

STREAM



Second SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Languages

Tagaytay City, Philippines
12-14 June 2003

Livelihoods and Languages – a SPARK-STREAM
Learning and Communications Process

In Association with FAO

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Acronyms

BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Philippines)
CAG	Country Advisory Group (VSO)
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DAP	Development Academy of the Philippines
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IIRR	International Institute for Rural Rehabilitation
IMA	International Marine Alliance
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LATIN	Indonesian NGO
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
SPARK	Sharing and Promotion of Awareness and Regional Knowledge
STREAM	Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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Executive Summary

The SPARK-STREAM Learning and Communications Process on Livelihoods and Languages has involved two three-day workshops at the beginning and culmination of a two-month between-workshops period. The aims of this SPARK-STREAM process are to:

- Build understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches and their meanings in languages of regional countries
- Generate awareness of issues related to language, participation and power

The purpose of the first workshop (Bangkok, April 2003) was to build shared understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches, with emphases on the approaches as “ways of thinking and working”, and on learning from concrete examples from the experiences of STREAM in Cambodia and Vietnam, and SPARK in the Philippines. One outcome from the first workshop, was that – between the two workshops – participants would carry out follow-up tasks appropriate to their context.

The Second SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Languages took place in Tagaytay City, Philippines, from 12-14 June 2003. Outputs were intended to be:

- Drafts of language-specific “Guide to Learning and Communicating about Livelihoods”
- Drafts of articles for *STREAM Journal* and *SPARK Newsletter*
- Priorities and practical follow-up for capacity-building in carrying out participatory livelihoods analysis
- Follow-up plans

Presentations were given by three SPARK (Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand) and a STREAM team about their activities during the between-workshops period, followed by discussion of issues raised, as a way of defining more specifically what the outputs of the workshop should be. Important issues included:

- The importance of sharing understandings and processes for doing this, for example, through “conversation groups”
- Questions related to multiple understandings
- How the work of the Thai group had helped in understanding the relationship between a “guide for learning and communicating about livelihoods” and a “manual for livelihoods analysis”
- Relationships between power and the use of language. What people feel they can say and when they can speak in any given group has an impact on what they do say.

Smith had “done a livelihoods analysis” in Halimun and added that we learn about the framework by understanding real life first. In the case of a village with their own annual census, there is no point in analyzing livelihoods. If you build a relationship, then it should be possible to share their methods, such as the “full moon event” described from Indonesia. If we could participate in that event, that would be people analyzing their own livelihoods and us taking part, not the other way around.

The first workshop struggled with what was meant by a “guide for livelihoods and languages”. Through discussions in the second workshop, the focus shifted to thinking about processes for finding out about people’s lives, and an exploration of the importance of language in those processes. The questions remain:

- How can these understandings be implemented after this workshop?
- And what is the output of the process of sharing understandings?

Lessons learnt from presentations and discussions were grouped in terms of the *purpose* of a guide (see Appendix 4), a *process* that the guide would describe, and its *content*. Four groups worked in “writing mode” with facilitators to produce a draft of a “guide to learning and communicating about livelihoods”, something contextually-adaptive, simple and short.

There were many ways in which people had built capacity throughout the SPARK-STREAM process. This, and confidence, are being built, with participants developing these through workshop discussions.

One of the outputs from this [process] group was a matrix (designed by Tabitha and Graham) called “Communication Issues for Conversation Groups” (see page 16). It allows users to explore issues of languages, power and relationships in livelihoods analysis. The matrix shows languages to be considered, whether there may be power and status issues to consider, and how people have opportunities to build relationships. Graham and Tabitha made the point that relationships and power have to be mediated, or facilitated. In the boxes, there are references to “power relation mediation” and “relationship building”.

There are several upcoming opportunities to try out the process in the “guide”:

- Assessment of *outcomes* and *impact* in the Thai group’s work in Nong Khai
- A workshop in June in Indonesia with people from various districts about cooperation in project management
- Work being done by the Philippines team in Agusan del Sur in July
- A sector livelihoods workshop in Indonesia in July
- A workshop in Bangkok (pilot in June, sessions in August) on integrating culture into development programs
- The October SPARK Regional Workshop, an opportunity to share the results

An e-mail discussion group will be started to discuss the issues that arise.

Workshop participants will contribute articles to a special number of the *STREAM Journal* 2(2) on livelihoods and languages, and the *SPARK Newsletter*.

To evaluate the SPARK-STREAM process, participants wrote Significant Change stories about their experience of the Livelihoods and Languages Learning and Communications Process (Appendix 5).

Notes from the subsequent STREAM Netmeeting agendum on the livelihoods and languages workshop summarize the outputs and follow-up (page 18). Of note is that the draft “guide” will be compiled by the end of June, sent to participants for trying it out and providing feedback, for revision in August 2003.

The SPARK-STREAM Process

The SPARK-STREAM process has involved two three-day workshops at the beginning and culmination of a two-month between-workshops period of reflection, stakeholder feedback, review and materials development.

The aims of this SPARK-STREAM learning and communications process are to:

- Build understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches and their meanings in languages of regional countries¹
- Generate awareness of issues related to language, participation and power

The intended outcomes would be:

- Shared understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches
- Exchanges of experiences between STREAM and SPARK on participatory livelihoods approaches, processes and practices
- An understanding of what is involved in developing language-specific “participatory livelihoods analysis handbooks”
- Identification of follow-up capacity-building needs for carrying out participatory livelihoods analysis

Outputs are intended to be:

- “Guides to Learning and Communicating about Livelihoods” in the fourteen languages, related to understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches and terms commonly associated with them²
- Work plans for between-workshop reflection, stakeholder feedback, review and materials development of the “Guides”
- Statements of capacity-building needs for carrying out participatory livelihoods analysis

First Workshop

SPARK organized the first three-day workshop in Bangkok from 9-11 April 2003. The “First SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Languages” was facilitated by STREAM, and attended by thirteen SPARK participants from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand (including VSO Programme Officers and concerned NGOs), and five STREAM participants (Communications Hub Managers from Cambodia, India, Nepal, the Philippines and Vietnam). [See the report of the first workshop.]

The purpose of the first workshop was to build shared understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches, with emphases on the approaches as “ways of thinking and working”, and on learning from concrete examples from the experiences of STREAM in Cambodia and Vietnam, and SPARK in the Philippines.

1 The fourteen languages are Bahasa Indonesia, Bangla, Cebuano, Chotanagpuri, English, Hindi, Ilonggo, Khmer, Nepali, Oriya, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese and Waray.

2 This would not be a “DFID livelihoods framework” translated, but rather the meanings of “livelihoods (approaches)”, “participation” and other terms, understood and described in suitable language for wider sharing and learning with colleagues in regional countries.

The outputs were intended to be drafts of a “Livelihoods Language Guide” in thirteen languages [Chotanagpuri was added as a fourteenth during the second workshop] and English and a workplan for the between-workshops period.

The first workshop raised many issues and engendered interesting and often challenging discussions about the nature of language, languages and communication. In the second workshop, it was expected that these discussions would be taken further.

Evaluations showed that participants in the first workshop found that their understandings of issues around “livelihoods and languages” had deepened. Although intended outputs in that workshop were not all achieved, in general, participants felt clearer about the issues. As one participant explained:

Maybe we haven't really achieved an actual draft of the livelihoods and language guide, but I think the process we took to get where we are is more valuable. Why? Because I now have more of a sense of how to proceed, and the activities for the future (e.g., SPARK plans) much clearer.

Between-Workshops

One outcome from the first workshop, was that – between the two workshops – participants would carry out a variety of tasks appropriate to their context³, for example, information-gathering, discussions with others in the field, and working on a first set of “nine words” suggested by the Philippines group.

In the first workshop program, this was described as:

Using the outputs from the first workshop, country representatives and teams would reflect on the outcomes, seek wider consultative feedback “at home”, review their progress and further develop their “Livelihoods Language Guide”, with the aim of making them practical and understandable by the full range of stakeholders, especially communities.

It was also suggested that the second workshop should be an opportunity to report on between-workshops activities, and the progress made. It is with this in mind that we moved into the second workshop.

Second Workshop

The Second SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Languages took place at the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) in Tagaytay City from 12-14 June 2003. It was the second activity in a SPARK-STREAM learning and communications process around livelihoods and languages. The 18 participants (Appendix 1) came from seven countries: Australia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The planned agenda can be found in Appendix 2, although this report's structure reflects the eventual actual running of the sessions.

The aims of the Second SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Language were to:

³ These are detailed on page 11 of the report of the First SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Languages.

- Report back on between-workshop activities
- Consolidate awareness of issues related to language, participation and power
- Start the process of drafting language-specific “Guide to Learning and Communicating about Livelihoods”
- Discuss how participants can document their experiences of the SPARK-STREAM process through articles in a special number of the *STREAM Journal* and the *SPARK Newsletter*

The intended outcomes would be:

- Further exchanges of experiences between STREAM and SPARK on participatory livelihoods analysis approaches, processes and practices
- More in-depth understandings of participatory livelihoods concepts and approaches, and how these relate to the contexts in which we work
- A practical sense of what will help us most in undertaking livelihoods analysis
- Guides to assist organizations and individuals come to shared understandings of concepts

Outputs are intended to be:

- Drafts of language-specific “Guide to Learning and Communicating about Livelihoods”
- Drafts of articles for *STREAM Journal* and *SPARK Newsletter*
- Priorities and practical follow-up for capacity-building in carrying out participatory livelihoods analysis
- Follow-up plans

Day One

Expectations

In the first session, we reviewed expectations of the second workshop which participants had at the beginning of the process, a summary of which is in Appendix 3. Participants were then asked to work in four groups to discuss how their expectations and whether they had changed. The groups were SPARK Indonesia, SPARK Philippines, SPARK Thailand and STREAM Communications Hub Managers from India, Nepal, Philippines and Vietnam.

SPARK Indonesia: A “livelihoods analysis handbook” was too ambitious for this workshop, although they still wanted a framework for sustainable livelihoods analysis. There was also an expectation of a “guide” on how to implement the results of the workshop.

SPARK Philippines: There should still be a “guide”, but in order to develop language-specific ones, we would need first to agree on a common framework. They thought that drafting a “guide” would be too ambitious.

STREAM: A “guide” should be developed in the country context as there would be differences from country to country. They suggested drafting in the local language first, then translating to English (except for India and the Philippines). They also thought that this should be called a “Livelihoods Languages Guide” rather than a “Livelihoods and Languages Guide”.

SPARK Thailand: Outputs will be shared with other countries for response and feedback, to produce a rough framework for a “guide” and identify how this could be used in practice.

Between-Workshops Presentations

The discussion of expectations was followed by presentations from each group about the activities undertaken during the between-workshops period. The presentations were followed by discussion of the issues raised, as a way of defining more specifically what the outputs of the workshop should be.

SPARK Philippines

*Sharing Meanings: The Philippine SPARK-Country Advisory Group (CAD) Process
(presented by Mariel de Jesus)*

We have worked on a process for establishing a guide, and how to share meaning and not just translate the words. We came up with nine commonly used terms. On returning, we communicated by telephone and e-mail, and a concept came up of “conversation groups” and the different languages we use, e.g., in the field, in a CAD meeting. We don’t have a “guide” of which words might be confusing, so sometimes we do not share all meanings well.

We decided to invite CAD members to define the nine terms and then discuss any differences. There were differences, for different reasons, in terms of degree – how specific or general, context, focus and specificity. One example is the word *outcome*, which is often defined as “results” but in livelihoods analysis or monitoring and evaluation, the word has different meanings in different contexts.

So a process for sharing meaning might involve four steps:

1. Defining the process and outlining why we need to share
2. Agreeing on a first set of terms which may cause confusion
3. Following this process with existing definitions, and
4. Opening for discussion.

We came to the meeting with translated definitions to generate discussion. We felt that two language groups need first to define, then share. We can share meaning through illustrations. We wanted a glossary to share common understanding before using those words.

Is it necessary to agree on one meaning only, as meanings come from different contexts and are affected by the experiences of the people who use them? There is therefore a range of meanings, all of which can be valid.

*On the Same Page
(presented by Ronet Santos)*

Between the workshops, I was asked to co-facilitate a workshop on monitoring and evaluation. Where does sharing of meaning fit in the project cycle? M&E is quite late in the process! The project was helping displaced people in Mindanao, by building resilience, peace and emotional recovery. There were a mixed group of volunteers and staff of different religions and gender. The objective was to evaluate the outcomes and impacts of the project. There was a feeling that local partners did not understand some terms. *Activities, outcomes, impacts, changes and lessons* were words that needed to be shared.

We used a diagram of concentric circles to illustrate *outcomes* and *impacts*. Outcome was behavioral change of intermediaries and impact was change in end-users lives and livelihoods. This helped to dispel confusion and didn’t take long. It led to much more participation and focused our discussions.

So where does this fit? This should start at project development and go through the cycle as an integral part of it. Using the livelihoods “lens”, *policies, institutions, processes* and *assets* are also terms to understand.

Discussion

- Bill pointed out that a further term *output* – used in STREAM – applies to tangible products as separate from *outcomes*.
- Ronet added that, if an “intervention” were in policy change, then the outcome might be a policy (e.g., exclusion zone) and the impact might be increased fish capture per unit of effort.
- Kath observed that a common theme in both Philippines presentations was the importance of sharing understandings and processes for doing this.
- In her presentation, Mariel mentioned “conversation groups”. The stakeholder diagram can be used to identify the medium of conversation, for example, within VSO, in English and local languages. There were examples in the presentations of processes we might use to reach shared understandings.
- Important questions related to multiple understandings were also raised. What do we do with multiple understandings of one term? Should we come to a consensus, for example, or should we accept that we have different understandings?

SPARK Indonesia

*Reflection after the First Workshop on Sustainable Livelihoods
(presented by Arif Aliadi and Latipah “Smith” Hendarti)*

Arif: After the Bangkok workshop, we wanted to discuss livelihoods frameworks with partners and we wanted to come up with a book on the process. We planned consultations and discussions, got feedback and conducted a write-shop. Our implementation was like this: we discussed with partners, including by e-mail. The question of sustainable livelihoods and requests for examples was raised. There was only one question by e-mail: what is sustainable livelihoods? We wrote a summary of the DFID concepts but this has not yet been distributed. We had no material for a write-shop so we held a meeting to check progress. We have another plan to write a reflection after the first workshop (in Bahasa Indonesia), then to translate the sustainable livelihoods concept.

Smith: I was talking to Sundanese speakers and asked friends in our office and other NGOs about the meaning of livelihoods. They said this is “the way of living”. Most were not familiar with it. So I shared the outputs of the first workshop, but they had little understanding. I asked also the local community at Halimun about livelihoods. They said, “We are farmers”, but they used the phrase *wo wo kon*, which means there are paddies, forest and fishing areas: “if we lost this, we would lose our life”. They also gave a proverb about livelihoods: “Forest has tiger, valley has rhino, village has old people, people has leader.”

Also every month on the full moon, they have some activities like a census of houses and animals. They find out how many outsiders are coming in to mine gold. They discuss the five years of the national park and working within it. This is like an annual stocktaking. Is this a livelihoods analysis? They have an understanding of assets, vulnerabilities and the environment in relation to livelihoods. Clearly, the process of understanding livelihoods should be in the local language rather than English.

In Jember: Here we asked Bahasa Indonesia speakers about the meaning of livelihoods and could they give examples. They defined livelihoods as *pri kehiduupan* (*pri* means characteristic) – of their lives. When the DFID sustainable livelihoods concept was summarized, it was described as being about human relationships, and not just economic-related.

Lessons learnt: We need good understanding of sustainable livelihoods as material for discussion with partners. A book would provide better understanding. We had difficulties with multi-level translation where the term in Bahasa Indonesia has three meanings: *mata pencaharian* means job (more economic-oriented), *kehidupan* means a way of life (more holistic), and *pri kehidupan* means human relationships. We need a process for asking partners about sustainable livelihoods. Without giving them some summary of the sustainable livelihoods concepts, it won’t work. We weren’t sure how to implement the results of the first workshop because we do not have a clear understanding of the sustainable livelihoods concept, and what a sustainable livelihoods language guide would be for.

Discussion

- Ronet said that we don't need to translate a "framework" for people. We need it as a tool in the back of our minds. They don't need to know the DFID framework. Also, these presentations gave us a glimpse of the structures of traditional systems in Philippine and Indonesian communities. This also gives us a clue as to who the stakeholders are in these different communities.
- Bill commented that Smith had "done a livelihoods analysis" in Halimun and added that we learn about the framework by understanding real life first. In the case of a village with their own annual census, there is no point in analyzing livelihoods. If you build a relationship, then it should be possible to share their methods, such as the "full moon event" described from Indonesia. If we could participate in that event, that would be people analyzing their own livelihoods and us taking part, not the other way around.

SPARK Thailand

*Thailand's Process for Community Study Manual
(presented by Nuch and Oy)*

Rationale

The network review shows that:

- There is a lack of clarity on how community study is done.
- There is a lack of implementation guide on community study, only concepts of tools.
- It is not "language" as such, but it's the facilitation skills, understanding of a community and trust.
- Community study needs to consider an area-based approach as well.

Objectives

- Share and promote a common understanding on sustainable livelihood through our designed process for participatory community study
- Provide a field-level and network-level guide for community study

Expected Outcomes

- Field-based participatory community study manual for community level and participatory community study manual for community network level, for whom? inexperienced or experienced CBNRM practitioners? community?
- Field-based manual at community level provides comprehensive information on definitions of CBNRM, community study, community and livelihoods; concepts of tools in community study; detailed implementation process; and reporting

Process

- Literature review by network to assess what can be further developed in terms of usefulness of the manual and definitions of terms
- Organize a workshop to draw lessons learned from the field as an input for the manual
- Adjust the manual based on workshop output
- Conduct field-based training to test the effectiveness of the manual
- Adjust the manual according to the experience gained during the field training

Outcomes of the Literature Review

- Framework for the manual
- Follow-up processes and activities
- Identifying roles and responsibilities

*Thailand's Process for Community Study Manual (continued)**Lessons Learned*

- Too much academic information on the existing community study manuals, but lacking implementation procedures to guide users
- Sustainable livelihoods is an approach to understand relationships between CBNRM and community livelihoods
- Community study tools should be flexible and appropriate to the specific circumstances
- Community study is fundamental for development workers
- Thai community has expanded into a network system, thus its study must consider this
- The whole process needs time, thus we cannot follow the SPARK regional timeframe

We went back to the Thai network members about the manual and concept. Some were familiar with the sustainable livelihoods concept, and CBNRM were familiar with this concept already. The networks said that there is a lack of clarity on how community studies are done. Some go to the community, and some only to community leaders. There is no step-by-step guide, just tools and concepts. Language is considered not just as translation, but how to better communicate with and learn from communities.

The objective is to share and promote common understandings of livelihood approaches. There could be two guides: one for community networking and the other a field-based participatory study manual. This will benefit CBNRM professionals and communities. The field-based manual would define concepts of CBNRM and community studies.

The process would also help us to gain a common understanding among the network. It would involve a working group being formed with experienced people and "languages and livelihoods workshop" participants. First, everyone would read and then share existing manuals. Then "experts" would help to draw up a new manual and to organize a workshop with lessons from the field. Then the manual would be adjusted based on the workshop and community support, reviewed and adjusted further. We would aim to identify the roles and responsibilities of those involved.

Existing manuals are too academic. A sustainable livelihoods approach is useful to understand relationships between a community and resources use. Tools should be flexible and appropriate. This process might finish by October.

Discussion

- Bill commented that the work of the Thai group had helped us understand the relationship between a "guide for learning and communicating about livelihoods" and a "manual for livelihood analysis", although the Thai network uses the term "community study" not "livelihoods analysis". A need could be argued for a guide for learning about communities and their lives. The Thai group said that while their partners primarily use secondary sources, there was also a need for a series of activities inserted into a community study cycle to help people carry them out. Bill asked whether the Thai group would find it useful if this emerging "manual" included a process that allowed people to build shared understandings about terms that are used. He also asked whether the Thai network would be a useful way to try out a process to come to shared understandings about concepts and terms in community studies, and validate if that is of use?
- Graham commented that the CBNRM network received 35 copies of the CD-ROM [*A Process and Practice for Understanding the Lives of Fishers and Farmers*] that STREAM produced several years ago. He asked whether CBNRM colleagues built on this resource in the development of the process for the manual they were looking at. The Thai group said that they want the lessons learnt to be in the Thai context, and expressed concerns about the livelihoods analysis framework seeming like yet another tool.
- Bill said that the aim was not to force anyone to use the DFID livelihoods framework. SPARK is funded by DFID and because the early work of the people in STREAM was

DFID-funded, that framework was used. An important point is that many of the elements of different organizations' frameworks are similar. Important characteristics of the livelihoods framework were the concept of "vulnerability", a broader resources focus, and the influences of institutions and policies.

- Ronet said that the process we want to document is to help us focus on how to come to shared understandings. This process should come out of this workshop and help people in the field. Nuch agreed that the work in the field might change what they are doing completely.
- Graham suggested that one of the reasons organizations find it difficult to use each others' products is that much of the learning comes from the process and not the product.
- Nuch raised a concern that even if we keep promoting a shared understanding, it's hard to see where that leads. Can we have a single definition? The Thai group found a book with 20 definitions. What was the point there?
- Kath commented that in any "conversation group", we have to be aware that there are other definitions and that this needs to be taken into account in our understandings of each other – it's a process of dialogue.
- Bill reminded the group that in the morning we had an example of how different understandings might occur when organizations come together (*A Story of "Collaboration"* by Arif, appears later in the text) and how common understandings emerge through discussion.
- Ronet suggested that the first step perhaps was to define the "conversation group". The network is broad and there are assumptions that everyone already shares a common understanding of the meanings of words. NGO leaders sometimes define meanings, and might even impose these and everyone else follows!
- A point was also raised about group dynamics and power, and how to work with groups where some people dominate. Bill said that this is where facilitation skills come in. In STREAM, we had this in our Regional Conference. Our FAO colleague said that our CSP document lacked action plans. Graham was able to explain that we define *strategy* to precede the *action planning*. We were able to quickly come to a shared understanding of the way we are using the terms.
- Bill then commented that although we had taken a long time in a discussion of the Thai presentation, it was essential to try to come to a shared understanding about what we are doing here.
- Bill concluded the discussion by saying that our FAO colleague found a Livelihoods Support Unit in FAO headquarters in Rome. He learnt that this is a DFID-funded unit to raise awareness of livelihoods in FAO, and that they have a working group which may be looking at "livelihoods and languages". How can we share the results of our SPARK-STREAM process with that unit?

STREAM*Between-Workshops Period
(presented by Rubu, Nil, Bebet and Ha)*

Whenever any organization begins, there is already some information there. We discussed with partners, friends and colleagues to begin to reach a common understanding of terms.

In India, terminologies have been discussed with colleagues working in rural areas. The terminology is pronounced differently, but the essence is the same. It seems there will be a common understanding of terms commonly used.

In Nepal, they have developed a five-page paper on terms and the importance of livelihoods analysis. Nil went to a community office forty kilometers from Katmandu. Most people think of livelihoods as economic issues and resources. After much discussion, the broader sense of livelihoods was agreed. The office staff asked for a concept paper. This was written and distributed to colleagues. They read it and suggested that examples should be included in the paper to aid understanding. The paper is still being put together: livelihoods analysis, livelihoods strategies, factors that affect livelihoods, influences, need to have livelihoods knowledge, how to use the products of the study in development, and why we need to use livelihoods approaches.

In the Philippines, they have started with the “nine terms” discussed in the first workshop. Bebet used an interview guide and did one-on-one discussions, not necessarily partners or one “conversation group”. She threw away the interview guide as the discussions led on well to all terms from a discussion of the one word *livelihood*. She called this report “Insights” – some parts are anecdotes and some are discussions. She has not decided how to organize it, so has written it as stories. For example, a common way to begin a conversation in the Philippines is to say, “How are you? Is there any problem?” But unless you have built a relationship with the people you are talking to, you won’t get a good answer to the question. So it’s a question not to ask.

In Vietnam, the terminologies have been standardized. Communities asked what was the meaning of livelihoods when we used it in an official letter to the People’s Committee in Long An about planning a workshop in their province on this issue. When STREAM was first introduced in Vietnam, people didn’t understand what livelihoods is, so we had to draft correspondence for the Ministry of Fisheries to help them explain to the provinces what it meant; this was understandable to communities. In socialist countries, an official letter is commonly used and can be powerful. A glossary of commonly used terms in English and Vietnamese has been started and, with cooperation from other partners, we came up with a list of more than 700 terms including ones about “livelihoods”. We did this by e-mail consultation together with DANIDA, IUCN, WWF, IMA and OXFAM.

Discussion

The discussions after the STREAM presentation raised interesting and important questions which helped participants clarify more precisely what the issues around livelihoods and languages are:

- Arif asked about the impact of meanings being determined in a top-down way. Ha said that it isn’t really possible to tell, but we would have to develop some indicators to find out.
- Kath made the comment that there is a strong relationship between power and the use of language. What people feel they can say and when they can speak in any given group has an impact on what they actually do say.
- Christine asked what reactions partners had to being asked about how they understood particular terms. A range of reactions were noted. Nil commented that his colleagues were interested, while Nuch thought that many people didn’t see the value in discussing the topic. In the Philippines, Mariel reported that they

received only five email responses to 15 e-mails and that this may reflect people's interest levels about the issues.

At this point, there were questions about what we were actually trying to do in the workshop, part of the process of working out what was important and necessary.

- Kath commented that, in the first workshop, we started thinking about a “guide for livelihoods and languages”. In the second workshop, through our discussions, the focus had shifted to thinking about processes we can use to find out about people's lives, and an exploration of the importance of language in those processes. She observed that several groups had devised glossaries, for example, Bebet's in Illongo and Ha's in Vietnamese. She asked whether the group considered a glossary sufficient and if not, what is it we were talking about.
- People responded in a number of ways. Smith said a glossary would not be enough, although Bebet commented that it would certainly be useful. Chris emphasized the importance of the process for understanding, as did Mariel, who said:

I could have just collated definitions. What is valuable here is discussion and understanding differences and similarities. We can have a wider range of meanings. It is important to know what it's for and how we should use it.

- Arif made a related point about power and participation, saying that he considered the livelihoods relationship in terms of power relations, for example, in communities. People without power become apathetic and the effect of this is sustained dominance.
- Similarly, Ronet confirmed that, “It's not just a list, it's a process,” saying that the STREAM presentation gave us a big-picture view. Fishers in the Philippines are a population of one million people, the government has a staff of 3,000, and there are 100 NGOs helping fishers. A lot of communication is going on and there are many examples of miscommunication: there is a need for these groups to interact. He added that there was a glossary of terms in the Philippines but it's in English.
- Smith and Oy raised two important questions: How can we implement these understandings after this workshop? And what is the output of the process of sharing understandings?
- Kath said that we need a way to get to shared understandings at any time in our discussions with others. If we look at the story by Arif, we can see that different individuals and groups may have different understandings of the same term.
- Ha made the point that we are touching on complex issues. SPARK and STREAM could reach a common understanding but with fishers, that is more difficult and shared understanding might be temporary because of the dynamic and evolving nature of language.

Following the discussion, tasks were set for Day Two. These included discussions of lessons learnt and ideas about how to proceed.

Day Two

Review of Day One

The review was done by the STREAM and Thai groups. They outlined the main activities of each group and some lessons learnt during the between-workshops period, as shown below.

	Philippines	Indonesia	Thailand	STREAM
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ “Conversation group” with CAG □ Tested on sustainable livelihoods in the field □ Built a glossary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ “Conversation group” with community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ “Conversation group” with CAG □ Examined how a “livelihoods and languages guide” can be useful in Thailand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ “Conversation group” with stakeholders
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussed “nine terms”, few responses, but got a common understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Language is a barrier to understanding □ No common understanding yet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Will have to find the process for sharing understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Definition of “nine terms” □ There is a common understanding

The lessons learnt included:

- The importance of defining the “conversation group” first
- The fact that translation of a word or term might not be adequate; the meanings and understandings of terms need to be emphasized.
- The understanding that a glossary in itself is not enough. The process for promoting a common understanding on sustainable livelihoods is more important.
- The notion that since language is dynamic and evolving, a common understanding can change according to context.

Lessons Learnt

Participants worked in mixed groups to discuss lessons learnt from the first workshop and the between-workshops period, based on the presentations and discussions on Day One. These were grouped in terms of the *purpose* of a guide, a *process* that the guide would describe, and its' *content*.

Purpose

- Needs to be a common understanding of the purpose, it's important but difficult
- Define who we should work with, this will define the purpose
- Make sure that the purpose is made clear or known to those worked with
- Share the purpose of what we are doing, make everyone clear; should not be to gather data, but how to share data, get involvement and better information, and what users can get from the process

Process

- Varies from group to group, depending on whom we work with, but there should be a common framework (define the “conversation group”)
- Should involve all concerned (stakeholders): communities, NGOs, government, and needs to be linked to issues of power, therefore including policy-makers
- Integrated into existing processes, and make those more efficient (e.g., by clarifying the concepts and terms used at the outset and at appropriate points – such as an M&E meeting, or a meeting on financial management – what do people think *audit* means?)
- Located within the usual project cycle
- It should be a trust-building process, allowing people we talk with to be as comfortable as possible and building rapport with them

Content

- Should be descriptive of the process, contain the purpose and how it should relate to our work, include mechanisms to properly implement them through the project cycle
- Depends on the needs of the group, and what is relevant
- Not only how it should be done, but also how it was done (through examples, cases and stories)
- Practical, simple and with country-specific examples, cases and illustrations

Drafting the Guide

Bill suggested that a good way to proceed would be to work in small groups – with each tasked with proposing what needs to be in the guide – until we reach an agreed version adaptable to everybody’s situation. Bill directed participants to page 38 of the report from the first workshop, where there were some suggestions for the guide. Participants were invited to read these and use them as a starting point for group discussion and drafting.

For this activity, four groups worked in “writing mode” with facilitators to produce a draft of a “guide to learning and communicating about livelihoods”. Participants were asked to come up with something contextually-adaptive, simple and short. They worked to draft the following sections: purpose (Thailand, with Bill), process (Philippines, with Graham, and Indonesia, with Ronet) and content (STREAM, with Kath).

The rest of the day was spent working on their “sections” of the draft guide. Towards the end of the afternoon, the groups came together to share progress.

Day Three

Review of Day Two

The Day Two review was done as a story-telling session, with Arif sharing two stories reflecting relationships between livelihoods and languages.

A Story about Land Reclaiming

There are two groups of NGOs in Indonesia who have different strategies or ideologies for helping local communities and *adat* people to have access to forest land which belongs to the state.

The first is a group of NGOs who advocate land reclaiming as a strategy. This group facilitates the local community and *adat* people to take land from the state. They do not want to talk and discuss with the government, because they think the land belongs to the local community or *adat* people. The land was taken away from the local community and *adat* people, and allocated to private and state-owned companies for plantation or logging concessions.

The second group are NGOs who do not talk about ownership rights, but rather management rights. They facilitate local communities to have access to manage the forest by developing collaborations among stakeholders. They develop agreements which consist of rights, responsibilities, revenues and relationships among stakeholders.

It is difficult for both groups of NGOs to meet together and discuss what is the best way for the local community and *adat* people. Perhaps both groups have the same goal, but if they do not want to meet, they will stay in the same place. So, it is important to discuss the meaning of *reclaiming* as a starting point to discuss goals, similarities and differences among themselves.

A Story of "Collaboration"

In May 2000, two years after Soeharto resigned, I went to Padas Village in East Java with John Freeman (IIRR) to conduct a site selection process for a project on community-based forest planning. It is a collaboration project between LATIN and IIRR which has been supported by IDRC Canada. We saw that many trees had been cut down along the way.

Before we arrived in the village, we talked about our expectations. We wondered whether the community would be happy to meet us; otherwise it would be difficult to get the information we needed. We needed to know whether there was any collaboration among stakeholders to rehabilitate the forest in this village. It is better if there is agreement between the local community and other stakeholders to rehabilitate the forest area.

After a fifteen-minute walk, we arrived in the village, met some people, and had a conversation with them. We introduced ourselves and explained the purpose of our visit. The people responded, "WHAT? COLLABORATION? No!! No!! We do not have collaboration with any other people." The response of the local community surprised us, because they looked afraid or worried to answer our question about collaboration. We did not know yet why that was. After that, we had difficulties talking with people in the village.

Finally, we found a local community who wanted to talk to us. Again, we started by introducing ourselves and explained our purpose, and talked about their families and their children. We didn't talk about collaboration.

After we felt they were happy with us, we about asked the history of their village, including the situation after Soeharto resigned. Before 1998 or before Soeharto resigned, the forest was managed by Perhutani, and farmers could not get access to the forest. The village people said, "We did not get benefit from the forest, even though it was in our village area. We just imagine that the trees are covered by money, but we could not touch it." After Soeharto resigned, encroachment and illegal logging happened here, started by outsiders from other villages far from here. Many people came from other villages just to cut the trees here.

In the beginning, the villagers said, "We just watched because we were still afraid of the forest ranger of Perhutani. After several times, we did not see any punishment given by the forest ranger to the illegal loggers. We saw there is no law anymore. The forest could not be controlled by the forest ranger anymore. So, after that, we also joined to cut the trees, even though we knew it is illegal. This is the only way to reach our dream to have cash money quickly. After we joined, we understood why there is not a law anymore. It was because we have to "COLLABORATE" with the forest ranger to cut the trees. They buy the logs from us which they can sell for higher prices than what we can get. Now, the situation is like you see along the way. There are no people responsible for rehabilitating the forest, even Perhutani."

At that time, John and I understood why the farmers in the first village worried when we asked about "collaboration".

Drafting the Guide

The morning of Day Three was spent continuing to draft the guides. Although each group was working on specific aspects of the guide, several inter-group discussions occurred when clarification was necessary. For example, members of the "content group" had some ideas they considered important for the "process group".

In the afternoon, we took stock of how far we were with the guide, and what further work needed to be done. Each group outlined what they had done with their sections and there was discussion on how to proceed.

Purpose

Bill and the Thai group reported back on the purpose statement they had drafted (Appendix 4).

Process

The group discussed language groups in countries and regions where we work; potential users of the guide and various partners who might be involved.

One of the outputs from this group was a matrix (designed by Tabitha and Graham) called “Communication Issues for Conversation Groups” (see next page). It allows users to explore issues of languages, power and relationships in livelihoods analysis. The matrix shows languages to be considered, whether there may be power and status issues to consider, and how people have opportunities to build relationships. Graham and Tabitha made the point that relationships and power have to be mediated, or facilitated. In the boxes, there are references to “power relation mediation” and “relationship building”.

The groups from the Philippines and Thailand got together and shared experiences. The Thai group learnt that the Philippines had conducted “conversation groups” already and got feedback, and thus managed to set out a process of coming to shared understandings. Now we need to list out what we need to do to conduct this process.

Bill commented that we also need to think about what the next steps are after we have reached a shared understanding. He emphasized that reaching shared understandings shouldn’t be seen as a separate process – it fits into a project cycle when opportunities arise and circumstances necessitate it.

Content

The content group had worked on looking at explanations, examples, stories and glossaries that could be included in the guide to give people insights about livelihoods analysis. Explanations that might be included relate to the DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Framework [this was done during the workshop in Cebuano by Malou and Ronet on the DFID framework diagram], and terms such as *outcomes*, *outputs* and *impacts*. Glossaries would need to be country-appropriate, and stories context-appropriate to illustrate important points and issues.

As a separate publication, the “guide for learning and communicating about livelihoods” will be drafted to incorporate the outcomes and outputs of the workshop, structured around *purpose*, *process* and *content*.

Communication Issues for Conversation Groups

	Livelihood Analysis Beneficiaries	Local NGOs	Development Practitioners	Donor Agency
Livelihood Analysis Beneficiaries	Sundanese Bahasa Indonesia			
Local NGOs	Relationship building Sundanese Bahasa Indonesia	Relationship building Bahasa Indonesia		
Development Practitioners	Relationship building Bahasa Indonesia English Sundanese	Power relation mediation → Relationship building Bahasa Indonesia English	Relationship building Bahasa Indonesia English	
Donor Agency	Power relation mediation Little expectation of Relationship building English Sundanese Bahasa Indonesia	Power relation mediation → Relationship building Bahasa Indonesia English	Power relation mediation → Relationship building Bahasa Indonesia English	Relationship building English

Wrap-up Discussion

Capacity-building

Many of the expectations which participants initially had of these workshops were related to capacity-building in livelihoods analysis. Bill commented that it has been his experience that it is usually less effective to “train” people in a workshop on how to “do livelihoods analysis”, unless they are part of a capacity-building process with opportunities for people to learn from experience. Any livelihoods analysis framework is a tool for discussion at particular levels, and we would tend not to use this directly with communities. It is for us to help make sense of what we learn from and about communities.

Bill outlined many of the ways in which people had built capacity throughout the livelihoods and languages workshops, and during the between-workshops period. He commented that capacity and confidence are being built, with participants developing these through workshop discussions. Bill gave the example of the matrix constructed by Tabitha and Graham which outlines issues for social analysis in a sensitive way. Bill then read out the list of capacity-building needs identified in the first workshop (see report pages 12-13), and

suggested ways in which we had worked on building these capacities during the whole process.

Malou commented that, although in the first livelihoods and languages workshop, we were talking about capacity-building needs, it seems as if now we already had the capacities, we actually knew those things. Ha found that his capacity had been influenced in some way indirectly and it was a good chance for him to see the links between livelihoods and language issues.

Opportunities for Trying the Process

There are several upcoming opportunities to try out the process in the “guide”, for learning and communicating about livelihoods in different contexts:

- Assessment of *outcomes* and *impact* in the Thai group’s work in Nong Khai
- A workshop in June in Indonesia with people from various districts about cooperation in project management; Arif will talk about this then
- Work being done by the Philippines team in Agusan del Sur in July
- A sector livelihoods workshop in Indonesia in July
- A workshop in Bangkok (pilot in June, sessions in August) on integrating culture into development programs, for which Bill is a resource person
- The October SPARK Regional Workshop, an opportunity to share the results

We can organize an e-mail group to discuss the issues that arise.

STREAM Journal and SPARK Newsletter Articles

All workshop participants agreed to contribute articles to a special number of the *STREAM Journal 2(2)* on livelihoods and languages, and the *SPARK Newsletter*. Bill suggested a table of contents for *SJ2(2)* which included articles co-authored by the workshop teams and facilitators.

Evaluation

The workshop was evaluated using Significant Change stories. Participants were invited to write a Significant Change story about their experience of the Livelihoods and Languages Learning and Communications Process. Their stories are Appendix 5.

STREAM Netmeeting Follow-up

Follow-up from the Livelihoods and Languages Workshop was one of the agenda at the STREAM Netmeeting on 24 June 2003. The following excerpt from the meeting notes captures the follow-up from the workshop.

From STREAM Netmeeting Notes of 24 June 2003 on L&L2 Workshop Follow-up

There are two “outputs” from the Livelihoods and Languages Workshop: the report and the draft of the actual guide. There was a real breakthrough in the Philippines, and a process which we think is significant. It is actually being piloted during several events in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. Bill will also be using it in a modified form at a workshop in Bangkok in August.

The process starts with an analysis of who the conversation group will be, considering issues of relationship-building, power relations and languages to be used, a kind of awareness-raising for those to be using the process; then a step involving defining the purpose of the conversation, the meanings to be shared to reach common understanding, and a process for this, with examples, explanations, stories and glossaries appended.

The follow-up will be mainly related to the guide and formulating country-specific aspects of it, for example, by discussing with “conversation groups” also. There will likely be a “master” version in English in a binder, which could cater for all countries and languages, and which each team can use as a basis for translation. With a binder, different versions (country-specific, local language, different contents in the appendices) can appear in the same collection. In India, the four languages (Bangla, Chotanagpuri, Hindi, Oriya) can be translated together.

There’s a lot of follow-up on the actual production of the guide(s). We will also be following up with FAO and DFID to see about getting some support to take the L&L initiative forward in a bigger way. We’ve had some encouraging insights from Simon Funge-Smith (FAO) on this, and he’s already begun making contacts and sending them to Bill. Once we have the draft guide, we will send that to appropriate people in FAO and DFID as an example of what’s happening on the ground with this, and are there opportunities for support?

It would be good to bring everyone together again to share experiences of the “guide’s” use, perhaps after six months or a year. Before that though, do we need to come together and discuss the draft guide and finalize it in some way? It could be done in-country and over the web. Colleagues would send feedback for incorporation in the guide. It could then be tested with SPARK and STREAM colleagues.

There is also the potential for VSO to replicate the guide in other countries where it works. Recommendations from a recent DFID review of VSO included VSO sharing experiences such as the livelihoods and languages work more widely with other development actors. This is a specific example of VSO doing that. Shaun will discuss with colleagues in VSO and DFID UK – exploring options and potential opportunities – at the end of July, and awaits the report and thoughts on the future. The draft guide will be ready at the beginning of July, with feeding back in August.

Appendix 1 Participants

SPARK

1. Mr Arif Aliadi (LATIN, SPARK Hub Organisation, Bogor, Indonesia)
2. Ms Latipah “Smith” Hendarti (RMI, an NGO, member of SPARK advisory group, Indonesia)
3. Ms Tabitha Yulita (Programme Assistant, SPARK Indonesia)
4. Ms Christine Bantug (Programme Officer, VSO Philippines)
5. Mr Ernesto Montes (Department of Trade and Industry, Tacloban City, Philippines)
6. Ms Malou Salcedo (ESSC⁴, Agusan del Sur, Mindanao, Philippines)
7. Ms Mariel de Jesus (Project Manager, ESSC, SPARK Hub Organisation, Philippines)
8. Ms Duangkamol “Oy” Sirisook (Sustainable Development Foundation, SPARK Hub Organisation, Thailand)
9. Ms Nuchjaree “Nuch” Langkulsane (Programme Assistant, SPARK Thailand)
10. Mr Ronet Santos (Regional Programme Coordinator, VSO-SPARK)

STREAM

11. Dr Graham Haylor (Director)
12. Mr Rubu Mukherjee (CHM⁵ India)
13. Ms Elizabeth Gonzales (CHM Philippines)
14. Mr Erwin Pador (Assistant National Coordinator, STREAM Philippines, Senior Aquaculturist, BFAR, Western Visayas)
15. Mr Nilkanth Pokhrel (CHM Nepal)
16. Mr Nguyen Song Ha (CHM Vietnam)
17. Ms Kath Copley (Communications Specialist, Sydney, Australia, co-facilitator)
18. Mr Bill Savage (Communications Specialist, Bangkok, Thailand, co-facilitator)

4 Environmental Science for Social Change, NGO based at Ateneo de Manila University

5 Communications Hub Manager

Appendix 2 Agenda

**Second SPARK-STREAM Workshop on Livelihoods and Languages
Tagaytay, Philippines, 12-14 June 2003**

Agenda (annotated draft)

Day One: Thursday, 12 June		
0830	Opening remarks	▪ Ronet Santos and Bill Savage
0845	Expectations	▪ Review and revision of previously-stated expectations
0930	Overview of the SPARK-STREAM process and second workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With reference to the “process” and “agenda” sections of the program ▪ Clarifying the link (or the difference) between the "guide" and a "livelihoods analysis “handbook” ▪ Why do we do livelihoods analysis, for what, how, and where does a process of sharing meanings and understandings fit into this?
1000	<i>Break</i>	
1030	Presentation 1: Philippines	▪ Discussion of between-workshops activities, issues and findings
1130	Presentation 2: Indonesia	▪ Discussion of between-workshops activities, issues and findings
1230	<i>Lunch</i>	
1330	Presentation 3: Thailand	▪ Discussion of between-workshops activities, issues and findings
1430	Presentation 4: STREAM	▪ Discussion of between-workshops activities, issues and findings
1500	<i>Break</i>	
1530	Discussion and task-setting for day two	
1600	<i>Finish</i>	

Note: Indicated sessions for days two and three will be modified based on the outcomes of previous sessions and group decisions on how best to proceed with the workshop.

Day Two: Friday, 13 June		
0830	Review of day one	▪ By participant teams
0845	Preview of day two	▪ By co-facilitators
0900	Lessons learnt from between-workshops activities	▪ Compare experiences of the four groups, and what was learnt
1030	<i>Break</i>	
1100	Reaching shared understandings	▪ What are lessons learnt about sharing understandings? What should the guides contain?
1230	<i>Lunch</i>	
1330	Drafting the guides	
1500	<i>Break</i>	
1530	Drafting the guides	
1700	<i>Finish</i>	

Day Three: Saturday, 14 June		
0830	Review of day two	▪ By participant teams
0845	Preview of day three	▪ By co-facilitators
0900	Reportback on the draft guides	▪ Teams
1030	<i>Break</i>	
1100	Discussion on and brainstorming articles for the STREAM Journal and SPARK Newsletter	
1230	<i>Lunch</i>	
1330	Capacity-building	▪ Priorities and practical follow-up for capacity-building in carrying out participatory livelihoods analysis
1430	Follow-up plans	▪ For post-workshop reflection, stakeholder feedback, review and materials development of the guide
1500	<i>Break</i>	
1530	Discussion to reflect on process and second workshop	
1600	Workshop evaluation	
1630	Closing remarks and finish	

Appendix 3 Expectations

Sharing Between-workshops Experiences

- Review and synthesize experiences gained in the between-workshops period – on the process and development of the “guide” in each country
- Plan for further development of the “guides” and sharing results later among participants

“Livelihoods and Languages Guide”

- Draft second (and final) versions of the “livelihoods and languages guide” – easy to understand, applicable
- Validate the importance of the “livelihoods and languages guide”, particularly in the context of implementing participatory livelihoods approaches

Participatory Livelihoods Analysis

- Gain a better (and mutual) understanding of participatory livelihoods concepts, processes and practices – and applicability in each country
- Formulate initial plans for responding to capacity-building needs

Livelihoods Analysis “Handbook”

- “Level off” on the meaning and value of developing language-specific “participatory livelihoods analysis handbooks”
- Develop language-specific “participatory livelihoods analysis handbooks”
- Plan for gathering stakeholders' feedback, review and publication of the LHA handbook
- Discuss a process for how the “handbook” can be used to support the sustainable livelihoods forum in each [SPARK] country and how it can support community-level activities

SPARK Livelihoods Activities

- Clarify roles of each SPARK country program to use the “guide” to support activities and roles of appointed sustainable livelihoods facilitators
- Clarify links among these sustainable livelihoods workshops, other SPARK activities and the October Regional Workshop
- Clarify and formulate an annual activity plan to assist each SPARK country to understand and be able to organize their national activities

Networking

- Broaden and strengthen community networks
- Strengthen capacity of community leaders and civil society organization staff for efficient networking

Next Steps

- See what we should do next or will the process end?

Appendix 4 Draft Purpose Statement**Purpose of the Process**

Experience has taught us that “appropriate” participatory [livelihoods analysis] [community study] practice is about having “conversations” with people in communities to learn and understand about their livelihoods. It has also been realized that we experience “communication gaps” – or misunderstandings – in our roles as people who often find ourselves working with a wide range of stakeholders. There are differences in the ways that people communicate – between the ways that community, government and NGO people talk; between people who live in rural and urban areas; among different languages [dialects]; or different development ideologies. We need to become more aware of how these differences – across levels and contexts – are related to issues of how languages are used, how people have opportunities to participate and how power statuses affect relationships.

A story that illustrates the reasons why we need to have common understandings as we work together, e.g., to carry out a livelihoods analysis or community study, (like the Indonesia case of two NGOs.

The purpose of this document is to describe processes for building common understandings of participatory livelihoods analysis [community study] concepts, approaches, processes and practices, and meanings of the words commonly associated with these. In particular, this document will invite readers to consider how participatory and inclusive they are in working with people in communities, and how they exercise power. It can also guide our community colleagues to a clearer understanding of why we are taking a livelihoods approach to development.

All of us need to become more responsive to the needs of the communities we work with. This – being responsive – requires us to find opportunities to reflect on the ways we think about and work with communities and other stakeholders. How do we learn from and about others? How do we communicate with them? Do we understand community perceptions of why we are studying their lives?

Common understanding provides a basis for establishing trusting relationships, which in turn, allow us to work together to plan and implement activities which will improve the lives of communities.

Who Could Use the Process?

This “livelihoods language guide” will be an essential reference for anyone working through a participatory livelihoods approach, especially practitioners who work directly with communities, and members of communities themselves. Such colleagues may work with NGOs, local government units and inter-government organizations.

Where, When and How Might the Process Be Used?

The guide could be used anywhere and any time people are together to discuss what participatory approaches to livelihoods analysis are, and how they will be carried out with communities, including their methods and tools. These discussions may include clarification of various actors’ understandings of the meanings of concepts, and of their own roles and responsibilities.

Appendix 5 Significant Change Stories

Tabitha (Indonesia)

Before, I thought that doing administrative things is a “moving back” in my career. But after I followed the workshop which is also a kind of admin activity, I feel that this is a very important thing to do. The admin stuff is a starter for me to do the next step: what I’ll be doing relates to my position right now. Thanks to Ronet for making me realise (which is most of his task as an RPC doing administration stuff such as reporting, preparing the financial report, etc.) So now I understand that doing admin stuff is not a moving back in my career but actually this is the important thing to do. I didn’t really realise that I have the good capacity to analyse something. Thanks to Ronet (again), Graham, Kath and Bill for guiding me with their questions and statements to analyse something (specifically about livelihood) deeper. Look what we’ve done so far.

Chris (Philippines)

I would like to think that the most significant change for me as a result of my participation in this workshop has been the ability to identify and locate opportunities in my work, (locating it in my own context) where sustainable livelihoods analysis in general and the need to come to a common understanding of meanings in particular may be essential. I consider this to be significant because I came to this workshop with a certain level of wariness in the purpose and process of this workshop.

Listening to different stories/experiences helped me locate my own experiences (as a development practitioner) and identify the gaps and opportunities to come to shared understanding. Now apart from the forthcoming opportunity in Agusan, I am challenged and excited to maximize another opportunity in Eastern Samar (during a meeting with four municipal mayors).

Marief (Philippines)

I consider my participation in the SPARK-STREAM learning and communication process to have started all the way at the beginning of the year when SPARK decided it would focus on sustainable livelihoods. It was decided that I would do a livelihoods analysis – never mind that I had never seen the framework before. In a way struggling with the analysis and having to present the results of that process (alone!) and now, having had the experience of sharing common understanding is all part of the process.

The result? (Impact? Outcome? 😊)

From never having known about the framework, I now have a good working understanding of it; it is now knowledge that I have at “my fingertips”. More importantly, I bring this information with me and can now identify opportunities for how I might share this information and apply it to the work of my office (which has not done livelihoods analysis before.)

Also, now I feel more confident about going back to my office, reporting what I have done and maybe trying out the “process of learning and communicating about livelihoods” there.

Will tell you how it goes.

Oy (Thailand)

I must say that my significant change is more focus on knowing and understanding what exactly we are trying to do. For some reason I didn’t capture that very well, resulting in a process which is quite different from the other countries. From working with NGO in Thailand for quite a while, I never questioned if the people that we are working with understand what we are talking about. For example, we keep using the words strategy,

outcome and outputs but do we know what it means? Now, I begin to question and even to myself. I realize that before I begin to ask other people, I have to ask myself first and before I begin to analyse others' livelihoods, I must be able to analyse mine first.

When I was working with the other group, I also realized that I was also practiced the facilitation skills, asking questions and being able to admit my mistakes to other people. I'm looking forward to practice this skill with the community and also with my colleagues.

Oh, one story! My colleagues and I are writing a book on CBNRM and one part is about the community's perceptions of NRM. He couldn't write it and spent ages looking for other resources that were written. This makes me realize how little we understand communities' livelihoods even though we support community participation in natural resources management.

Nuchjaree (Thailand)

I think I have a better understanding of the concept of "process of common understanding". Last workshop, it seems that we ended up with some assumptions that our situation is different based on whatever may be the different ideologies or experience that we have. This caused us to be suspicious about why we needed to do this and more difficulty when we addressed our networks during the between-workshops period. For this second workshop, I think we are not different, we face the same problem of communication, but we just overlook by thinking/assuming that we are on the same page. And I feel relieved that the process of common understandings is the inclusive process which is not an add-on process to cause more jobs for our networks to do. It is fundamental for the project cycle which is the important part. We just overlook it. I hope we can address and convince our network to participate more. Anyway, I will try.

Malou (Philippines)

The use of the "Sustainable Livelihoods" framework or even understanding it as a tool for discussing livelihoods analysis with specific conversation groups is to me the most significant change I have experienced when I participated in these two workshops.

During the first workshop, I found the framework too "high" for me which made me uncomfortable dealing with it. Maybe it's because the terms used in it connote a different meaning for me.

When I opened this up with Ronet during our small group discussion, I told him of my apprehensions of not being able to communicate what's in the framework because I do not fully feel comfortable with it.

Later when we discussed how to make things easier for us, our group decided to have a common understanding of the framework and started to translate it into our own dialect. As a matter of fact, I already started the Cebuano translation with Ronet. Now I believe that the framework is a very useful tool to guide me in going along this process – livelihoods analysis.

Rubu (India)

After participating in the workshop, I came to know the importance of language in livelihoods analysis. Also how language plays an important role in communications with vulnerable groups of people.

I also understand that there should be a common understanding of the words related to livelihoods, among the vulnerable groups and policy makers

Song Ha (Vietnam)

For long I have known the importance of livelihoods, and language, separately. My involvement in this process has given me an opportunity to see the connection between these two ranges of issues. At first, I simply thought common understanding could only be useful for within each country, and now it's clear that common understandings should also be important for regional and international efforts in livelihoods improvement strategies. I really like the idea of this perfect combination, and will do my best to give my contribution to this process.

Nil (Nepal)

As a participant in the SPARK-STREAM learning and communications process, I participate in three days in all activities. In the first day after the presentation of the in-between workshops activities, paper and following the discussions about that I reached some confusion, especially in discussion time. At that time we started to initiate about the meaning of livelihoods. It's a little bit difficult for me to decide what we want to achieve. A big question mark came into my mind that is, can we bring some output from this workshop?

But from the second day a rough road map was seen. At the end of day three, with hard efforts, we can develop a fine road that can lead us to understand learning and communication in livelihoods analysis.

For me actually there is a road to drive further my work, i.e. to develop common understandings with colleagues, policy makers and others on livelihoods and languages.

Arif (Indonesia)

My significant change is I know how to synergise the process and the result of the livelihoods workshop in our own strategy, i.e. enlarging community managed areas. I found out what is the direct benefit of the livelihoods workshop to LATIN, my organization.

I will start to use three words (community managed area, social forestry and reclaiming) to discuss sharing of understanding those concepts with three different communication groups. I will use community managed area with our partners in 7 districts. I will use social forestry with members of the social forestry working group in the department of Forestry in Indonesia. I will use reclaiming with NGOs framework.

I hope we can understand our position and interest each other, and we can develop joint strategies with the three different conversation groups.

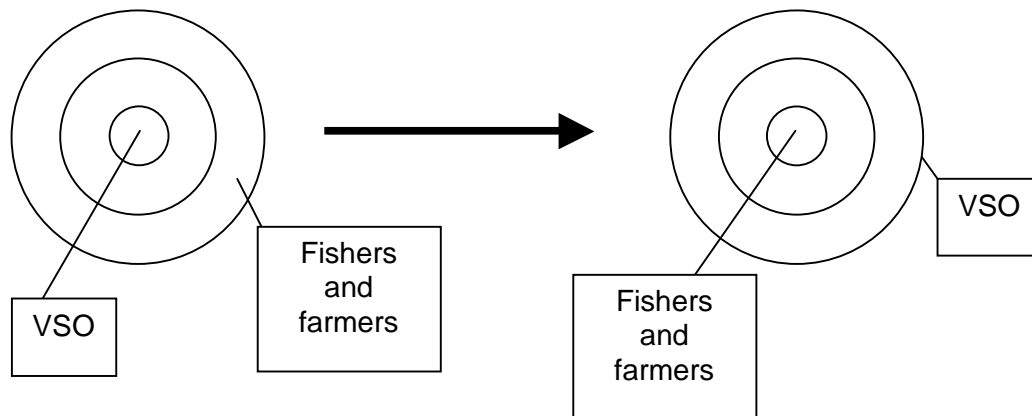
Smith (Indonesia)

The second workshop for me was when I found the door to enter the livelihoods world. I mean that:

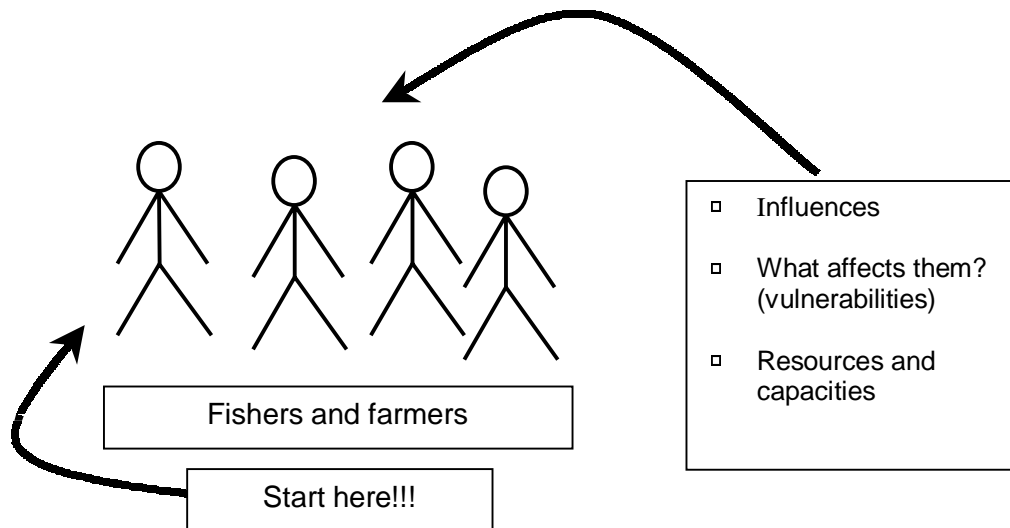
- I learnt how to use the sustainable livelihoods framework, for analyzing working together with communities in the Halimun area
- The workshops help me to review some program which we have done in the field and inspired me to write the story of livelihoods at Kasepuhan.

Ronet (Philippines)

Picture 1.



Picture 2.



These two illustrations I think convey a crucial mind shift – which is shifting our thinking towards “end-users” from ourselves and the service providers. This reminds me of Galileo stating that the Earth is not the centre of the universe.

Bebet (Philippines)

Having arrived at a revised stakeholder diagram in the course of the process we’ve journeyed through was the most significant moment for me. In the original diagram we had in during the 2nd Stream Regional Conference, we placed STREAM RO at the core of the diagram and the fishers and farmers at the periphery. A lot of discussions have been spent on “stakeholders” during our net meeting in STREAM and yet it seems to me that we couldn’t get a grip on it, especially the connections between the fishers and farmers and STREAM RO. However when the idea came up of revising the placement of the stakeholders by moving the fisher and farmer stakeholders to the core of the diagram, it all made sense in an instant. Such a simple realization (though the process that led to it might

be a complex one) opened the key to a lot of blocks that had somehow pulled me backing going through the CSP process we are journeying in STREAM.

Hopefully, this breakthrough in coming up with a process (stakeholders analysis) to identify those stakeholders that are affected by the key issues on poverty and aquatic resources management in the country, would help me a lot in playing my role in the scheme of things.

