

1.2 Why better rather than best.

Better is more flexible for adjustment and improvement according to changing conditions (socio-political, environmental, economical and technological) of the country. If we select the best option it implies that there is no room for further improvement.

1.3 Why it is needed (goal, purpose)

The existing policy formulation process in many countries are often top-down oriented, have poor participation of farmers and do not have mechanisms to hear farmers voices. Therefore better practice guidelines for consensus building are intended to facilitate following

- To develop the ways of hearing the previously less heard voices.
- To formulate more pro-poor policy for poverty reduction.
- To empower the local governance, and implementers.

1.4 Who is it aimed at

Recipients	Examples
Service providers and Implementers	Community Organizers (In case of Local agencies and NGOs)
	Extension workers (GOs)
	IEC (Information Education Communications)
	Development Institutions (NGOs, GOs)
	Educators, Academia, Research
	Media Services
Policy Makers	Ministers, Governors
	Policy Administrators and Secretaries of Different Dept.
	Policy Advisors/Consultants/Planners
	Major Donor Agencies

2. Context (where and when)

Background

The existing policy formulation process in most of the countries has no place to hear the voices of grass root level people and implementer. Politician and senior officials do the realization of policy changes. Therefore the new policy actually can't improve the livelihoods of people. The existing policy formulation process is presented in the appendix.

Criteria for application of guiding principles (when would you use this tool)

This can be applied in the situations where the opportunity for changing the existing policies arises. The opportunities may differ from country to country and some of the potential opportunities are as follows.

- When newly formed government want to make some adjustment in the existing policy.
- When formulating new policy to address some emerging issues
- Revising of existing policies and plans
- Pressure from people to change the existing policies
- Formulation of long term plan (5 year plan to 20 years perspective plan)
- Entering the agreements with donor agencies

3. The Process (How)

- The process includes 7 Steps (See appendix)
 1. Grass root consultation
 - a) Farmers group/village cooperatives meeting
 - b) Village/ Village Development Committee/ Municipality level workshop
 - c) District/ state/provincial level workshop
 2. Compilation of issues/points:
Drafting of issues and priorities identified by community
 3. Priority ranking:
Delivery of compiled issues to policy makers in various levels for priority ranking according to their opinion
 4. Summarizing
Summarizing the priority ranking of policy makers
 5. Final presentation
Present the summarized priority rankings for final discussion of policy makers and farmers
 6. Entering into policy formulation
Converting the identified recommendations in to policies
 7. Changes in policy
Output
- Introducing consensus-building process to existing policy formulation process can be done by different stakeholders. Some of the more potential stakeholders are as follows.
 - Politicians
 - Community leaders/organizers
 - Policy administrators
 - Policy advisors
 - Planners
 - Local agencies (Rural Banks etc)
 - Donor agencies
 - Other outside agencies (e.g. NACA, FAO)

4. Examples

Success Stories

In eastern India (See Appendix 1)

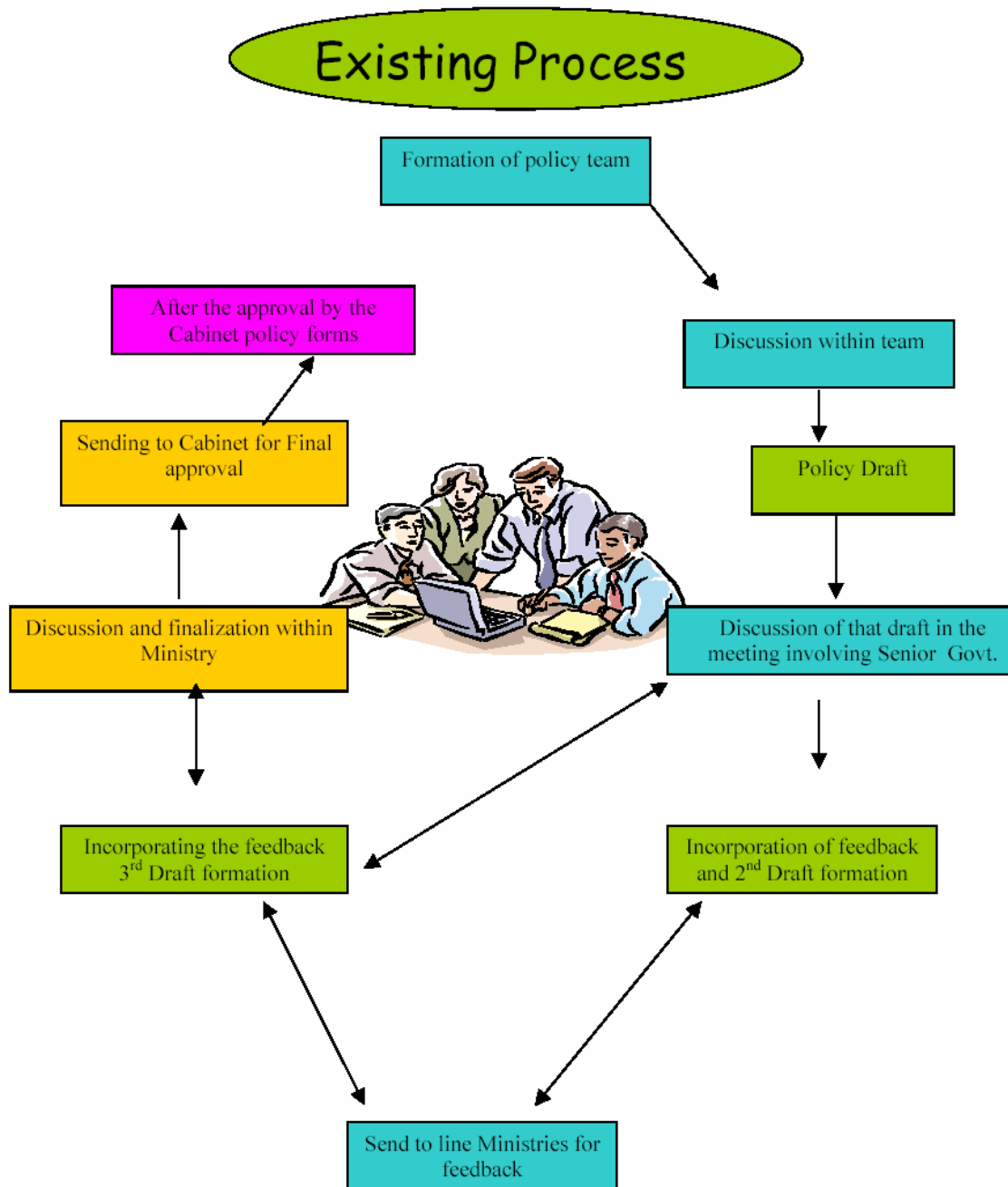
Impacts

Policy Change

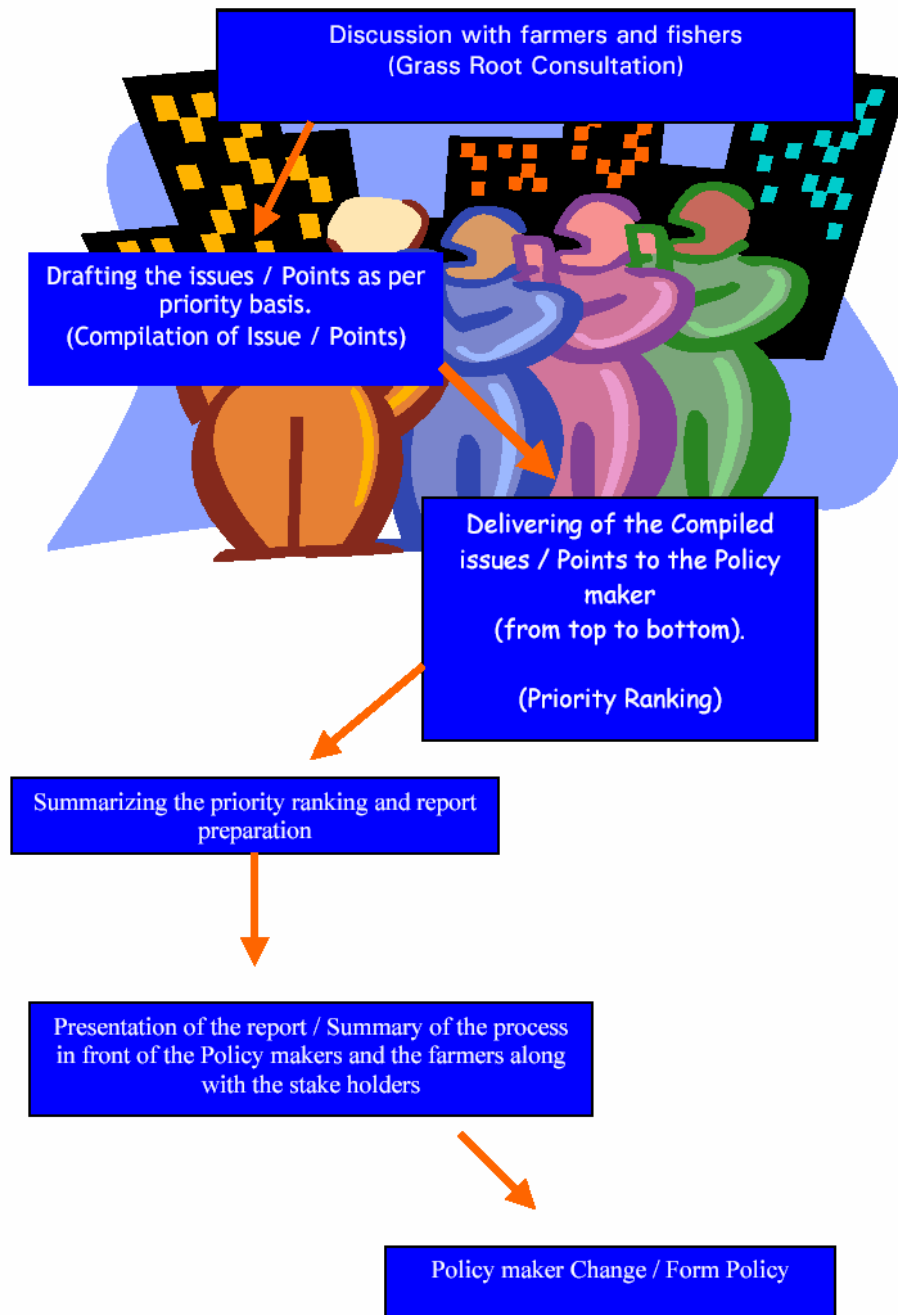
Example: Changing of leasing out period of local water bodies for community groups.

5. Recipients Experiences of Using The Guidelines

In India STREAM initiative along with DFID NRSP runs a project titled; “Investigating Improved Policy on Aquaculture Service Provision to Poor People” from March 2002 to May 2003 and use the CBP tool. In the end 13 recommendations come up from the farmers community was ranked by the policy makers for implementation. Then out of 13 recommendations 2 have already been implemented while others are in pipeline.



CB PROCESS



Better Practice Guidelines for Information Access Survey tool

1. Introduction

Definition:

“Information access survey” (IAS) is a tool that:

- identifies key issues and needs of information
- identifies availability of media sources, strategies and looks into their cost effectiveness
- recommends methods of communications that are appropriate to aquatic resources management stakeholders, focusing in particular on poor rural communities.

Why “better” rather than “best”

- Change in a constant thing in life through the years, new knowledge is acquired, new skills are developed, new attitudes emerge. In development work in particular, what may be relevant at present may longer be relevant in the future. What may be the best way of working and thinking now may longer be the best in the future because new approaches and tools have to be developed and adaptation has to be made to keep pace with dynamic changes that happen. Hence, we aim for “better practices” than the “best” to anticipate future emerging changes.
- Multi-disciplinary aspects of development work require us to learn from others, since what we think “the best” in our working sector/field may not fit into broader scenario.
- Everything keeps on changing, we need to harmonize our work with other dimensions of change.

Why it is needed:

- Better Practice Guidelines is needed to improve our ways of working (knowledge, skills, capacity, practices)
- IAS is needed to provide efficient and effective communications channels between service providers, policy makers and communities, build relations and enable often unheard voices to be heard
- Hence, in the long term, it will help farmers and fishers improve their livelihoods, and in turn, help professional service providers improve their services.

Who is it aimed at:

- Service providers (CO, institutions, IEC workers, researchers and academia, media, accreditation services, extension workers, commercial/business sector, NGOs);
- Policy makers (as users of IAS outcomes)

2. Context

Background

- Actually, the tool is applicable everywhere, but contextually in development work, IAS could be used in poor rural communities
- During planning stage

Guiding principles for the application of IAS

- People-focused: Taking into consideration the needs of target groups
- Participatory: Socially and culturally acceptable, and involving as many people as possible?
- Practical: Recommendations are easy to apply, and cost-effective
- Flexible: Modifiable, depending on circumstances
- Supportive: Outcomes should support service providers' work, in line with national/local strategies and policies
- Transparent: openness
- Reflective: Receptive and responsive to any feedback

3. The Process

(See the diagram)

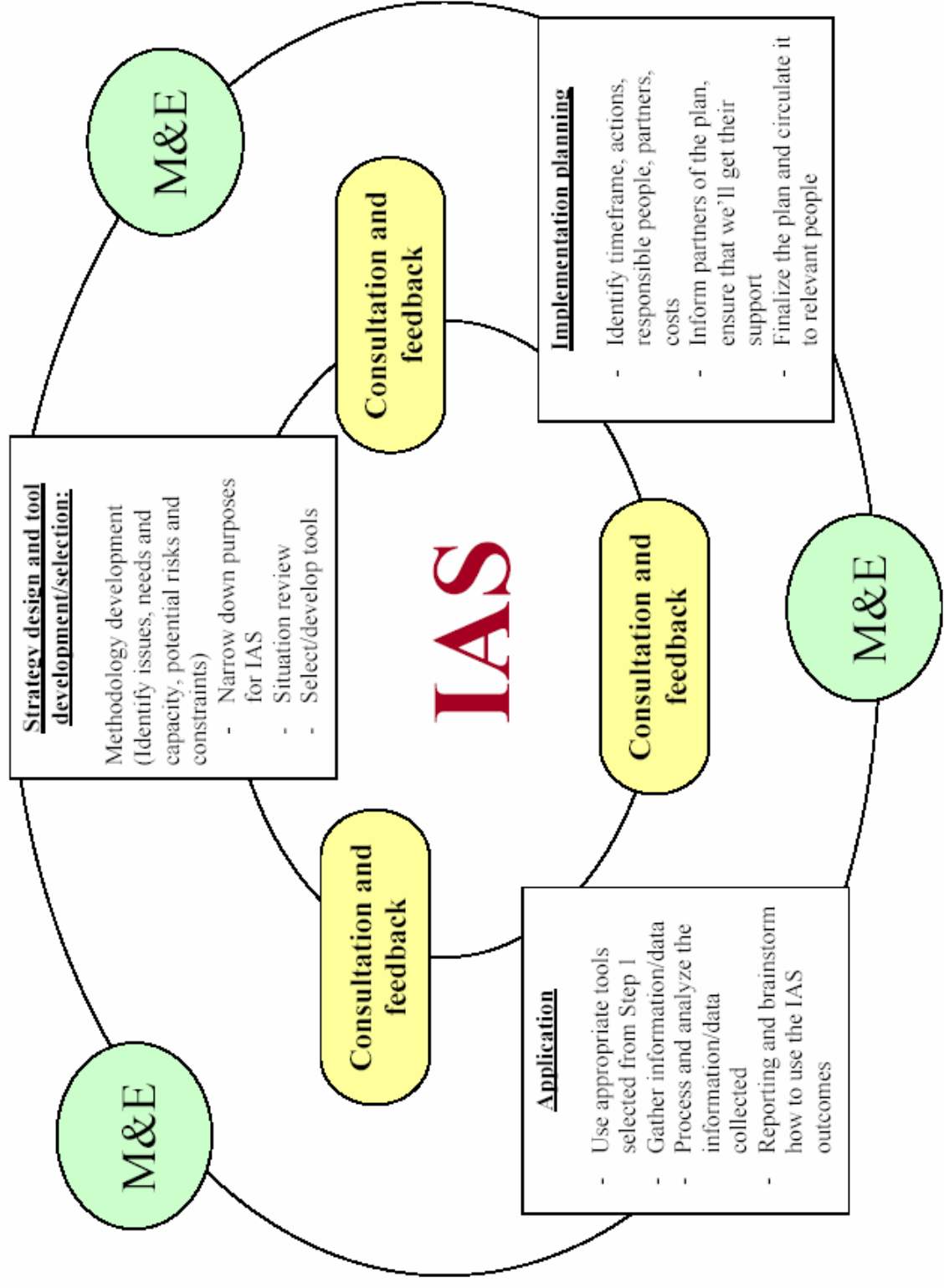
Notes for M& E:

- Answer the question:
 - Have we done this well?
 - What was good/not good? Why?
 - Strategy design?
 - Tools? Combination of tools?
 - IAS outcomes?
 - Uptake?
 - What can be improved? How?
 - Have we achieved the purposes?
 - To what extent does the IAS help our work?
- Send report to concerned people for feedback
- Follow-up actions to fine-tune the IAS tool

4. Examples

- Impacts
- Success Stories

- How IAS was tested in India, Cambodia, Philippines and Vietnam
- How IAS outcomes were used? (Cambodia's story on mass communication of community fisheries management sub-decree)
- Uptake of the tool elsewhere
- Internet sources, hard-copies (key resources)



Self-Help Groups¹

‘Self-Help Groups’ are ...

“... A way to start working that helps to build up the social connections which people find useful in support of their livelihoods objectives”

“... Helping people to agree things and to speak together, giving people a stronger voice in decision-making and in negotiating with more powerful forces”

“Self-Help Groups raising fish in rural West Bengal have been especially successful. They have the highest savings and therefore have tended to receive larger loans.” - *Ajit Banerjee, bank branch manager, Ludhurka, Purulia, West Bengal, India*

“My village is 30 km from town. Earlier there was no place to ask for help but the formation of Self-Help Groups gave people the strength and confidence to ask for and get the support they need.” - *Kuddus Ansary, Jankar (Self-Help Group leader), Kaipara, West Bengal, India*

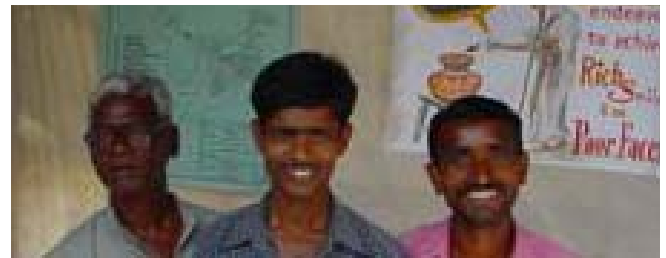
“... A way of increasing the effectiveness of local actions”

“... Providing easier access to micro-credit and other resources and services”

Self-Help Groups are a real way to build social capital. Other actions can include:



Building networks and connectedness to increase the ability of providers and users of services to work together or to strengthen links among individuals with shared interests, and increase their chances to be part of wider institutions, such as political or people’s organizations.



Supporting membership of more formalized groups which often involves everyone agreeing and accepting a set of rules and ways of doing things and also agreeing what to do if people don’t follow the rules.



Building relationships of trust (so-called ‘give-and-take’), exchanging information, working on things together, cooperating and reducing the effort involved in doing something which may provide the basis for informal safety nets among people (helping each other). This can be people and also groups helping each other and may eventually take the form of federations of Self-Help Groups.

A federation of Self-Help Groups is good for building links with service providers, including **extension** and other government and NGO services, the **rural banking** sector, suppliers of materials and links to markets.

“Bringing together Self-Help Groups, aquaculture research and flexible rural credit have improved food security and lowered indebtedness for the villagers of Jabarrah in India.” - *Natural Resources Systems Program Annual Report 2003-04*

Lalita Mahato, an elderly Bengali woman, “There was a time when we could not dare to talk to the menfolk of the village not to think of strangers! Today, we can go to the bank and ask for the loan, approach the *Panchayat* authorities and put up our grievances and can boldly face the challenges. We are happy that we are listened to and respected.”

¹ A way of building social capital, something people can use to reduce vulnerability and pursue their livelihoods objectives

How to set up a Self-Help Group

Getting started

1. See if a group already exists

If a group already exists, ask if you may visit it. If you find what you are looking for, you don't have to start your own group. If not, you can learn from what you see there.

2. Work with others and seek help

Start as a group, where every member has some ownership. Try to contact someone who has founded a group. If new folks join, help them recognize that it is important for every member to make some contribution. Consider obtaining the assistance of any professionals who may be sensitive to your needs and willing to assist your efforts. Projects, banks, NGOs and extension workers may be helpful in various ways, from providing meeting space to locating needed resources.

3. Start small

Start small to work out the problems, make some mistakes, and generally get things in order before you go to the general public. Small groups are less likely to be divided by arguments or dominated by a minority. Members with similar backgrounds and common interests are more likely to trust each other and accept joint liability for their activities.

4. Choose a name for the group

A group name helps people feel part of a team who are working toward a common goal. It helps hold people together.

5. Agree a constitution

Your constitution is a written record of the purpose and rules for the group, what is expected from members and what they can expect from the group. This can avoid conflict and make the responsibilities of each member clear.

6. Agree a meeting place and time

Encourage men's and women's participation in groups (separately or together). Try to provide the best place for participation of women and men and encourage leadership skills in them. If you anticipate a small group and feel comfortable with the idea, consider initial meetings in members' homes. Also, try and set a convenient time for people to remember the meeting, e.g., the first Tuesday of the month.



Some tips ...



Encourage:

- Regular attendance at group meetings
- Transparency in ways of working; records (like the minutes book, attendance register, accounts) help the group remember what has been decided at meetings. They are important in monitoring and evaluation.

Example minutes of a group meeting

DATE	AGENDA	DISCUSSED	DECISIONS
4/6	Workshop Purchase of feed Late arrival fine of committee members	Yes Yes Yes	3 members to go 2 will buy 3 bags, 6 / 6 none
11/6	Report workshop Report sale of chickens	Yes Yes	Adjust constitution All members to advertise at school
18/6		

- Small savings to build up a strong common fund; members may be allowed to get loans against their savings and the group will develop skills in setting an interest rate, loan installments, and recovering loans and all this will help with getting credit from a bank.
- Opening a savings bank account with the nearest commercial or rural bank or a cooperative bank, beginning a relationship between the bank and the Self-Help Group.
- Income-generating activities that produce assets that help build self-reliance.
- Agreement on changing leaders; too frequently can be unsettling and make long-term planning difficult. On the other hand, rotating leadership quite frequently within the group provides all members with the chance to develop organizational and leadership skills.

Avoid:

- Discrimination among members based on caste, religion or political affiliations.

Forming a management committee

You will need a chair, a treasurer and a secretary.

What does the chair do?

The Chair: organizes meetings (agenda) and summarizes them at the end, encourages participation by all members, represents the group at meetings with others.

What does the treasurer do?

The Treasurer: keeps and reports the financial records, safeguards and manages the money in cash or at the bank, keeps the cash book and the receipts.

What does the secretary do?

The Secretary: writes the agenda (for meetings) and the minutes, keeps all records, and deals with letters.

Useful Contacts

Other Better-Practice Guidelines

There are more Better-Practice Guidelines in this series. These include:

- Information Access Surveys
- Consensus-Building Process

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STREAM Website

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Consensus-Building Process

What does 'CONSENSUS' mean?

We asked people what they thought consensus meant. Here are some of the responses they gave:

“An agreed opinion of several ideas as a result of discussion among one or several groups of people in communities to get better conditions or an improved situation”

“A shared understanding or an agreement on how to move forward.”

“A common decision taken by a group of people with diverse opinions and views on a particular problem.”

Consensus means agreement on an understanding of an idea, view or opinion.

So,
CONSENSUS BUILDING is:

a way of arriving at a common decision acceptable to almost all the people involved who have diverse views and opinions on a particular problem or subject

About the Consensus-Building Process

Many people work hard to improve the situation of disadvantaged communities. Those who work with government agencies, non-governmental organizations and development projects have expertise in many areas.

I would like people to know about the challenges I face.

If we hear from everyone, we can start to work out solutions which are good for everyone.

Fishers and farmers also have expertise - through their own life experiences - about their situation and what they think needs to be done to change it.



I feel more hopeful now.

The stories that fishers and farmers tell about their lives can give us a deeper understanding of the realities of their experiences. They can help policy-makers to build an understanding of the aspirations and complex livelihoods strategies of “recipients”: poor women, men and youth, including tribal and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups. They can provide a rich source of information for policy debate and thus inform policy change.

A Consensus-Building Process is a way of providing a space where these stories can be told, so that policies can be improved to better support poor people’s needs.



How does the Consensus-Building Process work?

In the STREAM project called *Investigating improved policy on aquaculture service provision to poor people*, many “stakeholders” were involved in the development of schemes to support tribal communities to undertake aquaculture: tribal communities, researchers, policy-makers and others.

Different people have conflicting views. These differences can be about what the goal, outcomes and activities of a scheme should be, and who should be helped and how. STREAM used a Consensus-Building Process to ensure that everyone’s voice was heard.

In this process, each member of the “group” knew who the other group members were but each member worked separately. In the first step, state and national government policy-makers were asked to give their opinions or views on policy change. This established some of the views and opposing views among the group.

A moderator collated their responses and returned them to the participants. Then they were given the comments of everyone involved in the process but they weren’t told which comment came from which person. They were now able to agree or disagree and to change their own view, namelessly.

All participants in the process were then required to accept the collected response of the moderator and support it. Either they had to change their views in line with the new emerging consensus; or they could reject it and give more arguments why others should change their views.

In this case, the policy-makers were asked to select from 42 change priorities proposed by project participants. This resulted in 13 prioritized recommendations for policy change.

The Consensus-Building Process involves...

... giving time to build trusting, on-going relationships among all stakeholders, working with the same people, villages, agencies and organizations.

... enabling people to express their views in a supportive and constructive atmosphere.

... providing space and time to share meaning: well presented statements, drama and video film documentaries.

... listening to people’s voices, especially those of people who are poor.

... engaging people who are poor in policy-making and decisions about service delivery processes, so that policies aimed at poverty alleviation can be improved.

... using activities which enable equitable participation.

... providing anonymity and opportunity outside of hierarchies, such as by taking people away from their usual places, so that they can work together in “neutral” spaces to share each other’s perceptions.



A 7-step Consensus-Building Process: overview

Well, you know, I am an old, old woman, and I've seen a lot of things in my life. But I have **never** seen poor people change policy.

1. Grass Roots Consultation

Discussions with farmers and fishers

- Farmers' group, village cooperatives meeting
- Village, Village Development Committee, municipality level workshop
- District, state, provincial level workshop

2. Compilation of Issues and Points

Draft issues and priorities identified by community

3. Priority Ranking

Present compiled issues to policy-makers at various levels for priority ranking according to their opinion

4. Summarizing

Summarize the priority ranking of policy-makers

5. Final Presentation

Present the summarized priority rankings for final discussion of policy-makers and farmers

6. Entering into Policy Formulation

Convert the identified recommendations into policies

7. Changes in Policy

Grandma, please read the story about *Mahajal*, and you will see how we can change policy.



Mahajal - The Big Fishing Net

These are scenes from the play *Mahajal - The Big Fishing Net*, which was performed in front of policy-makers at central government level. The play tells the stories of real people and the challenges they face as they try to earn their livelihoods. These stories were first told during the Consensus-Building Process.

This play was a way of taking the concerns of poor people to policy-makers. Thirteen of the recommendations made during this process were taken on by policy-makers.

Some advantages of the Consensus-Building Process

I feel safe to say what I really think.

I don't need to worry that I will upset my boss.

I feel confident that the decision has been made in the fairest way.

I can have my say.

The moderator helps us so we all have the information, but there are fewer arguments.

Sometimes group decision-making can be difficult, because in the group there are many different people with different personalities and different statuses. For example, some members of the group can be over-dominant which may mean that some other voices aren't heard. Some people may be afraid to voice their opinion in front of people who are senior to them in some way.

The Consensus-Building Process technique keeps the benefits of group decision-making while avoiding some of its limitations, e.g., over-dominant group members, political lobbying, "not wanting to criticize the boss".

Useful Contacts

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Information Access Surveys (IAS)

What is an Information Access Survey?

An Information Access Survey is a tool that:

- Identifies **key issues** about people and what **information needs** they have
- Identifies what **media sources** are available, what **strategies** people use to get information and finds out how **cost-effective** these are
- Recommends **methods of communication** that are useful for poor rural communities who use aquatic resources to **improve their livelihoods**



What is it for? How do you use it?

The IAS describes how people get information they need. This tells us how we can best communicate with stakeholders. Here are some examples of what we can find out when we conduct an Information Access Survey.

Radio is a popular medium and access is high in coastal Philippines communities.

Attention to color, script and dialect, simple language, photographs and positive images are all important factors.

In Vietnam, public address systems, the broadcast of radio and news on public loudspeakers, are provided free to about 5,000 remote and isolated communities.

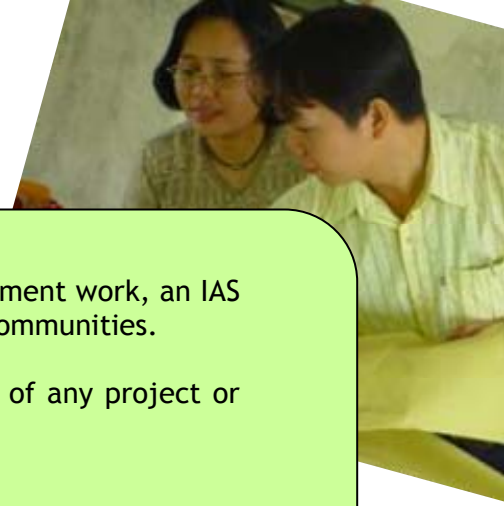
Rural communities rely heavily on traditional information sources including the village chief, commune chief, monks and to an extent, village elders.

Drama and comedy are popular forms of entertainment in Cambodia. Many believe that theater, puppetry and soap operas on radio and television have great potential as vehicles to communicate information.

Vietnamese people love reading.

Filipino comics (love stories with simple text accompanied by colorful cartoon drawings) are popular.

Information Access Surveys: getting started



You can use this tool in many different contexts. In the context of development work, an IAS could be used to find out more about the information needs of poor rural communities.

The Information Access Survey is an important part of the planning stage of any project or intervention.

The IAS should:

- take into consideration the needs of the target group
- involve as many people as possible
- be socially and culturally acceptable
- be flexible, so that we can modify it according to the circumstances
- have recommendations that are easy to put into practice

When you conduct an Information Access Survey, you need to work in a team and plan ahead.

Start by asking questions:



Producing an Information Access Survey: a process

So if I want to produce an IAS, what steps do I need to go through?

START HERE

STEP ONE

Say what geographical area the IAS covers

- What is its population?
- What are the literacy rates like?
- What about languages, dialects, ethnic groups, urban and rural communities, men and women?

STEP TWO

Find out about existing communications and networks

- What networks are there (formal or informal)?
- How about household radio and TV ownership (or access communally or with friends or family)?
- Who broadcasts over what area?
- What is popular and with whom?
- What national or local newspapers and magazines are there? What about specialist interest publications?
- What about performing arts? What do people like? Street-plays, puppet shows, dance, singing?

STEP THREE

Find out about what works well and why

- How do institutions communicate now?
- Are messages getting through? What could improve?
- What links exist between organizations? (government, NGOs, people's organizations, communities)
- What plans and strategies exist?
- What about the research sector, how accessible is new information for people who could use it?

STEP FOUR

Find out how village people prefer to get information

- How do people in villages prefer to get information?
- What sources do they use, want or trust?

STEP FIVE

Say what the needs are

- Where are the communications gaps?
- What are the needs? Training, media, better linking?

What tools should I use?

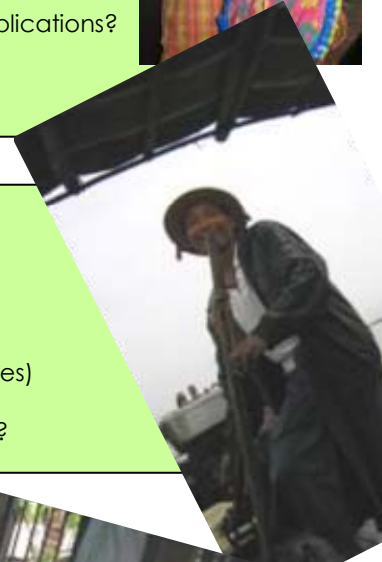
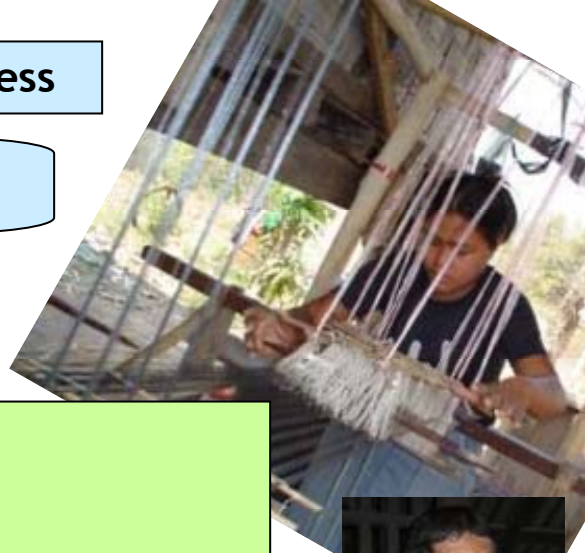
When we talk about tools in the IAS, we're talking about the techniques you will use to get the information you want. Here are some examples:

Questionnaires

Focus group discussions

Interviews

Formal or informal meetings



Information access: a meeting

I learn a lot from my relatives and friends.

I got some useful leaflets about the problem of over-fishing last week. They were from the Department of Fisheries.

If there is something important from the municipal office, I prefer to get a letter.

So, how do you guys prefer to get information?

Well, I listen to the radio. There are some useful programs. There is a program in my language and I listen to that.

When I'm out fishing, I can take my radio with me. I listen to the news and I listen to the soap operas while I am working.

I like reading comics.

I go to my auntie's house and watch videos.

I have a radio, but if I can watch TV, I prefer that.

I don't always listen to the news, but I find out what's happening when I see the neighbors or when I am selling my fish.

Useful Contacts

Other Better-Practice Guidelines

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Appendix III Downloads of R8363 Publications from the STREAM Virtual Library

<http://www.streaminitiative.org/Library/VirtualLibrary.html>

Title	Date	Downloads
<i>Extension leaflets, brochures, policy briefs and posters</i>		
Policy Briefs		
What are Policy Briefs		
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Bahasa Indonesia)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	12
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Bengali)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	13
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (English)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Mar 2005	73
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Hindi)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	9
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Brief? (Ilonggo)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	15
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Khmer)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	10
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Myanmar)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	10
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Nepali)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	10
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Oriya)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	14
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Sinhala)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	14
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Urdu)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	9
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>What are Policy Briefs? (Vietnamese)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 1pp	Aug 2005	20
Building Consensus		
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Bahasa)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	31
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Bengali)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	18
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (English)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	July 2005	38
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Hindi)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	9
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Ilonggo)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	15
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Khmer)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	16
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Myanmar)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	8
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Nepali)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	11
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Oriya)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	7
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Sinhala)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	14
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Urdu)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	12

Title	Date	Downloads
Haylor, G. (ed) 2005 <i>Building Consensus Version 1.0 (Vietnamese)</i> . STREAM Bangkok, Thailand. 2pp	Aug 2005	25
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