



The World Bank Group's Common Property Resource Management Network

Guide to *CPRNet*

December 2000

The World Bank Group's Common Property Resource Management Network (*CPRNet*) is an international network open to practitioners, policy makers/managers, researchers and others interested in issues related to property rights and sustainable natural resource management. This includes, inter alia: Institutions and management of natural resources, Community-based natural resource management, Poverty-reduction strategies and Knowledge management, Relations between property rights regimes, and Traditional/local knowledge. *CPRNet* was established in 1995.

Background

For a correct understanding and analysis of CPRs, it is important to separate natural resources as such from the tenurial aspects of managing these resources. *CPRNet* is concerned with the latter institutional modalities.

CPRs cover all types of natural resources which are shared by a group of people or communities, including transboundary resources of two or more countries. They include: closed water bodies, coastal zones, community forests, mountain areas, open seas, pastures, rangelands, rivers and river basins, sacred groves, uncultivated waste areas, and wet-lands. There are resources like air, climate and the open seas where the CPR is referred to as a global commons. Whether localized or global, these resources continue to be important parts of community resources in developing countries.

In comparison with privately owned and managed, as well as state-controlled resources, CPRs play a crucial role in: (i) reducing rural poverty and inequality; (ii) maintaining local-level biodiversity and micro-level environmental stability; (iii) enhancing agricultural productivity and diversity; and (iv) promoting collective sharing and group action. These issues constitute key areas of concern for the World Bank Group.

The focus of the World Bank Group's work has, so far, largely been restricted to resource management issues where tenure is fairly clear, and to specific natural resources. Thus a large amount of work has been done on, for example, land tenure and administration in countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. There has so far been less focus on examining other, more complex and/or traditional, forms of tenure and management, as well as other natural resources, including aquatic areas, forests and rangelands. This focus on one, and neglect of other natural resources, and, by implication, the people dependent upon them, has sometimes had damaging effects on CPRs and those depending upon them.

Rationale for *CPRNet*

CPRNet is concerned with resource management regimes that require collaborative – often group-based – action. Guided by the above considerations, as well as the need for harnessing the potential of CPRs as an important component of development strategies in its own right, *CPRNet* aims to:

1. Enhance the awareness about CPRs and their importance within the World Bank Group as institutional modalities, but also as resources that are managed collectively, as well as susceptible to induced institutional development for CPRs;
2. Increase the understanding of the dynamic interplay between various types of property rights' regimes on the local level, and the importance of this for a correct targeting of World Bank Group investment operations;
3. Function as a clearinghouse for information and data on CPRs as they pertain to World Bank Group operations;
4. Create partnerships between World Bank Group staff and outside practitioners, whether individuals or organizations, through establishing and maintaining effective channels of communication (including, e.g., email, Newsletter and website), as communication with local practitioners is fundamental to the World Bank Group's work;
5. Link World Bank Group staff that need specific property rights-related operational input with outside practitioners and experts;
6. Define the salient characteristics of and conditions for viability of institutions for natural resources management; and,
7. Define and facilitate pro-active policies and operational work aimed at protection of CPRs.

Focus areas and issues

A list of some areas and issues that are currently being addressed by the World Bank Group and that have a CPR angle or connection, and the specific nature of these issues (incl. concerns, interests and requirements), would include the following (see Table 1).

Table 1. CPRs in the World Bank Group: Areas and issues

| Areas | Issues |
|--|---|
| Agriculture, Fisheries, Food security, Forestry, Range-land mgmt., Water | Agricultural intensification, Agroforestry, Crop-livestock complementarities, CPR-PPR complementarities (CPRs as support lands for croplands), Diversified agriculture; Integrated coastal zone mgmt., Irrigation, Rangeland mgmt., Resource-centered research and development, River basin mgmt., Water resources mgmt., Watershed mgmt., etc. |
| Biodiversity, Environment | Annual-perennial linkages and biomass stability, Biodiversity outside protected areas, Biophysical rehabilitation of degraded/waste lands, Deforestation and overgrazing, Economic benefits of CPRs, Environmental law, IPRs, Future of marginal lands, Medical anthropology, Micro-environment issues and land degradation, Micro water-shed (hydrology) stability, Natural resource management, Participatory approaches, Public forests and parks, TRIP, TRRs, etc. |
| Poverty, Policy work | Gender, Indigenous peoples; Land intensification programs, Land policies, Land titling, Open access resources and options for rural poor, Tenure security, Resettlement, Resource access and autonomy issues, etc. |
| Social policy, Programs | Beneficiary assessment and public consultation, Civil society and grassroots level initiatives and group action, Community-based development, Community-based natural resource mgmt., Conflicts and conflict mgmt., Gender, Indigenous peoples, Indigenous resource use systems and their relevance, Intellectual property rights, Internal equity and access, Local and traditional institutions, Local-level initiatives on resource upgrading and regulation, Participatory approaches, Resettlement, Social assessment, Traditional knowledge, User groups and NGOs, etc. |

Notes: This table does not aim to be exhaustive. Also, the available terminology is not always clear, and some Issues for this reason will be partly overlapping. Finally, the relationship between Areas and Issues is not definite, and there is permeability of Issues across the Areas.

Within this very broad set of areas and issues, *CPRNet* will focus on a smaller set of selected issues. The actual focus of *CPRNet*'s work will depend on the interest of the members, and the expertise and resources at disposal. Over time the focus is likely to change, reflecting changing priorities and interests on the part of members as well as changing external priorities.

Scope and Content

CPRNet aims to be a community of practice for its members, and promotes exchange of information on CPR management, including the relation between CPR regimes and other property rights regimes. *CPRNet* is located within a general intellectual and applied context consisting of a broad, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to natural resource management that is emerging within the World Bank Group as well as internationally, aimed at sustainable local-level natural resource management within the context of a transparent, supportive, and collaborative nation-state. This context emphasizes sustainable development, community-based management of natural resources, institutional reform, legal codification of relevant local institutions, and collaborative approaches – including partnerships – involving a wide range of stakeholders (see the section “Community-Based Natural Resource Management”).

It follows that a major emphasis is placed on awareness-raising of World Bank Group staff and others, followed by supporting them in working with CPRs, both at the policy level and at the operational level. Furthermore, *CPRNet* promotes World Bank Group policy dialogues and investment operations aimed at supporting and facilitating community-based natural resource management.

The primary way in which this is done is through the *CPRNet* Newsletter, the *CPRNet* mailing lists, the *CPRNet* National Chapters, and the *CPRNet* Seminar Series. Of particular importance is the emphasis given to such exchange of information between outside practitioners and experts on the one hand and World Bank Group staff on the other hand, whether as members of *CPRNet* or not. The type of information circulated includes (but are not necessarily restricted to) the following:

1. Announcements of seminars, conferences, presentations, or meetings relevant to CPRs;
2. Relevant findings and recommendations reached at such meetings;
3. Information available in periodicals and technical publications to which network members subscribe;
4. Pertinent information posted on relevant Internet listservs and mailing lists;
5. Interesting lessons of experience from particular countries, regions and projects; and,
6. Requests for help or assistance in technical or managerial tasks.

Community-based natural resource management

Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) needs to be institutionalized to be effective. While the structure of each situation will be different, involving different sets of actors and interests, there is a need for an institutional framework that builds upon the shared values of communities while providing positive incentives for individual action. Four related elements of any institutional framework include:

1. Effective community-based groups, both at the local level and scaled up to the regional level;
2. Effective operational linkages between the public sector, the private sector, and community-based groups in management of natural resources;
3. Effective approaches to conflict management with regard to use of natural resources, at all levels; and,

4. An enabling policy and institutional environment, at macro and micro levels, that fosters support of existing community-based institutions, or the emergence of new institutions, to manage natural resources locally.

Successful reform in each of these areas is also dependent on the ability to develop legitimate fora and process for addressing these issues – processes which have the highest level of political commitment, which involves all legitimate stakeholders, and which is transparent and accountable.

Such institutional reform processes also needs to be supplemented by concerted efforts to build human capacity at all levels – from community-based organizations to central government agencies – both to realize the above institutional arrangements as well as administer them over time.

Approaches and activities

CPRNet has a strong dissemination and advocacy orientation, rooted in the experiences of practitioners dealing with the social dimensions of natural resource management.

Newsletter. Most information dissemination is done through the monthly *CPRNet* Newsletter. Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome.

Mailing lists. Specific information is posted to the mailing lists, including updates of the Register of Members.

National chapters. National Chapters exists in Bangladesh and Burkina Faso. Efforts are underway to establish a Chapter in Mauritania. As the Chapters grow, both in numbers and activities, it will be necessary to find ways and means to support them.

Notes. This is a publication series that contains “good practice” documentation on ongoing work relating to CPR and/or CBNRM management. The Notes have a more-or-less standard structure (initial situation, reform/change process, outcome and lessons learned), are brief (4-5 pages), informal, and are only distributed electronically.

Common property resource management and the World Bank. In this seminar series invited speakers, both World Bank Group staff and others, present and discuss their work on CPR issues. The topics covered range widely in terms of geographic location, type of property resource, type of intervention, and lessons learned.

ESSD core database. Under this project database, presently available only on the World Bank Group’s intranet, a perspective on “Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Property Rights” has been established. The perspective, jointly sponsored by *CPRNet* and ongoing work by the World Bank Institute (formerly the Economic Development institute and the Learning and Leadership Center) on CBNRM, provides ready access to the relevant project portfolio, and supports comparative work and research across a range of parameters.

Other activities. In collaboration with selected World Bank Group units and outside partners, *CPRNet* aims to contribute to and be involved in: training for World Bank Group staff and others, applied research on CPRs, and dissemination of good practices.

Preliminary conclusions

The results so far with *CPRNet* can be summarized as follows: (i) There is increased awareness about the crucial importance of CPRs for sustainable management of natural resources and for the well-being of large segments of the population in certain areas; (ii) The CPR agenda is expanding, both inside the World Bank Group and in partnership with outside organizations; (iii) New critical analysis is forth-coming; and, (iv) CPRs play a central role in the context of the World Bank Group’s emphasis on poverty reduction, specifically in regard to risk reduction and poverty-equity-livelihood strategies.

Based upon these results, a strategy for *CPRNet* is gradually emerging that is focused around the intersection of CPRs and poverty reduction, within a context of strategic knowledge management and community-based natural resource management. CPRs are central to the livelihood and coping strategies of many of the poor categories of people that are marginalized with respect to the mainstream, for a variety of reasons (ethnic, political, geographical/topographical, etc.). This strategy fits well with the World Bank Group's goals, it allows for reaching out to and collaborating with a range of relevant approaches and work underway across the World Bank. Importantly, this is a low-cost and effective means of reducing poverty.

Membership

CPRNet members are both World Bank Group staff and others working on a range of issues relating to, or incorporating, a CPR focus.

World Bank Group Members. World Bank Groups staff members work in all the World Bank Group's regions and sectors, and in all networks and families.

Non-World Bank Group Members. The outside members represent NGOs, civil society in more general terms, the private sector, the public sector, research and training, and are constituted by people with a broad diversity in terms of training, background and approach to CPR management.

Application for Membership. Membership Application Forms can be requested from the Coordinator (see below). *CPRNet* is based on electronic communication and networking, and prospective members need to have an email address, or else have access to an email address.

Membership Statistics. *CPRNet* has over 300 members, among them both individual and institutional members. Approximately 50 percent of the members are World Bank Group staff.

Partnerships

CPRNet gives emphasis to establishing partnerships with like-minded organizations and NGOs.

Access to email lists

World Bank Group Staff Members: The complete *CPRNet* mailing list can be accessed by typing the following at the "TO:" prompt in the Message Header (capitalization is not necessary): <CPRNet - All>. To address only World Bank Group staff use this list: <CPRNet - WB staff>. To address only non-World Bank Group staff, use this list: <CPRNet - External>.

Outside Members: Based on a received *CPRNet* mail, use the "answer" or "reply" function (depending on the mail software) and create a personal distribution list.

Access to web-based information

CPRNet's main website is at: www.cbnrm.net/resources/organizations/cprnet/index.html. *CPRNet*'s website on the World Bank Group's intranet is: <http://essd.worldbank.org/essd/sdv/sdvhome.nsf/CPRNETView?OpenView>. A link to this page is available on the website of the World Bank Group's Rural Family.

General information about *CPRNet* is available on the World Bank Group's external web site, under "Partnerships" at: <http://www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/prt-essd.htm#cprnet> as well as on the International Association for the Study of Common Property (IASCP)'s website, at: <http://www.indiana.edu/~iascp/cprnet.html>.

Management

The Coordinator. The responsibility for day-to-day management lies with the Coordinators (currently Lars T. Soeftestad and Hans-Werner Wabnitz). The Coordinator is advised by an Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee consists of: (i) World Bank Group staff in operations and central units; (ii) Non-World Bank Group staff; and, (iii) representatives of the *CPRNet* National Chapters. Members in categories (i) and (ii) will, in some cases, represent their respective region/department, in other cases they are members in their individual capacity. Contact the Coordinator for a list of the members in the Advisory Committee including their contact information.

The Coordinators, Contact Information. (A) Lars T. Soeftestad – *Postal Address:* 3651 North Harrison Street, Arlington, Virginia 22207-1843, United States; *Phone:* +1 703 534 4492; *Fax:* +1 703 534 4466; *Cell phone:* +47 908 23 006; *Email:* Lars@cbnrm.net. (B) Hans-Werner Wabnitz – *Postal Address:* 1818 H Street NW, Washington D.C., United States. *Phone:* +1 202 ??? ????; *Fax:* +1 202 ??? ????; *Email:* Hwabnitz@worldbank.org