

# SECTION I

## DECIDING TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY PROTOCOL

### KEY READING

- ✓ Part I: Section II
- ✓ Part I: Section III

Biocultural community protocols aim to support communities' efforts to secure their rights, responsibilities, territories, and areas. As the first part of the practical guidance, this section of the Toolkit is intended to help assess whether or not it may be appropriate to undertake a protocol process within your local context. The rest of **Part II** suggests specific methods and tools from **Part I: Section IV** and guiding questions to support the development and use of a community protocol. Consider the questions contained in Figure 12 on the follow page and engage in focused discussions with community leaders, catalysts, and other groups until an informed decision can be made.

Other important considerations that may affect the community's decision include, among others:

- Existence or potential for some sense of shared identity or common goal
- General openness and agency to try new things and carry them through
- Strong local leadership and presence of or potential for community catalysts
- At least one person to serve as a confident facilitator and retain sensitivity to local timelines, priorities, and decision-making processes
- Some degree of access to communications infrastructure (for example, common language, road, internet or phone)

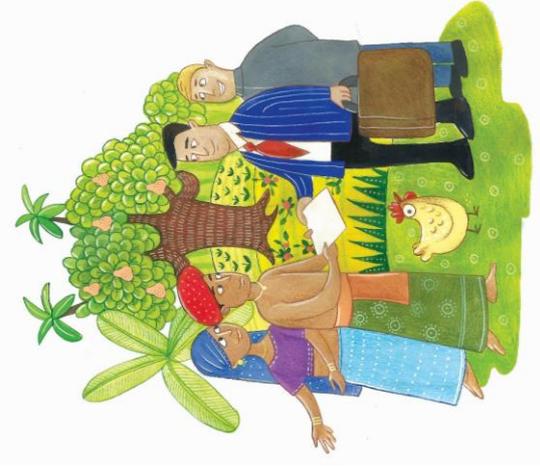
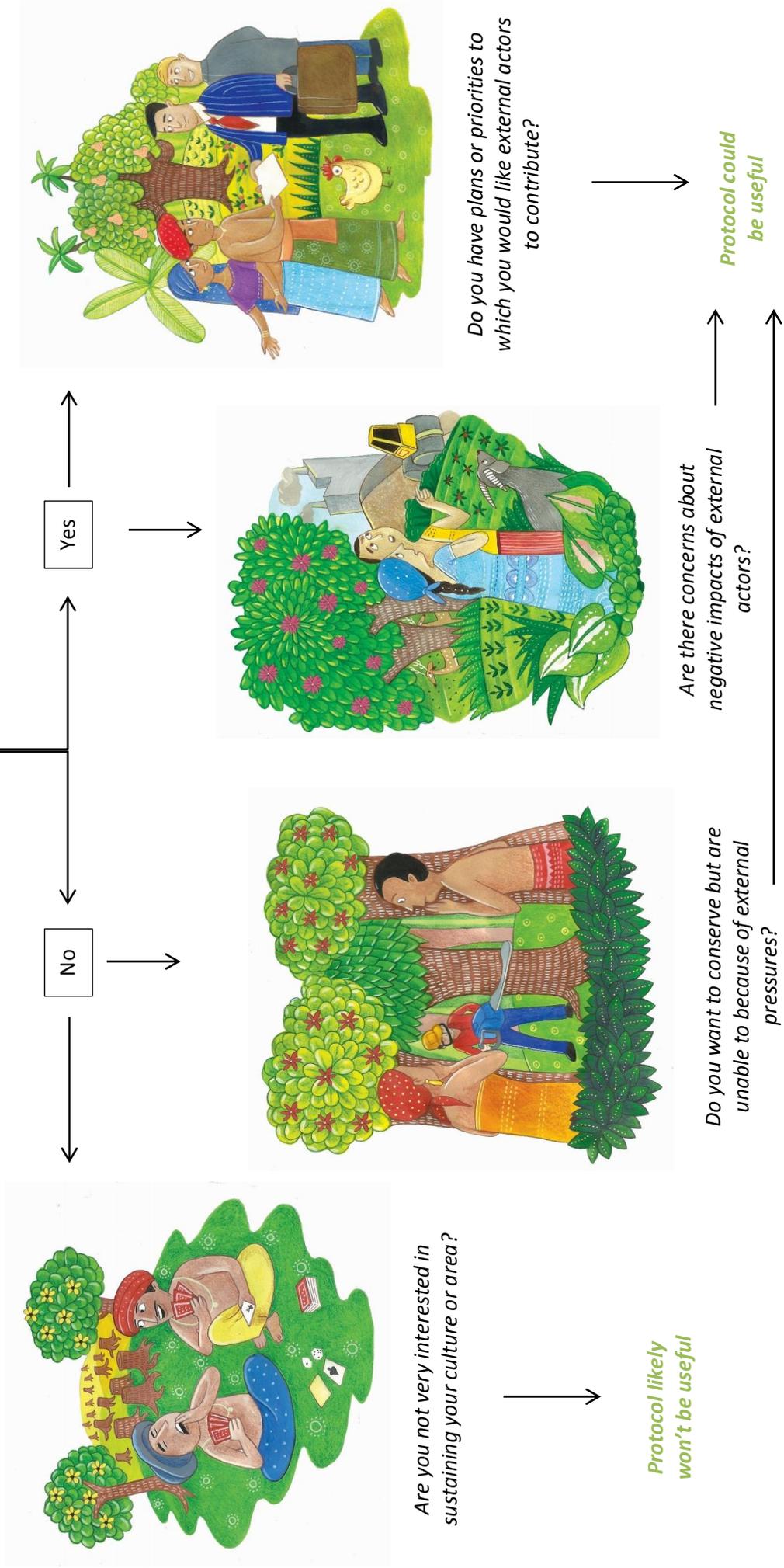
A biocultural community protocol is highly context-dependent and is not necessarily appropriate for any given community. It also does not guarantee any particular changes or improvements. As a facilitator, it is your responsibility to appropriately manage expectations (see **Part I: Section II/B3**). The decision about whether and how to undertake a protocol process should be taken by the community without pressure or coercion from external actors or externally imposed timeframes or terms and conditions.

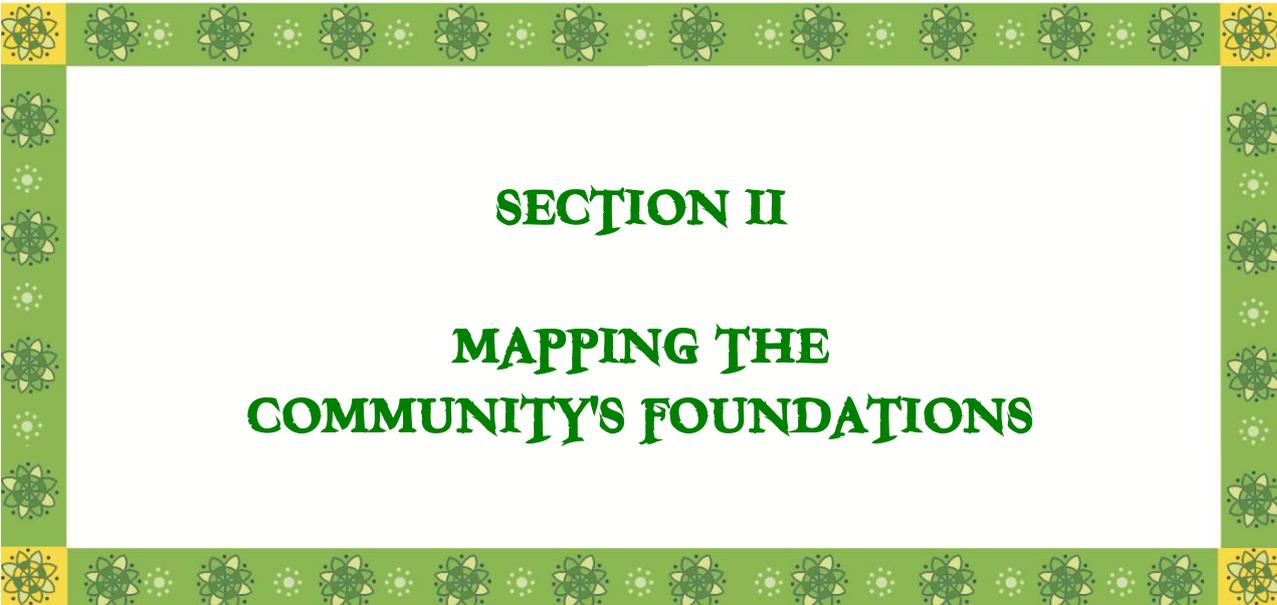
See [www.community-protocols.org/community-protocols](http://www.community-protocols.org/community-protocols) for a collection of protocols from Asia, the Pacific, Africa, and the Americas

**Figure 12: Assessing whether a protocol may be useful for your community**

**Does your community:**

- a) *Have a close historical, cultural, or spiritual connection with a particular territory or area?*
- b) *Have or aspire to have some degree of decision-making power over its management and use?*
- c) *Contribute to or aspire to contribute to its restoration or conservation (intentionally or otherwise)?*





## SECTION II

# MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S FOUNDATIONS

### KEY READING

- ✓ Part I: Section III
- ✓ Part I: Section IV
- ✓ Part II: Section I
- ✓ Part II: Section III

This section provides guidance on a range of issues that your community may wish to consider including in the biocultural community protocol. It is referred to as 'mapping' primarily in the metaphorical sense. Overall, it aims to support a locally-defined process of documenting, delineating, and communicating the community's identity and natural, social-cultural, economic, political and institutional, and legal foundations.

Each sub-section references several tools described in **Part I: Section IV** that may be useful for their respective topics. They are neither exhaustive nor mandatory. You may already have experience with some of them or other similar tools. All of them can be adapted and integrated into the local process as appropriate, depending on the community's interests, priorities, and capacities.

Each sub-section also contains a number of guiding questions to catalyze community reflection and discussion. The questions and overarching topics will inevitably overlap and should not be treated as mutually exclusive or exhaustive. It is not necessary to address only these questions or in any particular order; some will naturally lead to ancillary questions and others may not be at all applicable. Encourage natural transitions between topics and avoid being overly prescriptive about what can be discussed and when. The most important thing is to explore issues that relate directly to the community's ways of life and current situation. Due to the wide-ranging nature of the questions, encourage flexible discussions and culturally appropriate participation from a broad cross-section of the community.

Notably, these questions are potentially invasive and deal with sensitive issues. Understand your role as facilitator and be clear to the community that not 'everything' has to be included in their protocol. They should not feel obliged to answer each question, discuss anything they don't wish to, or contravene any customary laws or social norms. This is especially relevant for the location of natural resources, the location and meaning of cultural and spiritual sites, and specific details of traditional knowledge. Sensitive or confidential information that is documented should be kept in a secure place with regulated access and use. Once information is documented, it is possible that others could access and use it for unintended or unwanted purposes. *See Part I: Section III/B5 for more guidance about safeguarding sensitive information.*

As a facilitator, consider how to integrate tools to monitor and evaluate the process as it emerges. Some relevant tools are highlighted in **Part I: Section III/B5, Part I: Section IV, and Part II: Section III**. Documenting the process of developing and using a protocol can also help ensure accountability and transparency within the community as well as with external actors.

**Before beginning the documentation process, reflect upon the following questions with other community facilitators, catalysts, and leaders:**

- *What is the purpose of the protocol? Who is it directed towards?*
- *How will you decide which issues to discuss and in what order?*
- *How will you facilitate these discussions in culturally appropriate and engaging ways? Every person responds differently to learning and communication styles such as visual images, listening, and movement. Facilitation methods should be diverse and participatory. **See Part I: Section III/A4.***
- *How will you document these discussions and supporting evidence (such as the location of resources or impacts of customary practices)?*
- *How will you consolidate the documentation into a protocol? Who should be involved?*
- *What format will the protocol take (for example, a written document, videos, photographs, and maps)? What technical capacities are required? Which language(s) will be used?*

**Box 35: Guiding questions for reflection before beginning documentation**

**When facilitating community discussions about the sub-sections below, consider using the following overarching questions as the foundation:**

- *What resources, assets, systems, etc. do we currently have?*
- *What did we have in the past that we would like to revive or revitalize?*
- *What do we envision for our future?*
- *What are the internal and external challenges, opportunities, and potential sources of support?*
- *How are cultural sources of information (such as customary laws, traditions, values, and knowledge) tracked, recorded, shared, and passed on within the community? How has this changed over time?*
- *How could the information be shared with or communicated to someone outside of the community?*
- *What specific aspects would you like to convey to outsiders through the community protocol?*
- *How will you communicate the information? Examples may include maps, illustrations, written documents, photographs, or videos.*

**Box 36: Overarching questions to use for discussion of the community's foundations**

## **A. MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S IDENTITY**

### **KEY READING**

- |                                                 |                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ Part I: Section III                           | ✓ Understanding relationships between key actors |
| ✓ Part II: Section II (Introduction, Box 35-36) |                                                  |

### **KEY TOOLS**

- |                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| ✓ Community institutions sketch map | ✓ Forum theatre    |
| ✓ Identifying key actors            | ✓ Image theatre    |
|                                     | ✓ Audio interviews |

Defining and communicating who or what is your community is one of the most important parts of the protocol process. It forms the basis of the shared identity, vision, and purpose around which the rest of the protocol will largely materialize. It clarifies who the protocol represents both to people within and outside of the community. It may also become an interesting process in itself as people come together to consider both traditional or customary and new ways of defining community within different cultural and political contexts. Examples of commonalities around which a community could be defined include ethnicity, language, ways of life and livelihoods, class or caste, spatial area within particular geographical

or political boundaries, shared resources or knowledge, concerns or views about shared threats or opportunities, and shared visions, aims, or plans.

All communities are dynamic. Discussions of self-definition and changing identities should not be seen as either new or inherently threatening to traditional institutions. The broader aim is to mobilize people around shared identities, visions, and plans and empower them to address both threats and opportunities emerging from interactions with external actors. The following boxes provide guiding questions for discussion in order to define and communicate who and what comprises the community.

### Defining Community

- *How do you define your community? How do you decide who is included in and excluded? This self-definition may include more than one of the examples outlined above, including within different contexts, or other characteristics entirely.*
- *What is the story about the origins or history of your community? What is its significance for your present way of life?*
- *What are your community's core values? What is their significance for your present way of life?*

### Communicating Community

- *Within your community, how are identity and core values passed on and reinforced? How are they conveyed to outsiders? Is anyone in particular responsible for these processes? How have they changed over time?*
- *How could these processes be drawn on to communicate your identity and core values in the community protocol?*

### COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE:

#### Defining 'Community' through Shared Identity as Traditional Health Practitioners in South Africa

**Resource:** Biocultural Protocol of the Traditional Health Practitioners of Bushbuckridge (available at [www.community-protocols.org](http://www.community-protocols.org) under "Community Protocols")

In the area of Bushbuckridge, South Africa, traditional health practitioners contribute greatly their villages' health and wellbeing. However, their traditional knowledge and practices are being undermined by outside pressures such as the degradation of medicinal plants. A group spread across a large number of villages and from two different language groups came together to define themselves as a community of traditional health practitioners. They did this to assert their rights under a new national law and to seek recognition of and support for their shared knowledge and customary practices.

## B. MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL FOUNDATIONS

### KEY READING

- ✓ Part I: Section III
- ✓ Part II: Section II (Introduction, Box 35-36)

### KEY TOOLS

- |                                                     |                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| ✓ Identifying appropriate forms of resource mapping | ✓ Historical timeline                     |
| ✓ Community institutions sketch map                 | ✓ Trend line analysis                     |
| ✓ Community biodiversity registers                  | ✓ Community visioning                     |
|                                                     | ✓ Assessing key opportunities and threats |
|                                                     | ✓ Participatory video                     |
|                                                     | ✓ Photo stories                           |
|                                                     | ✓ Audio interviews                        |

The following boxes contain guiding questions for community discussion about their ways of life in relation to territories and areas. Some of the topics may not be relevant (for example, if the community does not keep livestock), so you may wish to read through them all first before beginning. In the

community protocol, you may wish to include the following main types of information, among others: relationships with and impacts on the environment and different types of resources; territorial boundaries; connections between ecosystems or other communities' territories or areas; unique values and roles of certain resources; totem species or taboos; land use change and resource use trends over time; and visions and plans for resource management and conservation.

#### General Environment and Natural Resources

- *What types of natural resources do you use? What are they used for?*
- *Which are most important to your community? Why?*
- *What are the main cycles (for example, seasonal, temporal, cultural, or spiritual)?*
- *Where are they?*
- *How are they used and managed? Who is involved?*
- *What types of customary laws or values regulate the management of different resources?*
- *What traditional knowledge, innovations and practices are involved?*

#### COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE:

##### Developing Tribal Biodiversity Registers as the Basis for Tribal Biocultural Protocols in Iran

**Resource:** Adapted from material provided by CENESTA



**Figure 13: The Qashqai tribe has extensive knowledge of the high biodiversity in the rangelands of their territory** (Courtesy: Samira Farahani, CENESTA)

Iran has approximately 700 tribes of Indigenous nomadic pastoralists. Most are engaged in vertical migration over their ancestral territories, including summering grounds in the highlands, wintering grounds in the lowlands, and the migratory routes and resting stops connecting the two. About a dozen tribes recently decided to develop tribal biocultural protocols in order to protect themselves from unwanted outsiders taking resources, particularly highly valuable medicinal plants, from their territories without their consent.

The tribes initially set out to describe the diversity of their domesticated livestock, including sheep, goats, camels, horses, cattle, and donkeys. They soon decided that it was first necessary to collect and identify the hundreds of plant species that provide the foundation for their livestock and livelihoods. With the support of professional botanists, they found that many of the plants species, perhaps up to 20 per cent, were unknown to science. However, the tribal elders knew them and their properties, names, and many uses such as food, medicine, livestock feed, or industry. They decided to elaborate tribal

biodiversity registers and are currently exploring the feasibility of setting up a tribal herbarium as a reference base for identifying species and their status in the territories where they are found. Using digital cameras provided by a supporting NGO, they have learned to follow standard procedures to set up a sample sheet for each species or variety collected with the help of the modern botanists. Hundreds of species of plants have been collected so far by these expert community ethno-botanists.

According to the Indigenous nomadic communities, the work must be done over the entire tribal territory and over a long enough period of time. In the Iranian context, they recommend that it includes collection in the summering grounds, in the wintering grounds, and over the entire migration route in between each (in essence, four times each year). This should be done two or more times over subsequent years. It must also be done in a large enough area, covering a significant number of tribal territories. Next, the tribes plan to document wildlife and domesticated plants and animals to complete their tribal biodiversity registers.

The collection and identification of biodiversity should not be seen as a mere study but should form the basis for improving the conservation of nature in the tribal territories. It can also help identify practical ways that the nomadic communities can sustainably use and benefit from resources identified as having economic value. While tribal biodiversity registers and biocultural protocols are vital in their own right, the process to document and develop them has engendered strong feelings of cooperation, mutual support, and solidarity.



**Figure 14: Review of specimens collected by Shahsevan Tribal Confederacy in preparation for botanical classification** (Courtesy: Hamed Zolfaqari, CENESTA)



**Figure 15: Tribal ethno-botanists from various nomadic tribes preparing their specimen sheets** (Courtesy: Abbas Didari, CENESTA)

#### **Local Wildlife (including mammals, birds, fish, insects, reptiles, and amphibians)**

- *Do you hunt, fish, or collect wildlife species?*
- *Do you have specific names for them in your local language? If appropriate, some examples could be provided.*
- *What are they used for? How do you obtain and use them?*
- *Are they migratory or restricted to a certain area?*
- *What roles or values do they have in your community (for example, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental, economic, and political)?*
- *Are the wildlife species or local populations in danger of becoming threatened or extinct? If so, what are the factors leading to this? How are they currently being or could they be addressed?*

### Local Crop Varieties, Medicinal Plants, and Livestock Breeds

- *Has your community developed and used local crop varieties, medicinal plants, or livestock breeds, either in the past or currently?*
- *Do you have specific names for them in your local language? If appropriate, some examples could be provided.*
- *Why are they important to your community? What roles or values do they have (for example, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental, economic, and political)?*
- *Are the livestock migratory, sedentary, or restricted to specific areas or grazing routes?*
- *How does your community manage the crops, medicinal plants, or livestock? You may wish to describe customary laws, traditions, beliefs, norms, values, knowledge, and practices for exchanging, cultivating or breeding, feeding and grazing, harvesting, processing, and using.*
- *Are the crop varieties, medicinal plants, or livestock breeds under threat and potentially in danger of being lost? If so, what are the factors leading to this? How are they currently being addressed or could they be addressed in the future?*

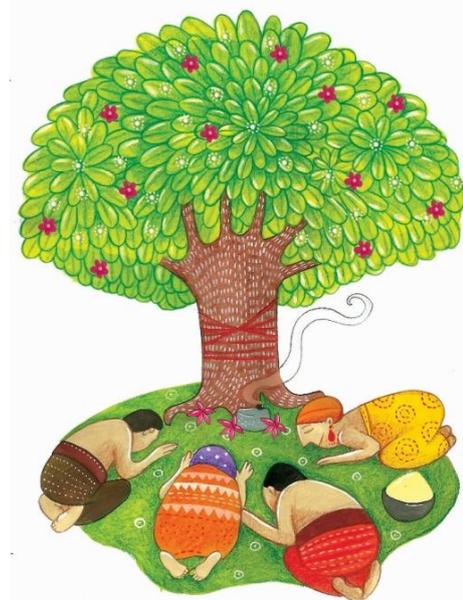
## C. MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S SOCIAL-CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS

### KEY READING

- ✓ Part I: Section III
- ✓ Part II: Section II (Introduction, Box 35-36)

### KEY TOOLS

- ☑ Photo stories
- ☑ Audio interviews
- ☑ Participatory video
- ☑ Historical timeline
- ☑ Trend line analysis
- ☑ Identifying appropriate forms of resource mapping
- ☑ Community visioning
- ☑ Assessing community capacities
- ☑ Assessing key opportunities and threats



The following box contains guiding questions for community discussion about social-cultural aspects, including festivals, sacred sites, and pilgrimage routes. There may be many other topics that would be appropriate to discuss. Particular attention should be given to considerations of sensitive or restricted information such as exact locations, names, and other related knowledge. In the community protocol, you may wish to include the following main types of information, among others: significant events, sites, or other social-cultural activities with unique values and relations to the environment; customary institutions or authorities; changes and trends over time; and visions and plans for the future.

### Cultural Festivals, Rituals, Sacred Sites, and Pilgrimage Routes

- *Do you have cultural festivals, rituals, sacred sites, or pilgrimage routes?*
- *What are the locations or boundaries? How are they connected to other parts of the community's territory or area?*
- *What roles or values do they have in your community (for example, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental, economic, and political)?*
- *Which natural resources are involved and how?*

- *What are the relevant customary laws, rules, norms, and values that regulate practices and resource use around the festivals, rituals, sites, or routes?*
- *Are there particular people or groups within the community who make these decisions?*
- *Are the festivals, rituals, visits to sacred sites, or pilgrimages held on particular occasions or times of year? What are these occasions linked to or initiated by?*
- *Are there certain songs, dances, designs, handicrafts, or other art forms connected to these events or sites? How do the values and knowledge contained therein affect how the community understands, manages, and uses resources?*
- *Are the festivals, rituals, sites, or routes under threat or in danger of being harmed or lost? What are the factors leading to this? How are they currently being or could they be addressed?*
- *Would you want this information to be made public?*

### **Key Resources on Sacred Sites**

[Barcelona Statement of Custodians of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories \(2008\)](#)

[Preliminary Action Plan for the Conservation of Sacred Natural Sites \(WCPA Specialist Group on the Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas, 2010\)](#)

[Sacred Natural Sites: Guidelines for Protected Area Managers \(IUCN and UNESCO, 2008\)](#)

## **D. MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS**

### **KEY READING**

- ✓ Part I: Section III
- ✓ Part II: Section II (Introduction, Box 35-36)

### **KEY TOOLS**

- ✓ Community institutions sketch map
- ✓ Historical timeline
- ✓ Trend line analysis
- ✓ Assessing community capacities

- ✓ Forum theatre
- ✓ Identifying appropriate forms of resource mapping
- ✓ Participatory video
- ✓ Photo stories
- ✓ Audio interviews
- ✓ Community visioning
- ✓ Assessing key opportunities and threats

The following box contains guiding questions for community discussion about their livelihoods and sources of sustenance and income. In the community protocol, you may wish to include the following main types of information, among others: how livelihood strategies relate to the environment and different types of resources; relationships between customary and more recent practices; viability of customary practices; sharing or restriction of resources and knowledge; and visions and plans for the future.

### **Livelihood Strategies**

- *What are the main sources of livelihoods and income in the community? How long have they been practiced?*
- *To what extent are customary subsistence livelihoods currently practiced? How does this compare to 10, 20, 50, or 100 years ago?*
- *To what extent do the youth learn about and maintain customary practices and knowledge?*
- *Overall, to what degree do these sources of livelihoods and income sustain the health and wellbeing of the whole community? What are the gaps or shortfalls, if any?*
- *If there are any excess resources, how are they shared with other communities or exported to markets? How are benefits and costs shared within your community?*
- *Are there any tensions between customary subsistence and market-based practices such as cash crops? If so, how are they currently being or could they be addressed?*
- *If the community cultivates crops, uses medicinal plants, or keeps livestock, what are the cycles or timeframes for exchange, migration or grazing routes, breeding, cultivation, and harvesting?*

- *What customs and values regulate the sharing of key resources (such as seeds, plants, or animals) and related knowledge within your community? with nearby communities? with outsiders? Who is responsible for making these decisions?*
- *What is unique and valuable about how your community uses local crop varieties, medicinal plants, livestock breeds, wildlife, or other resources? How do you manage and use them differently than other communities or external actors?*
- *If you think about 10, 20, 50, or 100 years from now, what will be the main sources of livelihoods and income? Does this reflect the community's visions?*
- *What are the main threats and opportunities that are likely to affect future livelihoods and sources of income? How could the community proactively plan and address these?*

### COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE:

#### Valorizing Indigenous Knowledge through Participatory Mapping in Ethiopia

**Resource:** Adapted from material provided by MELCA-Ethiopia

Also see [Participatory 3-Dimensional and Eco-cultural Mapping for Indigenous Knowledge Documentation](#) (Refera/MELCA-Ethiopia, 2009)

With the support of local organization MELCA-Ethiopia, the communities of the Bale Mountains, Sheka forest, Foata Mountain Complex, and Wechecha Mountain Complex have been using participatory mapping to mobilize knowledge related to their territories and areas and to build resilience and learning about change. The maps demonstrate the importance of traditional knowledge and cultural practices in the communities' deep understandings of and relationships with their landscapes. In each of the four communities, over 200 elders, adults, and youth participated in the construction of the maps. This process has created social cohesion around a common purpose, further contributing to the communities' resilience and capacity to respond to change.



**Figure 16: An elder placing a pin on the location of a sacred site that the community is struggling to protect against the negative influence of major religions** (Courtesy: Million Belay, MELCA-Ethiopia)

The maps are currently being used as the basis to revitalize intergenerational learning amongst students from local elementary and secondary schools and universities. This is contributing to greater awareness of and pride in community identity, revival of traditional ecological knowledge, focused planning to rehabilitate degraded ecosystems, and advocacy efforts to protect areas of cultural, social, economic, and environmental importance.

## E. MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS

### KEY READING

- ✓ Part I: Section III
- ✓ Part II: Section II (Introduction, Box 35-36)

### KEY TOOLS

- ☑ Community institutions sketch map

- ☑ Assessing community capacities
- ☑ Assessing key opportunities and threats
- ☑ Framework for research and action
- ☑ Identifying key actors
- ☑ Understanding relationships between key

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community decision-making calendar	actors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historical timeline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multi-stakeholder role play
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trend line analysis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forum theatre
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community visioning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image theatre

The boxes below contain guiding questions for discussion about internal and external decisions that affect the community. In the protocol, you may wish to include the following main types of information, among others: decision-making processes, institutions, and values; identification of key actors and relationships (existing and potential); understanding of power dynamics and influences of external actors and any related assertions; methods for dispute resolution; and visions and plans for the future.

### Internal Decision-making Systems

- *How are internal decisions made about the community's territory or area? Who is involved and in what ways?*
- *How long have these institutions and decision-making processes been in place?*
- *To what extent are customary institutions currently practiced? How does this compare to 10, 20, 50, or 100 years ago? What factors have affected these changes over time?*
- *What are the different roles and responsibilities of the customary and local authorities?*
- *How do the decision-making systems regulate different aspects of the community's ways of life (for example, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental, economic, political, and legal)?*
- *What social norms, values, and beliefs underpin the systems?*
- *For what kinds of decisions do they need to seek broader support from the community?*
- *For what kinds of decisions do they have the mandate to act on the community's behalf?*
- *How could they be further improved upon and strengthened? For example, if decisions would be improved by broader participation, how could this be done in culturally appropriate ways?*
- *How are disagreements or conflicts within the community addressed?*
- *Overall, to what degree do these systems sustain the wellbeing of the whole community? What are the gaps or shortfalls, if any?*
- *Are there any tensions between customary and more recent decision-making processes? If so, how are they currently being or could they be addressed?*

### Relations with External Decision-making Systems

- *What are the local structures of government decision-making and administration? How do they relate to customary structures?*
- *What other actors and decision-making processes affect the community? Examples may include companies, researchers, and NGOs. How do power dynamics affect the relationship and the community's potential to influence the process and outcome?*
- *Discuss some past experiences of interactions with these external actors. What were the factors that led to the experiences being overall positive or negative? How could positive factors be further supported? How could negative factors be constructively addressed?*
- *If a potential threat or opportunity arises in the future with any of these actors, how would the community respond? What decision-making process would be undertaken?*

## F. MAPPING THE COMMUNITY'S LEGAL FOUNDATIONS

### KEY READING

- ✓ Part I: Section III
- ✓ Part II: Section II (Introduction, Box 35-36)

### KEY TOOLS

- E-learning modules on relevant legal frameworks

- Understanding relationships between key actors
- Multi-stakeholder role play
- Identifying appropriate forms of resource mapping
- Historical timeline

- |                                                                             |                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessing key opportunities and threats | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trend line analysis |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Framework for research and action       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community visioning |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identifying key actors                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legislative theatre |

What distinguishes a biocultural community protocol from other instruments such as management plans is the explicit focus on understanding laws and policies, asserting rights and responsibilities, and clearly defining community requirements for external actors to engage with them and their territories and areas. The legal empowerment process behind it requires time, energy, strategic thinking, and attention to detail, but is well worth the effort. The more the community understands and effectively uses their rights and responsibilities, the more external actors will respect and comply with them.

The boxes below contain guiding questions for community discussion about different kinds of legal systems and how they relate to each other. In the community protocol, you may wish to include the following main types of information, among others: customary laws, rights, and responsibilities and the norms and values that underpin them; specific national and international laws and policies; assertions of overlaps or conflicts between legal systems; community-defined terms and conditions for engagement of external actors; messages directed towards specific external actors to either cease harmful activities or engage in constructive ones; and visions and plans for the future.

### Customary Laws

- *Do you have customary laws relating to your territory or area? This may include rules or regulations for the use of resources, sharing of traditional knowledge, and timing of important social-cultural events.*
- *How long have these customary laws been in place?*
- *To what extent are they currently practiced? How does this compare to 10, 20, 50, or 100 years ago? What factors have affected these changes over time?*
- *Overall, to what degree do customary laws sustain the wellbeing of the whole community? What are the gaps or shortfalls, if any?*
- *How do these laws regulate different aspects of the community's ways of life (for example, social, cultural, spiritual, environmental, economic, and political)?*
- *What are their underlying values and norms? How are these values and norms reinforced and passed on to other authorities or younger generations?*
- *According to the community's customary laws, what are your customary rights and responsibilities over your territory or area? How are the boundaries defined?*
- *What are your customary rights and responsibilities related to local crops, plants, livestock breeds, and wildlife? over the areas and habitats in which they are found, cultivated, bred, kept, or grazed?*
- *Are there any taboos or restricted areas from which no resources should be taken (during certain times or permanently)?*

### Positive (Governmental) Laws and Policies

- *What are the community's rights and responsibilities under international, regional, and national laws and policies? Include those related to the territory or area and all resources contained therein, human rights, culture and ways of life, and intellectual property.*
- *What are the rights and responsibilities of external actors in relation to the community? For example, some laws prohibit actions undertaken without your consent or that adversely affect you. Others oblige governments to support different aspects of the community's ways of life.*
- *Which international, regional, and national laws and policies negatively affect your ways of life? Are there any supportive aspects of these laws and policies? If not, how could they be addressed?*
- *Are there any tensions or conflicts between customary laws and positive laws? If so, how would the community like to address them?*

- *Overall, do positive laws and policies generally support or hinder the community's ways of life and priorities? What are the gaps and shortfalls?*
- *How have these laws and policies changed over the past 10, 20, 50, or 100 years? How would the community like to see them change in the future?*

#### **Community-defined Engagement of External Actors**

- *When an outsider or external agency approaches the community for something, what procedures must they follow? Who must they seek permission from?*
- *How can the community inform them of this procedure?*
- *What information would the community like to know before making any decisions? Consider listing key questions that they should answer up front.*
- *Once this information is presented, how would the community respond to different requests or proposals? Examples may include taking samples of genetic resources, recording traditional knowledge, establishing a protected area, or beginning a business venture on or near the community's territory or area.*
- *What rights and responsibilities under which laws must be respected? What essential terms and conditions must be adhered to?*
- *How could the community explain these rights, responsibilities, and terms and conditions to the external actor?*
- *What would the community do if they were not properly adhered to?*

## SECTION III

# CONSOLIDATING THE PROTOCOL AND DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

### A. COMMUNITY PRIORITIZATION

The process of mapping the community's foundations likely elicited an incredible wealth of information in the form of reams of notes, stacks of chart paper, and folders of photographs and maps. All of this information is important and valuable and should be managed with care and respect, especially if any is sensitive or confidential.

The next stage of the process is prioritizing particular issues to address in the community protocol. Prioritization can often be done through further community discussions and the use of simple tools such as voting and ranking, either through private ballots or an open space. For example, the topics with the most votes or highest overall rankings could be included in the protocol. Another useful tool is called pairwise ranking, which involves creating a matrix of topics listed in the same order across the top row and left column (see Table 17 for a fictitious example). Each pair is compared and people indicate their preferences. The topic with the highest number of 'preferred' boxes has the highest priority. As people's priorities are influenced by their roles in the community and personal interests, ensure opportunities for broad participation in this process. This could be in the form of large community workshops, focused group discussions, leaders' meetings, and one-on-one interviews.

**Table 17: Example of a pairwise matrix used to prioritize ideas for income generation projects**

	Vegetables	Livestock	Fruit Trees	Fish Farm	Bee Keeping
Vegetables	X	<i>Livestock</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>	<i>Bee Keeping</i>
Livestock		X	<i>Livestock</i>	<i>Livestock</i>	<i>Bee Keeping</i>
Fruit Trees			X	<i>Fruit Trees</i>	<i>Bee Keeping</i>
Fish Farm				X	<i>Bee Keeping</i>
Bee Keeping					X

### B. FOCUSING AND CLARIFYING THE COMMUNITY'S MESSAGE TO EXTERNAL ACTORS

Every topic and issue raised throughout the documentation process is important and interconnected in reality. However, the purpose of a protocol is not to provide every single detail known about the community or generic descriptions of concerns or priorities. The protocol will be much more effective if it

contains clear messages targeted towards specific external actors with decision-making power, providing just enough information to inform them why and how they should take action and what impacts their decisions will have.

#### Focusing the Message

- *What is the overall objective of the community protocol?*
- *What is the overall message that you would like to convey to external actors?*
- *What are the specific messages that you would like to convey to external actors? This could include, for example, what they should know about the community, what the community would like them to do and how, what the community commits to doing, the legal basis for these assertions, and so on.*
- *Who in particular are these messages directed towards?*
- *What do you know about these actors? What are their mandates? How do they generally respond to communities? Awareness of such background information and insights will help you compile a more effective message.*
- *How can you frame the message to peak their interest and encourage them to personally invest in and commit to the cause?*
- *How would the community like to convey their collective voice? How could individual voices also be shared?*
- *How should the external actor respond? Include, for example, detailed contact information and suggested means or procedures for communication.*

### C. CONSOLIDATING INTO A PROTOCOL

The bulk of the protocol can be drawn from the documentation process (see **Part II, Section II**). In addition to directing clear messages towards specific external actors, it should focus on providing concise descriptions and supporting evidence (such as maps, photos, and graphs) to convince those actors why they need to pay attention and take action. Consolidation into something tangible can also have great meaning for the community. Some who have developed protocols have highlighted the self-affirming power of having something in hand to share their identities and ways of life with outsiders, often for the first time on their own terms.

Each protocol should be consolidated and communicated in a way and format that is meaningful and appropriate to that community. Certain formats such as written documents may be more politically advantageous, have greater legal certainty in negotiation processes, and be more easily understood by external actors. However, a written document may be seen as reductionist or misrepresentative of the complexity of the community's worldview and visions. On the other hand, a more culturally appropriate approach (such as through visual art, theatre, or music) may not be understood or taken seriously by external actors. Each format will have pros and cons depending on how and why the protocol is developed and to whom it is directed. Remember that any type of documentation is simply a snapshot of a diverse and complex community and should not be seen as the 'ultimate' or final account upon which all subsequent decisions must be made.

Overall, the consolidation process is a matter of bridging different knowledge systems, worldviews, and forms of communication. The balance that must be sought is ensuring that it has meaning and integrity for the community and is understood and respected by external actors.

In order to determine the most appropriate means of consolidating a protocol, the community could discuss who should be involved in the process and how, to whom the protocol is directed and in what contexts (for example, proactive or reactive), and how best to communicate their overall and specific message(s). The boxes below set out key guiding questions and considerations. You could use these for personal reflection as the facilitator as well as discussion with the broader community.

**Process**

- *Who will be involved in consolidating the information? What roles will they play?*
- *How can you support the participation of different members and groups in the community?*
- *How do you decide what information to consolidate and how to do so?*

**Tone**

- *Who is it directed towards? What are the overall and specific messages?*
- *What is overall tone that you would like to convey (positive or negative)? How would this contribute to the overall objective or goals of the protocol?*
- *Given the local context and communication styles, how could you tailor the message and tone appropriately?*

**Format**

- *What format will the protocol take? For example, it could consist of a written document with maps, videos, photographs, interviews, and so on. What are the pros and cons of each? In what contexts might some formats be more appropriate or useful than others? Consider which languages will be used and any technical capacities that may be required.*
- *Consider consolidating into one overarching protocol to begin with.*
- *Consider tailoring different versions, parts of the protocol, or additional annexes directed towards specific external actors for specific purposes. Each may use different formats and may adopt a different message and tone, depending on the purpose.*
- *Assuming the protocol was documented and developed in the local language, consider translating it into the national language and any other widely used languages.*

**Content and Structure**

- *What information is appropriate to include in the protocol? What information should not be included?*
- *Can a protocol itself contain a diversity of opinions and perspectives or should it be presented as a community's "one voice" (presumably agreed upon through consensus-building)?*

Although there is no prescribed list or template, the protocol could set out the following topics:

- The community's identity, story of origin, and core values and norms
- Relationships between culture, language, spirituality, customary laws, resource use practices, traditional knowledge, and their territories and areas
- Customary institutions, decision-making processes, and other aspects of self-governance
- Challenges and concerns and how the community would prefer to address them
- Locally defined development plans and priorities
- Specific rights and responsibilities in customary, national, and international law
- Specific calls to external actors

**Community Validation**

- *Is the protocol accurate and meaningful enough to serve as the 'public face' of the community to external actors?*
- *What would be an appropriate process for the community to endorse the consolidated protocol? What customary or local authorities should give their approval?*
- *What is the relationship between the protocol and local governance structures?*
- *How could the community validation be confirmed in the protocol itself? For example, a note at the beginning or end of the protocol could briefly describe the process undertaken to document, develop, and approve it.*

## D. DEVELOPING STRATEGIES TO USE THE PROTOCOL

### KEY TOOLS

- |                                                                                     |                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> E-learning modules on relevant legal frameworks | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multi-stakeholder role play |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessing key opportunities and threats         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forum theatre               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Framework for research and action               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Image theatre               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identifying key actors                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historical timeline         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understanding relationships between key actors  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trend line analysis         |
|                                                                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community visioning         |
|                                                                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activity monitoring table   |

The value of a single biocultural community protocol may lie primarily in its potential for internal self-affirmation and in achieving localized change through direct engagement with local officials or other actors. The potential to influence broader political and legal change may require the aggregation (though not in a 'standardizing' way) of several protocols that generally address similar issues. For example, multiple protocols calling for livestock keepers' rights in India, Pakistan, and Kenya could serve as the collective voice – still based on unique local contexts, identities, and priorities – of a broader social movement with shared aims, which could exert sufficient pressure to gain state recognition. It is likely that community protocols may only be able to influence concrete or structural change through coordinated social mobilization and strategic challenges to the legal and political status quo.

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*“The value of biocultural community protocols lies at the aggregate level: the more there are that speak about a particular issue in local contexts, the stronger their collective voice can be.” ~ Ilse Köhler-Rollefson, League for Pastoral Peoples and Endogenous Livestock Development*

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### Developing a Strategy

- *What are the overall aims or objectives of the protocol?*
- *What are the legal provisions and frameworks (customary, national, regional, and international) that can be used to achieve these aims?*
- *How does the community intend to use the law and other methods such as social mobilization to achieve these aims? What are the visions, specific strategies, and action plans?*
- *What capacities and resources are required? What already exists within the community or could be obtained with focused support?*
- *What are the main opportunities and threats that may affect the process?*
- *Who are the key actors or stakeholders, including relevant social movements? What are their existing or potential relationships with the community?*
- *How does the community intend to engage with these actors? What are the visions, specific strategies, and action plans?*
- *Who will contribute to realizing the strategy from within the community? Who will contribute from outside the community?*
- *How will you know that changes have occurred or aims achieved?*