Power dynamics in multi-stakeholder processes:
a balancing act

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Prologue

What is power? Power is a multifaceted social phenomenon at the core of human relations. 'Power over' is the ability to influence, control people or events to achieve certain outcomes. But there is also 'power within', referring to self-confidence; 'power with', referring to the power of cooperation; and 'power to' relating to having agency, being able to create. Those with resources often have more power. Many social change initiatives nowadays assume that joint action by multiple stakeholders is needed for impact. In such multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) we can see that power differences manifest themselves. It is often very difficult for less-powerful actors to influence what is going on in these MSPs, or to shift power dynamics in their favour.

This publication is a result of the Thematic Learning Programme (TLP) 'Strategically dealing with power dynamics in multi-stakeholder processes' (2011-2012) in which seven Dutch development NGOs investigated how they could address and incorporate a deeper understanding of these power dynamics in their work. This topic is important, because MSPs involve issues in complex contexts: land conflicts, natural resource conflicts or farmers at the bottom of the value chain. MSPs are not always harmonious; the stakes are generally higher for some than for others and the various actors may not necessarily have the same level of representation at the table. This TLP aimed to draw lessons for the different organizations involved and to enable them to deal better with power dynamics in MSPs.

A multi-stakeholder process is defined here as:
A process of interactive learning, empowerment and collaborative governance that enables stakeholders with common longer-term objectives, but different interests, to be collectively innovative and resilient when faced with emerging risks, crises and opportunities of a complex and changing environment.

If we are to analyse power in multi-stakeholder settings jointly with partners who are actors in these processes, it is evident that this cannot be a clean theoretical exercise. Engagement must involve our own feelings, perceptions and attitudes about our own power. Any inquiry should be sensitive to power. In recent years, several methodologies and tools have been developed to analyse power dynamics in collaborative settings. These include the PowerPack www.powercube.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/powerpack-web-version-2011.pdf of IDS (based on work around the Power Cube), the Power Tools resource box www.policy-powertools.org/index.html of IIED, and the Political Analytical Tool www.dlprog.org of the Developmental Leadership Program. In the TLP on power dynamics in MSPs we used, and built upon, these resources and developed a detailed analytical framework (see the Methodological framework section below), and tested specific tools (see insight #3). This led to five insights, which are presented in this e-publication. We invite you to follow us on this journey, and hope that our insights developed over the last two years will be of assistance to you.

Setting the scene

By way of introducing the topic, we present below recorded interviews with two people from an external reference group on the importance of dealing with power in MSPs. Professor David Millar from the University of Development Studies in Ghana focuses in the interview on policy discussions in Ghana related to gold mining and oil drilling, a context in which MSPs give voice to the voiceless. Jethro Pettit from IDS Sussex explains action research on power dynamics and clarifies this with an example from Kenya, linked to a port de-

"Power is a multi-faceted social phenomenon at the core of human relations"

We're most happy to fund your HIV programs. AS LONG AS they don't promote condom use...

Prologue

velopment project affecting different ethnic communities. These two interviews are part of a 12 minute video 'Make no mistake, the poor also have power'. See: http://youtu.be/rdp4mRpGTvk

Thank you!

We enjoyed editing this e-publication and are still surprised by the richness of the process and the insights gained. We thank all fellow travellers in this journey who contributed at specific times to the creative confusion. Hettie Walters of ICCO, Willem Elbers of CIDIN and Lucia Helsloot of Cordaid commented on earlier texts. Even though our names are listed here as editors, this e-publication does not have our copyright, but a copy-left statement. We thank all researchers, conveners, and members of the external reference group. We thank Kees-Jan Mulder and Walid Rhord, who made the accompanying video recordings. We also thank Ada Breedveld, an Amsterdam-based artist, who kindly provided us with digital images of her paintings, which were selected to illustrate the insights. And we thank the PSO Association. With the trust and financial support of PSO, we have been able to co-create practical understanding of power dynamics in MSPs.

Wim Hiemstra, ETC Foundation
Coordinator, Power dynamics in MSPs
Herman Brouwer & Simone van Vugt, Wageningen UR-CDI
Methodological support, Power dynamics in MSPs

David Millar

http://youtu.be/ijTEgT3rcyY

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Introduction

A balancing act. This was the most fitting metaphor for working with complex power dynamics that emerged during the Thematic Learning Programme (TLP) "Strategically dealing with power dynamics in multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs)". Dealing with power involves delicate processes and can be defined as: mediating interests with influence, mediating power with trust and making hidden power visible. To empower the least influential in MSPs, facilitators need to know the key actors, their resources, the spaces and rules of engagement, the visible and hidden expressions of power. Actually, all stakeholders are cord dancers!

The convening Dutch development organizations that participated in this TLP*, with methodological support from the Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation (UR-CDI), realize that globalization has entangled the stakes and interests of actors and institutions across borders, across sectors and across levels. The climate crisis, financial crisis and food crisis confirm that our 21st century reality is one of interconnected people and ecosystems, with consequent complexity and multi-layered issues. In recent decades, multi-stakeholder processes have been promoted as a way to address problems amidst this complexity.

Abused, overruled, excluded?

MSP advocates often argue that because of the interdependence of stakeholders in solving complex issues, MSPs create trust-based relations that enable the empowerment and active participation of all. However, in the experience of the Dutch organizations and their southern partners, 'putting the right people in one room' does not automatically generate an inclusive and equitable process, nor automatically produce more effective and sustainable solutions. In many contexts, the distribution of power, capacity and resources is generally imbalanced. Failure to recognize the power imbalances and the course of power dynamics before and during the engagement in an MSP, and to strategically deal with them, can result in some stakeholders dominating others and less-powerful stakeholders being abused, overruled or excluded.

Dealing with power dynamics

On the other hand, there are documented cases in which disadvantaged stakeholders who participated in MSPs were quite successful in transforming power relations; see for example Edmund and Wollenberg, 'Disadvantaged groups in multi-stakeholder negotiations', www.cbnrm.net/pdf/edmunds_d_001.pdf. This demonstrates the need for a thorough understanding of power dynamics in MSPs.

The four central learning questions agreed upon by the convening organizations were:
How can local, or 'beneficiary' organizations, which are usually less-powerful stakeholders, be empowered to operate strategically in a multi-stakeholder setting?
How can power differences between stakeholders be taken into account in the development of multi-stakeholder cooperative processes in order to ensure effective participation of the weaker/ smaller/ less-powerful stakeholders?
Given the growing involvement of local organizations in MSPs, what are the implications for relationships between local civil society organizations and northern agencies?
How should northern agencies deal with power imbalances when participating in or when they are otherwise related to MSPs?

Action research

To answer these four questions, the convening organizations each proposed two learning sites. Here, action researchers were engaged in MSPs as relative outside facilitators to support the stakeholders in analysing their own processes and mapping out the power relations and power dynamics. At the global level, there is a learning platform, http://thechangealliance.ning.com/, where action researchers and convening organizations share their experiences and connect to experience and learn from others.

> "Dealing with power is delicate: mediating interests with influence, mediating power with trust and making hidden power visible"

Introduction

Action research & location	Issue
Both Ends: Palm oil, Indonesia	Participatory land use planning
Both Ends: Roundtable sustainable palm oil, international	Capacity building for weak stakeholders in dispute settlement facility
Fair Trade Original: Fair trade citrus value chain, Ghana	Dealing with conflicting interests of stakeholders in fair trade value chains
Fair Trade Original: Fair trade assessments, international	Commitment and follow up of stakeholders in fair trade value chains
ICCO: Women and communities in cooperative societies, Guatemala	The influence of communities (especially women) in forestry programmes
ICCO: Seaweed value chain, Philippines	The influence of producers and other stakeholders in value chain programmes
ETC Foundation: Gold mining industry, Ghana	Use of biocultural community protocols to deal with gold mining affecting community livelihoods
ETC Foundation: Economic infrastructure, Kenya	Use of biocultural community protocols to deal with large-scale economic development affecting community livelihoods
Cordaid: Oil spill and gas flaring, Nigeria	Empowerment of NGO coalition to operate in MSP
Cordaid: National Home Based Care Alliance, Malawi	Commitment and capacity in home-based health care programmes
Waste: Sanitation sector, two locations, Malawi	Franchise concepts in sanitation services

Steps undertaken

The TLP took place in 2011-2012 and consisted of the following steps:
1. Discussion and **design of the programme** by the Dutch conveners
2. **Selection of the twelve cases** and of one or more action researchers per case by Dutch convenors and their local counterparts
3. **Inception workshop** with staff of convening organisations, academia and action researchers to agree on a methodological framework
4. Development of **toolbox** by WUR-CDI
5. **Action research** in twelve MSPs (actual or emerging MSPs) in eight countries
6. **E-conference** and webinars to exchange, discuss and take forward interim findings
7. **Documentation** of findings by action researchers
8. **Learning event** to present and discuss the experiences
9. **E-publication**

Academic support

An expert reference group, consisting of Professor David Millar (University of Development Studies, Ghana), Jethro Pettit (Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex), Willem Elbers (CIDIN, Radboud University, Nijmegen) and Art de Wulf (Public Administration and Policy Department, Wageningen UR) contributed to the design of the action research, e-conference and learning event.

*) The Dutch development organizations are Both Ends, Cordaid, ETC Foundation, Fair Trade Original, ICCO and WASTE. They are all members of PSO (a Dutch association of 57 members aiming to support capacity strengthening in southern societies) and the Change Alliance (a global network of organizations aiming to improve conditions and capacities for effective multi-stakeholder processes). Wageningen UR-CDI hosts the secretariat of the Change Alliance. Many of the links included in this publication lead to the limited-access site of the Change Alliance, http://thechangealliance.ning.com. Viewing content requires that you create an account and login.

Methodological framework

Surprisingly, MSP theory so far has not given much attention to the power opportunities and strategies of disadvantaged stakeholders. However, with the number of conflict-ridden MSPs increasing in an increasingly complex world, more scholars have been analysing the issues of exclusion, inequality and power abuse. This has resulted in a debate between those with a 'dialogue vision' on MSPs and those with a 'power relations vision'. The participants of the TLP tried to transcend the current either-or approach to the question of whether disadvantaged stakeholders should participate in MSPs. We believe that the participation of disadvantaged stakeholders depends on the conditions of the MSP and the capacities of the stakeholders and facilitators of MSPs to understand and deal with power dynamics. These aspects guided the methodological framework.

The two visions on power in MSP

According to the 'dialogue vision', an open dialogue with willing participants will produce the best possible, rational solution for all. Conflicts are mainly the result of miscommunication. Designers and facilitators of MSPs can prevent this by enabling an open dialogue through the creation of a level playing field for all stakeholders. Their focus should be on methods to create neutral and objective conditions for stakeholder interaction and joint learning in MSPs.

The 'power relations vision' contests the idea that a level playing field is possible, as power is the foundation of what MSPs are: a space to express power relations. In such a space, weaker stakeholders are at a disadvantage: participation exposes them to the risk of being overruled, manipulated or outvoted by other stakeholders. A radical conclusion based on this argument would be that marginalized stakeholders should avoid MSPs altogether. Social movement leaders often argue that rather than participating in invited spaces, marginalized communities can gain much more from building solidarity networks and using a social movement to demand space.

Combining two visions: benefit depends on conditions

The TLP transcended this either-or debate and called for analyses that recognize both the importance of power positions and people's capacities to change them, as well as the role of facilitation. The participants wanted to move beyond a static definition of power and capture the dynamics of power relations, as well as the capacity of actors to change these dynamics. We assumed that this broader definition could give us more options to improve the outcomes of MSPs for disadvantaged stakeholders.

We argued that less powerful stakeholders can gain from participation, provided that two conditions for change are met. First, the MSP must be transparent about the power politics at work. Second, the MSP must create favourable conditions, in terms of the stakeholders' **willingness** to discuss power dynamics (depending on their mindset or political will), **understanding** of power dynamics, and **capacity** (depending on availability of resources, tools, supportive facilitators and clear rules of the game). As Gallopin wrote (2002):

> Willingness and capacity without understanding leads to wrong actions; understanding and capacity without

willingness leads to cosmetic action; willingness and understanding without capacity leads to failure and potential disillusionment.

Getting started
Each of the Dutch NGOs selected two cases. In total twelve cases were selected in eight countries. Some of the action research sites were already established MSPs, whilst in other cases communities were pushing for such a space to be created. In all sites local researchers were recruited who knew the area and issues, but did not have a direct interest in the issue or one of the partner organizations. The coordination of action research with a diverse group of cases and researchers demanded a balanced approach between 'letting go' and 'ensuring coherence' (http://thechangealliance.ning.com/page/power-in-msps-workshop).

It was essential that all local researchers together with the convenor group jointly designed the conceptual and methodological framework. For two days in November 2011 this group of 30 participants exchanged ideas, became familiar with each other's cases, received theoretical inputs and eventually agreed on seven research questions that all cases would focus on.

The framework
The framework developed for this TLP also benefitted from the insights contributed by the members of the external reference group, especially by Willem Elbers and Art de Wulf. These members participated in the inception meeting (November 2011) and contributed insights with respect to where power dynamics are likely to manifest themselves: in actors' control over resources; resource interdependencies; the definition and framing of the problem that the MSP collaboration is addressing; the membership of the MSP; and the strategies used in response to the problem. (http://thechangealliance.ning.com/page/power-in-msps-workshop). This led to a framework consisting of seven research questions focused on key actors, their interests/goals, problem framing, key resources, resources interdependencies, rules for decision-making and changing the decision-making rules.

Our basic assumption in this TLP was that research into power in an MSP can only be done in an action research mode, i.e. by involving the key stakeholders. A small group of participants therefore translated these seven research questions into action questions and presented these to the plenary. The framework for analysing power dynamics in MSPs was agreed upon. Action researchers were asked to consider both the research and the action questions. Yet, considering the boundaries of the TLP in terms of time and budget, they were also asked to approach the questions in a practical, reflective and flexible manner.

The toolbox
An accompanying toolbox (http://www.wageningen-portals.nl/msp/resource/tools-analysing-power-multi-stakeholder-processes-menu) for stakeholder analysis and power analysis was drafted by Wageningen UR-CDI to help the local researchers select tools for their specific situations, mostly based on existing material from various sources. This enabled the researchers to undertake stakeholder analysis with local communities and other players, followed by power analysis. Not all tools were used, and we encouraged researchers to adapt tools to their contexts – which they did in several cases.

"The MSP must be transparent about the power politics at work"

Box 1: Stakeholder and power analysis tools

Stakeholder analysis tools	Power analysis tools
1. Rich picture	1. Power cube
2. Problem tree analysis	2. Sources and positions of power
3. Interest/influence matrix	3. Expressions and faces of power
4. Stakeholder characteristics and roles matrix	4. Spaces and levels of power
5. Spider web network diagram	5. Power ranking
6. Fast arrangement mapping	6. Net-map (tracing power and influence in networks)
7. Stakeholder interests, roles and skills	7. Power matrix
8. Community institutional resource mapping	8. Political analytical tool
9. Institutional analysis	9. Biocultural community protocol
10. Four quadrants of change framework	10. Circle of coherence
11. Value chain mapping	

Keeping in touch – e-conference

After the first months we felt it was essential to take stock and ask all local researchers whether they were on track in investigating the seven questions, and whether they understood their roles in relation to the organizations they were working with in the MSP. We asked for interim reports from all local researchers and developed a three-week e-conference based on the common issues, initial findings and problems encountered. We exchanged experiences, made sense of the data collected thus far and inspired each other to proceed with new energy and zeal. We used a combination of webinars and asynchronous D-group discussions. Facilitators prepared one-page introductions once a week and helped participants reflect on the inputs given. For example, we started off by asking participants what type of MSP they were researching: an actual or a potential MSP? Later, we invited reflection on the concept of power: what are key issues over which there are conflicts in your MSP, and what actions do stakeholders take to exercise power over others?

By the end of the e-conference, participants requested more webinars to delve deeper into specific issues. We organized three separate webinars for specific smaller groups:
- researchers working with actual MSPs (mostly value chain cases);
- researchers working with groups striving to establish an MSP;
- researchers working in a situation in which it was not clear whether an MSP would emerge.

Because of the unavoidable time zone differences, some participants had to stay up late or wake up as early as 3:00 AM to participate in the discussions. Nevertheless, over 90% of the local researchers and conveners participated actively in the e-conference, usually with focused and relevant input.

Synthesizing results

After receiving the final reports in July 2012, a rough synthesis and a reflection on the results as reported by the researchers was prepared. In August 2012 the whole group of local researchers, conveners and external reference group members came together for three days to validate this synthesis and enrich the analysis. Finally, a reflection on the learning process took place, partly facilitated by the external evaluation team.

Methodological framework, linking research questions, action questions and tools for addressing the questions raised.

Research Questions	Action questions	Tool
1. Who are the key actors involved? **Reasoning:** We work in MSPs that have different actors with different degrees of power and influence. We need to understand these degrees, bases of power and the manner in which they use their power.	**1. Are these the right actors? Do other actors need to join the MSP?**	Rich picture; Problem tree analysis; Importance/Influence Matrix; Stakeholder Characteristics & Roles Matrix; Spider web network diagram; FAM; Stakeholder Interests, Roles, Skills tool; CIRM tool; Institutional Analysis; Value Chain Mapping; Net-Map; Power Matrix; PAT
2. What are the interests/goals of the different actors? • How do the different interests/goals of actors conflict with each other? (grievances) **Reasoning:** MSPs have joint objectives, aspirations and interdependencies to different degrees. This might be a source of strength, conflict, grievance, and effectiveness or ineffectiveness.	**2. How can common interests be strengthened? How can we overcome some of the differences in interests and ways of working? What other options are available?**	Rich picture; Problem tree analysis; Stakeholder Characteristics & Roles Matrix; Spider web network diagram; Stakeholder Interests, Roles, Skills tool; Institutional analysis; Four Quadrants; Value Chain Mapping; Net-Map; Power Matrix; PAT; BCP; Circle of Coherence
3. How is the problem framed and by whom? • Whose problem is going to be solved? • Who frames the problems, the questions and the objectives? **Reasoning:** Through the agenda setting capacity, power shows itself in MSPs. Participatory and empowerment processes are needed to balance the levels of influence of all actors in the MSP.	**3. What is needed to strengthen the influence of the least influential? How can empowerment be promoted?**	Rich picture; Problem tree analysis; Stakeholder Characteristics & Roles Matrix; Institutional analysis; Power Matrix; BCP; Circle of Coherence
4. What are the actors' key (material and non-material) resources? • How does the control over resources affect actors' ability to exercise influence?	**4. 5. How can interdependence at the level of resource access and control be realized?** Which capacities need/can be strengthened? How can power within be developed to lead to power to and power with?	Rich picture; Stakeholder Characteristics & Roles Matrix; Stakeholder Interests, Roles, Skills tool; CIRM tool; Value Chain Mapping; Sources and Positions of Power; Net-Map; PAT; BCP
5. What (resource) dependencies exist between actors? • How do dependencies affect actors' abilities to exercise influence? **Reasoning for 4 & 5:** Different actors have different access and control over various resources: material, immaterial, political, economic, social, individual, organizational, etc., that determine their influence in the MSP, and their capacity to realize their interests.		Rich picture; Stakeholder Interests, Roles, Skills tool; CIRM tool; Power Ranking; Net-Map; PAT; BCP
6. What are the rules that regulate decision-making? • Who sets the decision-making rules? • How do the decision-making rules affect actors' access to the decision-making? • How is influence being used? **Reasoning:** This question links the MSP to its 'institutional' side: What are the rules that govern? How and by whom are they being set? How are they enforced, arbitrated and sanctioned?	**6. What are the identified constraints / bottlenecks in the decision-making process?** Are changes needed in the decision-making process and/or in the governance agreements?	Institutional analysis; Power Cube; Forms of Power; Spaces/Levels of power; Power Ranking; Net-Map; Power Matrix; BCP; Circle of Coherence
7. To what extent are these interests/goals reflected in outcomes of decision-making (reputation/perception) nd in the outcomes of the collaborative undertaking? **Reasoning:** This is the expression of the results of the 'power' processes within the MSP.	**7. How can decision-making and collaboration be organized such that all benefit and see the results that are in their interests?**	Importance/Influence Matrix; FAM; Net-Map; BCP; Circle of Coherence

Power dynamics in practice

Summaries of the action research implemented in this TLP are presented below in three clusters of MSP typologies: value chains, natural resources, service delivery. At the end of each description is a weblink to a full report prepared by the corresponding action researcher in which he or she presents lessons learnt in accordance with the methodological framework. In the reports, the researchers also document the tools they used and reflect on their own roles as researchers and facilitators.

Value chain MSPs

1. ICCO: Seaweed network – Philippines

The seaweed value chain network on Samar Island in the Philippines focuses on the influence of producers and other stakeholders in the value chain. There are three inter-related issues of power dynamics: low income of fisher folks, environmental destruction and ineffective governance. The action researcher tested a method allowing all stakeholders to engage in dialogue on power relations in the cooperative process.

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Weblink to report http://thechangealliance.ning.com/page/power-in-msp-action-learning-cases

2. Fair Trade Original: Citrus value chain - Ghana

Citrus farmers in Ghana are interested in selling their citrus fruits under fair trade criteria. The value chain consists of a wide range of primary and secondary stakeholders: smallholder farmers, juice factories, importers, Fair Trade Original, supermarkets and consumers. The objective is empowerment of smallholder farmers through their active participation in the MSP. A manual for farmers on power analysis was developed.

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3. Fair Trade Original: Global

This Fair Trade Original case is situated at the global level and concerns stakeholder understanding of Fair Trade Assessments and the extent to which the findings of the assessments are followed up by actors in the value chain. Fair Trade Assessments assess the standards of partners, to make sure producers and workers benefit, and to guarantee for customers the 'fairness' claim on products. Some partners do not stick to deadlines and in many cases follow-up is poor. The objective is to improve the Fair Trade Assessment system by developing it into a multi-stakeholder process.

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Natural resources related MSPs

4. Cordaid: Civil society coalition in Oil Spill Regulatory Mechanism - Nigeria

This case is located in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, a densely populated, poor area with enormous oil resources. The action research focused on ensuring effective participation of NACGOND (National Coalition on Gas flaring and Oil spills in the Niger Delta) in the multi-stakeholder process with government, oil companies and international actors for establishment of an independent Oil Spill Regulatory Mechanism (OSRM). One of the challenges for effective participation of civil society (NACGOND) in the multi-stakeholder negotiations is to find effective ways for civil society to collaborate across ethnic boundaries. One of the options for strengthening the position of civil society is introduction of the international RUGGIE framework. In this case, power relations between different stakeholders as well as within civil society were complicated and the subject of the research question: 'How can civil society be empowered in emerging multi-stakeholder dialogues?'

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5. Both Ends: Palm oil – Indonesia

This case focuses on the Western part of Indonesia, Kalimantan, which is one of the top palm oil producing regions in the world. This production is the source of many problems, such as conflicts over logging, community land, food producing systems and economic interests. Government policy is focused on producing as much palm oil as possible. To address the root causes of underlying conflicts, a spatial planning map is being developed as a negotiation tool among the different stakeholders. The inclusion of local communities requires particular attention.

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6. Both Ends: Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil – Malaysia

The second case of Both Ends concentrates on the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). The RSPO Certification System states that certification is not possible as long as there are ongoing disputes, which requires that members make serious efforts to resolve disputes regarding land. Yet, many RSPO members – plantation companies and mills, smallholder oil palm growers and NGOs – find it difficult to address such disputes adequately and in a timely manner. This case focuses on the attempt of Both Ends to initiate the Dispute Settlement Facility (DSF) under the aegis of the RSPO, aiming to develop a conflict resolution manual that will help to resolve land disputes that hinder RSPO certification.

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Weblink to report http://thechangealliance.ning.com/page/power-in-msp-action-learning-cases

7. ETC Foundation: Biocultural Community Protocol – Ghana

Both ETC cases deal with the use of a Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP): a community-led instrument that promotes participatory advocacy for the recognition and support of customary rights and sustainable use of biodiversity. The process of developing and using BCPs involves negotiation processes with different stakeholders. This Ghana case strives for the protection of sacred forests from mining operations by an Australian gold mining company. The case is interesting because of the power dynamics between this mining company and other stakeholders. Furthermore, the role of sacred forests in preserving community well-being and contributing to conservation of biodiversity is often neglected. ETC is developing a manual on using BCPs in MSP negotiations.

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8. ETC Foundation: Biocultural Community Protocols – Kenya

In this case, the BCP is applied in the Lamu District in Kenya, a region with different ethnic groups. A planned infrastructure project will create a system of railroads, highways and pipelines from Lamu to South Sudan and Ethiopia. Although the project could relieve the area's economic woes, its impact on the people and environment of Lamu should not be underestimated. Moreover, little information on the project has been released to the people of Lamu. A coalition of groups, Save Lamu, was created to deal with the challenges. The case addresses internal power dynamics among the different indigenous communities and how to strategize for engaging with powerful external stakeholders.

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9. ICCO: Forestry programme – Guatemala

How can power relations between the various stakeholders within the cooperative process be improved – in a way that incorporates equal voice, participation, and access and control over benefits for the stakeholders involved, in particular the women? This case is about forestry programmes in Guatemala, focusing on promoting competitiveness and sustainability of producers, organizational strengthening in forestry governance and supporting lobby activities in favour of property rights and climate change issues. The case specifically focuses on the influence of communities (and women within communities) in forestry programmes. It tested a dynamic stakeholder power mapping tool: the Four Quadrants of Change.

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Service delivery MSPs

10. Cordaid: Home-based care – Malawi

The second Cordaid case looks at community-driven care and support services that strive to bridge the gap in existing health and care infrastructures (which hinder effective progress on the MDGs). The case emphasizes constraints in developing a consortium for home-based care. The work of home-based care, often done by women, is taken for granted and not supported by health services. It needs recognition, compensation and support. Other learning goals are centred on questions such as: How can stakeholders come to a shared change agenda? Does cooperation empower individual organizations at a national/international level? How can we take power differences between stakeholders into account, in order to ensure effective participation of smaller/weaker stakeholders?

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11. WASTE: Sanitation sector in two cities – Malawi

Both cases involving WASTE take place in Malawi. WASTE works in Malawi in the area of sanitation and solid waste. The objective is for clients to have access to sustained sanitation. This is achieved by a consortium of city authorities, banks and universities. The main objective of the consortium is to facilitate the Public Sanitation Utility, providing services to clients and employing people in sanitation who usually have a low status in their societies. There are considerable power struggles within the consortium. A watchdog was brought into the process to look at the consortium and its performance, to provide information on power relations and to look at the utility (in terms of conditions for its employees) and service and satisfaction levels. A concession contract was developed between the local city government, a service delivery institution and an NGO that served as arbitrator.

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Weblink to report http://thechangealliance.ning.com/page/power-in-msp-action-learning-cases

We present below five insights that emerged during this TLP.

Insight #**1**

Tipping the power balance requires mutual respect and trust among key actors

The first insight looks at the psychological dimension of power. Many local researchers reported difficulties in using the word 'power' with groups of stakeholders, as it may put powerful stakeholders 'in the hot seat' and evoke a defensive response. We decided to not use the word power extensively, but used 'trust building' and 'interdependencies' to discuss it. 'Be the change you wish to see in the world' is a quote from Gandhi that hints at the psychological dimension of power. Trust is a measure of one party's belief in the honesty, fairness, or benevolence of another party. For stakeholders to be able to address power dynamics, a basis of trust is needed. If trust is not already present within the MSP, it has to be created. To be able to start believing in the honesty of other stakeholders, MSP actors have to reflect on their own honesty, fairness or benevolence– "be the change you wish to see" – before being able to see it in other stakeholders.

The importance of trust building is described by Ramy Bulan, action researcher in the **Roundtable**

Sustainable Palm Oil case:

While the MSP ideal is to neutralize the differences among the stakeholders and create a level playing field, in reality an imbalance of power often exists among the state and non-state actors, as well as between parties with powerful economic interests and those who have little or no resources. In the case of a palm oil company having a dispute over land with local communities, there is an underlying sense of distrust. One of the more vocal and influential members of the community said: 'The company drags the matter on and on. They want to weaken us and eventually go to court, so that we lose and they can have the land for free'. Another community member said 'Even if we lose in court, where else can we go? We will remain here. This is our land.' Building of trust between stakeholders is important to begin an MSP and for a multi-stakeholder system of governance to work. It is important to move the parties from their position of rights towards a common interest, and from a contentious position to mutually beneficial ground.

"Be the change you wish to see in the world"

In the case of **Lamu District** in Kenya, the early meetings between the researchers and communities were as much about finding common ground between the different groups in the Save Lamu coalition – and trying to resolve internal tensions through dialogue – as about developing strategies to fulfill their demands in negotiations with external stakeholders. Having a facilitator from the local area was important because four different Kiswahili dialects are spoken there. But this sometimes led to a perception that some groups were listened to more than others. The facilitator, Pilly Martin, was very aware of this and made great efforts to ensure that she was seen as inclusive in bringing in different perspectives. Pilly has extensive experience in peace building and conflict resolution in countries like Somalia and South Sudan. This enabled her to mediate between internally divergent interests and positions towards the large infrastructural project. As she emphasizes that inclusivity should lead to dialogue – and practices what she preaches – suspicion between ethnic groups was reduced to some extent. Harmonizing internal positions – as far as possible – before engaging with external stakeholders is central for making progress and not becoming victims of power plays by external stakeholders. A more harmonious relationship is emerging in the MSP and the struggle has borne fruits, despite occasional flare-ups of tension.

In the case of the **Samar seaweed value chain** in the Philippines, Penpen Libres reflected on his role in facilitating discussions on power dynamics in the MSP as follows:

> Apart from having a good understanding of the value chain framework and approaches, such as basic concepts, value chain mapping, forms of value chains and ensuring the active participation of different actors in the MSP, the local researcher should establish rapport with different stakeholders, develop trust and confidence, establish credibility and maintain objectivity. The latter means listening to all sides.

In several MSPs, the facilitators created awareness among the disadvantaged stakeholders that they too have power. Using the tool 'Expressions and faces of power' (power within, power over, power with, power to), the researchers could make them aware of their 'power with and within'. As Kobina Esiah-Donkoh wrote on the MSP for the **citrus value chain** in Ghana:

> It was quite difficult to explain the concept of power to participants, owing to the negative perception that connotes the concept. We used 'participation' as a key issue and explained that one has power if she or he has the ability 1. to be seen 2. to be heard 3. to influence views to be implemented. The power ranking tool was simplified to suit the understanding of citrus farmers, because most could not read or write any language. There was a revelation of power, which is inherent in the (citrus) farmer associations. It can be conceptualized as 'power with'. The farmer associations were formed, some more than decades ago, to enable farmers to address common challenges and access resources such as credits, inputs and training from governmental and non-governmental organizations. This inherent power drives the association through good and challenging moments. The purpose is to impress upon the farmers, who tend to think that they are 'powerless', that power is not negative, but with them.. It is necessary for farmers to have a sense of self-worth. The MSP therefore is a critical platform through which stakeholder interactions increase their 'power within'.

Inclusion of trusted media to prevent manipulation

For key actors to engage in MSPs with trust often requires a change in their attitudes and abilities to see other actors with respect. In some cases, this respect can be derived from international laws and conventions, such as the Human Rights Convention. In the case of oil spills in Nigeria, Cordaid's suggestion was to explore the UN 'Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework for Business and Human Rights', developed by former Representative of the Secretary-General on Business and Human Rights, John Ruggie. See: http://www.business-human-rights.org/Links/Repository/965591

The local researcher, Akinyinka Akinyoade, noted that in the context of highly volatile conflicts over gas flaring and oil spills in Nigeria, the important role of trusted and independent media cannot be over-emphasized. Suggesting the way forward, the local researcher indicated that the MSP should serve as a platform for equal media representation. The attendance and participation of the media in the MSP is important, because it limits the scope for manipulation or suppression of news by any stakeholder.

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UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA, MALAYSIA

ACTION RESEARCHER
ROUNDTABLE SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL

http://youtu.be/0VFU8f01zaY

"Harmonizing internal positions – as far as possible – before engaging with external stakeholders is central for making progress"

Insight #**2**

Explore key actors' visible and/or hidden power

How are stakeholders linked to power? Once a basis of trust and willingness of key actors to engage has been established, a next step is to jointly explore different expressions, faces and understandings of power. Key actors' power is often related to resources, spaces and terms of engagement. Many expressions of power are hidden. Hence, any facilitator who embarks on power analysis should have facilitation skills and good knowledge of the cultural 'rules of the game'.

Knowledge is power but …. follow who controls the money and the politics ………and understand the impacts of illegal use of power and violence.

This is the most essential issue in attempting to understand power in MSPs according to Job Blijdenstein, local researcher of the **forestry governance and gender case in Guatemala**. Money (or controlling budgets) as a resource and source of power is often encountered in MSP settings. Apart from knowledge, there are also other resources that give actors power. Examples of resources linked to power that emerged from the Guatemala case include:

- one's position and ability to participate in the decision-making structures within the Association of Forestry-based Community Organizations (ACOFOP);
- the opportunity for ACOFOP community members to engage actively in economic ventures, to organize work processes and economic activities

in such a manner that men, women and families can take joint responsibility and benefit from the activities.

In terms of hidden power in the case of ACOFOP, the local basis of power with a membership of 'only' 15 recognized member organizations may seem modest. However, the influence and reputation of ACOFOP is growing quickly with the awareness of the importance of forests for environmental security in international debates. The businesses and institutions that certify forestry-related timber and non-timber products and processes do have considerable power, but according to the local researcher, they can hardly be considered stakeholders in the local decision-making processes.

Another example of hidden power comes from **Nigeria**. An oil company invited Father Obi, an NGO representative, to participate in a helicopter flight for verification of the extent of the damage of an oil spill. Father Obi discovered that since he was not technically knowledgeable regarding flight paths, he was powerless to direct the pilot to particular vantage points. Indeed he had to rely on the directions given by the pilot and he could only base his assessment of the spill area on what the pilot showed him from the air. In this case, the extent of the damage did not seem large, though the NGO representative suspected that he was shown only a small section of the spill-affected area.

The way we think about power always contains an

implicit theory of change: if we can 'see better', and 'think better', we will be able to secure 'better action'. The methodological framework underlying this TLP assumes that applying specific tools will lead to transparency about the power politics at work. Paul Goldsmith, researcher with the **Lamu case in Kenya**, reflected on conditions before engaging in a MSP:

A better starting point for a progressive research strategy is to clarify the political and transformative intentions of the proposed process, and to reflect on the power, positionality and roles of those involved. This did not occur in Lamu—where a review of the positionality and transitional political factors beforehand would have been quite useful. It is important to recognize the fact that Lamu and the coastal community have been struggling to come to grips with the problems of power differentials for five decades.

MSPs operate in a complex context. Part of the complexity can be a long history of the least-powerful being abused, overruled, neglected and excluded. In many cases, a peace and reconciliation process, at individual or collective level, is needed before it is possible to engage constructively with all kinds of tools that may reinvigorate all kinds of historical power plays.

Systemic differences addressed?
The case of the RSPO demonstrates the need for caution:

Even if the parties are willing to engage in dialo-

"Culture shapes power dynamics"

gue on an equal basis, systemic differences exist in the balance of power, capacity and resources. There are uneven levels in terms of access to resources and information, as well as experience in understanding and dealing with financial issues. These systemic differences inevitably spill over and affect the process. In the case of indigenous communities faced with company power, most of them feel highly insecure about their rights and are easily waylaid by short-term cash inducements or promised benefits, such that without proper understanding they easily give up their rights.

The Lamu case in Kenya also positions the power dynamics within a broader political context:

Patrimonial governance has worked to channel more aggressive members of local communities into opportunistic acquisition, often as middlemen for local and national elites. This is also a direct consequence of the coast's dysfunctional political leadership. Local leaders have sought to, and gotten away with paying lip service to local grievances due to the passivity of their constituents. Leaders enjoy the benefits of aligning themselves with national client networks and ethnic alliances to the detriment of defending coastal rights.

Many problems and solutions to conflicts in the cases researched relate to governance gaps, created by globalization and the scope and impact of economic forces and actors. The case of Lamu is a clear example of this. Yet, the Lamu communities also have power. They protested and made their voices heard at the groundbreaking ceremony on 2 March 2012, but they were not allowed by the Government of Kenya to protest at the ceremony attended by the presidents of Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan. However, their concerns were voiced through national and international media, such as CNN: 'Will oil plans ruin an African paradise?' See http://edition.cnn.com/video/#/video/business/2012/07/09/marketplace-africa-lamu-port-plans.cnn?iref=allsearch.

International media attention is one of the strategies used to address powerful international actors and economic processes. Recently (2012), the Save Lamu coalition received some funding to bring community-based organizations along the Kenyan LAPSSET (the abbreviation stands for Lamu Port Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor) together to discuss common issues concerning: development of LAPSSET, how communities will be affected and what actions are currently being taken in different communities. A national meeting is also being planned to bring the coalition to Nairobi to discuss pertinent issues of LAPSSET with government ministries, state corporations and international NGOs and institutions. The international media exposure helped to create some legitimacy for the Save Lamu coalition and its cause. This might have contributed to its fundraising success.

Actor power

If we explore power from an actor's perspective, two cases offer interesting examples: one involving a police officer in Philippines and the other a traditional earth priest in Ghana. The police officer in the Philippine MSP explained to the local fisher folk that his power to fine illegal groups using dynamite in fishing is limited, due to the political context. Local politicians have hidden power as they are linked to criminal groups. Thus, when these individuals are caught fishing illegally with dynamite, the police officer has to release them as instructed by higher police authorities. Despite his lack of resources to deal with criminal activities and illegal fishing, he was very motivated to play an active and positive role in the MSP in solving threats to seaweed farmers. He was an unexpected ally to the fisher folk and seaweed producers!

Culture shapes power dynamics. Based on the traditional beliefs of local communities in northern Ghana, earth priests are vested with significant authority, including over land issues. Through the MSP process in Ghana, the earth priests agreed to travel to a regional town to defend their views. This was seen as a huge effort from the local level to engage with powerful stakeholders in a town, who can employ several means to underscore their power position such as formal procedures for meetings.
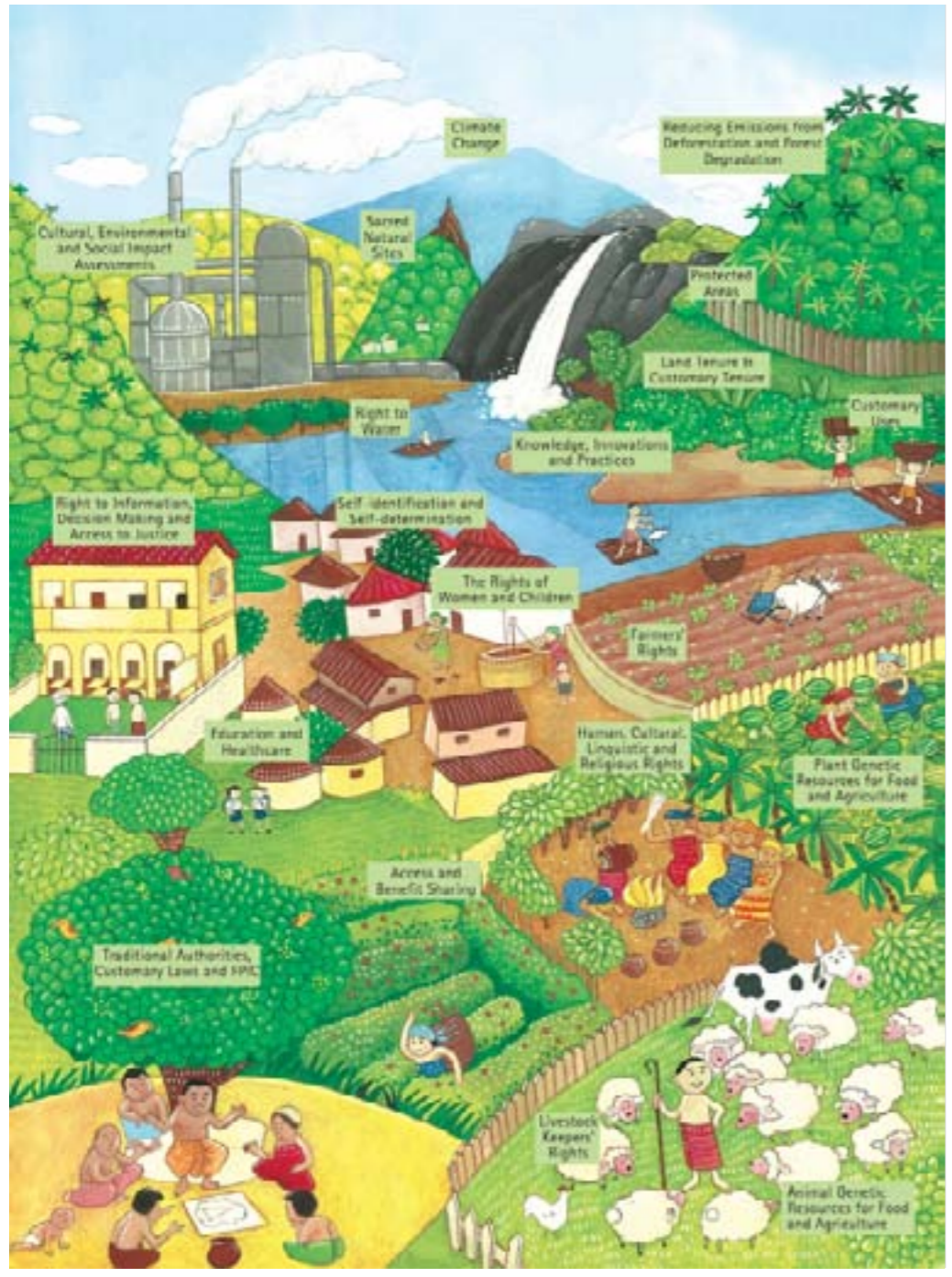
Hidden power

Paul Goldsmith elaborated on this structure:

The concepts of hidden and invisible power represent the most useful contribution of the MSP toolbox for the Lamu case study. Hidden power manifests itself as a matrix of informal and externally imposed rules on the local level. The power of narratives helps explain how hidden power sustained the systematic social exclusion of indigenous coastal Africans, the Arab-Swahili communities, pastoralists and other minorities that characterize post-independence governance in Kenya.

In terms of local, cultural knowledge of the 'rules of the game', it is important to reflect on communication, the use of language and how local stakehol-

"Many problems and solutions to conflicts in the cases researched relate to governance gaps"

While in customary law, people and nature are connected, formal law splits up all these elements.

http://naturaljustice.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/LivingConventiononBioculturalDiversity-FirstEdition2012-1.pdf

ders proudly use proverbs, sayings, metaphors and poetry.

Creating spaces

Empowerment of disadvantaged stakeholders often starts with becoming aware of their 'power within'. A next step can be to jointly mobilize this 'power within' as 'power with'. This calls for collective action. To create or even claim spaces for engagement is important for disadvantaged stakeholders to engage in the MSP. The fact that disadvantaged stakeholders also have power was a revelation for many least-empowered stakeholders in several cases.

Legal space for empowerment

In the cases of the ETC Foundation in Ghana and Kenya, the local communities were assisted by NGOs to develop Biocultural Community Protocols (BCP). These protocols describe the rights and responsibilities of local communities within the context of local customary stewardship roles as well as national legal frameworks. Most governments subscribe to the UN conventions and have ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity. The MSP action research complemented the NGO support to the communities to explore and clarify the negotiation dimensions of a BCP. Pilly Martin, action researcher in Kenya, commented on the link between BCPs and the MSP:

> One of the tools that the communities were excited about was the Biocultural Community Protocol. Communities find the BCP to be an opportunity to finally say who they are, what their history is, where they came from, how they settled there, what their values are, what their resources are, e.g. pastures for grazing, forests for honey, water for fishing. This is what makes us who we are, this is our identity. The BCP promises to bring out all these issues and the communities can claim some identity space that has been missing. As a connecting factor, the BCP informed the communities on land rights from different legal perspectives as well as their right to be informed on the LAPSSET project. The BCP has thus been a very empowering tool in an era characterized by land contestation and denial of access to resources. The communities now want to claim their space. The BCP provides that space.

Many local researchers in this TLP expressed that it was hard to combine research and facilitation roles. Getting involved in the MSP inevitably leads to increased expectations. It was considered much simpler to just collect data as a researcher, and present it at the end, than to design the action research as a collective sense-making and learning opportunity for all stakeholders. However, the action research approach to power dynamics helped stakeholders gain more ownership of the process and potentially could lead to more sustainable results.

Insight #**3**

Use specific tools to clarify power dynamics in MSP

The toolbox presented in the methodological framework was developed after the inception workshop in December 2011. According to the evaluators, the toolbox added value in this Thematic Learning Programme by providing the local researchers with a practical way to set up the action research process. Below we present some of the tools as applied in the action research on power dynamics in MSPs.

Four Quadrants of Change, ICCO - Guatemala

People easily get into arguments about 'correct strategies' to realize change. Often with a little bit of dialogue, they discover that they are actually talking about complementary strategies. Then, they start to understand the limitation of their own advocated strategy, and that it cannot succeed on its own. These types of insights spurred Ken Wilber to popularize an integral approach to support a comprehensive and integrated view of the world. A key product of this work is what is now referred to as the 'four-quadrant' diagram. Below, the Four Quadrants Of Change Framework is filled by community organizations in forestry programmes in Guatemala.

This tool can be used in different stages of an MSP, but particularly at a moment when strategies for change are discussed. It helps to generate conversations that bring out the essence of participants' notions of change. Its use has resulted in the realization that intervention and action strategies developed by community organizations and those who support them should be multi-layered. In the

	INTERIOR	**EXTERIOR**
INDIVIDUAL	**PSYCHOLOGICAL** Concerned with one's own sense of being, self-confidence, knowledge, capacities and perceptions.	**INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONS** Concerned with behaviour, developing relationships and personal networks: family cohesion, conflict management in ACOFOP Board, capacities to develop, negotiate, be diplomatic.
COLLECTIVE	**CULTURE / SOCIAL** Concerned with collectively held cultural values of fairness and justice: sustainability, self-sufficiency, no favouritism, mutual respect and equal rights, transparency, initiatives promoted.	**STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS** Concerned with governance, decision-making processes and formal institutions: ACOFOP Board and elections, by-laws, membership, innovation, influence in forestry legislation.

Guatemala MSP, a meeting with top management of ACOFOP was held to define the most important questions for change to be discussed by a group of representatives of the community organizations and the ACOFOP Board:

Internal relations within ACOFOP. Questions to be considered were:
- how to strengthen the participation of members in the community organizations; how to strengthen gender and empowerment, whilst maintaining social coherence
- how to strengthen local economic development and employment in the community organization.

External relations. Questions to be considered were:
- how to develop the collective business and value chain;
- how to deal with government institutions;
- how to expand membership in the multi-stakeholder platform..

In general when implementing this tool, participants are grouped on the basis of the prepared questions, and they receive a marker pen and a few sheets of paper. Before the group discussion starts, participants are asked to reflect individually on the question, and write down short key words on the sheets of paper. In plenary, the leaders of each group give concrete examples of strategies for change within the framework of their MSP and their question on a flip chart or wall, applying the 4QC framework. To further organize a diverse number of suggestions into coherent strategies for change, these suggestions are located in four quadrants of change. Thus, the interrelation of the different change strategies are clarified. The results of this exercise for the Ghana case are presented in the table below.

The MSP train concept in the citrus value chain, Fair Trade Original – Ghana

Participants described the concept of MSP as an interlinked train system moving in a defined direction with a defined purpose. The train moves the primary stakeholders who are seated in the compartments. These comprise the farmers, organized in associations; the processor - Fruittiland; the importer - Fair and Organic Products; and the wholesaler - Fair Trade Original. Other specific stakeholders include Fair Trade International, FLO Certifier (the inspector), GIZ and International Fertiliser Development Centre, and the IFDC as donors. The engine of the train indicates the force that drives the stakeholders. The rail is conceptualized as fair trade while the smoke shows the extent of victory or success of the multi-stakeholder processes in the citrus value chain. The citrus fruit, seen along the rail and on the canopy of the tree brings the stakeholders together.

The MSP train concept explains how the stakeholders are interlinked and interrelated in the citrus value chain. It shows that the standards and principles set by fair trade give the direction of the chain. A dynamic MSP is therefore needed to provide good quality 'fuel' and the best 'driving or piloting skills' to make the fair trade value chain successful. The concept therefore explains that the stronger the machine, the whiter the smoke and vice versa. Thus, the strength of the MSP determines the success of the citrus value chain.

	INTERIOR	EXTERIOR
INDIVIDUAL: initial engagement in the MSP	**PSYCHOLOGICAL** At the most basic level, emphasis on personal confidence and participation.	**INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONS** Focus on existing relations within family and groups, assertiveness.
COLLECTIVE: advanced, collective engagement in the MSP	**CULTURE / SOCIAL** Focus on the development of knowledge and capacities: To know (internal) To be able to (environment) To be motivated (culture, interpersonal, structure, $)	**STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS** Emphasis shifts to being able to communicate 'in public', to speak clearly and organize thoughts.

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http://youtu.be/vBSw9P-H6Gc

Powerhouse, ETC Foundation - Kenya

Stakeholder power analysis is crucial to inform advocacy and negotiation. During the second MSP meeting, the power cube was discussed with members of the Save Lamu coalition and representatives from ethnic communities, such as hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, farmers and fisher folk. The dimensions of the power cube were written in English and Pilly translated the concepts into Kiswahili. To facilitate understanding, the power cube became a powerhouse, using analogies of Islamic architecture in Lamu. People were asked how they would fit themselves and other groups involved in the LAPSSET project into the powerhouse. This led to a very animated discussion.

For example, in the figure above:
The door represents the visible economic power of the communities at local and national levels, and is a powerful symbol of Lamu culture.
- The window represents formal/closed power, crossing the local and national levels, e.g. the Government of Kenya Vision 2030, which communities are unable to participate in.
- An example of internalized power is the BCP that communities have been developing. It is internalized because it reflects their histories, cultures and customary governance of resources.
- People felt that elected local leaders had hidden power since they only have power when they talk to local people, but are not listened to at the national level. A window with dotted lines represents this.
- The half-open window represents invited space at local and national level. For example, the government created the Lamu Port Steering Committee, which Save Lamu coalition members are now invited to participate in. However, they are not involved in agenda setting.

It is worth noting that the global level is also represented at the regional level. It is crucial to point out that changes in power are possible over time due to changes in the socio-political environment. What happens at one level can affect power dynamics at other spaces of power, and may limit space for participation and affect the forms of power as well.

Resource dependencies mapping tool, ICCO - Philippines

In analysing goals and interest in MSP, it is advisable to identify the basic individual interests, as well as the common and conflicting interests. These are important aspects in the effective handling and management of power relations, and in ensuring sustainability of the MSP. It could help actors better appreciate and understand each other's situation, become more sensitive to others' interests, and identify ways of strengthening collaboration among themselves. It must be noted that a MSP involves multiple actors and indeed multiple interests.

The initiators (i.e. NGOs) of the MSP must recognize that other actors' primary motivations in involving themselves in a MSP are founded on each of their individual basic interests (i.e. personal or altruistic, organizational/institutional, economic, political, etc.). While the NGOs have in their interests and agenda the improvement of the marginalized groups (poverty alleviation), they should also be sensitive to the interests of other actors that join the MSP. As such, interdependency of interests can be clearly defined, which will likewise serve as the basis for its strengthening. For example, the fisher folks' need for increased income and a sustainable livelihood are the mandate of the NGOs, as well as of government institutions. Concern for environmental preservation

Figure 1:
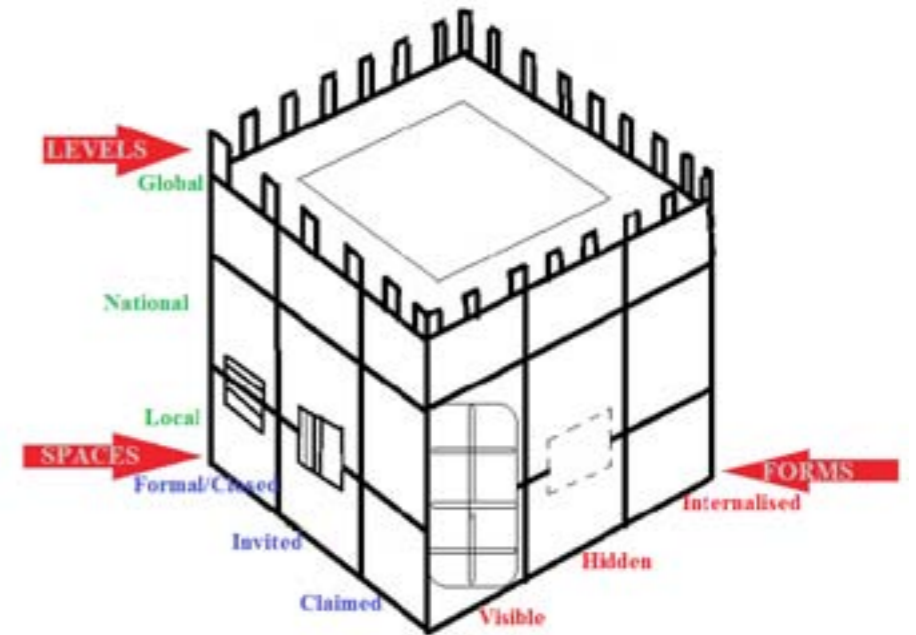
is a common interest of all stakeholders within the seaweed network. Nevertheless, the entry of other new (i.e. powerful) actors to the MSP may lead to changes in the whole configuration of managing the conflicting interests of different stakeholders. Analysing both material and non-material resources (of actors) must be directed toward determining the agenda and basis and degree of influence of the varying actors involved. Information on resource dependency can be gathered in a matrix (resource dependency scan) containing the type of resources, each actor's role (i.e. recipient, provider or co-equal), areas to be strengthened (dependency) and requirements for strengthening these areas.

In a MSP in a value setting, resource dependencies between actors are discernible and can be illustrated in several facets, namely: i) between operators in the chain (vertical dependencies involving business

Table 1: Stakeholder Register

Name of stakeholder	Type (PO/coop, NGO, govt., private, etc.)	Function(s)/ role(s)	Activities	Goals/ interests (Value chain and/or MSP)	Resources
1. … 2. …					

PENPEN LIBRES

PHILIPPINES

ACTION RESEARCHER
SEAWEEDS VALUE CHAIN

http://youtu.be/dPga19H2rGA

Table 2: Resource dependency scan

Name of stakeholders	Type of resource (e.g. financial, training, inputs)	Role in dependency (e.g. provider, recipient, co-equal)	What needs to be strengthened	Requirements for strengthening	Remarks
A. With existing dependency/ collaboration					
1. … 2. …					
A. Potential dependency/ collaboration					
1. … 2. …					

transactions); ii) between operators and supporters (characterized by provider-recipient relations); and, iii) between supporters (or co-equals). The information in the matrix can be plotted overlapping the value chain map that is called the resource dependency map in a value chain. This can help determine who is dependent on whom and on what resource/s, who provides more, who are co-equals, etc..

Biocultural Community Protocol, ETC Foundation - Ghana

CIKOD, a Ghanaian non-profit organization, introduced the idea of developing a Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP) as a tool for the people of Tanchara to negotiate with external parties and assert their rights. Legal instruments were derived from national and international agreements on human rights, biodiversity, agriculture, climate change and cultural heritage. For example, under the Convention on Biological Diversity communities have the right:
- to be consulted prior to a party obtaining access to genetic resources (CBD Article 15(5) and Nagoya Protocol Article 6(2));
- to be fully informed of the nature of access of genetic resource (CBD Article 15(5) and Nagoya Protocol Article 6(2));
- to give or withhold permission or consent for the sharing of the genetic resource (CBD Article 15(5) and Nagoya Protocol Article 6(2));
- to negotiate access to a genetic resource under mutually agreed terms (CBD Article 15(4) and Nagoya Protocol Article 7);
- for efforts to be made to ensure that communities, as the owners of genetic resources, can fully participate in the scientific research on such genetic resources (CBD Article 15(6));
- to receive a fair and equitable share in the results of research and benefits that arise from the com-

mercial (or other) use of a community's genetic resources or traditional knowledge (CBD Article 15(7)) based on mutually agreed terms (Nagoya Protocol Article 5(2) and (5)). Benefits can be monetary or non-monetary (Nagoya Protocol Article 5(3));
- to have taken into consideration their customary laws, community protocols and procedures with respect to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources (Nagoya Protocol Article 12(1)); and
- not have restricted the customary use and exchange of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge within and amongst communities (Nagoya Protocol Article 12(4)).

The private sector (including researchers who intend to or eventually use genetic resources or traditional knowledge for profit) does not have legally binding obligations if they are not contracting parties to the relevant international laws. However, as 'users' of genetic resources and traditional knowledge, businesses and researchers have the responsibility to:
- share the benefits of genetic resources and traditional knowledge with owners and to support the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components globally (Nagoya Protocol Article 10);
- provide information regarding prior informed consent, the source of the genetic resource, establishment of mutually agreed terms and/or utilization of genetic resources to a designated checkpoint within a host government (Nagoya Protocol Article 17(1)); and
- comply with any reporting requirements as a user of genetic resources/traditional knowledge set out in mutually agreed terms (Nagoya Protocol Article 17(1)(b)).

BCPs are tools to address conflicts facing communities and external users of the same area that share and use genetic and natural resources and associated traditional knowledge. In Ghana, a first draft of the BCP was made in April 2011. This drew on information gathered during the ongoing community development work, including mapping of the sacred groves, wetlands and burial grounds, and traditional decision-making structures. The draft was then discussed with community groups – men, women, elders, youth and traditional leaders – to ensure that all parts of the community had a say. The draft BCP documented the community's cultural values, vision for endogenous development, customary rights and responsibilities, and institutions and processes for Prior Informed Consent.

In 2012, the 'Tanchara BCP' was complemented with information on legal rights by the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) in Ghana. The CHRAJ documented community rights according to customary, national and international laws, and the findings were included in the BCP. The anticipated legal recognition of customary laws in Ghana, as promoted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Nagoya Protocol (Article 12), will be a significant boost in the people of Tanchara's efforts to assert their rights. After its completion, the protocol will be signed by the Chief, the Queen Mother and the Tingandem, the earth priests. Hopefully, the District Chief Executive and Paramount Chief will also sign the BCP. Following the communities' protests, gold mining by Azumah Resources has been postponed to 2013. This is a very significant achievement for the Tanchara community.

Participatory maps, Both Ends – Indonesia

The least-empowered in this MSP are the indigenous people living in West Kalimantan, one of the top palm oil producing regions in the world, who are faced with claims on their lands. Empowerment of local communities to face external threats is important to protect their land rights and customary rights to manage the forest. Use was made of the tool 'Positions of power sources'. Discussions with government officials showed their internal powers (such as budget allocations) and external powers (such as handling conflicts with companies as a party of the conflict) with the aim of integrating the competing interests on a 'unification map'. This map is intended to help avoid future land tenure conflicts. It is accompanied by a written document that describes the socio-cultural and economic resources that are identified on the map.

The MSP process started with a technical workshop at provincial level, where participatory mapping was discussed with 26 key stakeholders representing 15 institutions, such as NGOs, government agencies, forestry research institutes, companies and communities. The first day of the workshop was dedicated to discussing participatory mapping in Sanggau and for separate discussions on the various land uses as understood by the government and the communities. The next day, the compilation of uses onto one map showed which areas have overlapping claims. These overlapping claims were taken forward in the next workshops as part of a negotiation process, both at village level and with government representatives.
During workshops at village level, people from different sections within the communities were taught how to use GPS systems and compasses. Then they mapped the area they had selected. Later the sub-villages maps were combined into a village map. In the map, different colours indicate different land uses: oil palm plantations (green), rubber plantations (yellow) and tembawang (orange).

Tembawang represents the customary forest and land management system practised by the Dayak Bidayuh in Sanggau. It consists of communal natural forest, islands of secondary forest, managed honey trees, rubber plantations, swidden fallow, swidden lands, rice fields, village and home area in swidden lands. The society of Dayak Bidayuh recognizes three authorization concepts of land:

- Federation right, namely the property of the current tribe that inhabits a village. Outsiders from the federation of adat (custom) do not have rights to that property.
- Right of parenean represents a group property of a certain society inherited from forest clearing for farmland. Other residents of the village do not have the right to collect the products of that tembawang.
- Individual right, empu oko, is individual property held by one core family, obtained from previous forest clearing of the tribe property.

The NGOs supporting communities explored their participatory way of working with the villages, and are investigating how to incorporate their maps in an official map that will be approved by the National Land Agency. Follow-up MSP meetings, which include the companies, were planned for August 2012.

Expression & faces of power, Fair Trade Original (FTO)– South Africa

Fair Trade Original contracted a local researcher, Sanmari Hennop, to make an action research report on MSP processes in their fair trade supply chain

http://youtu.be/-TIhcmacDOk

in South Africa. The researcher used findings from a research project conducted by Arati Pandya and Anand Das, in which they visited ten different trading companies in India, Bangladesh and Nepal that underwent European Fair Trade Association (EFTA) Assessments in 2010 and 2011. EFTA consists of eleven fair trade importers from nine European countries. They support trading partnerships based on dialogue, transparency and respect and seek greater equity in international trade. Fair Trade Original is one of these EFTA members and it guarantees its customers that all products under its brand are produced according to the ten fair trade principles, see 'Our working methods' in http://fairtrade.nl/EN/MainContent/Home.aspx

Principle 1:	Creating Opportunities for Economically Disadvantaged Producers
Principle 2a:	Transparency and Accountability
Principle 2b:	Chain Responsibility
Principle 3:	Fair Trading Practices
Principle 4:	Payment of Fair Prices and Wages
Principle 5a:	Child Labour
Principle 5b:	No Forced Labour
Principle 6a:	Non-discrimination and Gender Equity
Principle 6b:	Freedom of Association
Principle 7a:	Working Conditions
Principle 7b:	Health & Safety
Principle 8:	Capacity Building
Principle 9:	Promotion of Fair Trade
Principle 10:	Environment

The action research by FTO in South Africa was done in parallel with the EFTA assessment process of the producers in the South African supply chain. The research on the MSP was done through observation and direct engagement with supply chain actors utilizing the research tools.

Power is a significant factor in supply chain relations. In most conventional supply chains the buyer is seen as the actor with the most power, and the workers are seen as those with the least power. Their power is limited to influencing their circumstances in the context of the supply chain. In a fair trade supply chain it is envisaged that power is more equitably distributed along the supply chain and that all key actors have more equal power relationships. Each key actor or group has different interests and goals.

Sources of power

'Power to' promotes the idea that every individual has the ability to make a difference. The fair trade principles are based on dialogue, transparency and respect. Fair trade contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers, and it thus gives the 'power to' all stakeholders involved in these supply chains. However the EFTA fair trade assessment system was not developed by the marginalized workers and producers, but by the most powerful parties in the chain: the importers and their clients (Wereldwinkels and WAAR winkels). The same applies to product development and quality, where the client has the power to make the final decision.

'Power with' refers to acting as a unit or joining forces in a collective action in an MSP setting. Various actors in a supply chain will usually have similar interests and goals, experiences and knowledge. It therefore makes sense for them to work together if possible to pool these resources in order to reach a common goal.

'Power within' refers to the internal self-worth of an individual. This is enhanced in a MSP setting through capacity building of individuals and by raising their aspirations about change. The fair trade principle 8, 'Capacity Building', challenges EFTA-assessed producers to develop the power within their individual employees.

Faces of power

Visible power in the fair trade supply chains exists on three levels. Firstly, visible power is exercised by FTO in the dictation of product type, volume and price. Secondly, visible power is exercised by trading companies in their choice of producers to supply the requested product into the FTO market channel. The last area of visible power is not as direct as the previous two, and lays in the requirements of the EFTA standard. For producers to be part of this system and the FTO supply chain they must comply with the principles of the EFTA standard. They currently have very little influence on or 'power over' the structure and content of this standard, so in effect they need to comply with this standard in a top-down direction.

Hidden power is exercised when powerful people and institutions maintain their influence by setting and manipulating agendas and marginalizing the concerns and voices of less-powerful groups. In theory Fair Trade Original and trading companies could have hidden power over the producers if the former play according to a set of rules that are not understood by the producers and their workers. During the research, this was not found to be the case. To the contrary, FTO actively seeks to involve

the interests of all of the main actors in the fair trade supply chain. Producers also have a certain degree of hidden power with regards to their workers, since they do not always communicate effectively the relevant information they have about the FTO supply. For this particular supply chain to truly be characte-rized as a multi-stakeholder chain, this communica-tion needs to be improved.

Invisible power refers to when those with power are able to influence the belief systems of others. Problems and issues are kept away not only from the negotiation table but also from the knowledge of different people including those affected by the decision made. The second fair trade principle, 'Transparency & Accountability' in some way ad-dresses invisible power as it calls for transparency and accountability within the assessed businesses. There are different levels at which transparency is applicable and it is expected that transparency is present throughout the fair trade supply chain.

During the research it was also observed that a certain degree of invisible power exists in this supply chain. This was seen on the worker level, where workers are unaware of systems and beliefs created by the EFTA assessment and fair trade principles. Most workers are aware of the fair trade organiza-tion solely because the trust pays for their children's school fees. They are unaware of measures to be taken by producers on living wages that directly influence them.

Reflections

The various tools for power analysis are very useful, but in several of the action research assignments it was difficult to test the tools in-depth, mostly due to time and opportunity constraints. In the case of

NACGOND in Nigeria, no meetings lent themselves to the feasible application of the tools. The NGO co-alition, government, oil companies, judiciary, media and donors did not meet in an MSP setting during the action-research period. The researcher did, however, apply the rich picture tool and the tools for power ranking and expressions of power during individual conversations with key stakeholders.

Insight #**4**

Facilitate stakeholders to create improved decision-making rules

"And yet: money is not always wanted or helpful!"

The twelve cases selected for action research were very diverse, and also relied on interventions conducted by diversely skilled local researchers. This implies that we often had discussions about what the common denominator of the cases was: e.g. their degree of 'MSP-ness'. The convener organizations balanced between creating coherence on the one hand (emphasizing the seven common research and action questions) and allowing for context-specific solutions on the other (offering a menu of tools which researchers could pick from and adapt as they deemed fit). Skills for action research and facilitation indeed often resembled cord-dancing skills.

An MSP is broader than meetings

In reflecting about MSPs, we often think and talk about roundtables, and the importance of getting people to the table. However, roundtables – the meetings in themselves - are only a (small) part of the MSP. The MSP takes place in all kinds of formal and informal or bilateral settings, due to a complex pattern of relations among key stakeholders. If a multi-stakeholder approach is the strategy of a donor or an international NGO, they have to understand this complex pattern of relationships and see themselves as an essential part of the MSP. In addition, the MSP doesn't limit itself to formal dialogue, but incorporates all kinds of informal relations as well. People combine resources, knowledge and relations from different networks, including donors.

The power of money

And yet: money is not always wanted or helpful! For example, civil society organizations in the Niger Delta dealing with oil spills and gas flaring are often not interested in funding by oil companies. Accepting funding by oil companies makes civil society voiceless. In the Malawi case on home-based care, many caregivers surprisingly did not want to receive incentives, even though one of the intentions of the programme was to develop a minimum package of incentives. Their argument was that a faith community started Home-based Care Alliance and this voluntary work is part of a person's role as a believer.

The Alliance suggested using funds to strengthen the linkage between home-based care and safety-net programmes, rather than to pay for the volunteers.

Donor power in terms of determining conditions for funding for their partner organizations may hinder learning. Many civil society organizations that receive funding from northern donor agencies do not want to receive a negative assessment, as this may jeopardize their future existence. So they are careful and less open in discussions.

Action research and change

It is not easy to attribute changes for disadvantaged stakeholders to the action research process. However, the following trends emerged from many of the cases:

• an improved sense of clarity about the purpose of the cooperation, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved and improved internal communication of the stakeholders involved;
• new engagement in the cooperative process by stakeholders involved;
• a strengthened sense of ownership over the process of cooperation (less donor motivated);
• greater coherence in the cooperative MSP platform.

In many of the action research projects, it was quite

HERMAN BROUWER

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METHODOLOGICAL SUPPORT

http://youtu.be/spPMknRDjOl

difficult to create opportunities to effectively work with the whole stakeholder group at the same time in the same locality. Stakeholders involved in the cooperative process are often overburdened with their 'own' organizational activities and find it difficult to give sufficient time to action research in the cooperative process.
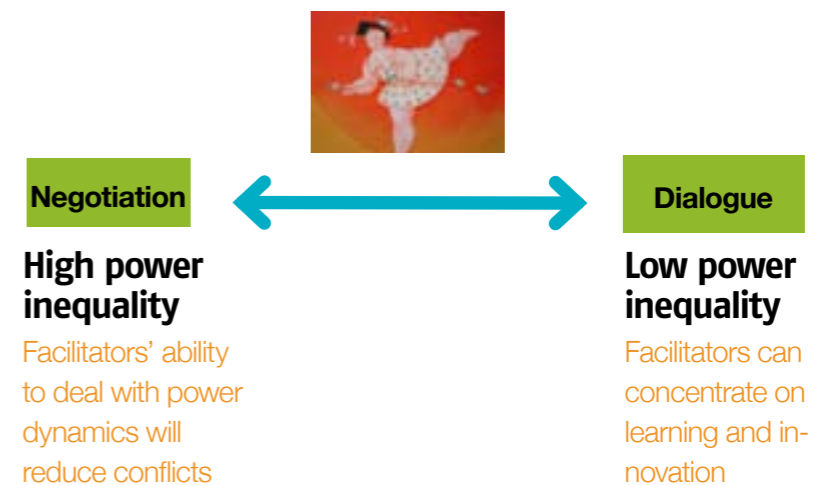
Once this takes place, it demonstrates engagement in the process and motivation to learn from practice and seek ways to overcome constraints. Participants have a recognized stake in the action research and its results.

The action research was based on field realities and thus resulted in deeper insights – not only deeper insights into conceptual aspects of the MSPs, but also into the changes of the rules of the game, and changes in attitudes of some of the stakeholders involved. In some situations local stakeholders are very aware of existing power relations and the MSP is more for external actors, e.g. the northern donors, who want to learn about strategies for dealing with power.

In the Kenyan case, capacity building for the least-

empowered stakeholders has been important for them to be well prepared for engaging in dialogues with external stakeholders at national level. The powerhouse tool (see insight #3) enabled the Save Lamu coalition to recognize the different stakeholders at different levels (local, national, international) and understand the concept of hidden power. In addition, the powerhouse helped them to strategize about relationships with other stakeholders including the media. The local researcher also conducted an organizational capacity assessment to enable the Save Lamu coalition to see where it needs organizational strengthening.

"capacity building for the least-empowered stakeholders has been important"

"deeper insights into the changes of the rules of the game"

Negotiation	Dialogue
High power inequality	**Low power inequality**
Facilitators' ability to deal with power dynamics will reduce conflicts	Facilitators can concentrate on learning and innovation

"the facilitator can help the parties clarify the issues for themselves"

A space to say 'no'

If local communities feel highly insecure about their rights, as in the case of communities in Kalimantan faced with land conflicts due to expanding oil palm plantations, this introduces the need to build capacity to enable them to gain a full understanding of their rights. This could include training in negotiation skills. This way they can be given the space to say 'no' if they chose to. A recent publication by Mariëtte van Huijstee of SOMO elaborates on choices for civil society organizations regarding whether or not to engage in multi-stakeholder initiatives: http://somo.nl/publications-nl/Publication_3786-nl

Empowerment could begin with the opinion makers and the influential members of the community, who could mentor and guide others. Among the communities themselves, building of consensus is important for meaningful negotiation and communication with other parties.

Roles of facilitators

Various stakeholders in the RSPO case expressed the hope that the facilitator could play a more 'involved' role and perhaps serve as an intermediary between the parties. To some extent, this facilitator was able to relay some of these wishes to the Dispute Settlement Facility. At the same time, it was possible to throw around some ideas to help the stakeholders consider their positions. It was clear that a researcher's role can easily become one of facilitating change. Inviting parties to offer and discuss their ideas, but without taking sides, the facilitator can help the parties clarify the issues for themselves and thereby help them move towards change.

Based on the perceived identities and interests, power is assigned to certain stakeholders, and needs to be made explicit. Especially the role of the facilitator should be examined, as this person often has interests and a stake in the outcome of the MSP while being assumed and trusted to be neutral. The tools in the toolbox also help to clarify the interests of the facilitator; if for example the facilitator is also included in the power ranking tool or the power cube.

Insight #**5**

"Make no mistake: the poor also have power!"

This action research was implemented in the context of a climate crisis, financial crisis and food crisis and aims to contribute to finding ways of effectively addressing these crises. Our 21st century reality is one of interconnected people and ecosystems, and the consequent complexity and multi-layered nature of issues. Has the action research resulted in major changes for the disadvantaged stakeholders, who are often the 'resource-poor'? Within the methodological framework of the TLP, some insights can be derived from answers to question 7: Have the least empowered been able to influence rules of decision-making?

actors of "equal" status and position."
According to the evaluators, "The reported impact of introducing a power focus in a multi stakeholder setting appears to have been beneficial for most stakeholders and appears to have enabled the development of better or different working relations between the powerless and those who have more power". (P.6 evaluation)

In the case of **fair trade citrus farmers in Ghana**, the farmer organizations' inherent 'power with' was a revelation. The farmer associations were formed some decades ago to address common challenges and jointly access resources (credits, inputs, training). This inherent 'power with' drives the association through good and challenging moments. This power is critical, because it is the essential factor that unites the farmers to act. This 'power with' thus becomes a key ingredient for farmers to sustain and promote the MSP.

For the least empowered to effectively use their power, several cases stress the importance of capacity building. The report on **fair trade citrus farmers in Ghana** states: 'The need to build and strengthen capacities of farmers (taking into account gender dynamics) is critical for the citrus value chain to have

The table below is compiled to present the reported changes from this action research:

Convener organization / MSP issue	Output	Reported changes
Both Ends: community rights and palm oil land planning, Indonesia	Spatial map	• Trust as an emergent property among NGOs, the local and national government • Decision-making rules invented along the way
Both Ends: RSPO Dispute Settlement Facility (DSF)	Conflict manual	• Capacity needs for DSF identified: education, communication • Companies need to understand the DSF, particularly the recognition of customary rights of indigenous peoples • Local community training needs: awareness of their legal rights; traditional leaders to understand customary and legal rights; support to allow them to choose their own representatives through customary decision making • Suggestion for DSF to establish a fund to pay for costs of a mediator
FTO: Citrus value chain / conflicting interests	Manual	• MSP train image to clarify interdependencies of key stakeholders in value chain • Tools adapted for literacy level primary audience • Manual 'How to conduct capacity needs assessment of citrus farmer-based organizations in Fair Trade Value chains' developed
FTO: Fair Trade assessments / stakeholder engagement	Manual	• FTO manual on assessments developed in Asia and tested in South Africa • More clarity on stakeholder power dynamics in fair trade value chains and assessments • Awareness that transparent and regular communication, especially on market developments, can create stakeholder cohesion and more regular engagement with fair trade principles
ICCO: ACOFOP / community influence & gender focus	Tested tools + description	• Gender strategy developed based on participatory process using the Four Quadrants of Change model • Organizational development: deeper reflection on successes and failures of ACOFOP and priority setting • Women and family interests recognized as mutually reinforcing • Women's voice more heard in organizational fora
ICCO: Seaweed value chain	Tested tools + description	• Stronger awareness of position and power in network • Increased risk awareness • Succeeded to explore power with provincial police, thus a relationship change • More numbers + more organization = more power
ETC: Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP) in Kenya	Guide on using BCPs in MSPs	• The MSP allowed trust building among different ethnic communities • The MSP meetings enabled some level of trust building between the District Commissioner and the Save Lamu coalition • Adaption of the power cube tool to a local 'Lamu power house' enabled community members to understand the concept of hidden power • The BCP enhances the MSP process and prepares the community in negotiations with other powerful stakeholders, e.g. oil companies • A manual to integrate BCP and MSP was drafted
ETC: Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP) in Ghana	Guide on using BCPs in MSPs	• Support from the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice educated the communities on contemporary and customary laws and conventions on their stewardship rights • MSP and BCP processes can be combined concurrently • The BCP represents community interests and provides standards of interaction for external actors to negotiate with them • A manual to integrate BCP and MSP was drafted
Cordaid: Role of CSOs in Oil Spill Regulatory Mechanism	Empowerment of NACGOND to operate strategically in MSP	• Improvement of management structure of NACGOND, to give members more equal footing (Unequal voting rights not yet solved). • Relationships with oil companies is changing from confrontational to more cooperation – without co-optation
Cordaid HBC Home Based Care / commitment	Agreement on minimum care package for home-based care volunteers	• Women participating in decision making of the home-based care policies • Increased awareness of Alliance about desired policies for home-based care
Waste: Evaluation franchise concepts in sanitation services	Evaluation of franchise concepts	• Agreement on creation, appointment and selection of an independent sanitation ombudsman who will oversee agreements and effective action

Make no mistake!

We end this section on changes for disadvantaged stakeholders by looking at a court process in Malaysia involving local communities. After 12 years of deliberations, the high court of Sabah and Sarawak passed judgement on land conflicts between local communities in Malaysia and an oil palm company (March 2010). The court recognized the native customary rights of local communities to their lands. This gave the local community a basis on which to take retaliatory steps against the company. By wielding this 'power of protest' as a collective body, the community was able to cripple the companies' local operations and work schedule. When asked about the imbalance of power, the company representative said: 'Make no mistake. The power is with the community. We cannot go into the plantation at all. They have managed to stall everything.' As Ramy Bulan wrote:

> This brings home the fact that everyone has some power and he or she can claim that space and exercise that 'power over' another. The resources of the community lay not in economic power, but in their unity and 'single voice'.

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ROUNTABLE SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL

http://youtu.be/3JtbsMmPJVc

Conclusions

The external evaluators Russell Kerkhoven and Marc Coenders indicated in their report (http://goo.gl/sjMaI) that the TLP's focus on power in MSPs is:
...an exciting attempt to explore an often recognized, but seldom addressed issue of power in multi-stakeholder programmes. Although there are many academic studies of power, there is only limited evidence that indicates impact at the community or stakeholder level. The details of this impact appear through the reports of the action researchers: better or different working relations between the powerless and those who have more power emerged.

In this concluding chapter, we answer the four central learning questions agreed upon by the convening organizations:

1. How can local, or 'beneficiary' organizations, which are usually less-powerful stakeholders, be empowered to operate strategically in a multi-stakeholder setting?

Local, disadvantaged organizations can utilize their 'power within' and their 'power with' when engaging with external stakeholders. Power is deeply influenced by culture, beliefs and norms, and is therefore also referred to as 'invisible power'. Much of the stakeholder interactions in the MSPs are visible, but these interactions are only 'the tip of the iceberg'. The iceberg depicts the complexity of power dynamics – often material, tangible and agency-related power dynamics are the visible tip of the iceberg. What lies below is a huge proportion of dynamics that we cannot see well – structural forms of power that we internalize, cultural language, values and ceremonies that influence stakeholders and that are difficult to change. Power often resides beneath the surface and this is where local organizations have an advantage as they often deeply understand and exhibit these cultural norms and beliefs. In some cases, these deeply rooted structures, culture, behaviour and norms can lead to conservative, 'entrenched' positions. It may not be easy to change these, but experience has shown that inventive approaches such as working with theatre or cartoons can create entrances to discuss these positions.

'Power with' refers not only to having strength in numbers, but also to the quality and extensiveness of networks that stakeholders have access to. Local organizations can be empowered by supporting their capacities to connect and engage with other stakeholders. These can be like-minded stakeholders who together can form a common front, but also stakeholders with completely different interests and mindsets. Developing the capability to interact and network with these different stakeholders can be a real asset in becoming a more strategic player in an MSP.

2. How can power differences between stakeholders be taken into account in the development of multi-stakeholder cooperative processes in order to ensure effective participation of the weaker/ smaller/ less-powerful stakeholders?

Learn by doing. As suggested by the proverb 'The song will emerge from the dance', we don't know how things will go, until we engage in the MSP.

Many action researchers emphasized the importance of NGO support to communities. This can take the form of financial resources, facilitation of meetings, application of power analysis tools or capacity building to ensure effective community participation in the MSP. Several researchers produced a manual or guide that will enable the less-powerful stakeholders to deal with power differences.

"Local, disadvantaged organizations can utilize their 'power within' and their 'power with'"

Is a good facilitator one who ensures effective participation of powerless stakeholders? As a minimum, he or she has to know the context and be familiar with specific power analysis tools throughout the MSP process. Facilitators come in and locate themselves in the MSP. Can they be fully objective and neutral, when the aim of their support is to empower the less powerful? Can they connect to all stakeholders, build trust, but also challenge stakeholders? Researchers in this TLP believe it is important that facilitators be able to create a space in which all stakeholders can participate, be heard and be seen. It is an art of hosting, of being inclusive. But who is reflecting on the facilitator's neutrality? Should neutrality and trustworthiness be primarily acknowledged by the local organizations, often the less powerful within the MSP? Often the community members do not trust 'a neutral person'; they assume there must be a hidden (power) agenda!

3. Given the growing involvement of local organizations in MSPs, what are the implications for relationships between local civil society organizations and northern agencies?
4. How should northern agencies deal with power imbalances when participating in or when otherwise related to MSPs?

These two questions were not addressed in great depth during the TLP. For some northern agencies, it may be difficult to get involved in sensitive conflicts or sensitive MSPs. Can northern agencies remain committed to such MSPs, even when the going gets tough? In other words: 'If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen'.

One of the roles for northern (donor) organizations is to allocate resources for capacity building on power dynamics in MSPs within their budgets. In some cases, northern agencies could advocate that their allies in the north also assume advocacy roles. For example, Cordaid could mobilize its Catholic constituency in the north, some members of which are shareholders of Shell, and form a pressure group that would be visible in the Annual General Meeting of shareholders of Shell. These shareholders could request attention for the Nigeria situation. This would be an act of solidarity with churches in Nigeria.

Epilogue

'We can't be creative if we refuse to be confused,' said Margaret Wheatley. If you go on a learning journey with over 30 people representing different organizational, cultural and academic backgrounds there is bound to be confusion every now and then. We experienced some confusion about the definitions of power and about the different roles of civil society in policy advocacy. The question is whether confusion is worth its price in the end. The external evaluators of this TLP concluded that there were 'impressive nodes of learning and inspirational results within the network of people and organizations that took part in this TLP'. This indicates that some of the emerging confusion eventually led to new insights and practices. The creativity involved was also demonstrated by the adaptations of research design and tools by many action researchers.

Participants of this TLP need to find new ways and networks to maintain, nurture and expand these newly gained insights and practices – as the TLP has come to an end. We hope that the resulting manuals, videos and documents will inspire convenors, action researchers and others to continue to reflect and learn, and to take this learning attitude into new places where they will engage with new people in new professional challenges.

Many of the convener organizations have on-going programmes through which the learning from this TLP will be continued. This includes the international value chain work of Fair Trade Original, ETC's work on Biocultural Community Protocols and Both Ends' work with various global commodity roundtables, to name just a few. The formal network that has been created through this TLP will cease to exist, but the connections made will be a sure asset in any further work its members undertake around the topic of power in multi-stakeholder processes.

What others said

The external evaluation of this TLP shed light on three design principles that were (sometimes unconsciously) used in this action research:
- diversity – the range of cases, the different and sometimes changing contexts;
- co-creation – the TLP as a collective effort;
- emergence – the on-going process of sense-making; producing a story together.

Three important conditions for action research using cases were met according to the evaluators. First, the researchers possessed a significant level of local situational knowledge and competence to act in complex processes. Second, a framework and a diverse set of tools were available to design and execute their action research. Third, guidance was provided by the convening group and external reference group through theory-based insights, exchange and joint reflection, and through coaching arrangements.

The evaluation further concluded that the TLP generated a substantial number of written outputs and material to report on the initial research questions - despite the inherent complexity of working with these three design principles. The effort to balance coherence (one set of research and action questions) and context-specificity (allowing deviations depending on the situation) was valued by participants. Still, more could have been done to help participants work through their individual research questions.

What's next in terms of connecting?

If this booklet makes you curious to learn more or connect to any of the organizations or individuals involved, do not hesitate to contact any of the convening or facilitating organizations. Much material of the TLP will be available on the Ning page of the Change Alliance, http://thechangealliance.ning.com/, the global network for multi-stakeholder engagement for development (requires login). If you would like to find more resources about multi-stakeholder processes, try the MSP portal of Wageningen UR, Centre for Development Innovation. If your interest is to explore power dynamics in more detail, try the Powerhouse Ning, a community of people interested in action and change through power analysis. Insert link If you want to learn more about Biocultural Community Protocols, see www.community-protocols.org.

What's next in terms of research?

Several new questions have emerged from this TLP that could guide future initiatives in this area:
1. It has become clear that the type of MSP greatly influences the possibilities for low-power stakeholders to exercise influence. Future research should help to specify the opportunities and limitations for stakeholders in various types of MSPs to exert influence. In other words, which strategies for influencing are available for which type of MSP? Which

strategy will most likely yield results, and under which conditions?

2. Future research should identify the conditions under which MSPs offer enough chances for low-power stakeholders to exercise influence, and under which conditions this will not take place. In the latter case low-power stakeholders could decide not to participate in an MSP.

3. Traditional leadership, norms and values embedded in culture sometimes appear to give opportunities for low-power stakeholders to exercise power. Future research could clarify the conditions under which this can happen.

4. Media appear to play a major role in MSPs. Future research could examine the role of the media, as well as clarify the possibilities that media offer to low-power stakeholders to realize their goals.

5. The possible roles of northern civil society organizations (and the implied opportunities and dilemmas) deserve more investigation. Though one of the four main questions of this TLP, this issue remains unclear.

Queen mothers in Techiman, Ghana discussing conflicts and the role of women in democracy. Traditional leadership, norms and values embedded in culture sometimes appear to give opportunities to low-power stakeholders to exercise power. See: http://www.youtube.com/user/cikodvideo?feature=mhee

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